A Study of Aimon de Varennes' *Florimont*

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Abstract

This thesis offers an intertextual examination of the twelfth-century romance, *Florimont*, by Aimon de Varennes. It considers the disparity between current knowledge of the text and its dissemination during the Middle Ages, revealing a failure of critics to appreciate the significance of re-writing as a medieval practice. This provides a framework for the study of *Florimont*, which uses the work of Douglas Kelly on the process of medieval composition to analyse *Florimont*'s relationship with important contemporary texts.

Progressive levels of rewriting techniques are seen in relation to these textual models. Chapter 2 explores the relatively straightforward emulation of a popular romance *(Le Roman d'Alexandre)*, showing how Aimon benefits by deliberately positioning his text as prehistory to its famous model, whilst also engaging with the problems of romancing the life of a historical figure. Chapter 3 moves on to explore the relationship with *Partonopeus de Blois*, discovering a more complex use of rewriting, which engages critically with its model. This reveals Aimon's rewriting strategies as a conscious commentary on medieval composition, an idea explored further in Chapter 4. Here the fusion of two models *(Le Roman d'Alexandre* and *Partonopeus de Blois)* provides opportunities to play texts off against each other and to exploit the resulting effects. This process is analysed in detail in the final chapter, which explores Aimon's combination of elements from *Partonopeus*, Chrétien de Troyes' *Cligés* and the *Roman d'Enéas* in one key scene in the romance.

This analysis gives us a fresh understanding of the romance, forcing us to re-evaluate its position in our understanding of the Old French canon, and opening up the possibility for further appreciation both of this text and of its relationship with previous and later works.

This thesis is dedicated to my parents without whose love, support, and encouragement, this work would never have been completed and,
to the memory of my Nan and Granddad, neither of whom lived long enough to see the conclusion of this project.

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Introduction

The late twelfth-century romance of *Florimont*, by Aimon de Varennes was relatively well-known. Keith Busby has described it as 'one of the most popular of all Old French romances'[1], thereby implicitly ranking it alongside established romances by Chrétien de Troyes. Yet when one thinks of Old French literature it is precisely authors such as Chrétien de Troyes, or perhaps Marie de France who spring to mind, and who have been studied extensively by modern readers. However popular *Florimont* may have been in the Middle Ages, as an author, Aimon de Varennes is not as well known today as Chrétien de Troyes or Marie de France. Similarly, as a text, *Florimont* has not been studied in anywhere near as much detail as have the works of Chrétien or Marie – there are no multi-volume bibliographies dedicated to the scholarship available on *Florimont* for example. The dissonance between *Florimont*'s status as well-known in the Middle Ages and its relative neglect today is unusual if we consider that other well-known of the Middle Ages, such as Marie's *Lais* or Benoît de Sainte-Maure's *Roman de Troie*, have gone on to remain well-known in our day. In considering why this has not been the case for *Florimont* we must ask ourselves two key questions – have scholars chosen not to engage with it because they feel it has little to recommend it? That it would not reward detailed study? Or is the lack of engagement with Aimon's text the result, not of a deliberate choice but perhaps a question of its popularity – perhaps it *will* eventually be looked at; but only when the established greats of medieval literature have been fully analysed. Quite simply, perhaps no-one has, as yet, found the time to prepare a full monograph on *Florimont* because its popularity and influence have not traditionally been considered as factors in its favour.

Exploring these key issues – the inherent interest of *Florimont* and the reception it received in the Middle Ages – will explain why *Florimont* is the focus of this thesis. We will begin with a brief consideration of the romance's literary merit. A first read through of *Florimont* offers an entertaining read and much to appreciate.[2] A rich vein of humour runs throughout the text, a vein which will be discussed on more than one occasion as we consider Aimon's abilities as an author and discover a playful sense of composition. This humour is in evidence both in the 'bedroom scene' (discussed in Chapter 5) and in

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[1] Keith Busby, *Codex and Context: reading Old French Verse Narrative in Manuscript*, 2 vols (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002), p. 554. See also below, p. 3, footnote 8.
[2] As *Florimont* is neither widely read, nor widely available to those seeking to read it, a brief synopsis of the plot is given as an Appendix to this chapter, pp. 17-19.

Florimont's separation from his first love, the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* (discussed in Chapter 2), but in large part seems to be centred on Florimont's tutor, Floquart and can be found in Floquart's relationship with Thecier, one of Rysus' knights and in Floquart's determined attempts always to do the right thing, even if it means endangering himself on the battlefield. Nor is this humour *Florimont*'s sole attraction. The nature of Florimont's adventures adds charm to the text; the *merveilleux* of the episodes with the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* and the suspense of a disguised Florimont bumping into the very people whose palace he is clandestinely entering, combine with the excitement of battles (against monsters and giants) and a military campaign against Camdiobras to bring pace and variety to the romance, suggesting that, as a text, *Florimont* has something to offer a wide range of readers.

The critics who have looked at *Florimont* have also found much that is worthy of interest: an unusual use of the Greek language and oriental locations have each added to the charm of *Florimont*, creating a stir and causing scholars to debate Aimon's nationality – was he Greek? French? – amongst other things.[3] The descriptions of terrain in and local legends from Greece are intriguing enough but the reader is also presented with Egypt as an important location (the text opens in Egypt as Philip's genealogy and familial situation are briefly discussed (ll. 135-45), with Carthage and almost the whole of Europe (Russia, Albania, Turkey and Germany also being mentioned.[4] Philip's journey from Egypt to Macedonia is indicative of this – described in careful, accurate detail, it seems designed to capture the imagination of an audience unfamiliar with the route. Indeed, it is so convincing that Paulin Paris notes: 'L'indication est exacte, et prouve déjà que notre Aimé de Varennes connoissoit [sic] parfaitement cette partie de la Grèce' (vol. 3, p. 20). Such exoticisms are not the sole element to have struck critics; it would seem that Aimon's writing and style are themselves not without charm. Paris notes that Aimon writes 'avec une élégance et une netteté d'expression que l'on trouveroit [sic] difficilement dans les autres compositions de la même époque' (vol. 3, p. 12), whilst Alfred Risop suggests that the stylistic accomplishment and the dexterity of Aimon's French argue against Aimon's being (as

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[3] For a discussion of the research regarding Aimon's use of Greek, see Chapter 1, pp. 23-25.

[4] Locations are not the only exoticisms to be found in *Florimont*. Paris notes that *Florimont* introduced oriental customs to the west fourteen years before the crusaders: ' il transportoit [sic] dans l'Occident des traditions entièrement inconnues des François [sic]', Paulin Paris, *Les manuscrits françois* [sic] *de la Bibliothèque du Roi*, 7 vols (Paris: Techener, 1836-48), vol. 3, p. 51. See Hilka's index of proper names for a complete list of countries mentioned in *Florimont*. Aimon de Varennes, *Florimont*, ed. by A. Hilka (Göttingen: gedruckt für die Gesellschaft für romanische Literatur, 1932), pp. 627-36.

some had suggested) Greek: 'Den grellsten Widerspruch gegen die etwaige griechischen Abkunft unseres Dichters bildet die hohe stilische Vollendung und Gewandthiet im Gebrauche des Französischen, Eigenschaften, die dem *roman de Florimont* im besonders hohen Grade eigen sind.'[5] Even Anthime Fourrier, in some respects *Florimont*'s most ardent critic (see Chapter 1) describes the scene in which Florimont enters the palace in disguise as 'un fabliau mondain' and compliments the realism of Aimon's dialogue.[6] He is not alone in this area, Keith Busby having commented: 'While there are numerous adventures, a good deal of action of different kinds, and a liberal use of the *merveilleux* in *Florimont*, it is also marked by a considerable amount of dialogue, interior monologue, and narrator's meditations'.[7] Such comments would seem to suggest that authorial style and talent present no bar to enjoying *Florimont*.

Nor, it seems, can a lack of popularity explain why we know so little about *Florimont*. As we have seen, Busby considers is to one of the most popular of all Old French romances.[8] A consideration of *Florimont*'s manuscript tradition certainly confirms that it was quite well-known in the Middle Ages: eleven extant manuscripts and three manuscript fragments attest to a reasonably wide dissemination. A brief consideration of these manuscripts will provide a clearer understanding of *Florimont*'s status during the Middle Ages and give us a glimpse as to how it was received. Of the fourteen manuscripts in total, seven are held in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. These seven are all written on vellum and consist of the manuscripts known as:

MS A (Bibliothèque Nationale 353 (formerly 6973)). Hilka dates the manuscript to the fourteenth century (p. ix) and Busby narrows this to the second quarter of that century (*Codex and Context*, p. 184). The manuscript also contains a copy of *Le lai du mantel* and at one point belonged to Nicholas Moreau (born circa 1544), who was made a treasurer of France in 1571. Folio 44 r°b bears the marks 'Des livres de N. Moreau, seignuer d'Auteuil' (Busby, p. 807). The manuscript may also have belonged at some point to the Laval family: Paulin Paris notes that on the third leaf one can read 'Laval a Guyon' in a fifteenth-century

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[5] Alfred Risop, 'Aimon de Varennes', *Herrigs Archiv*, 73 (1885), 47-72 (p. 6).

[6] Anthime Fourrier, *Le courant réaliste dans le roman courtois en France au Moyen Age* (Paris: Nizet, 1960), pp. 462 and 464 respectively. See also Chapter 5, p. 195.

[7] Busby, 'Filling in the Blanks: The Missing Miniatures in BnF, fr. 15101 of *Florimont*', in *De sens rassis*, ed. by Keith Busby, Bernard Guidot, and Logan Whalen (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), pp. 85-95 (p. 94).

[8] Busby: 'The universal import of what could best be called its 'pseudo-classical' subject-matter, and the nature of its amorous and adventurous intrigue, made *Florimont* one of the most popular of all Old French romances, with a total of fourteen manuscripts, not to mention later prose versions and early printed editions,' *Codex and Context*, p. 554.

hand, leading him to remark: '6973 fit autrefois partie de la librairie des sires de Laval. Branche illustre de la maison de Montmorency' (vol. 3, p. 10). Nothing further is known about the manuscript's provenance.

MS B (Bibliothèque Nationale 792): dating from the thirteenth century. *Florimont* here precedes Alexandre de Bernay's *Roman d'Alexandre*, Pierre de Saint-Cloud's *Mort Alixandre*, and Guy de Cambra's *Vengement Alixandre*. The first two folios are former endpapers, in the same hand as the rest of the manuscript, and contain a fragment of *Partonopeus de Blois* (MS F), beginning part way through the knighting ceremony at Chief d'Oire and ending with the narrator's attack on womanhood that comes as part of the initial description of the marriage tournament. A fragment of Jacques de Longuyon's *Les Voeux du Paon* was incorporated into the end of the manuscript at a later date.[9] Paulin Paris tells us that the manuscript belonged to the Migaillot family in the sixteenth century, with folio 141 bearing the words: 'ce présent volume, ouquel sont contenuez deux histoires, me fut donné et envoyé par mon cousin, Me Robert Migaillot, chanoine de Laon, et reçu par moi le XXVIIe jour de juin, l'an de grâce mil cinq cens et quinze' (vol. 6, p. 218).[10]

MS C (Bibliothèque Nationale 1374): dating from the thirteenth century. The manuscript contains only the first part of *Florimont*. Other texts contained in the manuscript are: *Parise la duchesse* (ff. 1r° - 21r°), Chrétien de Troyes' *Cligés* (ff. 21v° - 64v°), *Placidas* (ff. 65r° - 75r°), *La vengeance Nostre Seigneur* (ff. 75r° - 90v°) *Girart de Vienne* (ff. 91r° - 132v°), and Gerbert de Montreuil's *Le roman de la violette* (ff. 133r° - 172v°), (Busby, *Codex and Context*, p. 395). Foerster, whose edition of *Cligés* is based on this manuscript, suggests that it was produced at the start of the thirteenth century, perhaps in the south of France. He also suggests that the scribe was not familiar with the dialect he was working in, but was instead copying mechanically. As a result, Foerster notes that some verses are confused.[11] We have no further information as to its provenance.

MS D (Bibliothèque Nationale 1376), dating from the thirteenth century. The manuscript contains *Florimont* (ff. 1-93) and Chrétien de Troye's *Erec et Enide* (ff. 95r° - 144v°). Jean-Marie Fritz, whose edition of *Erec et Enide* is based on this manuscript,

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[9] *Partonopeus de Blois: An Electronic Edition*, Eley *et al*, eds (Sheffield: HRI Online, 2005) <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/partonopeus/main.html> [accessed 19th August 2009].

[10] Paulin Paris, *Les manuscrits françois*, vol. 6, p. 218.

[11] He states: 'Die Handschrift ist in Südfrankreich geschrieben, von einem Copisten, der mitunter die Vorlage gar nicht verstand, sich aber auch dann begnügt, die Zeichen der Vorlage mechanisch nachzumalen, so dass viele Verse vollständig sinnlos sind.' Chrétien de Troyes, *Christian von Troyes sämtliche (erhaltene) Werke: Cligés*, ed. by Wendelin Foerster (Halle: Niemeyer, 1884), p. xxvii.

suggests, based on dialectal evidence, that the manuscript was produced in Dijon: 'Les particularités phonétiques permettent de situer le copiste en Bourgogne et, plus précisément, dans la région de Dijon même'.[12] This hypothesis is supported by Alison Stones who, in addition to the dialectal peculiarities, also notes that the manuscript has several stylistic and codicological features in common with BN 846. She hypothesizes that the two manuscripts may have belonged to the Dukes of Burgundy, patrons of the Saint-Bénigne abbey in Dijon, and that they may have been given to Blanche, daughter of Robert II of Burgundy, when she married Edward of Savoy in 1307, as both are later known to have belonged to Marie of Luxemburg (1465-1546/7), daughter of Pierre II of Luxemburg and Marguerite of Savoy. Both manuscripts were later in the collection of Jean-Pierre-Imbert Châtre de Cangé, bought by the French bibliothèque du Roi in 1733.[13]

MS E (Bibliothèque Nationale 1491), dating from the fourteenth century and containing only *Florimont*. Busby has investigated this manuscript and tells us that there is a note on folio 67 recto telling us that it was 'Donné pour copie' to 'Johan Chaney, clerc notaire'. With regard to this and to Paris. Arras, BM 897 (which also possesses the signature of an administrator), Busby speculates: 'it may have been that owners of manuscripts lent their books to a professional scribe (albeit one whose primary activity was an official one) for the making of copies, perhaps for friends or acquaintances who had expressed admiration of the text in question' (*Codex and Context*, p. 43). This is extremely interesting and, if true, not only gives us an insight into developing reading habits but also suggests that *Florimont* was indeed seen as a relatively popular romance.

MS F (Bibliothèque Nationale 15101): Containing only *Florimont*, Hilka notes that BN 15101 dates from the thirteenth century (p. ix) whilst Busby dates it to the fourteenth century (*Codex and Context*, p. 723).[14] This difference in opinion perhaps arises from Risop, who identified two scribes and thus divided the manuscript into F^1 and F^2, F^1 (dating from the thirteenth century) having been largely destroyed before then being recopied in part by F^2, which dates from the fourteenth century ('Aimon de Varennes', pp. 49-51). There are spaces left in the manuscript for thirty-eight miniatures which have not

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[12] Chrétien de Troyes, *Chrétien de Troyes' Erec et Enide*, ed. by Jean-Marie Fritz (Paris : Librairie Générale Française, 1992), p. 21.
[13] Alison Stones, 'Notes on the Artistic Context of Some Gautier de Coinci Manuscripts', in *Gautier de Coinci: Miracles, Music and Manuscripts*, ed. by Kathy M. Krause and Alison Stones (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), pp. 65-98.
[14] See also Busby's 'Filling in the Blanks', p. 85.

been implemented (Busby, p. 555).[15] Busby suggests that the manuscript had early owners in Metz as folio 2r° bears the mark: 'c'est a Michiel de Barisey.' He dates this to the mid-fifteenth century and comments that though 'Michiel de Barisey' remains unidentified, 'the form of the name 'Michiel' is standard in Metz.' He also notes a later mark of ownership, that of Amee de Gournaix (found on folio 119v°), who is thought to have owned the manuscript at the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century (*Codex and Context*, p. 723).

MS G (Bibliothèque Nationale 24376): Containing only *Florimont*. Of Italian provenance, Hilka dates this manuscript to the fourteenth century (p. x), whilst Busby suggests a date in the mid-thirteenth century. He tells us that the manuscript has the Italian 'consiglo' in the margin next to didactic passages of *Florimont*, as well as the French 'consel' at two points, in the same hand as the Italian annotations. He also notes that the two Greek quotations have 'grego' written next to them (*Codex and Context*, p. 790). This is interesting as it suggests that the didactic passages of *Florimont* were of particular interest to at least one person, as well as indicating a general knowledge of languages. Manuscripts housed elsewhere are:

MS H (British Library, Harley 4487). The first of two manuscripts held by the British Library, Harley 4487 dates from the late thirteenth century; we have a specific date of 1295 on folio 86 r°. A single item codex, Busby notes that it has been attributed to the Lorraine (*Codex and Context*, p. 554). Ward tells us that the outside of the binding is stamped with the Foucault arms with a book-plate on the inside inscribed: 'Ex bibliotheca Nicolai Joseph Foucault Comitis Consistoriani.' He also tells us that the name of a previous owner is discernible at folio 3, where a fourteenth-century hand has written: 'ce libre est a Pierre Derloit prestre Corodathis.'[16] Busby notes that 'Corodathis' would be Cordes in modern French and suggests it 'is almost certainly the place of that name some eight kilometers [sic] to the northeast of Tournai'. He also notes that the name 'P. Derloit' is repeated on ff. 4 and 86 (p. 743).[17] Hilka informs us that the manuscript has lacunae at ll. 1183-2370 and ll. 8005-8152 (p. x).

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[15] See also his 'Filling in the Blanks', p. 87.
[16] H. L. D. Ward, *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts British Museum* (London: William Clowes & Sons, 1883), p. 156.
[17] See also Ward, p. 156.

MS H² (British Library, Harley 3983). The second British Library manuscript, Harley 3983 is signed and dated to 1323 by copyist Thomas le Huchier on folio 82 v°.[18] *Florimont* is followed by a French chronicle of France and England which has some special reference to the crusades. It begins: 'Depuis celle heure que godefroi de bouillon et la Roine de France orent conquis antioche et Jherusalem' and finishes with the death of the eldest son of St. Louis (in 1260). It includes a fable relating to Ysengrin the wolf and Renart the fox which is applied to the behaviour of some of the personages in the chronicle. As with Harley 4487 the outside of the binding is stamped with the Foucault arms whilst on the inside a book-plate is inscribed: 'Ex bibliotheca Nicolai Joseph Foucault Comitis Consistoriani' (Ward, p. 159). Busby tells us that a note reading 'L'an mil iiijc xxxiiij fut cest livre donné a Paulus Vyat' can be found on folio 55 v° (*Codex and Context*, p. 720).

MS I (Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice, fondo antico XXII): Hilka dates the manuscript to the fourteenth century (p. xi), a date supported by Busby (*Codex and Context*, p. 614). Guessard notes that it was produced in Italy but that it is 'très-peu italianisé'.[19] Busby tells us that it bears an expurged *ex libris* of 'Guido de Crema' and 'Francisco di Crema' on folio 102 verso and wonders if this manuscript could be what Hilka had designated as a lost fifteenth manuscript belonging in the library of the Dukes of Milan in 1426 but missing from an inventory of that library in 1459.[20]

MS K (University Library of Turin, L. II. 16). Dating from the fourteenth century, Edmund Max Stengel includes a discussion of this manuscript in his *Mitteilungen aus französischen Handschriften der Turiner Universitäts-Bibliothek*.[21] Hilka notes that the pages have two columns of 38 or 39 lines and suggests that the copyist may have been an Italian scribe (p. xi). Busby offers no further information.

MS L (Monza, Biblioteca Capitalore, 6 21. 137). L has a substantial lacuna at ll. 1259-2518 and both Hilka (p. xi) and Novati date it to the first half of the fourteenth

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[18] The inscription reads: 'L'an mil.ccc. et .xx. et trios / .I. mois devant la sainte crois / Fist Thomas le Huchier cest livre / Moult fu lié que en fu delivre / Le tiers jour de l'assumption / Accompli sa devotion'. Busby, *Codex and Context*, p. 43.

[19] M. F. Guessard, *Les Anciens Poètes de la France: Macaire. XX* (Paris: Librairie A. Franck, 1866), p. ii.

[20] Hilka, pp. xi-xii. In his discussion of the inventories of the Visconti-Sforza library in Milan Busby notes that 'the Alexander matter is also represented by item 53... a copy of *Florimont*, apparently lent and not returned immediately: "Habuit dominus Nicolaus de Gatico castellanus, die V junii 1414"; there is no *Florimont* listed in the 1459 list, but it is present in 1488... and 1490', *Codex and Context*, p. 778. He asks, in note 412 of that page, if the Milan manuscript might be the current Marciana XXII from which the arms of both the Gonzaga and the Visconti have been erased.

[21] Unfortunately I have been unable to access a copy of this work and so can only point readers in the right direction. Edmund Max Stengel, *Mitteilungen aus französischen Handschriften der Turiner Universitäts-Bibliothek* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1873).

century.[22] Of Italian production, the words 'Restaurato da Carlo Francesco Pasquali di Monza. 1796 20 settembre' can be found on the endpaper. Novati notes that on folio 78 r° there is a scratched out *explicit* underneath the last verse which he suggests may have been a signature. *Florimont* is followed by a prose fragment in the same hand which chronicles the Hebrew kings before moving on to, and ending with, the first kings of France (p. 483).

MS M (Montpelier, Bibliothèque Interuniversitaire, Sect. Méd. H 252): Hilka dates the manuscript to the thirteenth century (p. xi) whilst Busby tells us that Terry Nixon has dated it to the mid fourteenth century, but has also compared it with hands dated 1329 and 1346 (*Codex and Context*, p. 588, note 724). The manuscript also contains Chrétien de Troyes' *Yvain*.[23]

MS T (Bibliothèque Municipale de Tours, 941) dating from the thirteenth century. Busby tells us that the manuscript has 'a fourteenth-century *ex libris*, partly illegible, in Occitan on f. 1r°: "[...] aquest libre [...] captal [...] escuichal [...] non [...]" (*Codex and Context*, p. 747, note 274).

A closer look at the information obtained from the manuscripts can give us some idea as to how *Florimont* may have been received in the Middle Ages as we see patterns of transmission develop, with *Florimont* occurring with the same – or similar – text on more than one occasion. *Florimont*'s position alongside texts detailing the life of Alexander the Great (in MS B) should come as no surprise, given that the text posits Florimont as Alexander's grandfather. Indeed, Busby notes that *Florimont* 'clearly exploits the popularity of the *matière d'Alexandre* at the end of the twelfth century' remarking that the continued popularity of the material 'ensured a continuing audience for Aimon's romance' ('Filling in the Blanks', p. 85).[24] He suggests that the manuscript compositional principle of including tales of a hero's youth, offspring or ancestors is 'clearly responsible' for the contents of BN 792 (MS B), where *Florimont* precedes *Le roman d'Alexandre*[25] and also notes: 'interest in the Alexander legend is also no doubt responsible for two manuscripts of Aimon de Varennes' *Florimont* executed in Italy' (*Codex and Context*, p. 614). Such a

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[22] F. Novati, 'Nouvelles recherches sur le *Roman de Florimont* : d'après un ms. italien', *Revue des langues romanes*, 35 (1891), 481-502 (p. 483).

[23] For further information see *Les Manuscrits de Chrétien de Troyes*, ed. by Keith Busby (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1993). I have unfortunately been unable to access this book.

[24] See also Chapter 2, p. 52.

[25] Busby, 'Codices manuscriptos nudos tenemus: Alexander and the New Codicology,' in *The Medieval French Alexander*, ed. by Donald Maddox and Sara Sturm-Maddox (New York: University of New York Press, 2002) pp. 259-273 (p. 264). See also Chapter 4, p. 162.

close association with Alexander might suggest that *Florimont* was seen in a historical or, at the very least, in an epic light, a suggestion supported by the contents of MSS H² and L, in which *Florimont* is accompanied by, respectively, a chronicle of France and England looking specifically at the crusades and a chronicle detailing the lives of first Hebrew, then the early French kings. These companions seem to highlight the historic, martial aspects of *Florimont* and might suggest that these elements of the text caught the medieval imagination. Yet a look at the other manuscripts indicates that this was not always the case; for each manuscript which might be said to underline *Florimont*'s historic elements there are others in which the romance elements of the text come to the fore as *Florimont* appears alongside one or more other romances. Thus in MS C *Florimont* is placed with *Cligés*, *Parise la duchesse* and *Le roman de la violette*, for example. Interestingly, it is placed alongside a Chrétien de Troyes romance on more than one occasion. In MS C, as we have seen, it appears alongside *Cligés*. In MSS D and M however, *Florimont* and a Chrétien romance (*Erec et Enide* and *Yvain* respectively) are the only items in the codices. We cannot be sure quite what this means, but it perhaps suggests if not a comparable level of popularity between *Florimont* and the Chrétien romances then, perhaps, that medieval audiences saw connections or similarities between them. In MS A meanwhile, *Florimont* is paired with *Le lai du mantel*, perhaps suggesting that here *Florimont*'s humour (as opposed to its more martial or *merveilleux* elements) has been noticed. What emerges from these pairings and such diverse manuscript companions is a picture of a highly malleable text, one capable of being interpreted in many different ways.

Such malleability may perhaps explain why *Florimont* seems to have been relatively well-known throughout the Middle Ages. That it was still being read in the later Middle Ages is shown both by the number of extant manuscripts from the fourteenth century (MSS A, E, H2, I, K and L have all been dated to the fourteenth century) and by the later prose and early printed editions which were produced.[26] Christine de Pisan mentions it in her *Débat des deux amants*, suggesting that *Florimont* was known, possibly even read, at

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[26] For a more detailed look at one of the prose versions of *Florimont* see Charity C. Willard, 'A fifteenth-century Burgundian version of the *Roman de Florimont*,' *Medievalia et Humanistica*, n. s. 2 (1971), 21-46. Paulin Paris refers to 'nombreuses imitations en prose du poème de Florimont' without going into specifics (vol. 3, p. 15). Arlima notes four prose redactions, including that examined by Willard. <http://www.arlima.ntc/ad/aimon_de_varennes.html> [accessed 31/08/09].

the early fifteenth-century court in Paris.[27] The reference to *Florimont* is not inconsiderable – it comes as she is listing heroes who have performed great deeds in the name of love and refers to Romadanaple, Florimont's wife, as well as to Florimont himself. Christine writes:

> Et Flourimont
> D'Albanie, il n'ot en tout le mont
> Nul plus vaillant, mais dont li vint tel mont
> De vaillances fors d'Amours qui semont
> Ses serviteurs
> A estre bons, tant anoblist les cuers;
> Pour Rome de Naples mains grans labeurs
> Il endure, non obstant a tous feurs
> Il conquestoit
> Pris et honneur; son temps donc ne gastoit
> En bien amer, par qui il aquestoit
> Les vaillances qu'Amors lui aprestoit
> (ll. 1520-31)

That she includes details such as Florimont being from Albania (l. 1521) suggests that Christine de Pisan was familiar with the text. Though this does not in itself suggest that *Florimont* was popular (as a scholar with access to the royal library Christine would have been able to access even little-known works), it is nonetheless interesting that Christine found it worthy of inclusion. Similarly, Jean d'Arras refers briefly to *Florimont* in his late fourteenth-century history of the Lusignan family, using Aimon's text as a touchstone for his own work, (he too is providing a genealogical history for a well-known family) and suggesting that *Florimont* was known at the time he was writing.[28] Alongside this, *Florimont* was not without influence on the romances which followed its composition – Harf-Lancner notes that *Florimont* sees the first form of a narrative pattern which flourishes in Renaut de Beaujeu's *Le Bel Inconnu*,[29] and we can also see *Florimont*'s influence in texts such as *Joufroi de Poitiers* and *Floriant et Florete*.

Florimont thus seems to have been a reasonably well-known text, and one which offers various areas of potential interest for those wishing to study it in greater depth. It is

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[27] The *Débat* was written between 1400-1402. Christine de Pisan, *Oeuvres poétiques de Christine de Pisan*, ed. by Maurice Roy, 2 vols (Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1891), I. For information on the dating of the text, see p. xiii.

[28] See Chapter 1, pp. 35-36 and Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas, *La tentation de l'orient dans le roman médiéval: sur l'imaginaire médiéval de l'Autre* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2003), p. 314 for full details.

[29] Laurence Harf-Lancner, 'D'*Enéas* à *Florimont*: sens et fonction de la féerie dans le *Florimont* d'Aimon de Varennes', *Bien dire et bien aprandre*, 12 (1995), 123-134 (p. 130).

precisely for these reasons that we have chosen to focus on *Florimont* in our thesis as we believe that modern scholarship has not yet discovered all that *Florimont* has to offer. Indeed, given the relative lack of studies focussing on *Florimont*, a fuller consideration of the text could examine almost any aspect of it. A brief consideration of the existing scholarship, which is explained in more detail in Chapter 1, will therefore enable us to make a better-informed choice as to where our examination of *Florimont* should focus. To date we have only one edition, that offered by Alfons Hilka in 1932 and there has been no monograph dedicated to it. Early work tended to concentrate primarily on Aimon's use of Greek and external matters such as the exact location where *Florimont* was composed.[30] The longest study given over to *Florimont* is a chapter in Anthime Fourrier's *Le courant réaliste* (pp. 447-485), a chapter which describes the work as nothing more than a poor imitation of the vastly superior *Partonopeus de Blois*. However, recent years have seen a relative revival of interest in *Florimont* as critics have come forward to challenge Fourrier's view: since 1970 to the present day we have seen no fewer than eighteen studies which have *Florimont* as their main focus or which make use of it as an established romance.[31] Of these eighteen, six offer in-depth analyses of *Florimont* within the canon of twelfth-century romance, considering its literary influences and how it may have in turn influenced later

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[30] See Chapter 1, pp. 20-25 for full details.

[31] These studies are as follows: Douglas Kelly, 'The Composition of Aimon de Varennes' *Florimont*', *Romance Philology*, 23 (1969-70), 277-292; Herman Braet, 'Le songe de l'arbre chez Wace, Benoît et Aimon de Varennes', *Romania*, 91 (1970), 255-267; Charles François, 'Avec Florimont sur les traces de Floire', *Marche Romane* XXI, 4 (1971), 5-19; Willard, 'A fifteenth-century Burgundian version of the *Roman de Florimont*'; Brigitte Horiot, 'Études de quelques traits phonétiques et morphologiques dans *Florimont* d'Aimon de Varennes', in *Actes du 5e Congrès international de langue et littérature d'oc et d'études francoprovençales*, ed. by Gérard Moignet and Roger Lassalle (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1974), pp. 315-324; Matilda Bruckner, '*Florimont*: Extravagant Host, Extravagant Guest', *Studies in Medieval Culture*, 11 (1977), 57-63; Jacques Monfrin, 'Le *Roman de Florimont*', *Annuaire de l'Ecole pratique des hautes-études IV* section*, 111 (1978-1979), 585-590; Alison Adams, 'Destiny, Love and the Cultivation of Suspense: The *Roman d'Eneas* and Aimon de Varennes' *Florimont*', *Reading Medieval Studies*, 5 (1979), 57-70; Lucien Hergot, 'Estre pour aler: sur un vers du *Florimont* d'Aymon de Varennes', *Romania*, 103 (1982), 1-27; William D. Paden, 'Old Occitan as a Lyric Language : The Insertions from Occitan in Three Thirteenth-Century French Romances', *Speculum* 68, 1 (1993), 36-53; Laurence Harf-Lancner, 'Le *Florimont* d'Aimon de Varennes : un prologue du *Roman d'Alexandre*', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 37 (1994), 241-253 and 'D'*Enéas*'; Sandra Dieckmann, '*Langue de fransois* : die andere Sprache? Zur Selbst und Fremdwahrnehmung im *Florimont* von Aimon de Varennes', in *Schreiben in einer anderen Sprache*, ed. by Wolfgang Dahmen and others (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 2000), pp. 21-52; Michael Stanesco, 'La fée amante et le chevalier: de l'interdit premier au rite sacrificiel', in *Transgression and Contestation*, ed. by Russell King (Nottingham: University of Nottingham, 2000), pp. 3-12; Silvère Menegaldo, 'Quand le narrateur est amoureux: prologues et épilogues « lyriques » dans le roman de chevalerie en vers aux XIIᵉ et XIIIᵉ siècles', in *Prologues et épilogues dans la littérature du Moyen Age : actes du colloque du Centre d'Etudes Médiévales et Dialectales de Lille 3*, ed. by Aimé Petit (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Centre d'études médiévales et dialectales de Lille III, 2001), pp. 149-165; Gabriele Giannini, 'Prologhi e opzioni autoriali di lettura : il *Florimont* di Aimon de Varennes', *Francofonia* 45 (2003), 131-162 and Busby, 'Filling in the Blanks'.

texts.[32] This is in comparison with the thirty-year period leading up to 1970, which saw only eight studies making reference of any kind to *Florimont*, and of these, four viewed *Florimont* as a trove of linguistics data or as a means of confirming their main argument (which lay elsewhere), rather than as a text worthy of study in its own right.[33] In fact, interest in *Florimont* has grown to such an extent that scholars are beginning to feel the lack of a modern edition. In his work on the 'missing' miniatures in one of *Florimont*'s manuscripts, Keith Busby notes that 'a new edition and study of the *Florimont* corpus is a real desideratum.'[34] Recent studies would seem to suggest that *Florimont*'s relationship with other texts is significant; Kelly examines it in light of *Partonopeus de Blois*, François considers its debt to *Floire et Blancheflor* whilst Harf-Lancner links it to both the *Roman d'Alexandre* and the *Roman d'Enéas*.[35] In themselves, these studies would be enough to suggest that an examination of *Florimont*'s interactions with other texts would be fruitful. Yet recent years have also seen our conception of the process of romance composition change as we have come to understand that in large part it is a process of rewriting. Such a change inevitably highlights the importance of intertextuality in medieval composition, and an examination of *Florimont* from an intertextual viewpoint represents an opportunity to apply our knowledge of medieval rewriting processes to a work whose relationships with other texts are, so previous studies have suggested, clearly significant. Choosing to look at the manner in which *Florimont* rewrites previous texts should give us an insight into Aimon de Varennes' ability as a poet, and perhaps go some way towards explaining why *Florimont* remained popular throughout the Middle Ages.

It is with this in mind that this thesis takes as its focal point the manner in which *Florimont* rewrites texts circulating at the time of its composition. Intertextuality and

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[32] These are: Kelly, 'Composition'; Braet, 'Le songe de l'arbre'; François, 'Avec Florimont'; Adams, 'Destiny, Love and the Cultivation of Suspense'; Harf-Lancner, 'Le *Florimont* d'Aimon de Varennes' and 'D'*Enéas*'.

[33] These are: Charles Muscatine, 'The Emergence of Psychological Allegory in Old French Romance', *PMLA*, 68 (1953), 1160-1182; Pierre Gardette, 'Aimon de Varennes, Lyonnais', *Romania*, 77 (1956), 506-510; Marcel Françon, 'Le 'Monte Gargano' et Gargantua', *Italica*, 34 (1957), 9-13; Robrecht Lievens, 'En Middelnederlandse Roman van Florimont', *Spiegel der Letteren*, II (1958), 1-33; Fourrier, *Le courant réaliste*; Pierre Gardette, 'Trois anciens mots francoprovençaux', in *Verba et Vocabula: Ernst Gamillscheg zum 80. Geburtstag*, ed. by Helmut Stimm (Munich: Fink, 1968), pp. 241-250; Brigitte Horiot, 'Traits lyonnais dans *Florimont* d'Aimon de Varennes', *Travaux de linguistique et de littérature*, 6 (1968), 169-185; Félix Lecoy, 'Note sur le vocabulaire dialectal ou régional dans les œuvres littéraires du Moyen Age', *Revue de linguistique romane*, 32 (1968), 48-69. Gardette (1968) and Lecoy use *Florimont* as a means of examining the language of the period. Muscatine and Françon refer to it briefly as a way of reinforcing their principal arguments which are concerned with other matters.

[34] Busby, 'Filling in the Blanks', p. 85, footnote 1.

[35] See footnotes 29 and 31 for details of these studies.

rewriting have, as concepts, become more and more important for medieval studies over the past thirty years, as our understanding has grown of how 'originality' and 'imitation' were perceived in the Middle Ages: originality as we might understand it – something completely different to everything that had preceded it – was not part of the medieval aesthetic. It was considered better to rewrite an existing story in an improved or different manner.[36] In this respect, rewriting provides a particularly apt perspective through which to consider *Florimont*. This becomes still more pertinent if we consider that one potential reason for previous neglect of *Florimont* may lie in the perception that it was precisely what Fourrier claimed it to be – nothing more than a substandard imitation of *Partonopeus de Blois*. Our current understanding of rewriting and how it functioned in the Middle Ages should allow us to challenge this view and to consider whether what was once seen as a poor derivative of a previous text may actually be a carefully modulated, purposeful rewriting of not just one previous work, but of many. In other words, we ought to be able to explore the creative qualities of *Florimont* in the light of aesthetic principles appropriate to the time in which it was composed, and assess it as an expression of the art of twelfth-century romance composition. The key underlying principle of this thesis, therefore, is that we need to bring to our evaluation of *Florimont* what we currently understand of literary practice at the time it was written if we are to appreciate its contribution to the developing genre of romance at a crucial point in its evolution.

Having said what areas of the text we plan to focus on, it is equally important to acknowledge what the thesis does not intend to do. Firstly, it does not offer an exhaustive list of every single intertextual reference to be found in *Florimont*. This would be unproductive for two reasons: first, such a list can already be found (in a limited form) in Hilka's introduction to the text as he compiles a catalogue of motifs, and notes other texts in which they are also present (pp. cxvi-cxxxii). Secondly, although there are undoubtedly enough references to form the basis of a thesis, such a list would not offer anything of substance to scholars wishing to find useful ways of responding to and analysing *Florimont*. Rather, it is the intention of this thesis to focus on specific instances of intertextuality as interesting examples of rewriting in the hope that these examples will illuminate a medieval poet's approach to his work and the techniques he uses to achieve particular effects. I concentrate in particular upon texts that have, to one degree or another,

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[36] These ideas are developed in more length in the first chapter.

already been linked with *Florimont*, or which are themselves known for their innovative rewriting and intertextual techniques. In doing so I hope to provide work which will be of benefit to further scholars; a thesis which provides a framework which future students of *Florimont* can apply to intertexts not discussed in the present volume.

In order to achieve this the thesis begins with an examination of the work done thus far on *Florimont*, setting the romance into a critical context and charting strong initial interest before then attempting to account for years of critical neglect and a mini-renaissance of interest stemming from the 1970s. Secondly, and more importantly, this first chapter aims to establish an appropriate methodological framework for our examination of *Florimont*, in keeping with our current understanding of medieval romance composition. By surveying work on intertextuality in general as a critical tool, and in particular as an appropriate paradigm for the analysis of medieval texts, recent work on the importance of rewriting as a compositional practice is put into a broader context as a preliminary to an exploration of the work of key critics who have contributed to our understanding of medieval *inventio*. Particular attention is paid to the work of Douglas Kelly as both one of the first to see past the 'poor imitation' label assigned to *Florimont* and thus at the forefront of the resurgence of interest in the text ('Composition'), and as probably the most comprehensive authority on medieval rewriting. This analysis enables us to pinpoint a number of distinct rewriting techniques or practices which were familiar to medieval poets and which have their own distinct terminology in Latin; these then serve as points of reference for the following analysis of Aimon de Varennes' own techniques and practices.

Having thus situated *Florimont* in terms of the scholarship available on it and established the methods with which we shall examine the text, Chapter 2 sees the start of the main body of the thesis as it begins work on *Florimont*'s intertextual relationships with contemporary texts. It starts precisely where Aimon de Varennes chose to start – with the legends and history surrounding Alexander the Great, which were circulating in Old French in the years leading up to the composition of *Florimont*. Taking as its focal point the treatment of the theme of largesse, the chapter aims to detect which, if any, rewriting techniques Aimon uses in this relationship, as a means of confirming the validity of an intertextual approach to *Florimont*. At the same time, a series of important questions which will recur over the course of subsequent chapters is considered: can rewriting techniques affect narrative structure in addition to duplicating ideas or motifs? Is there a pattern to

Aimon's choice of texts as models for his rewriting? Can we discern how Aimon may have viewed his own work or the rewriting process in which he was engaged?

Having established the extent to which and ways in which Aimon rewrites the Alexander material, the third chapter aims to further our understanding of Aimon's poetic and rewriting strategies by considering the critically contested relationship between *Florimont* and *Partonopeus de Blois*. It attempts both to resolve the scholarly disagreement surrounding the debt Aimon owes to this second great literary landmark of the years immediately before 1188, and to address the possibilities that open up to Aimon as a result of broadening his rewriting horizon; different motivations behind his rewriting become visible and a detailed examination of *Partonopeus* explores the way in which Aimon responds to a text which, unlike the *Roman d'Alexandre*, is itself known for being a fusion of different traditions, and for deliberate rewriting.

This notion of the possibilities made available by the combining of different intertextual models into a rewriting process is developed further in Chapter 4. The chapter focuses on a single aspect of *Florimont*'s rewriting, providing a case study of how Aimon enables his intertexts to interact with one another in his treatment of the theme of education. This analysis not only enables us to explore Aimon's consciousness of the rewriting process in more detail, but also highlights further aspects of his compositional skill as we see *Florimont* taking the rewriting process a step further than had the *Partonopeus* poet. Where *Partonopeus* had fused elements from separate traditions in order to examine the result, *Florimont* not only examines the result but also evaluates what happens to the constituent elements as a result of the fusion. We thus have strong evidence that Aimon is deliberately locating his own work within the developing network of romances known to him and to his audience in the last part of the twelfth century, as well as demonstrating his own skill as a rewriter. Moreover, his romance can be seen as a commentary upon the very process which he practises.

The fifth and final chapter represents the culmination of our appreciation of the skill and complexity of Aimon's rewriting exercise. Building on what has gone before, it examines in greater detail the play between intertexts by investigating the manner in which Aimon uses contradictory themes drawn from his intertexts and brings them together in a key scene in *Florimont* as a way of suggesting the superiority of his own poetic skill. The chapter also widens the intertextual scope of our investigation by bringing in a further two

important models used by Aimon: the *Roman d'Enéas* and Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés*. In this chapter, the ways in which elements drawn from these additional intertexts are fused with elements from the two previously discussed texts reveal a delightful comedic and ludic aspect to Aimon's writing; they are also all brought together in the creation of a single character who can be said to embody in microcosm the rewriting strategy that Aimon has pursued throughout *Florimont*, as a testimony to the particular skill that the poet deploys.

The discussion and analysis carried out in chapters 2-5 of the thesis enable us, in the conclusion, to re-evaluate *Florimont*'s status as a romance text worthy of consideration by modern scholars and to argue that, viewed as an index of aesthetic values valid at the time it was composed, it represents a masterly piece of poetic composition. We are also able to suggest ways in which *Florimont* can be seen to have withstood the test of time and appeal to more modern aesthetic values. It emerges from our scrutiny as far from the second-rate, derivative work of a poet of limited skill which Fourrier had suggested. Assuming then, that there is much merit in this romance, the thesis concludes by looking at the implications of ideas generated by the research undertaken, identifying potentially profitable avenues for future research for those working in the field of twelfth-century Old French romance.

APPENDIX TO THE INTRODUCTION

An Outline of the Plot of *Florimont*

As *Florimont* has been relatively neglected in critical terms and its storyline is not generally familiar to scholars of Old French romance, it is helpful to have a detailed summary of major plot points and characters in order to provide a guide for references which occur throughout the thesis.

The narrative of *Florimont* can be divided into different sections. There is a Prologue in which Aimon names himself, states where he composed *Florimont*, and links his story to that of Alexander the Great. Following this, the first section of the text narrates the adventures of Philip of Macedonia. We are given a genealogy of his line and told how Philip, a younger brother unable to inherit his father's kingdom, moves to Greece to settle his claim to the throne. Once there he quickly establishes the city of Philipopolis before marrying Amordyalé, daughter to the king of Africa. Together they have a daughter, Romadanaple, whose beauty is such that knights come from all over the world to see her. Fearing inappropriate relationships, Philip confines Romadanaple and ordains that no male shall see her without first serving him for three years. Camdiobras, the king of Hungary, declares war on Philip when his demand for Romadanaple's hand in marriage, together with a demand for tribute from Philip, is refused. At this point the narrative shifts quite abruptly to a second section as we are introduced to Mataquas, the Duke of Albania, and his wife, Edorie. The night they conceive a son (the titular hero of the text), Duke Mataquas has an unusual dream. He applies to the wise man Floquart for an explanation of this dream, who reveals that it prophesies Mataquas' son's destiny. After the birth of Florimont, Floquart is assigned as his tutor and Florimont grows into a well-educated, fine fighter. His skills are shown as he slays a monster who has been terrorising his people. It is after this battle that Florimont meets a *pucele*

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named the *Dame de l'Ile Celee*. Here the narrative introduces elements from the *lai* tradition as the *Dame* gives Florimont wondrous gifts and places him under a taboo never to reveal their affair to anyone. All seems well in their relationship, with Florimont increasing his renown and even killing the feared giant, Garganeüs, until Floquart, fearing for his charge's safety, instructs Florimont's mother in how to break the taboo that her son is under. Florimont is broken-hearted as the *Dame* leaves him and reacts badly, lapsing into depression and almost ruining his family with a misguided application of largesse. At this point Floquart steps in, berating his pupil and instructing Florimont on the correct application of largesse. Immediately after his speech an Italian prince, Rysus, arrives at the head of a small company of knights on their way to aid Philip in his war against Camdiobras. Through a clever use of the *don contraignant* Florimont becomes their leader and they all journey to Philipopolis.

This sees the start of the third narrative section, which neatly joins the two previous ones together. The tone of the narrative shifts once more, away from the *merveilleux* of the *lai* and to a full romance one which enables Aimon to bring in more intertexts as the emphasis is now on Florimont fulfilling his destiny. The first step in this process sees our hero establishing himself at Philip's court (this despite a ragged appearance and the less than impressive pseudonym of 'Povre Perdu') and winning the heart of Romadanaple. Florimont achieves this through his friendship with Delfis – the richest 'bourgeois' in the city and the only male allowed free access to the princess, as he provides material for her clothes. It is this privilege which enables Florimont to meet Romadanaple clandestinely, as he is smuggled into the palace disguised as Delfis' apprentice and meets with the princess under the watchful eyes of Delfis and Romadanaple's mistress, Sipriaigne. In a key scene in terms of Aimon's rewriting Florimont and Romadanaple confirm but most emphatically do *not* consummate their love for one another. After successfully establishing this love the narrative turns to more martial matters as Florimont, through ruses and an outstanding prowess inspired by his love for Romadanaple, wins the war against Camdiobras to universal acclaim, and reveals his true identity to all before being offered Romadanaple's hand in marriage. They marry and Romadanaple conceives a son (Alexander the Great's father) before the narrative

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moves into its final section. This section takes the text full circle, reintegrating Florimont's parents into the narrative, thus tying up loose ends and ensuring that the two narrative strands (the tale of Philip and Philipopolis, the tale of Florimont from Albania) come together in a cohesive manner. This final section sees Florimont's parents kidnapped and imprisoned by the Emir of Carthage, uncle to the giant Garganeüs whom Florimont had previously killed. Florimont mounts a rescue mission, breaking into the seemingly unassailable fortress of Clavegris, and we witness a touching scene as he is reunited with his father. This effectively signals the end of the narrative as Aimon informs us that Florimont has successfully fulfilled his destiny and lives in peace, before offering us a brief résumé of the lives of Florimont's descendants.

Chapter 1

Context and Critical Framework

The task of undertaking a full-length study of *Florimont* is one which presents both opportunities and challenges. It seems to have been quite a popular text in the Middle Ages, but the relatively little attention it has received in the last one hundred and fifty years should mean that there is a great opportunity to explore a little-known text and add considerably to our understanding of it. Yet this same lack of critical material also poses the particular problem of knowing how to locate *Florimont* within the body of critical work on Old French romance of this period, in order to enable further study. A thorough understanding of scholarly work carried out on the text to date is necessary to understand traits of particular interest and areas which have been well documented. It will also allow us to discern aspects of the text which would benefit from further critical attention and increase our insight not only into *Florimont* itself but also into the complex inter-and intra-textual relationships between texts in the late twelfth century. In order to attain this understanding we need first of all to review the work done on *Florimont* from the nineteenth-century onwards as a means of establishing what critical trends have emerged. We then need to relate this review to our recent critical understanding of romance and its composition in order to draw up an appropriate critical framework within which to pursue further our analysis of Aimon as a medieval 'composer' or rewriter.

In line with the prevailing critical concerns of the period, much of the early work on *Florimont* focussed on two key issues: the identity of the author, Aimon de Varennes, and the location of the place in which he claims to have written it. Part of the interest surrounding this question may be accounted for by the rarity of having both a place of composition and an author who seems more than willing to name himself; *Florimont* is highly unusual in this respect. Aimon tells us that he wrote it at 'Chastillon,' (l. 27). However, variations in the manuscripts meant that exactly which 'Chastillon' he was referring to became the subject of much debate in the 1880s and 1890s, before being raised once again immediately following the publication of Hilka's edition in 1932. This debate has been focussed around line 27, which in Hilka's edition reads: 'Lortz a sejour a Chastillon.' Variants offer: 'Sor aselgue' (manuscripts A and T); 'Sor aselge' (L); 'Sor asegle' (C); 'Hors au siege' (D); 'Por assiege' (G); 'Por asage' (K); 'Desor saine' (B); and

'Coit al segor' (I). With such a variety of readings, it is scarcely surprising that opinions have differed as to the exact place of composition. Guiguené (1820) was the first to suggest that it was written at Châtillon in Lyonnais, whilst Paulin Paris (1840) later narrowed this area to a more precise location: by the river Azergues, thereby making 'Chastillon', Châtillon-sur-Azergues.[1]

However, in 1885, Risop contested this idea, suggesting instead the location of Châtillon-du-Temple in the Lorraine region ('Aimon de Varennes, pp. 68-69). He based his arguments on the text of the oldest and, he believed, most reliable manuscript, F, in which he discerned traces of the Lorrain dialect. This led him to prefer 'Laonais' to 'Lyonois' (l. 16) for Aimon's reference to the area in which he composed *Florimont*. The debate continued, as Risop's arguments were in turn rejected by Novati in 1891 (pp. 491-93). Novati comments that even were Aimon born in Lorraine, it would not necessarily prevent him from writing in the Lyonnais, although Novati himself does not accept the hypothesis that Aimon was born in Lorraine. He uses linguistic traits, some present within the very manuscript from which Risop drew his conclusions, to suggest that Aimon had been, as Paulin Paris had originally thought, born in and had written *Florimont* in, the Lyonnais (pp. 491-495).[2] Though Risop remained unconvinced, it seemed that the rest of the academic community had accepted Novati's conclusions.[3] In 1893, reviewing an article by Jean Psichari on the Greek elements in *Florimont*,[4] Gaston Paris commented: 'On peut regarder aujourd'hui comme acquis à la science qu'Aimon de Varennes était d'une noble famille de Lyonnais... et que... à Châtillon d'Azergues, il écrivit en 1188 le roman de *Florimont*'.[5]

However, the issue was raised once more in Alfred Hilka's 1933 edition of *Florimont*. Having inherited Risop's work in preparation for an edition, Hilka seems also to have inherited Risop's opposition to Châtillon-sur-Azergues as the place of composition for

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[1] Guiguené, *Histoire littéraire de la France*, vol. XV p. 486 and Paulin Paris, *Les manuscrits françois*, vol. 3, p. 9 – both are cited by Horiot, 'Traits lyonnais dans *Florimont* d'Aimon de Varennes', p. 169.

[2] Paris, *Les Manuscrits françois*, vol. 3, p. 14, cited in Novati, p. 491.

[3] In his 1893 review of Novati's article, Risop expresses a desire to correct what he considers to be misinterpretations of his work (p. 307); where Novati had understood him utterly to be rejecting the location of Châtillon-sur-Azergues and proposing Châtillon-du-Temple as a definitive replacement, Risop clarifies that the proposal of Châtillon-du-Temple was not meant to be definitive. Rather he expresses a reluctance to accept any definitive location until all others suggestions have been proved to be untenable, a proof which, he felt, could not be applied to Châtillon-du-Temple (pp. 307-308). Alfred Risop, 'Besprechung: F Novati. Nouvelles Recherches sur le *Roman de Florimont*', *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, 17 (1893), 306-311.

[4] Jean Psichari, '*Le roman de Florimont* : contribution à l'histoire littéraire – étude des mots grecs dans ce roman', in *Etudes dédiées à Gaston Paris* (Paris: Bouillon, 1891), pp. 507-550.

[5] Gaston Paris, 'Comptes rendus: J. Psichari, *Le roman de Florimont*', *Romania*, 22 (1893), 158-163 (p. 163).

Florimont. Like Risop, he favours Lorraine as the place where Aimon wrote. He sees 'Chastillon' as a reference to Châtillon-sur-Bar rather than Châtillon-sur-Azergues, whilst for him 'Varennes' is actually a reference to Varennes-en-Argonne.[6] He explains his reasons for such a choice: Aimon states that he did not write his text in France; Hilka points out that Lorraine was, at the time Aimon was writing, part of the German Holy Roman Empire rather than France.[7] He also suggests that the form 'Loënois', found in some manuscripts, is perhaps a derivative of Lyons – itself from a small village named Lion-devant-Dun which Hilka postulates would have been within Aimon's home area.[8] Albert Henry's 1935 review of Hilka's edition considers these arguments carefully.[9] He comments that Lyonnais, like Lorraine, was not at that time considered a part of France, whilst also pointing out the improbability that the term 'Lionois'/Laënois would be used as a derivative of the small village Lion-devant-Dun to designate a large area, especially when the term 'Dunois' was already in existence. Henry concludes that it is impossible to accept the Lorraine hypothesis and that the earlier suggestion of Châtillon-sur-Azergues 'semble une identification à peu près certaine'(p. 369). No further refutations of this identification have been made. Indeed, in 1956 Pierre Gardette added another argument in favour of Châtillon-sur-Azergues. He points out that 'Varennes' is a common name in the Lyonnais region, before referring to three Varennes in the Azergues valley: one at Châtillon-sur-Azergues, one at Marcilly d'Azergues and one at Chazay d'Azergues. He concentrates on Chazay d'Azergues, chronicling a noble Varennes family who seemed to favour the name 'Aimon.' He concludes that 'l'Aimon de Varennes qui écrivit *Florimont* à Châtillon-sur-Azergues, à la fin du XIIe siècle, a toute chance d'avoir fait partie de cette famille, et l'on aurait grand tort d'aller le chercher en Lorraine,' ('Aimon de Varennes, Lyonnais', p. 520). Fourrier goes a step further. Referring to the same family as Gardette (both mention an Aimon de

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[6] 'Varanes als Geburtsort unseres Dichters Aimon kann nur Varennes-en-Argonne (nordwestlich von Verdun) sein und sein Chastillon... Chastillon sor Bar, das heutige Châtillon-sur-Bar,' p. liii.

[7] 'Aimon lebte in einem politisch noch zum Imperium Germaniae gehörigen Grenzgebiet,' p. lvii. For Aimon's comments that his text was not written in France, see ll. 14 and 13 609 -13 620.

[8] See pp. xcviii-xcix of his introduction.

[9] Albert Henry, 'Compte Rendu de Aimon von Varennes *Florimont*, ed. by A. Hilka, (Göttingen: 1933)', *Romania*, 61 (1935), 363-373. Henry was not the sole reviewer to take issue with Hilka's designation of the place of composition. In his 1937 review of the edition, A. C. Ott also raises the question of location. Like Henry, he too disagrees with Hilka but, unlike Henry, rather than accepting the argument for Châtillon-sur-Azergues, he instead proposes a further Châtillon – Châtillon-les-Sons to be precise. For full details of his arguments, see his review, p. 643. A. C. Ott, 'Besprechung: Aimon von Varennes, *Florimont*... herausgegeben von Alfons Hilka', *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, 57 (1937), 642-647.

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Varennes as a guarantor for the debts of a Guichard d'Oingt),[10] he postulates that Aimon was born in around 1160-1165, considering *Florimont* to be undoubtedly the work of a young man (p. 471).

It seems prudent to accept Châtillon-sur-Azergues as the place of composition for *Florimont* despite the opposition of both Risop and Hilka. The amount of evidence in favour of Châtillon-sur-Azergues, coupled with inconsistencies within their arguments, would seem to suggest that Châtillon-sur-Azergues was indeed where Aimon de Varennes composed *Florimont*.[11]

Yet the location of Varennes and the identity of Aimon de Varennes are not the only questions that have fascinated critics with regard to *Florimont*. Aimon's use of Greek in the early part of his text has also been the cause of much debate and, along with other linguistic traits, has attracted a certain amount of critical attention.[12] *Florimont* seems to have been used as a linguistic treasure trove, scarcely a subject worthy of study in its own right but a valuable source of data for other studies.[13] A small flurry of articles which refer to *Florimont* appeared from 1968 onwards.[14] Of these, Brigitte Horiot's 1968 article is perhaps the most useful in furthering research on the contested areas of *Florimont* scholarship. She offers a summary of all the preceding work on *Florimont* before considering the language of the text as a way of determining the origins of Aimon de Varennes. Revealing a relatively small number of Lyonnais traits, her work would seem to support earlier conclusions that *Florimont* was written at Châtillon-sur-Azergues in Lyonnais. Paulin Paris was the first to mention the Greek passages, to which Aimon himself draws our attention (for examples see ll. 693-94, ll. 713-14, or ll. 4735-36) and

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[10] p. 470 in Fourrier and p. 509 in Gardette, 'Aimon de Varennes, Lyonnais'.

[11] Risop's preference, 'Loenois', appears in only three of the fourteen manuscripts one of which has, by his own admission, no authority with regards to this early part of the text as it was added to an incomplete copy of the text by a later scribe.

[12] Key amongst these other traits is the possibility that Aimon dedicated his work to a lady, one Juliane, whose name (in various anagrammatized forms) appears no less than three times in the poem. For further information, see Hilka's introduction, p. xcviii.

[13] Studies which use *Florimont* as a source of linguistic data are: Gardette, 'Trois anciens mots francoprovençaux'; Lecoy, 'Note sur le vocabulaire dialectal ou régional'; Monfrin, 'Le *Roman de Florimont*' and Hergot, 'Estre pour aler'.

[14] Other articles referring to *Florimont* include: Gardette, 'Trois anciens mots francoprovençaux'; Horiot, 'Traits lyonnais dans *Florimont*'; Lecoy, 'Note sur le vocabulaire dialectal'; Horiot, 'Études de quelques traits phonétiques'; Monfrin, 'Le *Roman de Florimont*'; Hergot, 'Estre pour aler' and Dieckmann, '*Langue de fransois*'. Keith Busby's 2005 article also looks at *Florimont* as he attempts to piece together the scenes which would have been depicted in the blank spaces left for miniatures. Busby, 'Filling in the Blanks'.

which are a notable feature of the romance[15] whilst du Méril was the first to look at them in a critical light in the introduction to his edition of *Floire et Blanceflor*.[16] However, Paul Meyer was the first to devote an entire article to the use of Greek in *Florimont*. Whereas du Méril was relatively critical of the Greek, stating that the Greek passages were: 'travestis d'après la prononciation latine et souvent fort mal expliqués,'[17] Meyer seems a great deal more positive. He lays any distortion at the feet of the copyists (p. 331) whilst he concludes that the translations given by Aimon de Varennes are perfectly satisfactory (p. 333). This is certainly not the case for Psichari who finds much to criticise in *Florimont*'s Greek. He subjects the Greek contained within *Florimont* to a rigorous examination which leads him to conclude that 'le grec de *Florimont*, tel que nous l'avons sous les yeux, ne peut être du grec d'aucun temps', (p. 528) adding that, 'le poète ignorait le grec certainement', (p. 549).[18] He cites grammatical impossibilities (p. 525) and basic errors (p. 526) as evidence of the poet's misunderstanding of the Greek language, before concluding that the Greek passages had been seen but not truly understood by the author of *Florimont*: 'Le grec de notre auteur a été *vu* par lui; il n'a été ni recueilli sur place ni même compris ou su,' (p. 538). Nevertheless, Psichari maintains that the Greek passages of *Florimont* are not out of place – they form a part of the story (p. 538), and this leads him to suppose the existence of an original, written Greek text, which was first translated into Latin by someone possessing a rudimentary knowledge at least of Greek, this translation then forming the basis of the French text that we know today.[19] Psichari is not alone in thinking that a Latin translation, not written by Aimon de Varennes, of *Florimont* existed. He notes (p. 538) that folio 68 of manuscript A bears an introduction stating: 'Roman en vers par Aimes ou Aimon, traduit si

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[15] Indeed, Paulin Paris even goes so far as to suggest that Aimon was a Greek native (p. 12) who, though perhaps unable to read Greek could, at the very least, speak it fluently (p. 46). Paris, *Les manuscrits françois*, vol. 3. The Greek passages in *Florimont* have also been considered by Psichari: '*Le roman de Florimont*' and Paul Meyer: 'Essai de restitution de quelques mots grecs cités dans le roman de *Florimont*', *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes*, 2 (1866), 331-334.

[16] E. du Méril, *Floire et Blanceflor, poèmes du 13ᵉ siècle* (Paris: P. Jannet, 1856).

[17] E. du Méril, cited in Paul Meyer, 'Essai de restitution', p. 331.

[18] Hilka concurs with this statement, commenting that Aimon's arbitrary changes to the Greek suggest that he wished only to show his knowledge of the language, despite his ignorance of its grammar and practical applications: 'Man könnte hinzufügen, dass Aimon bei diesem willkürlichen Verfahren seine Unkenntnis der griechischen Sprachgesetze verrät und mit einem solchen Sprachbrocken nur prunken will, gleichgültig, ob er die Phrase aus dem mündlich Verkehr oder aus einem Glossar hat,' p. civ.

[19] Douglas Kelly is in partial agreement with Psichari on this point, though he does not favour a written Greek text. He points out Aimon's insistence on a Greek source ('Composition', p. 279) before considering what this source may be. He rejects Hilka's rendition, according to which Aimon had 'translated' the story from Greek to Latin, instead preferring Risop's argument that Aimon had *heard* an oral Greek story (either in Latin or in French) and had composed his Latin version of it whilst still in Greece (pp. 279-280). See further discussion below.

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je ne me trompe du latin d'analui ou Malmai', suggesting that an unknown someone believed 'Aualai' or 'Malmai' to be responsible for a Latin translation of *Florimont*, which Aimon de Varennes had then himself translated into French. Psichari also cites du Méril (p. cxcvii), who states that the author of *Florimont* 'a travaillé sur une traduction latine qui ne s'est pas encore retrouvée,' (p. 538).

However, in looking for further proof of a Latin original for *Florimont*, Psichari then goes on to suggest that the French poet translating the Latin text need not necessarily be Aimon de Varennes himself. He declares the notion that Aimon wrote both a Latin version of the Greek original and a French version of the Latin translation to be 'inadmissible,' given that Aimon did not understand Greek (p. 547). He examines four passages in which we see both Aimon and the first person narrator 'je' speaking in order to prove this hypothesis, commenting on the differences in tone and attitude of what he feels to be two different people. Although it is an interesting theory, there is little direct evidence to reinforce Psichari's idea and it is difficult to accept, particularly when Psichari himself qualifies it by allowing that at some points, 'on dirait qu'Aymon et le rédacteur Je se confondent en une seule personne,' (p. 548).

His opinion was not met with a general consensus; although most scholars were accepting of Psichari's analysis of the Greek in *Florimont*, the idea that Aimon de Varennes was not responsible for the French version of the text was not given much credence. Novati states: 'Je ne réussis guère... à retrouver... ces différences de ton, ces changements d'attitude, qui ont au contraire frappés M. Psichari au point de lui faire paraître probable le dédoublement bizarre qu'il propose,' (p. 495). He goes on to remark that the only argument that lends any weight to Psichari's theory is the poet's claim that he is responsible for both the Latin version translated from the Greek and the vernacular version translated from the Latin (vv. 9214-15). However, Novati highlights differences in the manuscripts which suggest that, rather than claiming to have translated the Greek, Aimon may merely be saying that he has transported it from Greece – a claim which, Novati points out, would tie in with his remarks at the start of the poem in which he declares that he has seen the story in Greece (p. 496). Novati does not deny the existence of a possible Latin version but he does rightly point out that the author of such a version is in no way mentioned in *Florimont* (p. 497). Risop, meanwhile, has explained Aimon's claim to have translated the text into Latin by suggesting that Aimon composed a Latin version from oral accounts of a Greek

story.[20] The consensus adopted by the majority of today's critics is that Aimon, though aware of Greek and with perhaps a passing knowledge of it, was certainly not fluent in the language: Fourrier describes it as holiday Greek, designed to add splashes of colour and a ring of authenticity to his poem (p. 482), a view fully endorsed by Harf-Lancner who refers to Aimon's 'grec assez fantaisiste,' ('Le *Florimont* d'Aimon de Varennes', p. 242).

This interest in *Florimont* during the latter part of the nineteenth century, a time when a great deal of ground-breaking work was carried out on medieval texts, suggests that *Florimont* was viewed as an important work, an impression that is confirmed when we look more closely at the studies analysing the romance. Alfred Risop, writing in the 1880s, was the first to consider *Florimont* in any detail.[21] That *Florimont* was still being read at that time is shown by his reference to the number of previous studies of the text. However, he then dismisses the majority of these, commenting that the unscientific nature of their examinations meant that they were of little real worth.[22] Indeed, he seems distressed that a worthy text was not getting the critical thoroughness that it deserved, even going so far as to praise Paulin Paris for being the sole scholar to approach *Florimont* with an appropriate critical attitude: 'P. Paris ist denn auch der einzige, der... nach bestimmten kritischen Gesichtspunkten verfahren und daher auch zu einigen richtigen Resultaten gelangt ist,' ('Aimon de Varennes', p. 47). He saw in *Florimont* a text that was worthy of both intrinsic and extrinsic interest. Extrinsically there were questions of authorship, exact place of composition and a very rare use of Greek to be addressed,[23] whilst intrinsically he admired Aimon's stylistic accomplishment and the dexterity of Aimon's French.[24] Risop's findings were the subject of much discussion, as contemporary scholars discussed the issues raised

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[20] Risop: 'Wir haben in dem Roman de Florimont also eine in Philippopolis heimische Lokalsage... vor uns, mit deren Kern Aimon an Ort und Stelle durch Hörensagen bekannt wurde,' p. 440. See pp. 440-441 for a more explicit development of this idea. Alfred Risop, 'Ungelöste Fragen zum *Florimont*', in *Abhandlungen Herrn Prof. Dr. Adolf Tobler zur Feier seiner fünfundzwanzigjährtigen Thätigkeit als ordentlicher Professor an der Universität Berlin* (Halle: M. Niemeyer, 1895), pp. 430-463.

[21] Risop, 'Aimon de Varennes'; 'Besprechungen: F. Novati' and 'Ungelöste Fragen' zum *Florimont*'.

[22] Risop, 'Aimon de Varennes': 'Die Zahl derer, die, sei es in kurzen Notizen oder in längeren Abhandlungen, dem Dichter des *Roman de Florimont*, jenes altfranzösischen Gedichtes, welches eine Schilderung sagenhafter Vorgeschichte der makedonischen Könige enthält, ihre Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt haben, ist gewiss keine geringe; indes sind ihre Angaben meist so willkürlich und tragen so deutlich den Stempel eines unkritischen Verfahrens, dass der wissenschaftliche Wert der von ihnen gewonnenen Ergebnisse nicht eben hoch angeschlagen werden darf,' p. 47.

[23] These issues are considered throughout the *Herrigs Archiv* article. See pp. 50 and following.

[24] Risop, 'Aimon de Varennes': 'Den grellsten Widerspruch gegen die etwaige griechische Abkunft unseres Dichters bildet die hohe stilistische Vollendung und Gewandtheit im Gebrauche des Französischen, Eigenschaften die dem *Roman de Florimont* im besonders hohen Grade eigen sind,' p. 63.

by the German scholar, and his work eventually resulted in Alfons Hilka's edition of 1933.[25]

After the publication of the edition however, there seems to have been a relative lull in interest in the text, with few, if any, articles being written.[26] This may in part be due to the Second World War, which would have had a disruptive effect, certainly on any European scholarship, and may account for why interest began to pick up again in the late fifties. Charles Muscatine's 1953 article on psychological allegory ('The Emergence of Psychological Allegory') in romance is not a study focussing on *Florimont*, though it refers to the text on several occasions as *Florimont* offers ample examples of such allegory. Marcel Françon makes use of *Florimont* in a similar way for his 1957 article on 'Monte Gargano' ('Le Monte Gargano'). The text of *Florimont* itself is incidental; background information to the main focus of his work which is a consideration of the legend of Mount Gargano, mentioned briefly (ll. 3645-55) in *Florimont*. A final area that has caused considerable debate amongst critics is *Florimont*'s relation to other contemporary texts. It has been the focus of much discussion, with opinions varying greatly as to Aimon's originality or lack thereof with regard to his relationship with other works. Hilka has an extensive catalogue of Aimon's debts to other texts, though this is presented as a list, rather than being discussed in great detail. However, merely by collating such a list, Hilka demonstrates that *Florimont* is situated within a network of twelfth-century texts between which there are a variety of intertextual conversations.[27] Aside from this collation, Hilka also considers *Florimont*'s relationship with certain texts in greater detail: the anonymous

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[25] Aware that he would be unable to complete his long-planned edition of the text, Risop presented Hilka with all his notes in the 1920s. In the preface to his edition, Hilka notes: 'In meine Greifswalder Zeit (Sommer 1920) fiel ein Besuch Risops, der mir bereitwillig, da er selbst wegen Altersbeschwerden am Florimont bis zur kritischen Herausgabe nicht mehr arbeiten konnte, seine mit viel Liebe und Mühe gesammelten Materialien an Kopien, Kollationen der Handschriften und allerlei Zusätzen zu seinen früheren Aufsätzen anvertraute,' p. vii of his prologue.

[26] Indeed, the majority of articles appearing after the edition are reviews of the edition itself, with only a rare exception: Henry, 'Compte Rendu de Aimon von Varennes *Florimont*'; Alfred Schulze, 'Textkritisches zum Florimont des Aimon von Varennes ed. Hilka', *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur*, 59 (1935), 473-486; Leo Spitzer, 'Zu Florimont 8673ff', *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, 57 (1937), 597-598; Ott, 'Besprechungen : Aimon von Varennes, *Florimont*'; Hermann Breuer, 'Besserungsvorschläger zu Aimon de Varennes, Florimont, hg. von A. Hilka', *Zeitschrift für romansiche Philologie*, 58 (1938), 367-368; Gardette, 'Aimon de Varennes, Lyonnais' and Lievens 'En Middelnederlandse Roman van Florimont'.

[27] He notes the majority of these intertextual links by drawing up a list of motifs traditionally associated with love and its effects (for example, the omnipotence of love or how it causes the heart to desert the body in order to remain with the beloved). The location of these motifs in *Florimont* is given, followed by references to other texts in which the various motifs feature prominently, pp. cxvi ff.

Partonopeus de Blois, Marie de France's *Lanval*, and both the Melusine and Alexander the Great legends are just some of the texts mentioned.[28]

Fourrier was the next critic to consider *Florimont*'s debts to contemporary texts in his *Le courante réaliste*; though he goes into more detail than does Hilka, he focuses mostly on *Florimont*'s relationship with *Partonopeus de Blois*, seeing *Florimont* primarily as a poor derivative of this work. He refers to some similarities with Marie de France's *Lanval* (pp. 453, 459), but for the main part sees *Florimont* as an inferior imitation of *Partonopeus de Blois* – a text which, in his view, furnished not only the subject matter but also the structure and many of the incidental details of *Florimont*.[29] Fourrier investigates a host of similarities between the two texts; like *Partonopeus*, *Florimont* was written for the love of the author's lady; it too is set in a different country in a distant past; both poets tells us, quite vocally, about themselves, whilst Fourrier also suggests that *Florimont*'s long epilogue was inspired by the continuations of *Partonopeus*. For him, the entire affair with *la Dame de l'Ile Celée* is based on *Partonopeus* and he offers a detailed comparison of the two texts at this stage.[30] Fourrier's chapter proved to have an important impact on scholarly work on *Florimont*. Coming shortly before the publication of Joseph Gildea's edition of *Partonopeus de Blois* (1967-70), his dismissive attitude towards *Florimont* and his analysis of what he feels to be the superior romance, *Partonopeus de Blois*, may well have focussed attention on *Partonopeus* to the detriment of *Florimont*, thus contributing to the critical neglect of Aimon's text. As a result, immediately following Fourrier's study very little was written on any literary connections which *Florimont* may evince.[31]

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[28] See p. cvi and following for Hilka's work on how certain aspects of *Florimont* evoke these predecessors.

[29] In this respect he differs from Hilka who comments that we cannot assume that *Florimont* is a copy of *Partonopeus* as the taboo the hero labours under is different: 'Eine Nachbildung der Partonopeussage (Psychemythus)... ist für den Hauptzug kaum anzunehmen, da hier der Liebhaber selbst die Fee nicht bei Licht erblicken darf,' p. cxi. Hilka also notes that the role played by Florimont's mother in the dissolution of his relationship with the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* only distantly recalls that of Partonopeus' mother in his separation from Melior: 'Die Rolle der Mutter, die die Trennung des Liebesverhältnisses herbeifürht, erinnert nur entfernt an *Partonopeus*,' p. cxii. For Fourrier, however, the involvement of Florimont's mother is a decisive factor in making the text a poor imitation of *Partonopeus*, p. 455.

[30] See pp. 450-459 in particular.

[31] The one exception to this is perhaps Marjorie Rigby's 'The Education of Alexander the Great and *Florimont*,' written in 1962. Though this connects *Florimont* with texts popular at the time of its composition, it is not an in-depth analysis of the text as Fourrier's had been. Rather, the purpose of the note is to indicate that Aimon had used one of the descriptions of Alexander's education as he composed Florimont's education, and thus to provide some support for the idea that there existed a decasyllabic version of the Alexander legend, known in the Middle Ages but which is lost to us today. As such, the note is more concerned with Alexander than with *Florimont*. Marjorie Rigby, 'The Education of Alexander the Great and *Florimont*', *Modern Languages Review*, 57 (1962), 392-393.

Following Fourrier, Douglas Kelly ('Composition') was the first scholar to re-assess *Florimont*, writing an important article which not only challenged Fourrier's view that *Florimont* is but a poor imitation of *Partonopeus*, but also asserted the artistic merits of *Florimont* in its own right. Kelly considers the similarities discerned by Fourrier, subjecting them to a detailed analysis before concluding that 'their sum and significance are small' (p. 277). He points out that writing a romance for one's lady and setting it in the distant past in a different country are 'not unusual' traits, whilst also commenting that the idea of adding an epilogue is 'hardly original' (p. 278). He systematically goes through the details adduced by Fourrier, noting divergences within the texts which weaken the strength of the parallels.[32] Kelly also comments on the structure of *Florimont*, seeing it as a battle between Destiny and Fortune in which a man's Destiny may allow him to escape the turns of Fortune's wheel, provided he is prepared to do his duty, no matter what his own inclination may be. Kelly sees this as being shown in the place that both love and largesse occupy in *Florimont*'s life. Aimon's conception of courtly love is not typical of twelfth century ideals, as love is shown only to be a 'good' sort of love when it is subordinated to higher aristocratic obligations.

With his countering of Fourrier's claims, Kelly went some way towards establishing the literary credentials of *Florimont* and it would seem that he opened the door for further critics prepared to give *Florimont* some consideration. The text plays an integral role in Hermann Braet's 1970 study, 'Le songe de l'arbre chez Wace, Benoît et Aimon de Varennes.' Braet explores an entirely new topic, examining the literary antecedents of the tree found in Mataquas' dream – a tree which eventually grew to shelter the world. Looking at the symbolism of such a tree, he traces its relationship to similar trees found in Wace and Benoît de Sainte-Maure before considering sources for the description. He points out that the image of a tree sheltering many kinds of animals is to be found in the Scriptures, before referring to a specific image found in the Book of Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar dreams of a great tree which shelters many different kinds of animals; this dream is in fact prophetic for King Daniel and is meant to signify how great a King he will become. Braet thus concludes

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[32] For more details on Fourrier's similarities and Kelly's refutation of them, see pp. 450-459 in Fourrier's chapter on *Florimont* and pp. 277-279 in Kelly's article respectively.

that the Bible provided the source for Mataquas' dream, particularly as, like Mataquas, the image of the tree found in the Book of Daniel is used as a dream symbol.[33]

Charles François' 1971 article ('Avec Florimont') goes a step further than Braet. A direct study of the influence which *Floire et Blancheflor* may have had on *Florimont*, François acknowledges that, with his analysis, Kelly had righted a critical injustice with regard to *Florimont*: 'En nous intéressant au fond et à la composition du *Florimont* d'Aimon de Varennes, M. Douglas Kelly a en somme réparé une injustice de la critique, qui jusqu'ici a fait assez peu de cas de ce roman,' (p. 5). Indeed, he even goes a step further, suggesting that although Kelly had shown the originality of *Florimont* he may perhaps have minimised the debt which Aimon owed to his predecessors: 'Peut-être même aurait-il tendance à minimiser la dette du romancier envers ses prédécesseurs,' (p. 5). Thus we can see *Florimont* gradually being established as a text worthy of study with the manner in which it rewrites it predecessors being of particular interest. Of these predecessors, François feels that *Floire et Blancheflor* is a prime example, commenting that not one episode of the romance has not left at least some mark on *Florimont* (p. 6). For Florimont's separation from the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* for example, where previous critics have seen the influence of *Partonopeus*, François suggests that the influence of *Floire et Blancheflor* at the very least competes with that of *Partonopeus* (p. 8).[34] He sees *Floire et Blancheflor*'s biggest influence in two separate episodes occurring in Philipopolis; the first as Florimont meets and falls in love with Romadanaple during dinner, causing Delfis (his host) to attribute his distraction to monetary concerns. François points out that this also happens between Floire and his host at Baudas. For François, 'l'identité des réponses ne permet guère le doute sur la source de l'inspiration,' (p. 11). The second episode also involves Delfis, as Florimont confides his love for Romadanaple. Delfis' response – to stress the folly of such a love and to try to dissuade Florimont from it – echoes that of Floire's host, Daire, in Babylon who, when faced with the same situation, had reacted in the same manner (p. 12). François also notes striking resemblances between the Clavegris episode in *Florimont* and the Emir's tower in *Floire et Blancheflor*: both fortresses form a sort of harem and in each the women are protected by eunuchs and a suspicious gatekeeper (pp.

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[33] 'Cette interprétation ne laisse subsister aucun doute: Aimon a rattaché le signe onirique à Alexandre qui allait lui aussi conquérir le monde,' p. 263.

[34] He further notes that in both *Floire et Blancheflor* and in *Florimont* immediate suicide attempts follow this separation, dissimilar to *Partonopeus*, in which the protagonist is initially prevented from any such attempts by his friends, pp. 8-9.

14-15). These, combined with a host of other similarities, provide a convincing argument for *Floire et Blancheflor*'s influence on Aimon's composition of *Florimont*.

However, what really differentiates François from the majority of his predecessors is his attitude towards Aimon's skills as a writer. In addition to complimenting the structure of *Florimont*,[35] he also looks at the intertextual aspects of Aimon's work, commenting on the manner in which Aimon alters his 'borrowings': 'son entrain de conteur est un courant qui emporte, déforme, submerge ses emprunts, dont il ne reste que quelques dépôts reconnaissables,' (p. 17). He even suggests that Aimon was prey to the medieval desire of wanting to surpass his predecessors (a key concept to which we shall return later): 'Parfois on croit sentir, chez l'auteur de *Florimont*, le désir de rivaliser avec son devancier, de reprendre ses inventions pour les renouveler en les traitant selon sa propre technique,' (p. 13). In this way then, François explores Florimont's relationship with an important influence and identifies a key strategy of Aimon's in interacting with these influences.

Matilda Bruckner, whose work has done much to illuminate the techniques of twelfth-century romance composition, also plays an integral role in identifying key themes within *Florimont* and in showing the dexterity behind Aimon's writing. Her 1977 article, '*Florimont*: Extravagant Host, Extravagant Guest', looks closely at the hospitality scenes in Philipopolis. She notes that, on the whole, hospitality in romances can be divided into two categories – commercial hospitality and courtly hospitality (p. 58). *Florimont*, however, is unusual in that it focuses on a single, complex hospitality arrangement (rather than a series of juxtaposed separate episodes) and in that this arrangement combines both commercial and courtly hospitality (p. 59). It is through his understanding and manipulation of hospitality, she suggests, that the hero is able to orchestrate his welcome to Philipopolis and proclaim his social standing (pp. 60-61). Thus, hospitality and the different ways in which it is employed become linked with identity. In turn, the question of Florimont's identity ties in with the concept of largesse and the balance between giving and conquering wealth; ideas which are crucial to the text.[36] After this complex sequence, ideas of hospitality then yield the centre stage, allowing narrative concerns to come forward. For Bruckner, this creates a linear effect in the romance, meaning that *Florimont*'s narrative is more orientated towards "what comes next", an effect which differs from the 'circularity of recurrent

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[35] For him, *Florimont* is: 'une oeuvre élaborée... librement et ingénieusement construite,' p. 5.
[36] Bruckner comments: 'The model of this exchange is announced from the very opening of the romance,' p. 62.

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structures' (p. 62) in the other romances on which Bruckner bases her observations of 'Hospitality'.[37] This linearity shows how Aimon renews the narrative structure of hospitality (p. 63) whilst also highlighting the creative skills of Aimon himself: 'His originality, like Chrétien's or Renaut de Beaujeu's, arises out of this creative repetition of romance conventions,' (p. 63).

The process of weighing *Florimont* according to its literary and artistic merits was continued in Alison Adams's article, 'Destiny, Love and the Cultivation of Suspense: The *Roman d'Eneas* and Aimon de Varennes' *Florimont*'. Adams agrees with Kelly on the artistic merit of *Florimont* and its overall unified effect despite the disparate subject matter (p. 67). However, she disagrees with his postulation of a tension between Fortune and Destiny. She states that Destiny and Fortune normally play the same role in a text and indicates that Fortune is referenced for Florimont's successes as well as his misfortunes. She also points out that although the *Dame de l'Ile Célee* prevents Florimont from answering Phillip's call for aid, her gifts later help him achieve his successes, thereby meaning that she brings good as well as evil. Adams does not see any intrinsic opposition between Florimont's own qualities and the intervention of outside sources and, as such, she concludes that there is 'no justification' for the opposition hypothesised by Kelly (p. 68). She also looks at how suspense is both created and sustained within the text, comparing it favourably with the *Roman d'Eneas*, which also features a hero whose destiny has been foretold. Indeed, in comparing the integration of a prophesied destiny and a separate love intrigue, present in both texts, Adams notes that: 'despite the place assigned to *Eneas* in literary history, Aimon de Varennes' poem is in fact artistically a far more successful work,' (p. 67). This would suggest that *Florimont* is a complex work and that *Partonopeus* is perhaps not the sole text with which *Florimont* interacts – a position to which Charles François would certainly subscribe.

As a result of this stirring literary interest,[38] *Florimont* seems to be being taken much more seriously from 1990 onwards. One key critic in this respect is Laurence Harf-

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[37] Bruckner states at the start of her article that her observations are based on a corpus of eight romance written between 1160 and 1200. They are as follows: *Florimont*, Chrétien de Troyes' *Erec et Enide* and *Yvain*, *Floire et Blancheflor*, Gautier d'Arras' *Ille et Galeron*, *Ipomedon*, *Partonopeu de Blois*, and Renaut de Beaujeu's *Le Bel Inconnu*. For full details of editions see Bruckner, p. 63, footnote 1.

[38] In terms of non-literary research, Paden made use of *Florimont* for his 1993 article, 'Old Occitan as a Lyric Language'. However, this is a linguistics study and as such uses *Florimont* as a source of linguistics data rather than considering its literary potential. As this thesis is concerned with the literary aspects of *Florimont*, no further reference will made to this article.

Lancner who has devoted two articles to *Florimont*, both of which consider the romance's relations with other texts in detail. The first of these is her 'Le *Florimont* d'Aimon de Varennes: un prologue du *Roman d'Alexandre*.' She accepts Psichari's evidence that the Greek is a 'grec de cuisine' (p. 242), and, like Kelly, she disregards the view that *Florimont* is a mere pastiche of *Partonopeus de Blois*, stating that: 'les deux romans n'ont en commun que l'aventure amoureuse du héros avec une fée,' (p. 242). She comments that both cases are examples of a folk theme found abundantly in twelfth-century literature and that Marie de France's *Lanval* is a closer model for *Florimont* than *Partonopeus* is, as both the fairy in *Lanval* and the *Dame de l'Île Celée* inform their lovers that the affair will be over should they reveal its existence to anyone. Nevertheless, she does concede that Aimon de Varennes was probably aware of *Partonopeus*, mentioning that in both the hero's mother is responsible for the break-up of the lovers and the hero's consequent depression (p. 242).

Unlike Adams, she accepts Kelly's argument of a tension between Fortune and Destiny that forms the basis of the romance's structure, and she suggests resemblances with earlier texts without suggesting that Aimon was merely repeating his predecessors' ideas.[39] For the most part however, Harf-Lancner considers *Florimont*'s relationship to the *Roman d'Alexandre*. In doing so she makes an important contribution to the existing scholarship on *Florimont* as she considers a previously overlooked area and opens the door for further study of this fascinating text. She maintains that Aimon 'a bel et bien conçu son récit comme un prologue au *Roman d'Alexandre*,' and that as a way of showing this, he deliberately included echoes of the Alexander legend as he was writing *Florimont* (p. 244).[40]

In order to reinforce her arguments she lists these echoes, which range from incidental details to defining factors of the text. The master-pupil relationship of Floquart and Florimont, compared with that of Alexander and Aristotle, Rysus and his eleven men compared with the twelve peers of Alexander and the fight scenes' similarity to the epic battles described in the *Alexandre* rather than to the traditional jousts of romance texts may all be seen as incidental similarities.[41] However, Harf-Lancner goes on to show that one of

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[39] She notes, for example, that the opposition of the leopard and the dragon in Mataquas' dream recalls that of the lion and the serpent in Chrétien de Troyes' *Yvain*. For further instances evoking other texts see p. 244.

[40] That *Florimont* was indeed seen as being related to the Alexander material is made clear by Keith Busby who offers evidence that manuscript compilers in the Middle Ages perceived *Florimont* as a prequel to the *Roman d'Alexandre*; 'Codices manuscriptos', pp. 264-265.

[41] For additional similarities of this nature see p. 248.

the defining characteristics of the medieval Alexander legend, largesse, is also of great importance in *Florimont*. She chronicles when exactly it is mentioned in the text and the manner in which it is presented (pp. 248-9) before concluding: 'Or cette largesse fondée sur la pure joie de la conquête et le mépris des biens conquis est très précisément celle qu'incarne Alexandre' (p. 249). This, combined with the fact that Aimon de Varennes deliberately states that he is telling the story of Alexander's ancestors, makes for a powerful argument for *Florimont*'s being, as Harf-Lancner suggests, a deliberate prologue to the *Roman d'Alexandre*.

Her work on *Florimont* and its relationships with other texts continued the following year with an article ('D'*Enéas*') in which she evaluates the influence of the *Roman d'Enéas* on *Florimont* and considers to what use Aimon put the magical portions of his text. She sees the structure of the text as being that of a traditional 'conte merveilleux', with the hero facing three ordeals: an 'épreuve qualifiante... une épreuve principale et... une épreuve glorifiante,' (p. 124). Each of these ordeals is linked with a specific feminine figure. The first ordeal is represented by Florimont's fights with both the monster and the giant Garganeüs and is associated with his first love, the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* (pp. 124-125). Harf-Lancner reveals how this love is dangerous for the hero, concentrating on how he becomes a 'nouvel Erec' as he puts his love for the *Dame* before his skills as a knight (p. 127). The danger is further emphasised as she brings in Kelly's idea of Destiny and Fortune as opposing forces in *Florimont*'s life, revealing how Fortune as a negative force is linked with the *Dame* (pp. 127-8).[42] The image of the *Dame* becomes even blacker as Harf-Lancner discusses her association with the enchanter Nectanebo, finally noting that: 'cette association de la fée et de l'enchanteur rejette... la Dame de l'Ile Celée du côté d'une magie maléfique,' (p. 131).

She discusses the influence of the *Roman d'Enéas* where Floquart uses Dido and Eneas as an example when urging his young tutee not to mourn the loss of the *Dame* (p. 129) and she sees this influence as being brought to the fore with Florimont's second ordeal (in Philipopolis) and his encounter with a second feminine figure – Romadanaple.[43] For Harf-Lancner this clearly shows the influence of the *Enéas*; she notes as just one similarity

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[42] See also p. 128: 'La volonté de la fée d'entraîner le héros à sa suite est... explicitement liée aux mauvais tours de la Fortune.'

[43] Floquart uses Eneas and Dido as an example for Florimont to follow. Harf-Lancner sees this allusion as being 'la clef de l'épisode féerique du roman' and points out that both Dido and the *Dame* prevent the respective heroes from fulfilling their 'destins glorieux,' p. 129.

the fact that both Lavinia and Romadanaple's fathers know that their daughters will marry a stranger (p. 131). However, where the *Enéas* ends in victory and acclaim for its hero, in *Florimont* this victory is succeeded by another 'fairy' episode. This final episode introduces both the third ordeal and the third feminine figure in the form of the Queen of Carthage. Harf-Lancner suggests that the influence of the *Enéas* is manifest in these scenes, commenting that throughout the Clavegris scene: 'le souvenir de Dido et de la Carthage du *Roman d'Enéas* est omniprésent,' (p. 132). She cites details which include similarities in the wall hangings and the Queens each being deceived by the heroes to reinforce her hypothesis (pp. 132-133). She shows that the Queen of Carthage has traits both from Dido and the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* and as such represents a love which Florimont should avoid (p. 133).

To a certain extent Harf-Lancner is also aware of Aimon's writing skills, noting that he mastered a blend of genres,[44] and pointing out that *Florimont* formed a first template for later medieval writers: 'cet antagonisme entre la princesse et la fée... constitue dans *Florimont* la première mise en forme romanesque d'un schéma narrative qui s'épanouira dans *Le Bel Inconnu* de Renaut de Beaujeu,' (p. 130).[45]

Florimont thus seems gradually to have become more established as a 'literary' text, to the extent that recent scholars willingly include it in their analyses of twelfth-century literary patterns, along with other, more established romances. This is certainly the case for Michel Stanesco ('La fée amante et le chevalier') who includes *Florimont* amongst a host of other texts (*Partonopeus de Blois, Le Bel Inconnu, Guingamor* to name but a few) as he considers the relationship between a fairy lover and a knight. Similarly, Silvère Menegaldo ('Quand le narrateur est amoureux') considers *Florimont* in his study of amorous narrators creating 'lyric' prologues and epilogues in the romances of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[46] *Florimont*'s status as both popular in the Middle Ages and as an 'established' romance of today is reinforced by Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas' brief reference to it in her

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[44] 'Ni roman antique, ni roman Breton, l'œuvre d'Aimon de Varennes est cependant un microcosme de la littérature romanesque du XIIe siècle, antique ou bretonne, dont elle retrouve les éléments structurants, les agençant avec une rare virtuosité, qui éclate en particulier dans son utilisation du thème de la féerie comme principe directeur de la narration,' p. 124.

[45] Interestingly the *Bel Inconnu* also features a protagonist who is driven to excessive liberality by the belief that he has lost his lady's love; thus we see *Florimont* not only drawing on earlier romances as sources but in turn offering a model for later romances. This furthers our understanding of *Florimont*'s status in the Middle Ages – only the most popular texts were themselves then used as models by later generations of romance writers.

[46] Gabriele Giannini's article also looks at *Florimont*'s prologue, 'Prologhi e opzioni autoriali di lettura'.

book, *La tentation de l'Orient*. When discussing Jean d'Arras' history of the Lusignan family she notes that he: 'rattache... brièvement sa version des origines des Lusignan à une autre légende généalogique, celle de Florimont, grand-père d'Alexandre le Grand, et il renvoie à l'intrigue du *Florimont* d'Aimon de Varennes,' (p. 314). She notes that he discusses links to the Melusine legend (p. 314). This tells us several interesting things. Jean d'Arras was writing in the late fourteenth century so for him to refer deliberately and explicitly to *Florimont* as a means of conferring a 'parenté illustre' (p. 314) on a contemporary family reveals that *Florimont* was not only still known in the late fourteenth century, but also suggests that it was well thought of. Interestingly, it seems also to hint that Aimon de Varennes was perceived, in some measure at least, as an authority of some kind. In telling the tale of Alexander's prehistory in his text Aimon steps into the arena of history and implicitly places himself on a par with historians and previous poets who had offered details of Alexander's life. In doing so he assumes the mantle of authorial authority and invites his audience to trust him. Jean d'Arras deliberately citing Aimon two centuries later suggests that Aimon – perhaps with the weight of history aiding him – was perceived as authoritative or trustworthy enough to be of use in bestowing an illustrious parentage on a contemporary French family.[47]

Overall then, and despite some critical knocks, the consensus seems to point towards *Florimont* as being a text with inherent literary merit and one which occupies a significant position in the flourishing of Old French romance. The early work done on *Florimont* when scholarly and philological interest in Old French first began in earnest has been confirmed by more recent scholars, with each finding different aspects to engage with. However, there is one motif which seems to have been a running theme throughout nearly all scholarship on *Florimont*, namely that of its relationships with other texts. This is shown both in the form of a list of motifs which all appear in other texts like the one provided by Hilka (pp. cxvi ff) and in the form of studies focussing on *Florimont*'s interactions with individual texts like those offered by Fourrier, François and Harf-Lancner to name the most significant. It seems to be impossible to consider this romance without looking at its interaction with the broader literary context of the twelfth century in general, and the

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[47] We should not overestimate this however; though it does seem to hint at some form of authority for Aimon, we might equally note that by referring to Aimon, a poet who two centuries previously had successfully attached a 'fictional' beginning to a historical dynasty, Jean d'Arras lends credence to his own attempt to attach a legendary beginning to the history of a contemporary family.

decades leading up to 1188 in particular, which appear to have provided such creative impetus for the flourishing of the romance genre.

This provides a particularly attractive focus for a study on *Florimont*: choosing to focus on *Florimont*'s relationships with other texts enables both a reassessment of its merit in the light of current and previous criticism and suggests a critical framework that can be used to underpin the analysis. This framework is the notion of intertextuality, a phenomenon in literary production which has seen a surge of popularity and critical interest in recent years. Julia Kristeva was the first to coin the term at the end of the 1960s as a complement to Bahktin's idea of dialogism.[48] It was towards the latter half of the 20th century that critical interest in this phenomenon of dialogue between texts exploded; critics discussed whether intertextuality was merely a tool with which to interpret literature, or rather a means of considering the entirety of literature as past texts affect future ones, with future texts also exerting an influence on past works.[49] Yet despite this apparently recent 'discovery', intertextuality as a term describes a process that has been at work for generations. One might even suggest that it is merely a modern label for a process which has been taking place for centuries: Worton and Still note that 'although the term *intertextuality* dates from the 1960s, the phenomenon, in some form, is at least as old as recorded human society' (p. 2). The aspect of intertextuality that we are perhaps most familiar with is that which states that all texts affect other texts – influencing or adapting them in some way.[50] As such, it offers the most appropriate tool for investigating how texts interact with one another and the effects that this creates. Examining a text in such a way enables us to gain a fuller understanding of it as it allows us to view the text from a multitude of angles.

Despite this however, intertextuality in our modern understanding of it is most emphatically *not* another form of source criticism:

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[48] Michael Worton and Judith Still, *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*, ed. by Michael Worton and Judith Still (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), pp. 16-17; Sophie Rabau, *L'intertextualité: textes choisis et présentés par Sophie Rabau* (Paris: Flammarion, 2002), p. 21.

[49] Worton and Still note in their introduction that 'the last thirty years have... seen a celebration of plurality and intertextuality,' p. 30. For a summation of the debate surrounding intertextuality as well as an explanation of how future texts may affect past ones, see Sophie Rabau's introduction to *L'intertextualité*.

[50] 'Il n'est pas d'oeuvre littéraire qui, à quelque degré et selon les lectures n'en évoque quelque autre et, en ce sens, toutes les œuvres sont hypertextuelles,' G. Genette, cited in Tiphaine Samoyault, *L'intertextualité : mémoire de la littérature* (Paris: Nathan, 2001), p. 34.

> Car l'intertextualité n'est pas un autre nom pour l'étude des sources ou des influences, elle ne se réduit pas au simple constat que les textes entrent en relation (l'intertextualité) avec un ou plusieurs autres textes (l'intertexte). Elle engage à repenser notre mode de compréhension des textes littéraires, à envisager la littérature comme un espace ou un réseau, une bibliothèque si l'on veut, où chaque texte transforme les autres qui le modifient en retour. (Rabau, p. 15)

It considers texts in the form of networks, rather than in a linear manner.[51] Thus, as in a network, connections (this time between texts) can move in more than one direction. One potential direction is that of past to future where past or current texts may contain the germs of an idea from which will spring a future text. Rabau notes: 'chaque texte littéraire contient d'une manière plus ou moins forte des textes en puissance qui attendent d'autres auteurs pour être développés,' (p. 41). At its most simple level one might say that without Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* would never have existed. For Michel Charles these germs of possible texts are traceable in all texts. As Rabau explains:

> Charles propose... une méthode de lecture, fondée sur une approche 'rhétorique': à l'inverse du commentateur, le rhétoricien accepte l'idée qu'un texte donné soit un possible parmi d'autres. Il s'agit de lire le texte en fonction de cette contingence essentielle, de l'interpréter non pour montrer qu'il ne pouvait être autrement, mais pour y chercher la trace de ce qu'il aurait pu être et dont il porte la marque.
> (p. 218)[52]

Thus, in the above-mentioned example we may well have had a novel entitled *The Downfall of Mr Brocklehurst* rather than *Jane Eyre*. Douglas Kelly, writing about the more specific case of medieval intertextuality, makes a similar point:

> Intertextuality comprises a number of different models that explain relations among texts. It differs from most earlier source study by taking into account the process of adaptation in rewriting sources. The new author perceives a potential

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[51] 'Pour prendre la mesure de ce qu'on l'appelle depuis 1969 « l'intertextualité », il faudra accepter de bousculer la chronologie, établir entre les textes des réseaux qui n'ont rien de linéaire,' Rabau, p. 14.

[52] Summarising pp. 361-67 of Charles, *Introduction à l'étude des textes* (Paris: Seuil, 1995).

inherent, but not yet realized, in an antecedent work and rewrites it in his or her new version.[53]

Yet past to future is not the only possible direction in a network. Equally possible is that of future to past in which future (or later) texts can affect past (or previous) works. In a passage bearing the title 'influence rétrospective' Rabau explains that the second text (re)gives access to the first and in this respect intertextuality can transform the initial text:

> En ce sens une écriture intertextuelle influence sur le sens et le statut du passé, le transforme... L'auteur du texte second renégocie l'autorité et la valeur du texte premier, soit qu'il lui donne le statut de texte fondateur, soit qu'il le rétrograde au rang de simple précurseur d'un chef-d'œuvre, soit encore qu'il rende risible le texte sacré ou renforce l'autorité d'un texte qui n'avait pas grande valeur culturelle.
> (p. 37)

To use a modern example we might note that Ridley Scott's 1979 film *Alien* was widely regarded as a masterpiece upon its release, winning both an Oscar and critical acclaim. However, with the release of James Cameron's 1986 *Aliens*, Scott's film was relegated to a back seat, becoming merely a prequel to this new masterpiece which went on to win two Oscars and was nominated for several more. Yet despite this relegation in rank for the original, the mere existence of a second film tells us that the original was valued enough for someone to want to continue the story of its characters, its world. We can see from this that intertextuality can also tell us about the reception of a text: rewriting is, by definition, a reading of sorts (one cannot rewrite what one has not read) and as such, what we can discern within the rewriting of a text gives us hints as to how it was read. Of course, this is not an exact process and should be treated with the greatest of caution; just because we can see the flow of influence in one direction – model, model is read, how it has been read/received affects how it is rewritten – does not necessarily mean that we will be able to unpick and trace this influence in the opposite direction. Nevertheless, the mere presence of a reworking, a development of the model can tell us a little about the reception of the original. This process will play its part in our examination of *Florimont* as we consider

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[53] Douglas Kelly, 'Chrétien de Troyes', in *The Arthur of the French: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval French and Occitan Literature*, ed. by Glyn S. Burgess and Karen Pratt (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2006), pp. 135-185 (p. 148).

what, if anything, the reworking of ideas and motifs taken from particular texts tells us about the reception of these texts as models.

A number of different intertextual tendencies have been discerned in medieval compositional practices. Paul Zumthor was the first to coin the term *mouvance*, which Douglas Kelly describes as 'any deliberate alteration that may arise in the course of transmission, whether oral or written.'[54] Zumthor goes on to comment that: 'les échanges de texte à texte sont constants' and that large portions of earlier texts 'sont purement et simplement insérés dans des ouvrages nouveaux.'[55] For example, Jean Renart's *Le Roman de la Rose ou de Guillaume de Dole*, written at the start of the thirteenth century, incorporates several previous lyric poems into its composition, whilst Douglas Kelly comments that the anonymous *Cristal et Clarie* lifts almost verbatim from predecessors like Chrétien de Troyes.[56]

These exchanges were not limited to poems or entire passages copied verbatim, however; motifs too were transferred from one text to another. Lavinia's inability to pronounce her lover's name in the *Roman d'Enéas* is replicated in the anonymous *Partonopeus de Blois* for example.[57] The term *translatio* describes another medieval topos: the migration both of power and empire and that of learning, of ideas and of concepts. Jacques Le Goff describes *translatio imperii* as a transfer of power whilst *translatio studii* 'est avant tout un transfert de savoir et de culture'.[58] That this was an accepted and commonly held medieval belief is highlighted by Chrétien de Troyes who describes the westward movement of empire and knowledge until both are present in his homeland of France:

> Par les livres que nos avons
> Les fez des ancïens savons
> Et del siegle qui fu jadis.

[54] Douglas Kelly, *The Art of Medieval French Romance* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), p. 82.

[55] Paul Zumthor, *Essai de Poétique Médiévale* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1972), p. 24.

[56] Douglas Kelly, *The Conspiracy of Allusion: Description, Rewriting and Authorship from Macrobius to Medieval Romance* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), p. 215. For an examination of this process in the relationship between *Cristal et Clarie* and *Partonopeus de Blois*, see Penny Eley, Catherine Hanley, Mario Longtin and Penny Simons, '*Cristal et Clarie* and a Lost Manuscript of *Partonopeus de Blois*', *Romania*, 121 (2003), 329-347.

[57] Ll. 8553-56 in the *Roman d'Enéas* and ll. 7271-80 in *Partonopeus de Blois. Le Roman d'Enéas*, ed. by Jacques Salverda de Grave (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1891) and *Partonopeus de Blois*, ed. by Joseph Gildea, 2 vols (Villanova: Villanova University Press, 1967-70).

[58] Jacques le Goff, *La civilisation de l'occident médiéval* (Paris: Arthaud, 1964), p. 218.

Ce nos ont nostre livre apris
Qu'an Grece ot de chevalerie
Le premier los et de clergie.
Puis vint chevalerie a Rome
Et de la clergie la some,
Qui or est an France venue.
Dex doint qu'ele i soit retenue,
Et que li leus li abelisse
Tant que ja mes de France n'isse
L'enors qui s'i est arrestee
(ll. 27-39)[59]

This belief validates the use of previous centuries of learning, making insertions from previous works almost a duty if one was to show one's own learning, whilst Chrétien's description of the migration of ideas shows that for medieval authors the use of previous learning and ideas is very much a conscious practice.

From these two terms, the growth of the importance of intertextuality for medieval studies seems to have been constant, with scholars prefacing their own studies with references to its importance for the field as a whole.[60] Bruckner, in a chapter explicitly titled 'Intertextuality', comments that the concept of intertextuality 'may even be considered indispensable for our representation and analysis of what medieval writers and readers are doing'.[61] This seems doubly relevant for romance, a genre known for its deliberate references back to itself and its works; witness the countless overt references to the famous tale of *Tristan et Yseut* for example.[62] Equally evocative of the romance tendency to refer to other romantic works are the numerous references to Alexander the Great, about whom there were various romances in circulation in the twelfth century.[63] Jean

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[59] Chrétien de Troyes, *Cligés*, ed. by Claude Luttrell and Stewart Gregory (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1993).

[60] Indeed, in a comment which explicitly links *translatio imperii* and *studii* with intertextuality, Michelle Freeman remarks: 'intertextuality, known, it might be argued, under the alternate rubric of *translatio studii* in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, was a poetic principle practiced consistently within the genre of romance.' Michelle Freeman, 'Structural Transpositions and Intertextuality: Chrétien's *Cligés*', *Medievalia et Humanistica*, 11 (1982), 149-163 (p.149).

[61] Matilda Bruckner, 'Intertextuality', in *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, ed. by Norris J. Lacy, Douglas Kelly and Keith Busby (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1987), pp. 223-265 (p. 223).

[62] Fénice's desire not to be compared to Yseut in her adulterous relationship with her husband's nephew, Cligés, is but one example of this: 'Mialz voldroie ester desmanbree / Que de nos .ii. fust remanbree / L'amors d'Ysolt et de Tristan, / Don tantes folies dit an / Que honte m'est a reconter. / Ja ne m'i porroie accorder / A la vie qu'Isolz mena,' (ll. 3125-31). See also Freeman's comment in footnote 60.

[63] Chrétien de Troyes refers to Alexander in the prologue of his *Li Conte del Graal*, making specific mention of Alexander's liberality, suggesting that the twelfth-century poet was familiar with at least one of the compositions circulating about Alexander. Chrétien de Troyes, *Chrétien de Troyes* The Story of the Grail (Li Conte del Graal), *or* Perceval, ed. by Rupert T. Pickens (Garland Publishing: New York and London, 1990), ll. 13-59.

de Meun's famous continuation of and conclusion to Guillaume de Lorris' *Roman de la Rose* provides a further example of the romance author's desire to relate their work to other romance texts. Roberta Krueger notes that the story of romance is 'one of translation and transformation, adaptation and refashioning, and fertile *intertextual* and intercultural exchange among the linguistic and political entities of medieval Europe' (my italics).[64] Simon Gaunt, meanwhile, comments that 'clear intertextual connections between the different strands of romance point to a conscious generic and discursive formation,' whilst also noting that 'the implicit intertext for any text is... other texts of the same genre'.[65] Yet though romance as a genre shows a predisposition towards intertextuality, intertextual connections are not limited to texts from any one genre or, indeed, texts from the same genre. Intertextual threads may be woven across generic boundaries, linking – possibly even fusing elements from – texts which may have come from two completely different genres; motifs, ideas, even structural elements may be transferred from one genre to another.[66] Thus Bruckner explores how *Partonopeus de Blois* – an important intertext for *Florimont*, a fact to which we shall return later – crosses generic boundaries by fusing elements from genres such as the *lai* and the genealogy into a romance structure[67] whilst, as we have mentioned, Jean Renart includes several lyric poems in his romance, *Roman de la Rose ou de Guillaume de Dole*.

In fact, references to intertextuality have become so prolific in the medieval field that one might almost suggest if not a lack of coherence, then at the very least a profusion of differing ideas, with individual critics having varying ideas on the type of intertextuality in use in the Middle Ages. In his article on rewriting in the *Bel Inconnu*, Donald Maddox reviews how both Matilda Bruckner and Paul Rockwell consider medieval intertextuality. For Bruckner he suggests, it is: 'an esthetically-grounded, quasi-ludic pleasure of

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[64] Roberta L. Krueger, *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance*, ed. by Roberta L. Krueger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 1.

[65] Simon Gaunt, *Gender and Genre in Medieval French Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 73 and 8 respectively. In this respect then, one should *expect* intertextual references in *Florimont*: written at a time that valued re-writing and in a genre known for its intertextual games, one might almost ask how there could *not* be any intertextual references in *Florimont*?

[66] It is worth noting that Chapter 3 in particular examines ideas and motifs which seem to have been drawn from different genres whilst Chapter 4 considers how elements from two different genres are brought together in a single theme.

[67] Matilda Bruckner, 'From Genealogy to Romance and Continuation in the Fabulous History of *Partonopeu de Blois*', *Esprit Créateur*, 33 (1993), 27-39. See also Matilda Bruckner, *Shaping Romance: Interpretation, Truth and Closure in Twelfth-Century French Fictions* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), pp. 110-156.

reconfiguration,' whereas for Rockwell it represents: 'an ideantionally [sic]-driven compulsion to correct.'[68] He goes on to suggest that these two ideas are representative of two current attitudes towards intertextuality in the Middle Ages: the one concentrating on the formal properties of the texts as products, with the other viewing them from an intellectual and cultural viewpoint.[69] In a similar manner, Douglas Kelly notes how Bart Besamusca's distinction between specific and generic intertextuality corresponds to Bruckner's distinction between specific contacts between romances and contacts that have been mediated by tradition (*Conspiracy*, pp. 104-05).

An acknowledged leader of the field, Kelly has written widely on medieval French narrative, producing both sole-authored books and collations of essays from further eminent scholars of medieval studies.[70] His work on the formal properties of medieval French writing has led him fully to appreciate the importance of the Latin underpinning of all Old French writing:

> Vernacular authors adapted explicitly and implicitly the medieval Latin art of writing to their own different languages and publics. Knowledge of that art assists us today in interpreting medieval re-writing. It also helps us appreciate the originality of authors we may admire, but whose full achievement has sometimes escaped our grasp.
> (*Conspiracy*, p. 11)

This in turn has led him to produce a thesis which goes some way towards unifying the disparate threads of our understanding of the medieval approach to what we now know as 'intertextuality.' Basing his work on Macrobius' *Saturnalia* and the art of description articulated therein, Kelly brings the different conceptions of intertextuality together in such a manner as to suggest a cogent, comprehensive view of how intertextuality operated in the Middle Ages. He has also written on *Florimont* and in this respect is an ideal scholar to

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[68] Donald Maddox, 'Inventing the Unknown', in *The Medieval Opus*, ed. by Douglas Kelly (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 1996), pp. 101-123 (p. 120).
[69] 'While one tends to emphasize the study of the formal properties of texts as products and illustrations of the principles of poetics, the other seeks to apprehend in them evidence of their intellectual or cultural positionality,' Maddox, p. 120.
[70] His 1992 *Art of Medieval French Romance* addresses questions of both source and formal properties of medieval French writing, whilst the 1996 *Medieval Opus* is a collection of essays, edited by Kelly, which, as its sub-title indicates, looks specifically at 'imitation, rewriting and transmission in the French tradition'. Further works by Kelly include: *The Arts of Poetry and Prose* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1991) and *Medieval Imagination: Rhetoric and the Poetry of Courtly Love* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978).

bear in mind when considering intertextuality and forms of rewriting in Aimon de Varennes' romance.

Kelly puts forward the idea that Chrétien de Troyes's comment: 'Macrobe m'enseigne a descrivre,' (l. 6733)[71] as he depicts Erec's coronation robe is a reference to the *Saturnalia* rather than to Macrobius's *Commentary on Cicero's Dream of Scipio* as scholars have traditionally supposed (*Conspiracy*, pp. 1-2). He suggests it is a reference to Chrétien having *learnt* the *art* of description from Macrobius, as opposed to referring to a specific passage upon which he then based his own description (pp. 2-3). Although the *Saturnalia* was not the best known of Macrobius's works in the Middle Ages, it was by no means unknown: Kelly comments in his introduction that it is a compendium of late antique poetics which 'survived into the Middle Ages' (p. 9) before then considering the availability and possible uses of the *Saturnalia* throughout the Middle Ages in his first chapter. He postulates that the Latin arts of rhetoric and poetics taught and practised in classroom *praeexercitamina* had a great deal in common with Macrobius's art of description as detailed in the *Saturnalia*.[72] He states: 'the techniques Macrobius saw in Vergil's rewriting of Homer and others were actually practiced [sic] in twelfth-century Latin and vernacular composition,' (p. 104).[73] He also suggests that by understanding this art we can deepen our appreciation of medieval authors as it causes us to re-evaluate our interpretations of their work (p. 11). This suggestion is key in helping us to evaluate the merits of Aimon de Varennes as a poet. It is through a deeper understanding of medieval poetic techniques that we will better understand *Florimont* as a text and be able to assess Fourrier's charge that Aimon is 'unoriginal' in his writing.

Douglas Kelly highlights a key issue upon which modern and medieval attitudes differ widely; namely, that of originality.[74] For a modern audience, originality is one of the benchmarks of the creative process – the more original the better. Yet it is only recently that we have come to prize and value originality; up until the 18th century imitation was the

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[71] Chrétien de Troyes, *Erec et Enide*, ed. by Fritz.

[72] See particularly the first three chapters of *The Conspiracy of Allusion* for the development of this persuasive argument.

[73] 'Thus, a pupil like the young Chrétien studying Macrobius on description could... place the *Saturnalia* in a familiar paradigm of invention – that is, the medieval rhetorical and poetic paradigm for original rewriting that the twelfth- and thirteenth-century arts of poetry teach,' p. 62.

[74] David Townsend sums up this difference between medieval and modern attitudes when he notes: 'modernist sensibility looks for creativity in an originality more absolute than twelfth-century literary culture expected or even esteemed.' David Townsend, *The "Alexandreis" of Walter of Châtillon* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), p. xvii.

dominant creative force, with the value of a work stemming not from its originality but from its conformity with great past works (Rabau, p. 29). A culture of rewriting dominated the Middle Ages, with imitation being an art-form far more prized than that of originality (Bruckner, 'Intertextuality, p. 223). This is not to suggest however, that there was no originality in the Middle Ages: it was a concern and was indeed present in many works, but was sought after through the method of rewriting established works.[75] Artistry lay in reformulating familiar matter, reinterpreting it so as to draw something new from it. Bruckner refers to romancers who 'participate... in an aesthetic of conventionality which prizes rewriting above 'originality' *ex nihilo*' ('Intertextuality', p. 223) whilst Kelly comments: 'Medieval practice stressed original rewritings of canonical works over writing of new material,' (*Conspiracy*, p. 258). Though Horace was a classical and not a medieval author his views on this subject enjoyed a certain amount of respect in the Middle Ages. Kelly states: 'Horace wrote, and medieval authors concurred and passed on his counsel that... 'You are better in spinning into acts a song of Troy than if, for the first time, you were giving the world a theme unknown and unsung,' (ll. 128-130 of Horace's *Ars Poetica*, cited in *Conspiracy*, p. 62). For Horace of course, this point is as much to do with narrative materials and tales worthy of being known and sung as it is the manner in which these tales are composed. Yet the acceptance of his comment in the Middle Ages[76] is congruent with that era's appreciation of imitation, reformulation and rewriting in all its forms.

Marie de France's comments on the 'Ancients' offer further evidence that rewriting was the more established art form of the period. She informs us that classical writers deliberately made their works obscure so that later authors, going over their work, would have the opportunity to draw out and make explicit that which was only implicit in the classical works, fully to realise their potential and to find the 'surplus de sen' embedded within them:

> Custume fu as anciëns,
> ceo testimoine Preciëns,
> es livres que jadis faiseient

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[75] 'Rewriting... is the sphere within which medieval writers in the scholastic tradition sought and achieved originality,' Kelly, *Conspiracy*, p. xiii.

[76] Karsten Friis-Jensen tells us that 'Medieval interpreters of Horace's *Ars Poetica* all shared the view that the poem is entirely didactic'. For more on how Horace was received throughout the Middle Ages see Karsten Friis-Jensen, 'The reception of Horace in the Middle Ages' in *The Cambridge Companion to Horace*, ed. by Stephen Harrison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 291-304 (p. 300).

assez oscurement diseient
pur cels ki a venir esteient
e ki aprendre les deveient,
que peüssent *gloser la letre*
e de lur sen le surplus metre
(ll. 9-16, my italics)[77]

A closer examination of this passage shows that rewriting seems to have been viewed as a cumulative process. It suggests that it was a poet's duty not only to find and explain the deeper sense of what the 'ancients' were trying to say (*gloser la letre*) but also implies an additional duty of adding to this sense: *e de lur sen le surplus metre*. Thus the wisdom of previous authorities is drawn out and combined with the poet's own *sen* to create a new work that will, in some fashion, add to the existing body of knowledge.

With rewriting – one might say imitation – thus being the prevailing force in the Middle Ages, it is useful to have an understanding of how rewriting was perceived and approached in this era. This is exactly what Douglas Kelly provides as he brings the procedures depicted in Macrobius' *Saturnalia* to bear on medieval rewriting techniques. Macrobius, as we might expect, differentiated between the (original, source) author and the rewriter: the source author is the *auctor* of a work whilst the rewriter is its *imitator* (*Conspiracy*, pp. 55-56). In much the same way, there are clearly differentiated terms for the lifting of material from a source or sources (*mutuatio*) and the adaptation of this material to a new context (*mutatio*) (p. 56). Under the rather broad umbrella of *mutatio* there lie a number of processes, each differing according to what precisely happens to the source material that is to be adapted. Principal among these procedures are: *adiectio* (addition and amplification of material); its opposite, *detractio* (deletion, concentration or omission of material); *immutatio* (substitution – some material is deleted and new material is inserted into its place; in many cases this represents a combination of the previous two procedures) and finally *transmutatio* (transposition and transformation of material). The material itself could come from a single source, several different sources or even from a

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[77] Marie de France, *Lais*, ed. Karl Warnke (Paris: Librairie Générale Française, 1990). We might link this conception of literature and how it functions back to Sophie Rabau and the notion of future texts being discovered in present ones. The terminology may differ from Charles' 'dis-functioning' yet Marie de France's 'surplus de sen' shows that the basic process of intertextuality as we understand it was at work in the Middle Ages. This point is also made by Gaunt: 'The Middle Ages has no metalanguage about vernacular texts which corresponds to the style of writing we call literary criticism... Yet it does not follow that medieval texts are unable to perform the same intellectual operations as modern texts', *Gender and Genre*, p. 19.

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range of texts not necessarily of the same field; a twelfth-century French author may draw material from a *chanson de geste*, a *roman d'antiquité* and place them together with material from the lyric tradition for example.[78] It is not the extraction of differing types of material that creates originality in rewriting however (*mutuatio* is merely the first step), but what the author then does with this material. It is the *mutatio* that really matters. If well put together then the work thus created may be judged to be better than the 'originals' from which it lifted material:

> Not only does the writer imitate and emulate models identified in another writer, he or she can do so with more than one source, or insert secondary material into a major source. These different insertions come together in the new opus which, then, is truly a whole greater than any of its parts and than the sum of its parts.
> (pp. 62-63)

Achieving such a harmonious whole is not the work of a night. Kelly points out that although descriptive rewriting often constituted classroom exercises

> actual mastery of the technique evinces a different standard, one that requires the writer to surpass the source author's achievement and demonstrate how much better the source matter can be treated, or, at least, how it may be treated in a different way.
> (p. 43)

From this we can see that successful rewriting is a complex, demanding process, capable of bringing great richness and flavour to a text. Adding new and changing existing ingredients of a text offers a large scope and can greatly change the tone and feeling of a text. However, just as the creation of a new culinary masterpiece requires careful handling of new or altered ingredients, so too does original rewriting. For example, the audience, who may feel that the new work does not live up to its illustrious predecessor, may reject changes made to a popular contemporary model.

At this point Kelly's study of Macrobius has two further important aspects of the rewriting process that we should consider. In many ways, description as an art form in the Middle Ages converged with that of rewriting, and in his exploration of the methods of

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[78] 'Authors could rewrite given models; they could also conspire to bring together several models in the same new work,' Kelly, *Conspiracy*, pp. 81-82.

rewriting he clearly identifies the terms *imitatio* and *aemulatio*.[79] These terms are particularly important for our understanding of an author's intentions or attitude towards his source or sources as they can reveal whether he is trying to outperform his source or, rather, is paying homage to it in his own work:

> It is important, however, to distinguish between *imitatio* and *aemulatio*: they are not synonyms. *Imitatio* refers to the writer's attempt to reproduce a source as model in a new work. *Aemulatio* refers to the writer's attempt to outstrip the source's version of the model, in effect vying with it formally or substantively or both.
> (*Conspiracy*, p. 50)

Set out thus, these procedures seem relatively straightforward and easy to identify. However, matters become a great deal more complex when more than one procedure and indeed, more than one intertext is involved, as can often be the case. The process is further complicated when we consider that the material being lifted from sources may range from single words or phrases, to whole passages of verse. Ideas, concepts and motifs – all can be taken and re-used in a different, or even in a similar context: '*mutatio* may, in medieval practice, extend from elementary paraphrase to original transformation or even virtual metamorphosis of the source into something totally new in subject or mode,' (*Conspiracy*, p. 64).[80] The art of description itself, and our understanding of it may be clearly marked, yet as Kelly points out: 'as we move away from the sources and the author (in all Macrobius's senses) and towards *mutatio* and audience appreciation, matters become hazier and variables emerge,' (p. 56).

Despite these potential variables, however, in proffering Macrobius's saturnalian analysis of the various forms of description, Kelly offers a key to the understanding of functional intertextuality as it was at work in the Middle Ages. By combining Macrobius with the medieval arts of rhetoric and poetics, Kelly identifies a range of different procedures with which to examine almost any type of intertextuality. This range suggests that Kelly's analysis of rewriting theory and practice is an ideal tool with which to

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[79] '*Descriptio* overlaps in meaning with re-writing as copying, paraphrasing, imitating, and emulating; that is, with an original description by which an antecedent matter, motif, or theme is rewritten in order to enhance, improve upon, or correct the prior version or versions,' *Conspiracy*, p. 42.

[80] This is reinforced if we look at Kelly's comment on p. 171: 'The material rewritten may be a complete work... or it may entail rewriting a part of an earlier work, such as motifs, images, or smaller units of discourse... Examples of this latter kind are not rare in twelfth- and thirteenth-century literature.'

approach *Florimont*, a text which past scholarship suggests is resonant with intertextual references.

Kelly's analysis suggests that rewriting works on a variety of different levels, moving from the relatively simple act of *mutuatio* to the subtle complexities created by operating the different processes of *mutatio* upon several texts simultaneously. This thesis will follow a similar direction, starting with the simplest case of Aimon's addition to the *Roman d'Alexandre* tradition as he creates his own version of Alexander's genealogy, a process to which he explicitly refers in his Prologue (ll. 103-110). It then goes on to explore a more contentious intertext, *Partonopeus de Blois*, which has generated critical debate both as to *Florimont*'s originality and the extent to which it represents either *mutuatio* or *mutatio* of material drawn from *Partonopeus*. Alongside this it also considers material which may have been drawn from other models, both Celtic and classical, thus confirming what we know about the fluid, all inclusive nature of medieval rewriting. It is not limited to a single type of text or genre; rather the quest to recreate from existing works encompasses all texts and draws from different genres in its search for material.

Having seen from these two chapters that Aimon's rewriting crosses generic boundaries with ease and that he uses the *Roman d'Alexandre* and *Partonopeus de Blois* as two of the principal models in his rewriting, a number of perspectives on this rewriting are opened up for further analysis. Chapter 4 explores the ways in which Aimon fuses these particular models – arguably from different genres[81] – in the shape of one theme, that of education and, more precisely, in the person of one character, Floquart, thus achieving an overall coherence within his text. That these models are drawn from very different traditions confirms what we know about the fluid, all inclusive nature of medieval rewriting – it is not limited to a single type of text or genre; rather the quest to recreate from existing works encompasses all texts. Further light is shed on this process as Chapter 4 examines the manner in which the fusion of the *Roman d'Alexandre* and *Partonopeus de Blois* operates both as a commentary on the two earlier texts and on the very rewriting process in which Aimon is engaged. Chapter 5 moves the discussion on by bringing into consideration further important intertexts whose influence has been noted by critics: the *Roman d'Enéas* and Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés*. This final chapter addresses the question of the

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[81] Though the *Roman d'Alexandre* may tentatively be classified as a 'romance', its verse form (alexandrines rather than the more usual octosyllabic form) and the basis in reality of its subject matter combine to give it an epic flavour that is closer to *chanson de geste* than other romances.

contribution made by Aimon to an existing 'rewriting conversation' that had been carried out between *Partonopeus*, the *Roman d'Alexandre*, *Cligés* and the *Roman d'Enéas* and explores the effects Aimon achieves by bringing together multiple intertextual layers in an episode key to the romance, the love scene between the hero and the imprisoned heroine Romadanaple.

By thus using a critical framework which is grounded in medieval theory and based around a clear understanding of the process of medieval composition, but which has also been shown to be effective in modern times as a tool enabling us to analyse and understand medieval romance in particular, this thesis aims to open the possibilities of *Florimont* for future scholars.

Chapter 2

Florimont and the *Roman d'Alexandre*: Straightforward Rewriting?

To begin our exploration of *Florimont*'s intertextual relations we will start by looking at its links with the legends of Alexander the Great. The most compelling reason for doing so lies in the fact that Aimon de Varennes himself deliberately and explicitly weaves *Florimont* into the Alexander legend. In the Prologue he tells his audience about his composition and his hero, linking them to the lineage of Alexander of Macedon. That he does so at the very start of his Prologue gives us another reason for considering *Florimont*'s links with Alexander the Great first in our own examination; it makes sense to start from the same place as Aimon:

> Le romant fit a Chastillon
> De Phelipon de Masidone,
> Qui fut noris en Babilone,
> Et del fil a roi Maracas
> Qui estoit sire de Duras:
> Florimont ot nom en fransois
> (ll.18-23)

These few lines perfectly encapsulate Aimon de Varennes' writing technique. The juxtaposition of apparently known material (the story of Philip of Macedonia) with clearly unknown material (that of Florimont) sets forth a clear rationale for the text and neatly sums up the succeeding thirteen thousand verses as Aimon tells, first the story of Philip, then the story of Florimont. Despite this seeming clarity, closer examination reveals an underlying complexity, as there is an ambiguity as to which Philip of Macedonia, precisely, Aimon is referring to. New listeners might reasonably suppose it to be the well-known Philip of Macedonia who was father to Alexander the Great and, given Florimont's status as grandfather to Alexander, this would certainly be understandable. Familiarity with the text, however, reveals that the Philip in question is actually Alexander's great-grandfather, a person equally as unknown as Florimont. In just a few lines Aimon sets up expectations which he will later subvert, whilst at the same time availing himself of one of the most popular figures in the twelfth century. Such an unusual use of the Alexander legend reveals an intelligent rewriting which we will see at work throughout all of *Florimont*. These lines are followed on more than one occasion by Aimon's affirmation that Florimont is, in fact,

grandfather to Alexander the Great: see for example, ll. 11, 380-11, 388 or ll. 13, 580-13, 600.[1] In this respect Gaullier-Bougassas has commented that Aimon presents his work: 'comme un roman des origines du roi grec'.[2] As we have seen, Busby comments that *Florimont:* 'clearly exploits the popularity of the *matière d'Alexandre* at the end of the twelfth century... The continuing vogue of this subject over the following centuries ensured a continuing audience for Aimon's prose,' ('Filling in the Blanks', p. 85).

This gives us an excellent starting point, but the matter is complicated as there are several texts dating from this period which tell the story, one way or another, of the life of Alexander the Great both in Latin and in the vernacular. A large body of Latin work detailing Alexander's life, descended or adapted from various sources, made its way into the twelfth century. We shall briefly outline the most important of these texts before moving onto to consider the vernacular French texts and discussing which, if any, of these myriad texts Aimon may have been familiar with. One of the principal sources on Alexander available to medieval writers was the *Pseudo-Callisthenes*, written in Greek, probably by a native of Alexandria at some point after 200 BC.[3] The original *Pseudo-Callisthenes* has not survived and the text has come down to us in several recensions (see Cary, pp. 9-10). Of these, the ά recension represents the oldest surviving tradition. This recension was translated into Latin in the fourth century (Cary gives a date of approximately 320 AD, p. 10) by Julius Valerius, creating the *Res Gestae Alexandri Macedonis*. This translation was itself then abridged at some point in the ninth century and is known as the *Epitome* form. The *Epitome* was relatively popular in the Middle Ages; Cary notes that it was 'widely known and used' (p. 25). It was often paired with the *Epistola Alexandri ad Aristotlem*. This latter derives ultimately from the *Pseudo-Callisthenes* but enjoyed an independent existence from the *Pseudo-Callisthenes* and other descendants at an early date (Cary, pp. 14-16). Also derived from the *Pseudo-Callisthenes* we have the δ* recension upon which is based the texts collectively known as the *Historia de Preliis*, which Cary describes as 'one of the most important sources for medieval

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[1] 'Et sa feme un fil consut; / ... / Si fut Phelipes apalez; / Puels fut rois, si ot grant vertu / Et peires Alixandre fu, / Si com en Gre(s)ce di(s)t l'isto[i]re / Dont nos avommes la me(s)mo[i]re,' (ll. 11 380-388). 'La donait aprés a son fil, / [Phelipon que il ot eü / De sa fille, et cil peres fu] / Alixandre. Selui dona sa terre et puels le querona. / ... / Mai Alixandre conquest puis,' (ll. 13 580-590).
[2] Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas, *Les Romans d'Alexandre: aux frontières de l'épique et du romanesque* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1998), p. 366.
[3] George Cary, *The Medieval Alexander* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. 9. Cary gives an illuminating and useful survey both of the sources for medieval knowledge of Alexander and of the medieval derivatives of these sources. Much of the information in the following section is drawn from Cary's survey.

knowledge of Alexander' (p. 11). In the tenth century Archpriest Leo of Naples was sent on a mission to Constantinople. Whilst there, he made a copy of the Greek *Pseudo-Callisthenes* which he translated into Latin at the request of his master upon returning home. Neither Leo's copy nor his translation survive but these were reworked by later writers into three principal recensions, I^1, I^2 and I^3, to which the over-arching term of *Historia de Preliis* is usually applied.

Originally independent from the *Pseudo-Callisthenes* is the work of Quintus Curtis Rufus who, in the third century, wrote a biography of Alexander's life. This biography was later incorporated into the *Pseudo-Callisthenes* tradition and was the principal source for Gautier de Châtillon's late twelfth-century *Alexandreis*.[4] Dated to between 1171-81[5] this work was widely diffused and enjoyed considerable popularity: Cary remarks that it 'was the most popular of all medieval Latin epics' and that 'its author is acknowledged to have been the most distinguished poet of his time' (p. 63). The twelfth century also saw a Latin translation of the eight-century Syriac work, the *Secretum Secretorum*, which purported to be a book of counsel written by Aristotle for Alexander. Though important for treatises on political science Cary tells us that this work 'had little effect upon the medieval conception of Alexander' (p. 21).

These Latin sources formed a wealth of material from which writers in the vernacular could draw. The first vernacular text dealing with Alexander the Great was that written by Alberic de Pisançon in the early twelfth century. Of this work, which drew on Julius Valerius, the *Historia de Preliis* and the interpolated Quintus Curtius (p. 27), only the first 105 lines, detailing Alexander's birth and education remain. This was followed, around 1160, by a decasyllabic version of his life, known as the *Alexandre Décasyllabique* (or the *ADéca*). An expansion of an episode during the siege of Tyre known as the *Fuerre de Gadres* and briefly interpolated into the I^3 recension of the *Historia de Preliis* was also written at this time. Simultaneously (circa 1150-1175) there was a version of Alexander's

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[4] Townsend, *The "Alexandreis" of Walter of Châtillon*. He notes with regard to Gautier's use of Quintus Curtius Rufus, that 'substantial portions of the poem turn Curtius' prose into verse with some relatively slight rearrangement and substitution of metrically apt vocabulary', p. xvii.
[5] Cary dates it to between 1184-87 (p. 16) but Townsend, who considers the matter in more detail, comments that 'the exact dating of the poem is probably beyond definitive establishment' (p. xiv) later noting that 'we can say nothing with certainty beyond the fact that the poem was probably begun no earlier than 1171 and was finished by about 1181' (p. xv).

adventures in the Orient by Lambert Le Tort in circulation, known as *Alixandre en Orient.*[6] The majority of these texts were amalgamated into a hybrid 'super-story' of Alexander's life by Alexander de Paris.[7] Finished around 1184/5,[8] this *Roman d'Alexandre* proved popular – Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas comments: 'Il a connu une très grande diffusion au Moyen Âge, comme l'attestent le grand nombre de manuscrits conservés, la composition de continuations et l'annexion d'autres récits au XIIIe siècle,' (*Romans*, p. 12).

It is difficult to determine which of these texts – or indeed, which of the traditions, Latin or vernacular – Aimon may have been drawing upon as he composed *Florimont*. Manuscript evidence indicates that compilers placed *Florimont* alongside contemporary vernacular tales of Alexander (in MS B for example, *Florimont* can be found with the *Roman d'Alexandre*, the *Mort Alexandre* and Gui de Cambrai's *Vengement Alixandre*), but this reveals nothing of Aimon's sources. Though Aimon may well have spoken Latin (we are told, ll. 35-36 that he translates the story from Latin into the vernacular) we cannot say with certainty that he was drawing on any of the Latin Alexander texts. Hilka mentions Gautier de Châtillon's *Alexandreis* on two occasions in connection with the portrayal of largesse in *Florimont* (p. cxxxii), which perhaps suggests a tentative nod towards the Latin Alexander tradition. Given that he also sees allusions to Chrétien de Troyes' *Cligés* and the work of Bernard de Ventadour, amongst others, in the same passages however, it might be that these references are to a more generic tradition than to a particular Latin Alexander text. A clearer line of influence may be discerned with the vernacular French tradition. It is not insignificant that the *Roman d'Alexandre* was finished just about three years before Aimon composed *Florimont*.[9] If the previous works on Alexander had ensured that he was an increasingly well-known figure (and the sheer number of them would seem to suggest that this was indeed the case) and thus a tempting target for writers wishing to impress with

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[6] For further information on the dating of and relationships between these texts, see *The Medieval French Roman d'Alexandre*, Elliott Monographs edition, VII vols (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1937-42), vol. II.

[7] This amalgamation or the totality of these works will be referred to as the *Roman d'Alexandre*. Paul Meyer split this into four different Branches which roughly correspond to the earlier texts in circulation: thus, Branch I deals with Alberic de Pisançon's *enfances* of Alexander; Branch II seems to be Eustache's *Fuerre du Gadres*; Branch III is a version of *Alixandre en Orient* whilst Branch IV is a retelling of Alexander's death. Paul Meyer, 'Étude sur les manuscrits du *Roman d'Alexandre*', *Romania*, 11 (1882), 213-332. This chapter will use this version of the story of Alexander's life as it offers the most complete picture (see also below). Where I refer to a different version this will be specified in the text itself.

[8] Martin Gosman states that it was 'terminé probablement vers 1184/5'. Martin Gosman, *La légende d'Alexandre le Grand dans la littérature française du 12ième siècle* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997), p. 1.

[9] We have an exact dating for *Florimont* thanks to Aimon himself: he states in his Epilogue that *Florimont* was completed in 1188 (ll. 13 677-78).

their rewriting skills, then Alexandre de Paris' work represents the medieval equivalent of a modern day best-seller; as Aimon composed *Florimont* an increasing number of Alexandre de Paris' *Roman d'Alexandre* would have been in circulation. Details within *Florimont* such as Aimon's rejection of Alexander's bastardy on the basis that he later kills his supposed 'father', Nectanebus (ll. 3887-92), suggest that Aimon was aware of the *Roman d'Alexandre* as this is also the reason offered by Alexandre de Paris for his own rejection of Alexander's illegitimate status. For these reasons I have chosen to use Alexandre de Paris' text as a point of comparison for examining *Florimont*'s intertextual relations with the legend of Alexander the Great.[10] It also offers the widest scope for investigation as it combines the majority of his predecessors' works into one volume. I shall not be concentrating on any of the earlier texts – Latin or vernacular – concerning Alexander although, where pertinent, I shall attempt to trace their influence (see especially Chapter 4).

The choice of focus for this examination is important as, with two lengthy works (*Florimont* is 13, 680 lines, the *Roman d'Alexandre* 15, 924), it is simply not possible to catalogue every link and resonance between them. It is more fruitful to home in on what Alexander's story may have represented for its contemporary audience; certain aspects of his story were accorded particular importance in the Middle Ages. As we shall see shortly, Alexander was a by-word for the practice of largesse and, most particularly in Alexandre de Paris, his death became the negative exemplar of the folly of trusting and promoting low-born advisors, the *fils à vilain*. Correspondingly, after a brief discussion of the presentation of Alexander in the Middle Ages, our examination of the two texts will be centred around largesse and the attitudes each text portrays as regards the *fils à vilain*.

Alexander was both famed and celebrated for his use of largesse throughout the Middle Ages (see below, p. 57) – Cisek, for example, comments that it is Alexander's most famous virtue, second only to his prowess.[11] Aimon, meanwhile, makes it clear early on that largesse is an important part of his work as he devotes lines 38-100 of his Prologue to a discussion of the virtue of liberality. Largesse is, for Aimon, the source of all good qualities. He notes: 'Car largesce est meire d'amour / Et de proësce et de valour,' (ll. 95-

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[10] Alexandre de Paris' text can be found in *The Medieval French* Roman d'Alexandre, ed. by E. C. Armstrong, D. L. Buffum, Bateman Edwards, L. F. H. Howe, vol. II (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1937). All future references to the Alexandre de Paris text will be to this edition.

[11] 'Sa seconde vertu, venant après la vaillance sur le champ de bataille, c'est la libéralité... qui se trouve toujours beaucoup louée.' Alexandre Cisek, 'Considérations sur la réception du thème d'Alexandre le Grand au Moyen Age', in *Littérature et société au Moyen Age*, ed. by Danielle Buschinger (Paris: Champion, 1979), pp. 201-230 (p. 223).

96). The importance of largesse is underscored when he again stresses its importance in his Epilogue, both in more general terms – 'Car on ne vient en grant haltesce / Ne a grant honour san[s] largece' (ll. 13,656-58) – and, more specifically, in terms of the effect that it has had on Florimont's life:

> Pus fut tant por amor vaincus
> Qu'il fut nommeis Povre Perdus
> Et por amor et por lairgesse
> Ot mout d'anui et de povresse;
> *Por largesse et por amor*
> *Refut il puis a grant honour*
> (ll. 13,645-50, my italics)

Indeed, Laurence Harf-Lancner has already connected the two texts by using largesse as a bridge between them ('Le *Florimont* d'Aimon de Varennes'). This chapter will thus compare and contrast the use of and attitudes towards largesse in the two texts, considering whether Aimon has championed the cause of generosity merely as a means of further aligning his own hero with a legend celebrated for his liberality, or whether Aimon's presentation of largesse is a deliberate restructuring of the motif we see in the *Roman d'Alexandre*. This investigation will lead us to hypothesize that Aimon has used various techniques purposefully to adapt the concept of largesse as it is associated with Alexander. Such adaptation is, I propose to argue, a result not of disdain for the legendary Macedonian – quite the reverse – but rather of an acknowledgement that in portraying Alexander's life in verse, Aimon's predecessors and contemporaries were constrained by historical realities. Wanting to portray Alexander as a paragon of knighthood and kingliness, they were nonetheless limited in the scope of what they could depict him doing by the very fact of his existence as a historical figure. I argue that, as a 'fictional' character, Florimont represents a perfect solution to this 'problem': related to Alexander but without any historical facts dictating the events of his life, he can be manipulated as Aimon desires and made into a wonderful exemplar, one whose glory is in no way tarnished.

Alexander the Great's reputation was close to being that of an archetypal 'superhero' throughout the Middle Ages.[12] He was regarded as one of the Nine Worthies,[13]

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[12] Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas refers to the 'pouvoir de fascination qu'exerce Alexandre sur le Moyen Âge,' noting that the authors of each text on Alexander, 'contribuent ainsi chacun à la création d'un mythe littéraire d'Alexandre, qui dépasse le simple mythe politique du roi-conquérant.' *Romans*, pp. 9-10.

his name was a byword for supreme military prowess, and also for the specific personal characteristic of liberality. Alexander's name was synonymous with largesse, his generosity both feted and used to compliment noble patrons upon their own generosity.[14] Indeed, Donald and Sara Sturm-Maddox note as one of his most fundamental traits 'a largesse deemed exemplary in texts ranging from epic and troubadour lyric to romance.'[15] George Cary focuses on the twelfth to fourteenth centuries as a key period in the establishment of Alexander as a by-word for liberality, linking this to the influence of Alexandre de Paris' *Roman d'Alexandre*: 'the work which contributed most to the establishment of that reputation [for liberality] was the *Roman d'Alexandre*, with its emphasis upon Alexander as a generous giver' (p. 209).[16] Indeed, so closely is Alexander associated with largesse in the *Roman d'Alexandre* that his name becomes synonymous with generosity in this romance; at his birth we are told that joy and largesse rejoice and are given new life, having previously been crushed by bad lords.[17] Conversely, at his death, his men mourn the passing of liberality and valour from the world and suppose that their opposing counterparts are given new life.[18] Yet this emphasis on his liberality seems to have been part of a larger desire which saw medieval poets attempting to depict Alexander, despite his status as a pagan, as the perfect medieval prince, possessed of all the virtues which would make his life an

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[13] The Nine Worthies were nine historical figures meant to embody the ideal of chivalry. Divided into three triads in the form of Pagan Worthies, Heroes from the Old Testament and Worthies from the Christian era, Alexander was viewed as one of the pagan worthies. Deirdre O'Siodhachain, 'The Nine Worthies,' 1-4. <http://moas.atlantia.sca.org/oak/08/worth.htm> [accessed on the 20/05/08].

[14] Chrétien de Troyes' *Conte du Graal* for example, favourably compares his patron Philip of Flanders to Alexander in terms of his practice of largesse: 'C'est li cuens Phelipes de Flandres, / Qui mialz valt ne fist Alixandres, / Cil que l'an dit qui tant fu buens. / Mes je proverai que li cuens / Valt mialz que cist ne fist asez... / Donc sachoiz bien de verité / Que li don sont bien de charité / Que li bons cuens Felipes done... / Ne valt mialz cil que ne valut / Alixandres, cui ne chalut / De charité ne de nul bien?' Chrétien de Troyes, *Li Conte del Graal*, ll. 13-59. For a discussion of the potentially selfish motivations behind Alexander's generosity, see pp. 64-69, especially pp. 67-68. We can also see Chrétien's awareness of Alexander's reputation for liberality in *Cligés*, where he stresses the importance of largesse as a virtue (ll. 192-217) to Cligés' father, who happens also to be named Alexander. One senses that this is no mere coincidence.

[15] Donald Maddox and Sara Sturm-Maddox, *The Medieval French Alexander*, ed. by Donald Maddox and Sara Sturm-Maddox (University of New York Press: New York, 2002), p. 5.

[16] In this he is essentially summing up the views of Paul Meyer: Paul Meyer, *Alexandre le Grand dans la literature française du moyen âge*, 2 vol (Paris: F. Vieweg, 1886). Gaullier-Bougassas reinforces what Meyer and Cary have to say, noting that Thomas of Kent and 'surtout Alexandre de Paris donnent une grande ampleur à la relation des actes de largesse d'Alexandre,' and suggesting that 'pour Alexandre de Paris, Alexandre incarne le principe de largesse,' *Romans* pp. 145 and 324 respectively.

[17] 'A l'eure qu'il nasqui fu joie recouvree / Et barnages creüz et bontez ravivee, / Qui par mauvés seigneurs ert si anïentee / Que nuz hom ne donnoit vaillant une denree / Ne seul tant qui montast une pomme paree, / S'ainz ne seüst de quoi li fust guerredonnee,' (Branch 1, ll. 95-100).

[18] '"Proëce, vos dormés et malvaistés oisele, / Hui cest jor estes mise de grant cuve en cuvele. / Largetés est breaigne et avarisse aignele,"' (Branch IV, ll. 747-49). This evidence that Alexandre de Paris played a part in establishing Alexander's reputation for generosity can only reinforce our decision to use the *Roman d'Alexandre* as the basis for comparing Florimont's liberality with that of Alexander.

exemplary 'miroir du prince.' Not only is Alexander extremely generous, he is renowned for his prowess (see footnote 11) and is also a very learned king.[19] George Cary notes: 'some exemplar [sic] purpose, some lesson that the story of Alexander may convey, is professed in many of the Alexander-books,' (p. 189). This lesson may range from Alexander being 'recommended as an example to all classes of men,' to a 'special emphasis on the virtue of liberality,' (pp. 189, 190). Gaullier-Bougassas makes the tendency to impose twelfth-century values onto the Macedonian king even clearer. She remarks that Thomas of Kent and Alexandre de Paris proclaim Alexander as being:

> exemplaire, non seulement à cause de qualités guerrières qui appartiennent au portrait idéal des héros de chansons de geste comme de chroniques et de nombreux romans, mais aussi à cause de vertus qui le rapprochent uniquement de personnages des récits historiographiques et romanesques du XIIe siècle: la préférence qu'il accorde à la chevalerie au mépris des vilains, la largesse, la courtoisie, la « clergie ».
> (*Romans*, p. 22)

She notes that they

> essaient de lui enlever son altérité de héros antique païen... en le modelant sur les valeurs politiques médiévales, en le mettant en fiction comme précurseur prestigieux des chevaliers médiévaux et comme roi médiéval idéal.
> (p. 24)

Yet the price of this desire to portray Alexander as a perfect king seems to have been one of ambiguity. Despite the poets' best efforts to idealise Alexander's reputation, elements of that reputation refuse to be subsumed, meaning that the image of Alexander which emerges is ambiguous at best. Gaullier-Bougassas notes that even as the poets praise Alexander's exemplarity, their description of Alexander's childhood and his adventures in the Orient contradict their praise as they reveal: 'ses origines troubles, son autoritarisme, la démesure de son orgueil et de sa volonté de puissance,' (p. 22). She goes on to state that 'la narration des actions du héros ne correspond pas toujours avec l'image idéalisée que célèbrent les commentaires du narrateur et des personnages. Elle va même jusqu'à la contester, lorsqu'elle montre son autoritarisme et son oubli des devoirs inhérents à sa fonction,' (pp. 278-279). Cary is also aware of this dissonance between the 'desirable' image of Alexander

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[19] See Chapter 4 for a more detailed discussion of Alexander's education.

and the 'real' portrait of a power-hungry conqueror which shone through any embroidery added to his character. When examining how different periods valued different traits in Alexander he comments: 'new virtues came to be highly regarded and were brought into prominence... but no permanent change in the picture was brought about by these changes of emphasis. They altered the details of Alexander's character, *but his character could only be fitted to his career of conquest*, and therefore his basic role of conqueror was to outlive and outgrow the courtly mask that was temporarily fitted upon him' (pp. 224-225, my italics). Despite this latent ambiguity, however, Alexander remained a popular figure, with largesse as one of his most enduring characteristics[20] and it is with this largesse that we will engage.

For largesse as a concept is clearly equally important in *Florimont*. Aimon devotes long sections of both his Prologue and Epilogue to a discussion of largesse (see in particular ll. 57-100, ll. 13,643-75). He opens his Prologue by linking largesse with love and arguing the merits of a largesse supported by prowess, pointing out that largesse unsupported by prowess soon leads to the loss of everything, whilst its opposite (conquest of wealth without distributing it) leads its practitioner to be universally disliked (ll. 61-88). The idea of prowess, conquest and largesse working together as a beneficial triumvirate emerges clearly:

> Qui mout despant et poc amasce
> Tout son pris adonques i(l) laisse;
> Et qui conquiert et ne despant
> Il est haïtz de tout jant.
> *Li uns sans l'autre n'ait mestier;*
> *Car li uns doit et l'autre aidier.*
> *Poc valt conquerre sens doneir;*
> ....
> Boins princes doit toz jors *despandre*
> *Et conquester, doner et prandre*
> (ll. 85-94, my italics)

By dismissing both largesse unsupported by prowess (ll. 83-84, ll. 90-92) and conquest unmitigated by largesse (ll. 85-86), Aimon suggests that a unified largesse and prowess, working in conjunction, represent the only truly viable form of either virtue. Following this

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[20] As a part of the 'mask' that was fitted upon Alexander in the twelfth century, Cary comments: 'the conventions of French *courtoisie* brought with them the courtly doctrine of liberality... that took its place in the portrait of Alexander because it was considered a quality essential to him', p. 224.

Aimon moves onto a detailed list of the virtues associated with largesse, commenting specifically on the love and honors that it can bring to a man (ll. 95-102). The introduction of these concepts in the prologue is significant as it is precisely these ideas which are developed in the main body of *Florimont*. We see Florimont suffering and falling into disgrace as he espouses the largesse condemned by Aimon – that which is not sustained by prowess. The importance of largesse as a theme within the text is underscored for, as soon as Florimont reaches his lowest ebb in practising this 'incorrect' largesse, Aimon has his hero's tutor, Floquart, discourse on no fewer than seven different types of largesse. This discourse is 159 lines long and, were it removed wholesale from *Florimont*, could almost serve as a didactic poem in its own right on the practice of largesse.[21]

This discourse is comprehensive in nature, with Floquart explaining how each type of largesse works and what each can be expected to bring its practitioner. The first involves figures who achieve high status or lordship through largesse but who then abandon it in favour of avarice and greed. He compares practitioners of this largesse to bird-catchers who use sweet songs in order to trap and cage birds. The second type of largesse is that of the fearful, who show generosity as they fear attack if they are not generous; were they sure of safety, we are told, then they too would not practise largesse as they do not associate it with honour. This largesse is compared to the nightingale who sings not for pleasure but in order to guard its nest. The third category of largesse is that shown by serfs who sell, rather than give, meat to those staying with them. This is practised by lords who give generously, but only to their own men, not to strangers. Floquart comments that this largesse will not lead to greatness, stating that it has no honour and benefits only the lord who practises it. The fourth is again a type of largesse used by serfs, who use manure in order to enrich the land and produce more wheat: its practitioners are generous, but are so in a selective manner, hoping to gain a return for their liberality. The fifth, Florimont knows well as he has been practising it – it involves generosity beyond one's means, without using prowess as a means of sustaining largesse. The sixth is a solitary largesse, without honour: it involves giving gifts but again, is unsupported by prowess. The seventh advocates practising largesse in unison with prowess and sense; just as a ship without a helm is lost and

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[21] The cohesion of this discourse is such that one cannot help but wonder, when studying it, whether Aimon has based it, in whole or in part, upon an independent poem or whether he has drawn if from some other work. Analyses of the treatment of largesse in French and Latin Alexander texts have so far yielded no such model however, suggesting that, if it is indeed drawn from somewhere other than the imagination then the model has not survived.

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dangerous to its sailors, so too is largesse in danger of bringing its practitioner to poverty if practised without sense and prowess. Interestingly, the seventh type of largesse described in this discourse is that advocated by Aimon in his Prologue: largesse sustained by prowess and practised with good sense. This suggests that part of the reason for Florimont's previous behaviour had been precisely so that Aimon's point could be made all the more effectively. Immediately following this discussion Florimont is able to regain his status in society through the practice of this correct form of largesse, thereby reinforcing Aimon's claim in the Prologue that true largesse will bring honour and high rank to its practitioner. This idea is brought forward once more in the Epilogue to the romance as Aimon outlines the honour brought to Florimont through his practice of largesse and once again states that great status cannot be achieved without largesse, that largesse provides the means with which to conquer everything (ll. 13, 647ff).

Having seen that largesse and liberality are important in both our texts, it will be useful at this point to take a metaphorical step backwards and consider what, precisely, constituted the medieval conception of largesse. In detailing those seven types of largesse, Aimon showed that it was possible for the practice and understanding of largesse to vary greatly. We shall now look in more detail at how the act of giving and the reasoning behind it were construed in the Middle Ages. George Cary has outlined the philosophic conception of liberality as it was perceived in this period. He notes that it differentiated between *affectus* and *effectus*. *Affectus* is 'the natural benevolence of the giver,' whilst *effectus* is 'the objective act of giving,' (p. 88). The distinction between these two was of great importance as it was considered that it was the state of mind of the giver (the *affectus*), which defined real largesse. Cary notes that if this state of mind is in any way corrupted, then the resulting generosity loses meaning: 'if this is corrupt in any way, if it is not true benignity, but a desire for self-glorification, the groping towards a political end, or careless pleasure in giving, then the *effectus* must lose the name of true liberality,' (p. 88). He suggests that this distinction between *affectus* and *effectus* must be taken as 'the starting-point for any consideration of the medieval attitude to Alexander's liberality,' (p. 88). Also included in the philosophic definition of liberality is the size of the giver's treasury and the worth of the recipient (pp. 89, 210) – giving when one cannot afford to, and ostentatious displays of wealth which far outweigh the worth of the recipient are both to be condemned. Cary then contrasts this philosophic understanding of largesse with that espoused by

preachers, who prioritised different criteria in terms of largesse: 'neither the state of mind of the giver... nor the state of his treasury... nor the worth of the recipient... are matters which need serious consideration. The amount of the gift, that it shall be as large as possible, is the chief factor in the preachers' definition of liberality,' (p. 210). Thus where classical philosophers condemned Alexander's profligacy (p. 89) and even the more relaxed medieval moralists 'partly admitted' (p. 91) Alexander's prodigality, the preachers, 'have nothing but praise' for Alexander as 'a giver of great gifts,' (p. 210). In terms of how these differing views came together and impacted on secular writing, Cary notes that Alexander's methods and use of largesse are endorsed, rather than condemned (p. 213). This leads him to comment that 'in the *Roman d'Alexandre* and the other texts of the period there is no philosophic approach to liberality,' (p. 213) and, further, that in secular writing 'the question of the exact *affectus* is of little importance when compared with that of the amount of *effectus*,' (p. 214).

Tony Hunt is also aware of this distinction between *affectus* and *effectus* and, unlike Cary, he hypothesizes that secular writers in the Middle Ages were also very much aware of the difference.[22] Hunt analyses Chrétien de Troyes's Prologue to his *Conte du Graal* in which the poet's patron, Philip of Alsace is favourably compared with Alexander the Great, precisely for his largesse. In the course of his analysis Hunt demonstrates that medieval commentators understood the difference between the *affectus* and the *effectus* behind largesse. Though he recognises that largesse is key to the medieval portrayal of Alexander,[23] he also recognises that the Middle Ages displayed an awareness of the, in some sense, superficial character of Alexander's largesse, noting that in Chrétien's prologue, 'Alexander is presented only as a touchstone of the outward gesture of liberality,' (p. 366) and referring to the tradition of criticising Alexander which was present in a great deal of twelfth-century writing. He notes first, that comparisons between Philip of Macedon and his son, Alexander the Great, 'to the advantage of the former' were, 'commonplace in

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[22] Though the author that Hunt discusses, Chrétien de Troyes, was not responsible for any of the secular works dealing specifically with Alexander the Great, it could be argued that his romance *Cligés* reinterprets Alexander the Great via the figure of the hero's father, also called Alexander. Gaullier-Bougassas notes that this character was written 'probablement en contrepoint de... l'Alexandre « épique » des *Romans d'Alexandre*,' before going on to comment that Chrétien 'montre ainsi quelles transformations profondes doit subir à ses yeux le personnage historique et déjà littéraire d'Alexandre pour s'intégrer à son univers romanesque,' (*Romans*, p. 20) ; see also Chapter 5, p. 199-200. Tony Hunt, 'The Prologue to Chrestien's *Li Contes del Graal*', *Romania*, 92 (1971), 359-379.

[23] 'There is no denying that Alexander figures widely in the romances as the type or epitome of that most practical and fervently admired of medieval virtues, *largesse*,' pp. 364-65.

the ethical writing on liberality which was studied or composed in the twelfth century.' He then goes on to state: 'A tradition of criticism was attached to Alexander (and even to his liberality itself) in much twelfth century writing,' (p. 377). His article focuses on the prologue of Chrétien's *Conte du Graal* in which Chrétien favourably contrasts the largesse of his own patron, Philip of Alsace, with that of Alexander, before ultimately concluding that that of Philip of Alsace is superior, as it stems from purer motives:

> A distinction is made between the objective act of giving itself and the spirit of the giver which promotes that act... Thus, it may be suggested that Chrestien's [sic] demonstration of Count Philip's superiority to Alexander will reside in the opposition of the *affectus* which motivates the two, whilst the *effectus* of each's liberality is not in question, indeed, provides the cornerstone of the comparison.

(pp. 368-69)

That this has been deliberately developed by Chrétien is made even clearer when we consider that the vices he attributes to Alexander are purposefully and distinctly nullified in the portrayal of Count Philip, as we are told that Alexander suffers from vices from which the count is free.[24] It seems unlikely that Chrétien was the sole 'author' aware of these two sides to Alexander's generosity: Hunt refers to the 'considerable influence' that the philosopher Cicero possessed over the moral writers of the twelfth century (p. 366) before noting that with regards to Alexander's 'virtue': 'a lack of true generosity... was indicated by Cicero's criticism of his liberality as both ill-motivated and of evil influence,' (pp. 367-68), criticisms which were, moreover, 'continued by later writers,' (p. 368).

Hunt's analysis of the *affectus* and *effectus* echoes that of Cary,[25] but his examination of Chrétien's Prologue gives the lie to Cary's hypothesis that secular medieval writers had no concept of the philosophic notion of largesse. Another way of looking at this philosophic notion of generosity can be found in the model of commodity-exchange versus gift-exchange offered by political economist Christopher Gregory and used by Ad Putter in his discussion of the fourteenth-century English romance, *Sir Amadace*.[26] *Sir Amadace* is,

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[24] 'Car il ot an lui ammassez / Toz les vice et toz les maus / Don li cuens est mondes et saus,' (ll. 18-20). See also Hunt, 'Prologue', pp. 370-72.
[25] Cary: *Affectus* is 'the natural benevolence of the giver,' whilst *effectus* is 'the objective act of giving,' p. 88. Hunt: 'A distinction is made between the objective act of giving itself and the spirit of the giver which promotes that act,' p. 368.
[26] Christopher Gregory, *Gifts and Commodities* (Cambridge: Academic Press, 1982), see especially pp. 15-24. Ad Putter, 'Gifts and Commodities in *Sir Amadace*', *The Review of English Studies*, 51 (Aug 2000), 371-94.

of course, two centuries later than *Florimont* but, because it is based on anthropology rather than a specific period of time, Putter's exposition of *Sir Amadace* using Gregory's model may offer us the key towards understanding the concept of largesse as depicted in *Florimont*. Putter uses Gregory's model to open up *Sir Amadace*, successfully using it to make sense of what had previously been seen as the text's inconsistencies.[27] Summarising the distinction between the types of exchange offered by the model Putter notes that:

> In commodity exchange I swap objects or money that I own for something equivalent that you own, and the transaction is as short as the time it takes for the goods to change hands. In gift exchange the transaction is temporally extended, and in the process I establish not a relationship between equivalent objects, as in commodity exchange, but a relationship of social equality with the recipient.
> (p. 378)

In short, the gift 'extends the donor's sphere of influence' and it 'creates relationships of indebtedness between people,' (p. 378). Putter's analysis reveals that the merchant obstructing the burial of a colleague until the colleague's debt to him had been paid in full is the only character in the romance to practice commodity-exchange. This character, Putter notes, 'is caricatured so grotesquely as to present no serious threat,' (p. 379). Putter describes him as a 'niggard' who 'excommunicates himself from God and all noblemen by clinging to the tit for tat of "commodity exchange,"' (p. 378). Such niggardliness is contrasted with Sir Amadace who uses the last of his money to pay off the dead man's debt and provide a grand burial for him in a disinterested display of gift-exchange. Putter notes that these two types of exchange represent 'two different kinds of economies that *Amadace* sets in competition with each other' (p. 378). This would seem to suggest that the author of *Sir Amadace*, like the twelfth-century writers to whom Hunt refers, was aware of, and had a moral framework for, varying degrees of liberality. Indeed, I would argue that the idea of gift-exchange shows an awareness of *affectus* as it is concerned both with the state of mind of the donor (desiring to establish a benevolent relationship with the recipient) and with the worth of the recipient. Similarly it seems that commodity-exchange has more in common with the medieval notion of *effectus* as it concentrates solely on the objects that are given.

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[27] He points out that comparative study has not looked kindly on *Sir Amadace*, as it 'raises obstacles to appreciation' (p. 372), stating as he introduces Gregory's model that 'by enlarging our understanding of gift-giving our dissatisfactions with *Amadace* may disappear' (pp. 373-74). His analysis then goes on to offer interesting solutions to what previous scholars had seen as problems.

In making the sole practitioner of commodity-exchange into a thoroughly unpleasant character, the author of *Sir Amadace* indicates that some writers in the Middle Ages were aware of the distinction between the *affectus* and *effectus* of largesse.

Putter uses Gregory's model to reveal this moral framework at the heart of *Sir Amadace* and thus further our understanding of the text. He shows that Gregory's anthropological notions of commodity- and gift-exchange are a suitable way of approaching texts representative of a society very different from our own; their basis in anthropology rather than a specific time period allows them to serve as a bridge to different periods. Having seen their efficacy in opening up *Sir Amadace*, we might reasonably expect they might aid our understanding of largesse as it is at work in *Florimont*. This idea becomes more persuasive when we consider that Matilda Bruckner has created a model remarkably similar to that of Gregory and used it to analyse elements, not of a romance closer in time to *Florimont* than *Sir Amadace*, but *Florimont* itself (*Florimont*: Extravagant Host). Focussing on hospitality as a motif, she offers an analysis of two differing types: 'commercial hospitality' versus 'courtly hospitality':

> *Commercial Hospitality* [sic] with a bourgeois host is based on repayment in material goods for services rendered. (2) *Courtly Hospitality* [sic] with a noble host is part of an elaborate system of exchanges in which courtly services are performed for mutual benefit.
> (p. 58)

I would like to suggest that these definitions of hospitality could equally be extended to the study of largesse. Bruckner's definition of commercial hospitality, with its emphasis on material goods, can be likened to the notion of commodity-exchange discussed by Putter. She goes on to comment, with regard to courtly hospitality:

> A code of courtly behaviour appears to regulate implicitly the encounter between noble guest and host... Both guest and host should show gratitude, giving, accepting and returning services with true reciprocity.
> (p. 58)

This is remarkably similar to the concept of gift-exchange, with its emphasis on establishing a relationship of social equality with the recipient. Though I disagree with

some of Bruckner's conclusions,[28] it nonetheless seems inescapably clear not only that we should accept that largesse was an important motif for twelfth-century writers, one well worth discussing, but also that their understanding of the subtleties involved in different conceptions of largesse was, contrary to Cary's initial opinion, just as nuanced as that of the philosophers who originally discussed Alexander's largesse.

It is important for us to bear these nuances in mind when considering the nature of, and philosophy behind largesse, first in the *Roman d'Alexandre*, and then in *Florimont*, for it is these very nuances which will enable us to see the subtle differences between the largesse practised by the legendary Macedonian and that taught to his purported grandfather. Alexander in the *Roman d'Alexandre* is a generous man, of this there can be no doubt. From the moment of his birth he is identified with largesse and from his childhood onwards he is shown giving to others: as a young boy, having summoned all the *enfans* to him, he proceeds to give them great gifts:

> Largement leur donoit et fezoit lor talens:
> Chevaus et muls d'Espaigne et palefroiz amblans,
> Tirés et dras de soie et pailes aufriquans
> (Branch I, ll. 374-76)

Then his first act as a newly crowned king is to clothe and arm others:

> Li noviaus roys de Grece, qui le corage ot fier,
> Qui onques nen ama traïteur losengier,
> A fet ses compaignons devant apareillier
> Et dist que li plus povre soient vestu premier,
> S'ait chascuns bonnes armes et bon courant destrier
> (Branch I, ll. 548-52)[29]

Despite this apparently extraordinary generosity however, it should be noted that there is an underlying ambiguity inherent in Alexander's largesse. Cary has noted that in the *Roman*

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[28] She sees Florimont's relationship with the bourgeois Delfis as clearly being one of commercial hospitality ('Commercial Hospitality between Povre Perdu and Delfis will also operate on an extraordinary level,' (p. 60)) whereas I see it more as, if not an outright example of courtly hospitality, then at the very least an example which blurs the line between the two. For a discussion of Delfis' generosity, both material and otherwise, see pp. 93-97.

[29] Further examples of this generosity include: the presents he dispenses after he successfully claims Bucifal as his horse (Branch I, ll. 497-99); the gold he disperses among his men after the conquest of Porrus' palace (Branch III, ll. 953-55) and the return of his lands and wealth to Porrus (Branch III, ll. 2139-41) to name but a few.

d'Alexandre the 'most significant' lesson that Alexandre offers to his audience is: 'the art of making friends by liberality,' (p. 213). Though this may initially seem a form of gift-exchange – forming a relationship with the recipient – and thus to be in keeping with the disinterested *affectus* of true liberality, I argue that it actually represents a form of commodity-exchange. Alexander is not concerned with his relationship with those on whom he bestows his largesse; he merely wishes them to perform some service for him, thus showing that he is concerned only with the outcome of his largesse. For him, the *effectus*, the act of giving and what it will procure for him, matters more than the *affectus*, the spirit behind the gift. Cary is perhaps aware of this when he goes on to remark with regard to Alexander's art of 'making friends' that 'this theme reappears constantly throughout the poem, where it is frequently stressed that it was Alexander's liberality that won him the world by inspiring his followers to deeds of valour' (p. 213).

The idea of largesse inspiring prowess is key to our understanding of Alexander's practice of largesse. Alexander was an ambitious man and his ambitions have been well documented, both within the medieval French tradition itself and in the critical literature surrounding it: Donald Maddox and Sara Sturm-Maddox, for example, include 'an indomitable drive to conquer' within their list of Alexander's traditionally most fundamental traits (*Medieval French Alexander*, p. 5).[30] In the *Roman d'Alexandre*, Alexandre is portrayed as stating outright his desire to conquer the world:

> Et quant porpensez s'est, si commence a jurer
> Que mout fist Dieus peu terre por un homme honorer;
> Deus tans en poïst bien uns preudon gouverner.
> Et puis a dit aprés: "Se longnes puis durer,
> Seur tant comme il en est vodrai je seignorer."
> (Branch I, ll. 2031-35)

Alexander uses his largesse as a means of achieving these ambitions, binding his army to him in a sort of largesse pact. He is very much aware that his followers will suffer greatly in order to attain the rewards that he offers them and he uses these promised rewards to ensure their loyalty to him. We can see this in his pledge to make his peers kings if they follow him and in his assurance to his men that their suffering and loyalty will be well

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[30] Gaullier-Bougassas refers to his 'démesure orgueilleuse, pour éprouver les limites de la condition humaine,' whilst at the same time referring to his wish to 's'élever à une condition supérieure,' *Romans*, p. 10.

rewarded.[31] Alexander's awareness that it is his largesse which binds his army to him, is made explicit when he tells Porrus:

> "Avers hom ne puet mie conquerre autrui regné,
> Ains pert molt sa terre, q'ainsi veulent li dé.
> Ses com m'aiment mi home par ma grant largeté?
> De ma volenté faire se sont tous jors pené,
> Et jou ai a chascun itant du mien doné
> Que mieus vaudroient estre trestuit ars et venté
> Que riens eüssent fait contre ma volenté."
> (Branch III, ll. 2242-48)

Stephen White has also commented on this, noting that in the *Roman d'Alexandre* 'the interdependency of generosity and conquest is openly acknowledged' and suggesting that this makes Alexander appear in a favourable light as he desires conquests in order to give gifts to his peers and men.[32] However, he then cites a Philippe de Navarre anecdote about Alexander which states more explicitly that which is evident throughout all of Alexander's uses of largesse in the *Roman d'Alexandre*; namely that 'instead of practising indiscriminate, disinterested, or charitable generosity, Alexander uses a distinctive form of largesse: he gives and gives generously mainly to the nobles who serve him in war, and rarely if ever gives much to anyone else,' (pp. 134-35).[33] Indeed, as White goes on to point out: 'anyone who is not a beneficiary of his largesse is likely to be a victim of his plundering,' (p. 135). By comparing and contrasting Darius' largesse with that of Alexander – presenting the one as a form of bribery as far as fief-giving is concerned whilst the other is perceived as a generous reward – White concludes that the *Roman d'Alexandre* 'reproduced and mystified but failed to resolve a fundamental underlying ambiguity in fief-giving, which could never, of course, be distinguished clearly and conclusively from bribery' (p. 138).

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[31] Alexander's promise to make each of his twelve peers a king: '"Un don vous prometrai et tendrai en verté / Que ja ne conquerrai ne chastel ne cité / Qui ne soient trestout a vostre volenté. / Ja mes ne finerai en trestout mon aé / Tant que chascun de vous ferai roy coronné,"' (Branch I, ll. 1388-92). His assuarance that his men's suffering will be rewarded: 'Li roi monte en un tertre s'a sa gent esgardee. / "Ahi! franche maisnie, gentil et honoree, / Comme estes por m'amor de tous biens porpensee / Et tante estrange terre en avés trespassee / Et tant fain et tant soif, tante paine enduree. / Se Dieus me laist tant vivre que viegne en ma contree, / L'amor qu'avés vers moi vos iert gueredonee, / Trestoute ma richoise vos iert abandonee,"' (Branch III, ll. 1733-40).
[32] Stephen White, 'Giving Fiefs and Honor: Largesse, Avarice, and the Problem of "Feudalism" in Alexander's testament', in *The Medieval French Alexander*, pp. 127-141 (p. 134).
[33] The anecdote he refers to can be found in *Les Quatre ages de l'homme: Traité moral de Philippe de Navarre*, ed. by Marcel de Fréville (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1888), c. 70, p. 41.

In wanting something specific from his followers – their service and their prowess –
Alexander seems to be practising a form of commodity-exchange and commercial
hospitality where he is concerned solely with the outcome of his giving (his *effectus*).
Gaullier-Bougassas comments that: 'des mobiles purement profanes inspirent l'entreprise
collective que le roi dirige... il unit son armée autour d'un espoir d'enrichissement,' and
that 'Le *Roman d'Alexandre* présente toujours la largesse comme un instrument politique
déterminant, qui sert la réalisation de désirs interdépendants, la volonté de puissance du roi
et l'aspiration à l'enrichissement des chevaliers, et *constitue le ciment de l'armée,'*
(*Romans*, pp. 282, 327, my italics). This selfishness in Alexander's use of largesse is made
particularly clear early in the first Branch as he seeks to encourage his men to conquer and
kill a Duke who has refused his sovereignty:

> "Qui premiers montera sus la roche que voi
> Et de ma riche enseigne mosterra le desploi,
> Dis mars d'or li donrai, ce li plevis par foy,
> Li autre en avra nuef et li tiers uit, ce croy,
> ....
> Et chascuns de ces autres en avra un par soi,
> Pour ce qu'il m'abatront du duc le grant boufoy."
> (Branch I, ll. 2285-93)

That Alexander is not concerned with the *affectus* of his gifts, and that his largesse is not a
form of courtly hospitality or of gift-exchange is also signalled by his relationship with his
followers, as it is made clear that *his* is the only opinion that matters and that he will do as
he wishes. When Tholomers remonstrates with him for having put his life – and thus those
of his people – at risk in pursuing adventure under the sea, Alexander dismisses his peer's
justifiable concern and instead retorts that not for all the gold in the world would he have
given the adventure up:

> "Se vous fuissiés noiés, vostre gent fust perie."
> "Tholomé, dist li rois, si Dieus me beneïe,
> Ce sachiés por tout l'or qui est tresq'a Pavie
> Remés ne vausisse ester, ne vos celerai mie," ·
> (Branch III, ll. 525-28)

Gaullier-Bougassas sums up this 'commodity-exchange' relationship perfectly when she
comments that Alexander 'réduit les chevaliers au rang d'esclaves, en achetant leur liberté

par ses largesses,' and that he 'n'hésite pas à sacrifier leurs intérêts s'ils vont à l'encontre des siens,' (*Romans*, p. 330).

This aspect of Alexander's liberality is further clarified if we consider that his generosity seems designed more as a way of reflecting glory back onto himself by emphasising the wealth and power he can afford to give away (thus increasing his own prestige) rather than being of true benefit to the recipient. In this respect his *effectus* would certainly lose the name of true liberality as defined by the philosophers. This tendency is shown most famously in his offer of a city to a harpist by whose music he is charmed (Branch 1, ll. 2631-54); he gives because it amuses him to give, as if indulging a whim, rather than because he has been moved by the musician's plight (see especially ll. 2643-51). I would argue that this is also shown in Alexander's attitude towards the 'tour guides' who reveal the mysteries of three 'magical' fountains to him.[34] When he first hears of them his immediate reaction is to offer these guides more wealth than they could think to ask for, in return for showing him these marvels:

> Qant Alixandres l'ot, si commence a parler:
> "Se tu icés noveles me fais en voir ester,
> Plus te donrai chevaus, or fin et argent cler
> Qu'entre toi et tes freres n'oserés demander."
> (Branch III, ll. 3012-15)

In showering these old men with more wealth than they could hope to use in what remains of their lives, Alexander draws attention to his generous nature and obscures the fact that he had earlier threatened the same old men with gruesome deaths (Branch III, ll. 2974-79).[35]

The impression that Alexander's largesse is all about Alexander is reinforced when we consider how closely the *Roman d'Alexandre* identifies Alexander with this virtue. We have already seen that at his birth and again at his death Alexander's name becomes synonymous with largesse (see above, p. 57), but as a motif largesse is a concept that is nearly always associated with Alexander.[36] Largesse is thus portrayed more as an extension

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[34] One has the power to return a bather from old age to youth, one will provide everlasting life to whomsoever should bathe in it, whilst the third can resuscitate the dead (Branch III, ll. 2991-3011).

[35] That his threats are reported in indirect speech whilst his offer of wealth is made in direct speech enhances this favourable portrait of Alexander.

[36] For examples of verses which treat largesse in a more general fashion and which are not specifically associated with Alexander, see Branch I, ll. 53-55 and Branch III, l. 5216.

of Alexander's character than as a virtue that is worthy in its own right.[37] So, for example, when Emendius fears that he will die at the battle of Gaza, his first response, as he regrets that he will never again see his liege lord, is to refer to the gifts Alexander had bestowed.[38] Again, largesse serves to enhance Alexander's reputation to the point where people whom one would expect to number among his enemies seek instead to join him in the hope of receiving some of his great munificence. Darius' nephew for example, chooses to join his uncle's enemy:

> "Je sui niez le roy Daire, ne le te quier celer,
> Fuiz sui de sa serour, mout me deüst amer,
> Mes il me tolt ma terre por moi desheriter.
> *Or sui venuz a toi, que j'ai oï conter*
> *Que tu retiens les povres qui ont oeus d'amender,*
> Et plus povre de moi ne pues tu esgarder,
> Car je n'ai tant d'avoir dont je pregne un diner."
> (Branch I, ll. 716-22, my italics)

Porrus, the King of India, even goes so far as to declare Alexander the most generous person there has ever been (Branch III, l. 2237). This assimilation of Alexander with largesse reaches its most extreme after his death, as people are paying tribute to him. In his homage to his lord Dans Clins states:

> "Avarise et largece courent par aatine
> Et muevent d'un eslais, mais li siecles destine
> Que largece est vaincue, nis mes cuers le devine;
> C'est drois, puis que cil muert qui tout li siecle acline,"
> (Branch IV, ll. 664-67)

This essentially makes largesse and Alexander one and the same, suggesting that there cannot be one without the other.[39]

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[37] As we shall see, in *Florimont* Aimon uses the *transmutatio* rewriting technique to turn largesse into a virtue in its own right, making it a social necessity which his hero needs to learn. In doing so Aimon gives himself the opportunity to explore in detail the concept of largesse and how it operates.

[38] 'Des biaus ieus de son chief commença a plorer / Et le roi Alixandre forment a regreter: / "Ha! frans roi debonaires, qui tant nos seus amer, / Tes pailes et ton or et ton argent doner / Et tes beles richeces a chascun presenter"' (Branch II, ll. 300-04).

[39] See also the words of Aristotle in the same scene, which, although not quite so extreme, nonetheless suggest identification of Alexander with largesse: '"Largesce estoit ta mere et tu ieres ses fis; / En doner iert ta gloire, ta joie et tes delis"' (Branch IV, ll. 1032-33). Cary notes with regard to this assimilation that at Alexander's death: 'What is bewailed is not merely the passing of the conqueror but the passing of all courtesy and all 'largesse' from the world,' (p. 195). It is interesting to note at this point that in his Prologue

Hand in hand with the association of Alexander with largesse in the *Roman d'Alexandre* is the association of any non-nobles – serfs in particular – with the very opposite of largesse: avarice and greed. This is best shown by an examination of the behaviour of Darius' serfs. Once they are given noble wives and titles, their rapaciousness becomes such that it turns Darius' noble vassals against him to the extent that they refuse to fight for him:

> Mais por ce fu vaincus et ses regnes conquis
> Qu'es fieus de ses garçons estoit ses consaus mis
> Q'avoit fait de sa terre seneschaus et baillis,
> Donees gentieus femes et es honors asis.
> ....
> Et hontes et contraires ont tant fait as gentis
> Q'il n'a home en sa terre qui ne li soit eschis.
> Qant vint au grant besoing sor l'eaue de Gangis,
> Si dist li uns a l'autre: "Ja n'ait il Paradis
> Qui por malvais segnor se laist navrer el vis
> Ne qui'n avra colee desor son escu bis;
> Combatent soi li serf que il a enrichis,
> *Qui nos avoirs nos tolent et font clamer chaitis;*
> Ja cil n'avra la terre qui nos en face pis."
> Lors s'en torna chascuns tout droit en son païs
> (Branch III, ll. 172-89, my italics)

Gaullier-Bougassas has remarked that Alexandre de Paris 'présente le statut des *serfs*, non comme une condition sociale, mais comme une nature qui prédispose au vice et à la trahison sans que rien ne puisse la modifier,' (*Romans*, p. 324). Such baseness of character is aptly demonstrated both by the serfs' ultimate betrayal of Darius and by the ruse with which Alexander is able to apprehend them.[40] After murdering their liege lord, Alexander plays upon the serfs' greed in order to bring them to justice. By promising them necklaces and bracelets, and to raise them above all others, he persuades them to make themselves known to him before imprisoning and hanging them (Branch III, ll. 313-347). What makes this apprehension and punishment ironic, of course, is that Alexander fails to heed the

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Aimon states: 'Car largesce est *meire* d'amour / Et de proësce et de valour,' (ll. 95-96, my italics). Is this a coincidental repetition of the word 'mère' in an association with largesse or has Aimon used the *adiectio* rewriting technique deliberately to evolve the concept of largesse as a 'mother', broadening it so that it is no longer exclusive to Alexander but also encompasses the virtues perceived as necessary for a medieval ideal? Given his treatment of the largesse theme elsewhere in the text, such an evolution becomes a distinct possibility.

[40] See Branch III, ll. 259-264 for Darius' death at the hands of his serfs.

warning offered by Darius and ultimately dies in a manner similar to that of the Persian king – at the hands of wrongly promoted serfs, the infamous *fils à vilain* who seem incapable of honourable behaviour.

This class distinction and the negative picture it incorporates of the lower classes who attempt to move out of their allotted place in society and join the higher, aristocratic ranks is an important motif in the *Roman d'Alexandre* and it is also important in another key intertext for *Florimont*, *Partonopeus de Blois*.[41] The usual term for such social climbers is *fils à vilain*. In the *Alexandre*, the mistrust and dislike of them is a leitmotif which runs throughout the text, beginning with Aristotle's warning as he educates Alexander never to trust serfs (Branch I, ll. 343-49), and ending with a brutal representation of the truth of his words as Alexander is betrayed and poisoned by the very serfs whom he had elevated.[42] In *Partonopeus* meanwhile, though it is less of a constant motif, as a concern it is certainly present in the description of Anchisés and within the Sornegur episode as Sornegur is betrayed and dishonoured by the *fils à vilain*, Marés (ll. 2539ff).[43] Marés deliberately breaks the terms set for single combat between Sornegur and Partonopeus, coming to the field armed and capturing Partonopeus. Not strictly speaking necessary to the narrative (whose focus is Melior and Partonopeus – his betrayal of her and their eventual reconciliation), the fact that the anonymous poet includes an examination of the *fils à vilain* theme in this episode (even having a section in which Sornegur laments the rise of the *fils à vilain*) suggests that he viewed it as an important topic, one with which it was well worth engaging. This is then elaborated on in the Continuation as Partonopeus and his former

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[41] We will see interaction between these two intertexts as Aimon joins together elements taken from both in his development of different models of largesse. See discussion pp. 87-88.

[42] For Aristotle's reaction to Alexander's resulting death, see Branch IV, ll. 1047-60.

[43] *Partonopeus de Blois*, ed. by Gildea. *Partonopeus* has traditionally been dated to between 1182-85, with *Florimont*'s date of 1188 serving as a firm *terminus ad quem* for *Partonopeus*. However, Eley and Simons have in recent years challenged this view, arguing convincingly for *Partonopeus* having instead been composed sometime in the 1170s. In their recent edition Olivier Collet and Pierre-Marie Joris note that the question of *Partonopeus*' date is one that 'remains open' (p. 21). The exact date of composition has little bearing on the text's relationship with *Florimont* as *Partonopeus* clearly precedes Aimon's text. For a more detailed examination of the dating of *Partonopeus* see: *Partonopeu de Blois*, ed. by Olivier Collet and Pierre-Marie Joris (Paris: Librairie Générale Française, 2005), pp. 14-22 and Penny Eley and Penny Simons, '*Partonopeus de Blois* and Chrétien de Troyes: A Re-assessment', *Romania*, 117 (1999), 316-341. The exact date of *Partonopeus* does, of course, have a bearing on its relationship with the *Roman d'Alexandre*. If the later dating for *Partonopeus* is correct then it is perhaps coincidental that both texts express concern at the promotion of *fils à vilain* – independent demonstrations of contemporary societal fears. If, however, *Partonopeus* is substantially earlier than the *Roman d'Alexandre* it raises interesting questions about *Partonopeus*' possible influence on the later text.

squire Anselot discuss instances of such apparently commonplace betrayals.[44] This seems to have been a popular cause for concern in the twelfth century. Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas notes that with Aristotle's exhortation 'scornfully to reject the low born and the serf,' Alexandre de Paris 'appropriates... a political ideal already prevalent in the twelfth-century vernacular texts'.[45] William W. Kibler tells us that, for all the lessons it purports to offer, 'what sets Alexandre de Paris's poem apart is its insistence that a noble ruler not rely upon the counsel of lowborn men'.[46] He comments that the theme of mistrusting low-born classes 'is a particularly timely one for its period' (p. 121) before going on to say that it does not seem unreasonable to see in the work of Alexandre de Paris 'the reflection of ideas that were current among the upper aristocracy of that period' (p. 121). He suggests that this rampant distrust of the non-noble classes is a backlash against the rising influence of a bourgeois middle class within traditional courtly circles and notes that this attitude 'appears to come to special prominence in the later-twelfth and early-thirteenth centuries, when the rising moneyed class and the favours accorded them within the king's curia became an increasingly unpleasant reality for the traditional aristocracy' (p. 122).[47]

This examination of the theme of largesse – and its opposite – in the *Roman d'Alexandre* illustrates the kind of interest in and debate on the nature of liberality which was current in the latter part of the twelfth century.[48] Having seen that largesse is also present as a theme in Aimon's *Florimont*, two important questions are raised: firstly, does Aimon use the topic of generosity as a target for practising the art of rewriting and, secondly, does any rewriting reveal anything about Aimon's attitude to his intertextual model and to the broader debate about liberality? At first glance, Aimon appears to use liberality as a character trait in a similar way to Alexandre de Paris: it is a virtue associated

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[44] Penny Eley sees this as evidence of the influence of some version of the *Roman d'Alexandre* on the Continuation of *Partonopeus de Blois*. Penny Eley, 'Power, birth and values: the *fils à vilain* theme in *Partonopeus de Blois*.' Paper given to the London Medieval Society in January 2006.

[45] Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas, 'Alexander and Aristotle in the French Alexander Romances', in *The Medieval French Alexander*, pp. 57-73 (p. 61 and footnote 15).

[46] William W. Kibler, '"A paine a on bon arbre de malvaise raïs": Counsel for Kings in the *Roman d'Alexandre*', in *The Medieval French Alexander*, pp. 111-125 (p. 121).

[47] See also Fourrier, *Le courant réaliste* and Erich Köhler, *L'Aventure chevaleresque* (Paris: Gallimard, 1974) and 'Observations historiques et sociologiques sur la poésie des troubadours', *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale*, 7, 1964, 27-51, cited in Dominique Boutet, 'Sur l'origine et le sens de la largesse arthurienne', *Le Moyen Age*, 89 (1983), 397 - 411.

[48] Cary discusses the portrayal of largesse in the didactic books of the *Exempla*, charting the evolution from classical, philosophical views of largesse to a conception which focussed on alms giving and the Christian charity of liberality. In doing so he shows that a desire to understand largesse was not solely a concern for secular writers, but rather a desire felt by many in the twelfth century, (pp. 154-155).

with the hero. But closer examination reveals a more nuanced and, as we shall see, a more developmental presentation of the famous attribute.

Florimont's largesse is best considered split into three different sections: the first involving the largesse that he shows as a young knight, when his relationship with the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* is still a secret; the second, his behaviour when he first arrives in Philipopolis; and the third, and most important, the over-generosity leading to destitution which he displays when the *Dame* leaves him. These correspond to the major sections in the hero's life and development where largesse has a particular role to play.

The largesse Florimont practises as a young knight is in keeping with that of medieval romance heroes. Following both his tutor's and his father's advice,[49] when Florimont goes to fight for King Medon of Slavonia he is generous with his wealth and conquests and refuses to accept gifts from others:

> Florimont dona son avoir
> ....
> Li rois li volt avoir doner.
> Florimons ne l'en welt porter,
>
> ....
> Florimons ot mout aporté
> [D'] avoir qu'il avoit conquesté.
> Il le dona mout largement
> As cheveliers et a la gent
> (ll. 2938-82)

He seems to have an instinctive understanding of the advice that he is given; namely that his largesse should be supported by his prowess (see also ll. 2921-22). In this respect Florimont's largesse certainly resembles that of Alexander and might be said to be a deliberate *imitatio* of the Macedonian's generosity. Supported by his *chevalerie*, Florimont immediately distributes the goods he gains from conquering Garganeüs among his men:

> Florimons el chastel ala,
> Gaires de gent nen i trova,
> Desgarnit le trova, cel prist,
> Trestot l'estaige descomfit.

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[49] For Floquart's advice see ll. 2751-76, but especially l. 2754: ' « Ton avoir done largement, »', ll. 2762-63: ' « Te welt de son aveir doner, / Nel prendre, se t'en puels guenchir, »' and ll. 2773-74: ' « Adés done, toz jors conquier; / Largesce te doit essaucier, »'. Florimont's father suggests: ' « Tant d'avoir com poras avoir / Done et [si] despent a pooir, »' (ll. 2919-20).

Mout i trova d'or et d'argent,
Si le dona tot a sa gent
(ll. 3621-26, my italics)

There is nothing out of the ordinary in such behaviour and indeed, it does resemble that of

Alexander, whose men are rewarded after taking cities for him.[50] It also accords with the

behaviour one would expect of any romance hero who would be assumed to practise the

courtly virtue of largesse.[51] We might assume then, that Aimon is deliberately reproducing

a largesse model which has been successfully used by his predecessors, as a form of

imitatio.

However, dissimilarities and oddities start to creep into Florimont's behaviour in

the second and third of our three sections. At first glance, Florimont's behaviour and use of

largesse when he first arrives in Philipopolis could not be more different from that of

Alexander. Poor – and perceived as such, whereas Alexander is a mighty king – Florimont

nonetheless sets about distributing goods to the poorest knights of the city and bestowing

lavish hospitality on Rysus and the companions who had travelled with him, in an

extravagant display of gift-exchange.[52] When he sends Floquart ahead to Philipopolis he

instructs him to prepare both their accommodation and new clothes and arms for Rysus and

his companions, before then telling him to let it be known throughout the city that whoever

should need arms or a horse should come to him to get it:

« .XIII. robes nos faites faire,

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[50] See for example, Branch I, ll. 1377-81: 'La bataille est veincue, cil dedens sont maté. / Mout fu granz li eschés qu'il i ont conquesté; / Li roys l'a a ses homes departi et donné, / Onques n'i ot baron, malade ne navré, / Que il nen ait le jor bonnement regardé.' The capture of Gaza sees a similar distribution of wealth: 'Qant li rois ot pris Gadres et saisi les deffois, / Por la terre garder i laissa des Grigois. / Des bachelors du regne, des chevaliers courtois, / .... / En mena Alixandres plus de deus mile et trois; / Tant par l'ont aamé por ce qu'il est courtois, / Et les avoirs lor done et les arrabiois,' (Branch II, ll. 2413-20).

[51] For example Partonopeus, the eponymous hero of *Partonopeus de Blois*, uses wealth provided by his *amie* Melior as a part of his cousin's campaign against the Sultan of Persia. The heroes of Marie de France's *lais* also show what an integral part of courtly life liberality was. Guigemar's largesse is seen as part of the many virtues which make him an exemplary knight: 'Guigemar noment le dancel: / el reialme nen out plus bel. / .... / Guigemar se part de la curt; / mult i dona ainz qu'il s'en turt,' (ll. 37-50). Eliduc is also shown to be generous, distributing all that he gained fighting against the King of Cornwall's enemies: 'As altres depart le harneis; / a sun ués ne reticent que treis / chevals ki li erent loé; / tut a departi e dune, / la sue part comunement, / as prisons e a l'altre gent,' (ll. 259- 64). For Lanval meanwhile, Arthur's *lack* of generosity towards him is seen as unusual, inappropriate and a justifiable source of discontent: belonging to the King's retinue, it is made clear what a fix Arthur's lack of largesse places Lanval in: 'De la maisinee le rei fu. / Tut sun aveir a despendu; / kar li reis rien ne li dona, / ne Lanval ne li demanda. / Ore est Lanval mult entrepris,' (ll. 29-33). Marie de France, *Lais*.

[52] For an example of the hospitality provided by Delfis on behalf of Florimont, see ll. 5501-25.

Et d'armes i ait .XIII. paire;
....
Savoir faites as chevaliers,
A[s] damoisiaus, as sodoiers:
Cheveliers qui n'avrait hernois,
S'avoir en welt, vignet a moi;
Damoisiaus qui armes vodrait,
C'il vient a moi, il les avrait.
C'il i ait povre chevelier
Qui nen ait armes ne destrier,
Cheval, armes et palefroi
Avrait, c'il welt venir a moi. »
(ll. 4943-60)

It is interesting to note that where Alexander's largesse seems an ostentatious way of subtly drawing attention to himself, the principal beneficiaries of which are his own men, Florimont's generosity includes mercenaries (*sodoiers*) and those not yet knighted (*damoisiaus*) as well as the to be expected *cheveliers*. Indeed, rather than showering them with unsought-after wealth (one thinks again of Alexander and his 'tour guides'), Florimont's generosity seems more humble in that he offers what people need – harnesses, horses, weapons – in order to be able to sustain themselves and create their own wealth. This represents an example of the *immutatio* rewriting technique, as Aimon uses *detractio* to take away the self-glorification element of Alexander's largesse, replacing it instead with a consideration of the social status of the recipient, a trait entirely in keeping with the *affectus* of philosophic liberality.

Such apparently disinterested giving falls well within the realm of gift-exchange, as Florimont *seeks* nothing in return for these gifts. This is not to say, however, that he *receives* nothing in return for them. Though it appears disinterested, the concept of gift-exchange nonetheless contains a paradoxical self-interest. Ad Putter comments: 'The gratuity represents the surplus that givers earn, and points to the paradox that, along with the poet, we should maintain: economic disinterest (giving, spending, conspicuously consuming) is always in one's long-term economic interest' (p. 376). The idea that largesse may earn something back for you in the future appears at length in *Florimont* and it is via this medium of gift-exchange that it functions. Florimont is told on more than one occasion of the greatness that largesse may bring to him as the text reiterates and reinforces the message first introduced in the prologue: namely that largesse is a beneficial virtue capable

of bringing great praise and an elevated social stature to its practitioner. As we have seen, Aimon states in his prologue:

> Car largesce est meire d'amour
> ....
> Ensi puet del siecle joïr,
> Amors et honors maintenir,
> Dont il ert del siecle loeiz
> Et après sa mort remanbreiz
> (ll. 95-102)

This suggests that the correct application of largesse, as well as assuring love and honour in life may even, in the form of people's memories, ensure a life after death. Florimont's father later expounds this theory as a part of his son's education (an education which, crucially, takes place before Florimont meets the *Dame de l'Ile Celee*), adding details and giving form to the more generic assertions of the prologue. He tells Florimont:

> « Biaus fils, tot done de boen gré
> Quanque tu jai avoir poras:
> Per largeté mout conquerras.
> Largesce done signorie
> Et a son amin est amie:
> Selui cui ele veult norrir
> De plusors gens le fait servir,
> Plus halt le met que ne puis dire
> Biaus fils, nus ne poroit descrire
> Le bien que largeté ait fet.
> ....
> Per largesce seras amez,
> En cort servis et honorez »
> (ll. 1920-36)

In other words, the practice of largesse will ensure – as the paradox of gift-exchange notes – that the practitioner's own interests will be well served. Mataquas' words seem almost prophetic as this is precisely the type of largesse that we see at work in Philipopolis and would seem to be the opposite of the largesse practised by Alexander: Florimont is told that it is through largesse that he will 'conquerre', whereas Alexander's largesse is at all times supported by his conquests. Just as Putter has commented that 'the gift... extends the donor's sphere of influence' (p. 378), in *Florimont* the hero's sphere of influence is actually

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created through his largesse. Before his extravagant displays in Philipopolis, Florimont's social status is by no means secure – he has effectively bankrupted his family by profligate 'generosity' – and indeed, Rysus hesitates to be seen to be connected with him:

> Li princes faisoit ostel prendre,
> O Delfi ne veloit dessendre.
> ....
> Li princes fut enmi la plaice,
> Entrepris est, ne seit que faice,
> Ses homes trait a une pairt,
> Mout se repant, mai se fut tairt,
> De se qu'il fist le covenant
> (ll. 5329-61)

However, by sending Floquart to Philipopolis ahead of him, with instructions to practise ostentatious largesse, Florimont has ensured that he is the talk of the town before he arrives:

> En la ville grant bruit avoit
> Del Povre Perdu qui venoit.
> Endroit nonne a l'avespree
> Fut tote la gent fors alee,
> Li damoisel, li chevelier,
> Les borjois et li escuier;
> Contre le Povre Perdu vont
> Tuit cil qui en la ville sont
> (ll. 5271-78)

Moreover, he also ensures that people look past his poverty long enough to notice his other qualities; qualities which mark his noble birth. So, when the seneschal Damian reports back to King Philip after he first meets the 'Povre Perdu', he comments that, were he only dressed correctly, one would take him to be of noble birth:

> « Povres Perdus ait nom li sire
> Qui o Delfi est herbergiés.
> Gentis est et bien afaitiés.
> ....
> Lor sires n'es[t] pas bien vestus,
> Mai il n'est mie esperdus.
> Re[s]pondre seit et escouter,
> Si n'est pas vilains de parler,
> Frans est et dous et amiables

Et sor totes gens acoentables.
C'il fust vestus, a son vissaige
Semblet que il soit de paraige. »
(ll. 5572-86)

These other qualities, when coupled with his largesse, quickly establish Florimont as a courtly man, to the extent that Philip's court ignore Florimont's official identity as the Povre Perdu, in much the same way that Delfis sees through Floquart's identity of Quacopedie, realising that behind the apparent 'Bad Boy' lies a man of education. Thus largesse is the means by which Florimont establishes himself both in Philip's court and Rysus' eyes.

This, it may be argued, is a rewriting of Alexander's practice of largesse. Although one could say that Florimont is using largesse to establish himself, and thus further his own interests, just as Alexander used his largesse and promises of gifts to fulfil his ambitions and to get him where he wanted to be, in Florimont's case, the practice is far less calculating and cynical. Aimon may here be seen to use the rewriting technique of *transmutatio* (transposition and transformation of material) to adapt the motif of largesse to his own purposes, as he transforms Alexander's calculated commodity-exchange largesse into a more philanthropic gift-exchange largesse. I would suggest that this is done not as a way of denigrating Alexander in any fashion, but rather as a means of showing Florimont to be a worthy ancestor to Alexander the Great, and of compensating for Florimont's status as a fictional character of whom Aimon's audience will never before have heard. Alexander is very clearly a *real* person, one whose legend and presence would loom large in the minds of Aimon's audience. In order to create a character worthy of association with so impressive a figure and one who stands a chance of being remembered alongside Alexander, Aimon is obliged, as it were, to go the extra mile and portray a largesse which is not only equal to that of the Macedonian, but which is perhaps a shade more generous; he does not want his creation to be overshadowed or dwarfed by Alexander's reputation for liberality, thus Florimont has to be seen as more generous than Alexander. Yet this is not all that is at work in Aimon's *transmutatio* of the largesse motif. Since Alexander dreams of conquests and world domination, his largesse is both used and portrayed in a martial manner. One may even argue that the commercial, give-and-take aspect of the commodity exchange, which seems to represent his largesse, stems precisely from the awareness that Alexander was a real person, not a fictional character, and that certain of his actions were

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set in stone and had to be portrayed in a particular manner. As long as the largesse depicted helps Alexander achieve his goals then it does not need to be overly refined, conceptualised or elegant. This is not the case in *Florimont*. Here, in seeking to present his hero as being the grandfather of Alexander the Great, as being worthy of the connection with such an august personage, Aimon needs his hero not only to embody the virtue that Alexander was famed for, but also, given the late twelfth-century fascination with courtliness, to do so in a *courtly* fashion.[53] Florimont's behaviour in Philipopolis does exactly this, neatly fulfilling a narrative necessity (the narrative needs him to establish himself at Philip's court before he can follow his destiny and eventually lead it) whilst at the same time showing that he is worthy of being connected to Alexander the Great, his courtliness being such that he would clearly rather be seen as being poor himself than to be perceived as avaricious. Interestingly, this practice of largesse echoes a comment made in the *Roman d'Alexandre*: 'Pire est riches malvais que povres honorés,' (Branch I, ll. 2583-85). Florimont practises that which Alexander may be said to advocate, but not practise.

Aimon's adaptation of the motif of largesse as a means of setting Florimont up as a worthy ancestor, whilst at the same time ensuring his hero's independence from Alexander, shows us that although Aimon clearly respects the Alexander material and is keen to be associated with it, he is not afraid of adapting the Alexander romances in order to express and privilege his own ideas. One might even suggest that, great though the Alexander story is, Aimon may perhaps be using Alexander as a flag, a signal with which to attract his audience's attention before then moving on to express and implement his own ideas, a rewriting strategy entirely in keeping with the concept of *aemulatio*.

This becomes clear in the example of Florimont's generosity which we have yet to consider – namely, the destructive over-generosity to which he falls victim when the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* leaves him. The loss of the *Dame* comes as a devastating blow to Florimont. When she first leaves his immediate thought is of suicide; though his family prevents this, he then retires to a bed where he refuses to eat, drink, or even move for two days:

> Noier se veloit en la mer.
> Li dus i vient et si le prent

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[53] As proof that largesse was closely associated with courtliness, note Dominique Boutet's comment when discussing largesse as a characteristic: 'Cette vertu déborde d'ailleurs du cadre de la royauté et s'attache à tout homme puissant et riche: *elle permet de définir le "prodome" de l'idéal courtois*,' my italics. 'Sur l'origine et le sens', p. 398.

>   ....
>   Tant li ont dit, estre son grei
>   L'en menerent en la cytei
>   ....
>   Si l'ont mout belement couchié
>   Dous jors i fut, qu'il ne se mut,
>   Qu'il ne mainga ains ne ne but,
>   Bien faissoit semblant de morir
>   (ll. 3906-17)

Though Floquart eventually persuades him to leave his bed (ll. 3981-82), matters do not improve as it seems as if Florimont has stopped caring about anything except the *Dame*. He pays no attention to his clothing or any aspect of his appearance, instead giving away everything that he possesses and dedicating his life to martyrdom in his disappointment:

>   Ne veloit oblïer s'amie.
>   Le jor ait mal et la nuit pis;
>   ....
>   Florimons ait perti de soi
>   Toz ses chevals et son hernoi,
>   Trestot ait donei largement
>   As estrainges et a sa gent:
>   Tant ait donei et despendu
>   Que il nen ait riens retenu.
>   Des estrainges terres venoient
>   Cil que sa largesce savoient,
>   Ne il ne finoit de doner
>   Tant com ses avoirs puet durer.
>   Sa terre mist a grant povresce
>   Et ses homes per sa largesce.
>   Il c'est de povres dras vestus,
>   Toz jors aloit de[s]cha[u]s et nus,
>   Ne[s] ses chavous nen apalignoit,
>   Gaires a home ne parloit.
>   Dedens son cuer avoit grant ire,
>   Toz estoit livrez a martire
>   (ll. 3986-412)

His obsession is such that he goes so far as to reject his name, creating instead a new identity, that of *Povre Perdu*, the better to express his pain. He even states that he will die if not addressed by this pseudonym:

>   « De Florimont nen i a mie ;

Il s'en ala avec s'amie

....

Mai por Florimont sai laissa
Un chevelier povre perdu.

....

Que Povres Perdu sui nomez.
Qui atrement me nomeroit
De duel ossire me feroit. »
(ll. 4017-26)

Though we cannot help but feel a certain amount of sympathy for Florimont – we must remember that this is his first love and, young as he still is, it is to be expected that he feels its loss keenly – there nonetheless seems to be something a little excessive in his reaction. He lives this way not for days or weeks or months but three years (l. 4031, 'Trois anz menait si dure vie') and beggars not just himself his land (l. 4092, 'La terre fut mout apovrie'). His parents suffer as the Emir of Carthage devastates the land, sparing only the capital, Duras, in revenge for the death of his nephew Garganeüs, whom Florimont had killed:

Car li amiralx de Qartaige
I amenait tot son barnaige.
Por Florimont lor fist grant tort:
Por son neveu qu'il li ot mort
Les chastiaus et les viles prist,

....

Ne remeist a duc Mataquas
Mai sol la force de Duras.
Per son fil ot grant povreté
Gaires non ot condiut ne bleif
(ll. 4041-52, my italics)

There are signs that Aimon is using this excess for humorous purposes.[54] When the *Dame* tells Florimont that she intends to leave, he faints in response. In itself this is not amusing – rather, a swooning hero might instead provoke sympathy. Yet it must be noted that Florimont faints not once but more than forty times: 'Plus de .XL. fois pasmez' (l. 3853). This creates a recurring mental image of a hero who faints, then rouses himself, only to fall prostrate once more, which is entertaining. Such an image is in comparison with that of the *Dame*: she also faints but, upon regaining consciousness, simply kisses Florimont then

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[54] For a more detailed look at how Aimon uses humour in relation to his intertexts, see Chapter 5.

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leaves him without saying a word (ll. 3855-57), actions which emphasise the difference between the supernatural *Dame* and her human lover. Yet behind the comedy and the overall portrait of excess there lies a serious point which both the humour and the excess serve to reinforce: the underlying idea of this portrayal points to Florimont's development as a character and shows how both love and largesse are integrally connected with this development, each having a corresponding impact on the narrative. The chaos the *Dame*'s departure causes in Florimont's life, and, consequently, in the lives of all those around him, shows her to have been a negative influence on Florimont, one who causes him to practise a 'wrong' kind of liberality, which ultimately leads both himself and his family close to ruination.

This link between Florimont's love for the *Dame* and his practice of this disastrous largesse is made especially clear in ll. 4110-30, a soliloquy in which Florimont blames Fortune, Love and Largesse for his miserable state, declaring that they have brought him to poverty and death:

> « Fortune, que quiers? Je me muer.
> Largesce, que quiers en mon cuer?
> ....
> Je sui toz sous, vos iestes troi:
> Amour, Fortune et Largesce ;
> D'onor m'avez mis a povresce.
> ....
> Ne ne me puis vers vos deffendre.
> Vancut m'avez : quant m'avez mort
> Plus ne me poëz faire tort. »
> (ll. 4117-30)

These lines are crucial as they represent the opposite of what Aimon proclaims in his prologue (and which will prove to be true elsewhere in the text) – namely that largesse can bring one to great honour and is the mother of love (see p. 55 and discussion pp. 77-80). In this respect these lines show the extent of the damage the loss of the *Dame* has occasioned in Florimont. His intuitive understanding of the nature of largesse (remember that his distribution of goods after Garganeüs' death showed and instinctive appreciation of how largesse should operate) has been warped to the point where he now sees largesse as an instigator of his misfortune. Such an emphasis on the damage the *Dame* has brought to Florimont has a dual purpose. Drawing back momentarily from narrative concerns, we see

that it has an intertextual purpose as it deftly links one of Aimon's intertexts (the *Roman d'Alexandre*, represented by the motif of largesse which Aimon is adapting) to a second intertext – *Partonopeus de Blois*, as the episode concerning the *Dame* has traditionally been understood to be a reworking of *Partonopeus de Blois*.[55] Yet coming back to a narrative level we see that this episode also shows Florimont's need to develop as a character and touches on the complex relationship between love, largesse and social education or development. Florimont's love for the 'wrong woman' causes an imbalance within him and so he takes his generosity to the extreme and unthinkingly wreaks havoc on all around him.[56] In other words the wrong kind of love, for the wrong woman, is a socially destructive force. Florimont needs to regain his inner balance, to learn where he has been going wrong as it were, and in this respect we see largesse acting as a metaphor for the hero's development.

This use of love and largesse as lessons which help define and develop our hero's character is reminiscent of Valérie Gontero's comments on the effect that the *romans d'antiquité* had on the genre of the 'miroir de prince'. She suggests that the *romans* renewed the genre 'en adoptant une méthode pédagogique plus efficace: le portrait idéal du prince se dessine à travers les faits et les gestes des héros, ou bien en négatif, par des personnages-repoussoirs.'[57] In her discussion of the *romans d'antiquité* and their influence, Francine Mora-Lebrun links this idea of using positive or negative exemplars as lessons with that of audience expectation. She notes:

> Ecrits en langue vernaculaire pour des laïcs, et même sans doute pour des princes et des seigneurs laïcs, les romans d'antiquité doivent parler à leur auditoire de ce qui l'intéresse. Et ce qui intéresse au premier chef ces seigneurs... ce sont les moyens d'acquérir, de conserver et de bien exercer ce pouvoir.
> (p. 246)

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[55] See Chapter 3 for a discussion of this idea and of *Florimont*'s relationship with *Partonopeus*. It also considers the influence which the *Dame* exerts over Florimont.

[56] An example of this havoc is shown by his father's people wishing to leave the land they were born and grew up in because Florimont's excessive liberality has left it destitute: 'Povre Perdu l'apelent tuit. / Trois anz menait si dure vie. / La terre fu mout apovrie; / Les gens s'en veloient foïr / En(s) atres terres por guerir. / Povre fut la gent et la terre; / De mainte gent avoient guerre. / Li dus poc de condut avoit,' (ll. 4030- 37).

[57] Valérie Gontero, *Parures d'or et de gemmes : l'orfèverie dans les romans antiques du XII*^e *siècle* (Aix-en-Provence : Publications de l'Université de Provence, 2002), p. 11, cited in Francine Mora-Lebrun, *« Metre en romanz » Les romans d'antiquité du XII*^e *siècle et leur postérité (XIII*^e-*XIV*^e *siècle)* (Paris: Champion, 2008), p. 246.

Because they offer examples of interest to their audience Mora-Lebrun notes that the *romans d'antiquité* are viewed as being 'miroirs de prince', also noting that in this respect there is 'un point de contact entre eux et les romans d'Alexandre,' (p. 246).[58] Bearing this in mind one can see how *Florimont* (also associated with Alexander the Great) might also be seen as a 'miroir de prince'. If an ideal prince may be discerned in the worthy and unworthy examples offered by the *romans d'antiquité* as Gontero has suggested, it might be suggested that, in its depiction of largesse, *Florimont* serves as a 'miroir de prince' by conflating these examples and allowing its principal character to embody un-ideal behaviour before learning its ideal counterpart.[59]

If *Florimont* is indeed acting as a 'miroir de prince', whose hero needs to learn ideal behaviour, it should come as no surprise that, shortly after his disastrous application of largesse following his separation from the *Dame*, his lessons in the correct application of largesse should begin. Thus both Floquart and his father – strong male role models – appear to give Florimont advice and to correct the imbalance created by his love for the *Dame*. Floquart, acting upon the Duke's orders, remonstrates with Florimont for having reduced them all to poverty (ll. 4151-58). Florimont displays an almost juvenile flippancy in his reply; he grumbles that no one has suffered as he has suffered (ll. 4160-61) before going on to blame his elders by stating that largesse has brought him low but that his father had told him it would exalt him, and all he has done is to follow his father's advice:

> « Mai je l'ai per vostre consoil;
> ....
> Et largesce m'ait mis si bas
> Que je nen ai or que despandre,
> Autrui que doner ne(s) que prendre.
> Mout ai despendu et doné:
> Mes peires le m'a comandé;
> Ju ai fait son comandement. »
> (ll. 4162-73)

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[58] She discusses how this offering of advice (from the clergy to the chivalric class which formed their principal audience) can be linked to the conceptions of *translatio studii* and *imperii*. See in particular pp. 165-286 for the development of this convincing argument.

[59] It is worth briefly noting manuscript evidence supporting the idea that *Florimont* may have been seen as a 'miroir de prince' in light of Mora-Lebrun's association of the genre with the conception of *translatio*: in manuscript H2 (Harley 3983) *Florimont* is followed by a French chronicle of France and England, whilst in manuscript L (Monza 6 21. 137) *Florimont* is followed by a prose fragment chronicling the Hebrew kings and the first kings of France.

Floquart gently corrects him by explaining that the largesse which Florimont has embraced was not what his father had been suggesting, that such largesse would bring even emperors to poverty, that largesse is worth little without conquests to maintain it (ll. 4175-98).

He then goes on to delineate the seven types of largesse (ll. 4199-4358; see pp. 60-61). The inclusion and expansion of these various types of largesse is a clear example of the *adiectio* rewriting technique, as Aimon builds upon the largesse model from the *Roman d'Alexandre* and expands it, showing that Alexander's conception of largesse is far from being the only one possible. Why though, does Aimon do this – is he hoping to achieve a particular effect or is he merely filling space, 'killing time' as it were, until his hero has had a suitable length of time to recover from his heartache before embarking on his next adventure? Far from such literary chicanery I would like to suggest that what lies behind this seeming digression is actually a complex use of rewriting techniques which works on two levels and which unites the major intertext for *Florimont* with which we are already familiar (the *Roman d'Alexandre*) with a second intertext – *Partonopeus de Blois*.

Partonopeus is an innovative text which introduces a number of new elements and approaches to the romance genre, the fusion of different narrative models and a particularly strong focus on the role of female characters being two of the best known.[60] These two concerns come together to provide, in *Partonopeus*, a kind of narrative exploration of the question 'what is love and its relationship to marriage?'

Penny Sullivan looks closely at this question in an examination of four texts (*Aymeri de Narbonne, le Roman d'Enéas, Cligés,* and *Partonopeus de Blois*) which offer diverse presentations and commentaries on the nature of love and marriage. She remarks that the texts 'give evidence of a common preoccupation... with the subject of relations between the sexes, and a common desire to explore as many aspects as possible of the interface between love and society'.[61] She notes the different models of marriage put forward in Chrétien de Troyes' *Cligés* and the 'awkward' questions it raises (pp. 92-94, p. 94) before going on to examine the models of marriage suggested by the MS A version of *Partonopeus de Blois*. After considering three 'different but apparently equally valid marital arrangements' (p. 101) which are all celebrated on the same day she concludes: 'It

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[60] See Bruckner, *Shaping Romance*, pp. 110-156. In her consideration of gender and genre in the text she argues that *Partonopeus* is exploring what makes 'romance' as a genre.

[61] Penny Sullivan, 'Love and Marriage in Early French Narrative Poetry', *Trivium*, 19 (1984), 85-102 (p. 100).

is hard to avoid the impression that the author or *remanieur* of the A version of *Partonopeus* is not advocating any one concept of love and marriage but, like Chrétien before him, is exploring a range of possibilities and leaving the final conclusion to his audience,' (p. 100).

Of the four texts that Sullivan examines, three of them were in circulation before *Florimont* and two of them (*Cligés* and *Partonopeus*) are deliberately used as intertexts within *Florimont* and would have been well known when Aimon was composing his text.[62] This timing and Aimon's intertextual use of two of the texts examined by Sullivan suggest that Aimon would have been aware of his predecessors' use of different models to explore a 'common preoccupation' of their time. Indeed, I would like to suggest that not only was Aimon aware of this use but that he used the process of *transmutatio* to adapt this idea for his own work. Thus, the idea of presenting different models of a complex concept is applied in *Florimont* to the second major common preoccupation of the twelfth century – that of largesse. This is the reasoning behind Floquart's discourse on largesse (ll. 4199-359), as Aimon adapts the idea found in his predecessors' work and uses it to express his own originality and to highlight his creativity in *Florimont*. This is shown partly in the neat manner in which the use of this idea ties together two extremely popular texts which both appear as intertexts in *Florimont*. Aimon's application of this idea takes the concept (the presentation of different models to explore a popular theme) from one of his intertexts (*Partonopeus de Blois*) and applies it to the motif (that of largesse) which he has taken from a different intertext (the *Roman d'Alexandre*), and thus serves to link the two. His originality in this rewriting of the 'model exploration' idea is further shown when we see that his *transmutatio* is combined with *adiectio* (addition and amplification of material), to become a form of *aemulatio* as he takes the additional step of presenting one of the models that he explores as being superior to all others, a step very clearly absent in his predecessors' works. We see this in a bald form in Floquart's speech where he asserts that the seventh form of largesse he describes will bring its practitioner great honour (ll. 4355-58). This is an idea which Aimon *tells* his audience and, to a certain extent, they are free to accept or reject his view, depending on their level of trust for him. However, in what follows this discourse, Aimon *shows* his audience this view, as we are given a chance to

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[62] Hilka also notes *Florimont*'s links with both *Partonopeus* and *Cligés*. See pp. cxi-cxv of his introduction and the compilation of motifs beginning on p. cxvi. *Florimont*'s intertextual relationship with *Cligés* is examined in detail in Chapter 5.

witness the model of largesse advocated by Floquart at work in Philipopolis. In apparently being given the chance to make up our own mind with regard to such a model in this way we paradoxically become more likely to accept and believe what we 'see'. Aimon thus shows an awareness that he stands a greater chance of persuading his audience of a view if he allows them to 'see' it, rather than merely 'telling' them. Of course, his timing here could not be more fortuitous – or deliberate – as Floquart's explanation of the different forms of largesse (Aimon telling his audience) is immediately followed by Florimont's trip to Philipopolis (Aimon showing the audience the 'truth' of his words). Thus as we witness Florimont's use of this largesse, Floquart's words are still fresh in our minds and we are all the more likely to accept them as truth.

Thus the lesson that Florimont needs to learn is deliberately encased in this final and 'best' form of largesse, described as 'la meire d'onor' (l. 4316). Florimont already knows that largesse is important, but Floquart and the Duke here stress the importance of being able to maintain largesse through prowess and conquests. Floquart points out that sense and prowess may often recover that which largesse spends:

> « Se li governaus est perdus,
> Li maroniers est comfondus;
> La neif pessoiet et perille.
> Et largesce selui essille
> Qui l'ait sens sens et sens proësce,
> Tost le met d'onor a povresce.
> Sens et proësce quiert sovent
> Tot seu que largesce despent. »
> (ll. 4321-28)

He then goes on to elucidate the complex bond between largesse, prowess, honour and *chevalerie* before telling Florimont that this is the type of largesse which will bring its practitioner great honour:

> « Qui tel largesce welt avoir
> Son signor met en grant pooir:
> Tel largesce met son signor
> De povreté en grant honor. »
> (ll. 4355-58)

In essence, this encapsulates the difference between Florimont and Alexander – Florimont uses his prowess to support his largesse, where Alexander is portrayed using his largesse as a means of achieving his conquests. This reversal of the integral link between the two is a neat example of *transmutatio* and once again shows that, though he respects the original material, Aimon is not afraid to effect changes as a way of making his own mark. That this is the lesson intended for Florimont is made perfectly clear as the narrative moves on almost immediately afterwards. As soon as Florimont has retained what Floquart has said we are then told that he sees a ship heading into harbour:

> Li Povres Perdus escoutait
> Tot seu que Floquars li dissoit,
> Bien l'ait en son cuer retenu,
> En meir garda, si a veü,
> Une neif que vient a esploit
> (ll.4359-63)

The ship, of course, belongs to Rysus and its arrival marks the start of the next stage in Florimont's adventure as, once more fully balanced thanks to the intervention of his male role models, he joins with Rysus and heads towards Philipopolis. Largesse becomes the link which joins two major parts of the text together – it is an important structural pivot.[63]

The evolution of the 'model exploration' idea in this manner may well be an organic progression suggested by Aimon's topic; it may be that largesse as a concept is less intrinsically complex than the combination of love *and* marriage and thus is more likely to lend itself to suggesting a 'superior' model. However, it is more likely that Aimon's evolution of the idea stems from a sense of competition and a desire to prove his own poetic worth in the face of his contemporaries' popularity. By taking his rewriting that one step further (showing different models but also suggesting one that is the 'best') Aimon draws attention not only to what he has done but also to how he has developed the idea. That this development has been woven into the structure of *Florimont* (his overall use of model exploration is spread throughout the text and underpins its structure, whereas in *Partonopeus* all three models had been presented at the end of the text), marks Aimon as a gifted story-teller and further serves to emphasise his originality and talent.

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[63] Making largesse key to the structure of *Florimont* in this way is a further example of *adiectio* – what was a recurring character trait in the *Roman d'Alexandre* is expanded into an ongoing theme which links otherwise disparate elements of the narrative.

The insistence that largesse, prowess and conquests work together to bring great honour to whoever practises them echoes what was said in the Prologue:

> Ne di pas por ce que doneir
> Nen puet nulz hons sens conquesteir:
> ....
> Li uns sans l'autre n'ait mestier;
> Car li uns doit et l'autre aidier.
> Poc valt conquerre sens doneir;
> ....
> Car largesce est meire d'amour
> Et de proësce et de valour
> (ll. 81-96)

When Florimont has secured his position in Philipopolis, he has reached the point where he has mastered effective liberality, and, significantly, insistence on his largesse diminishes, and he receives no further advice on the correct application of it. This makes for an intriguing comparison with Alexander as, from this moment on, largesse is associated with Florimont in much the same way that it is with Alexander in the *Roman d'Alexandre*: that is to say, it is very much an automatic extension of Florimont's character, something that he does without having to think about it. Crucially, however, it differs from that of Alexander in that it is used in a disinterested fashion. For an example of this largesse, we might instance his magnanimity towards Camdiobras after defeating him. Refusing the defeated king's gold he instead gives Camdiobras wealth and offers him friendship:

> «Alez, dites a roi d'Ongrie
> Que de l'avoir ne quier je mie.
> Ainz de grei nel pris per usaige,
> Ne ranfus mie l'omenaige:
> L'omenaige wel et s'amor
> ....
> De la moie par[t] le li dites.
> De l'or que il me welt doner
> Cel donrai ge lui sens peser;
> ....
> Et dites que je li otroi
> Loial amor et bone foi.
> Se je la puis trover en lui,
> Boen amin serons ambedui, »

(ll. 11, 469- 86)[64]

The theme of largesse is only broached again, in an extensive discussion, in the closing lines of the romance, where Aimon presents his summary of what his romance has been about:

> D'Eleonos oï aveis
> Que Florimons fut apeleis.
> Pus fut tant por amor vaincus
> Qu'il fut nommeis Povre Perdus
> Et por amor et por lairgesse
> Ot mout d'anui et de povresse;
> Por largesse et por amour
> Refut il puis a grant honour.
> Ensi avient a mainte gent:
> Que en loial amour s'entent,
> Se to(s)t a anui por largesse,
> Ne puet remenoir en povresce.
> Maix cil que se repant d'amour
> Tourne sa joie en errour;
> Car on ne vient en grant haltesce
> Ne a grant honour san[s] largece.
> (ll. 13643-58)[65]

What we see in our third section on largesse, then, is a period of transition as Florimont absorbs the advice from Floquart and his father and moves on to practise precisely this type of largesse.

Overall, the three sections into which we have divided our assessment of largesse represent a type of learning curve which is essential both to the narrative and to the character development of the hero, and which underpins the structure of the text, framed as it is by references in both Prologue and conclusion. Firstly we are presented with the normal, medieval hero, distributing his gifts after winning them through conquests. The next picture shows a subversion of this standard as the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* unbalances Florimont to the extent that he misunderstands how largesse should function and becomes overly generous with no means of supporting it. Finally, in the third phase, we find a

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[64] See also footnote 74.

[65] Coupled with Aimon's discussion of largesse in the Prologue, the emphasis here means that as a topic under discussion it effectively 'bookends' the text, a position which underscores the importance of largesse within the text as a whole.

gradual regaining of balance and shedding of the *Dame*'s malevolent influence as Florimont puts Floquart's advice into effect and practises only a sustainable largesse. This type of largesse is funded by the continual conquering of further supplies of wealth through military victory and conquest. Thus a motif inherent to the character of Alexander is rewritten by Aimon as a different aspect of his hero's own character, one which offers the possibility for narrative development. By additionally developing the notion of different models as possible solutions to a familiar debate from a second intertextual model, Aimon shows how texts can be rewritten in a way that provides a commentary on the topics they present.

Yet this development of the motif found in the *Roman d'Alexandre* is not all that Aimon has to say on largesse. In a move which marks a distinct departure from the portrayal of largesse in the *Roman d'Alexandre*, Aimon transforms its depiction, ensuring that it is no longer the sole province of the hero, or even of the nobility. Simply put, a good man is a generous man. Where the *Roman d'Alexandre* portrays largesse as the preserve of the nobility, presenting all other classes as avaricious and usurious, *Florimont* uses *detractio* (deletion, concentration or omission of material), to suggest that there is no class distinction to the practice of largesse. This is perhaps best exemplified in the character of Delfis, the bourgeois whom Floquart "recruits" when Florimont first sends him to Philipopolis, and who has a key role to play in securing Florimont's acceptance at Philip's court and in assisting his courtship of Romadanaple. We should bear in mind that it is initially Delfis' wealth, rather than his own, which Florimont spends when he arrives in Philipopolis. That Delfis is willing to agree to all that Floquart asks, having no knowledge whatsoever about Florimont – he does not even know what Floquart's master is called when he grants the requests – shows a generosity worthy of comparison with Florimont himself.

> « Sire, » fait Delfis, « mout m'est bel,
> Et sachiés bien veraiement
> Que je vos di outreement:
> Se il welt o moi herbergier,
> De quanque il avrait mestier
> ....
> Ferai ge bien tot son voloir, »
> (ll.5088-97)

One might argue that his willingness comes from the reward that Floquart has promised him on behalf of his master (ll. 5075-78) or that he has been swayed by the magical properties of the ring the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* had given Florimont.[66] Indeed, these possibilities are given more weight when we consider Delfis' astonishment at the prospect of such a lavish reward:

> Forment se mervilla Delfis
> De seu que cil li ot promis
> A premier cop tel gueredon
> (ll. 5079-81)

or the fact that Delfis seems to hesitate before seeing the ring on Floquart's finger (ll. 5082-88).

However, we must also take account of the fact that Delfis takes the time to think over Floquart's propositions and consider his words and level of education rather than solely his appearance:

> Ne li di(s)t mot ne ne respont,
> Une piece c'est porpensez;
> Puels est ses vis vers lui tornez.
> Delfis l'ait forment esgardé,
> Car mout ait richement parlé
> (ll. 5082-86)

Such consideration would seem to suggest that, although he may be swayed by Floquart's offer of recompense or by the magic ring, he may well have been going to agree to the requests anyway – a fact which, if true, would make his concept of largesse similar to the one advocated to Florimont, the seventh and most appropriate type of largesse; a good man is *large* and shares his wealth, especially if, like Delfis, he can afford to: ' «Ferai ge bien tot son voloir, / Car ju en ai bien le pooir, »' (ll. 5097-98). Even more significant as evidence of a genuine, disinterested generosity on Delfis' part is his reaction when he first hears the name of his intended guest – 'Povre Perdu' – as Florimont is at this point using this pseudonym. Though initially shocked and believing that all he has spent on Florimont's behalf will not be returned, he concludes after talking with Floquart that he will

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[66] See discussion in Chapter 3, pp. 136-37.

nevertheless give Florimont as much as he needs or wants; if Florimont proves not to be a skilled enough knight to regain it, why then Delfis will merely have lost everything:

> Delfis respont: « Hé, Deus, ahie!
> Qui vit ainz mais tel compaignie?
> Coment prist or a compaignon
> Povres Perdus mavaix garson?
> Se vostre sires est perdus,
> Dont sui ge mors et confondus,
> Et c'il est povres, asiment.
> D'onor m'avez mis a noient;
> ....
> Se vos avez povre signor,
> Ostel avrez a grant honor;
> Et se il nen ait que despandre,
> Tant li vodrai livrer et randre
> Qu'il porait mout doner et metre,
> Se d'armes se seit entremetre:
> Ou il me serait tot rendu,
> Ou ju avrai trestot perdu. »
> (ll. 5169-234)

This reaction reveals that Delfis is well aware of the importance of largesse and that he would rather face ruination than be ungenerous.[67] The favourable impression of Delfis and his approach to largesse continues as we see him determined to extend every honour and material comfort to his guests (ll. 5259-62, ll. 5287-92).

Such an awareness and practice of largesse in a non-noble character tells us that in *Florimont* largesse is not strictly an aristocratic trait, as Delfis, though a respected member

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[67] Bruckner interprets this differently, seeing it as a comment on the nature of identity rather than the elaboration of a philosophy of largesse: 'When Delfis learns that he will be hosting 'Poor Lost One' and 'Bad Boy' his merchant's head immediately conjures up fear of ruin. But Flocart's [sic] eloquence convinces Delfis that such names must be false since actions – and the ability to speak well – are truer than labels,' (p. 61). This is in keeping with her conviction that Delfis represents a form of commercial hospitality within *Florimont*, a conviction based on Florimont's promise of a reward to Delfis before meeting him (p. 60). However, Bruckner defines commercial hospitality as being: 'repayment in material goods for service rendered,' (p. 58) and I would argue that, no matter the promise of a reward, Florimont and Delfis' relationship goes far beyond this. In arranging the tryst with Romadanaple for example, Delfis neither seeks nor expects a reward, despite risking his own life. One might even suggest that this service falls within the remit of courtly hospitality where services 'are performed for mutual benefit,' (p. 58), the mutual benefit here being that just as Florimont is able to spend time with Romadanaple, so too is Delfis able to converse with Sipriaigne, the woman whom he loves. Bruckner, '*Florimont*: Extravagant Host'. The overall portrayal of Delfis is a complex one and, I suggest, one which cannot be readily summed up as 'supplier of commercial hospitality to the hero.' For a further discussion of Delfis in his role as a 'go-between' in Florimont's love affair, see Chapter 5.

of Philip's court, has his feet very firmly planted in the bourgeois class; when he is first introduced to the text for example, he is deliberately identified as bourgeois, not once but twice: first when Floquart asks after the richest bourgeois in the city and then once again as Floquart's question is answered:

> Belement li a demandé;
> « Amins, sez me(s) tu dire voir
> Li keus est plus riches d'avoir
> De toz ses borjois que si sont? »
> « Amins, » li damo[i]siaus respont,
> « Tuit cil que vos enqui veez
> Sont riche, d'avoir ont assez.
> Mai il en i ait un borjois,
> poc est vilains, mout est cortois:
> Delfis ait nom, mout est privez
> Del roi, si ait avoir assez, »
> (ll. 5034-49)

This bourgeois status is no impediment to Delfis holding an influential position in Philip's court, a position which neither the narrator nor any characters in the text ever call into question. So, we are told when we first hear of him that Delfis is allowed access to Romadanaple whenever he wishes; a privilege denied all other men:

> « Li rois l'aimgmet mout et le croit,
> Et quant il welt, sa fille voit,
> ....
> Nus hons que soit en cest païs
> Ne la puet veoir mai Delfis. »
> (ll.5045-50)

Such a favoured position may lead one to suppose that Delfis' classification as 'bourgeois' may only be a token one, or that it is there merely for narrative convenience; he is there, after all, to provide the financial support that the 'Povre Perdu' needs and, indeed, it is only because of Delfis' largesse towards him that Florimont in turn becomes known for his generosity:

> Et Delfis, ses ostes, li rant
> Seu que il donet et despant.
> Tuit l'amoient por sa largesse

(ll. 6451-53)

However, when Delfis is first introduced into the narrative, Aimon is at pains to make it clear *why* he holds such a position of respect, and the reason is none other than the very bourgeois standing and business affairs which would have other writers of the period reject him as a money grubbing merchant:

> « Li rois l'aimgmet mout et le croit,
> Et quant il welt, sa fille voit,
> *Si li achatet et li prent*
> *Seu que ele done et despent.* »
> (ll. 5045-48, my italics)

A further refusal to scorn Delfis' position as a man of business comes when Delfis is able to be of service to the hero, precisely because of his business connections. When Florimont is in the initial throes of love and suffering because he does not know how Romadanaple feels, it is Delfis, following Sipriaigne's plan, who enables him to ease this suffering by disguising Florimont as his apprentice who is to carry bales of cloth for the princess to approve (ll. 8531-49). Indeed, Delfis is the mainstay of this episode as it is he, rather than Floquart, to whom Florimont first reveals his suffering (ll. 8004-36) and it is he who guesses first, that Florimont is in love (ll. 8154-55) and second, that Romadanaple is the object of his affections (ll. 8165-90). Even as a businessman, he is attuned to the demands and suffering of the aristocrat's plight, courtly love. After initially attempting to persuade Florimont to love elsewhere, Delfis generously offers to act as a messenger on Florimont's behalf (ll. 8201-08) – an offer made even more selfless when we consider that suits such as Florimont's are precisely the reason why Philip prevents knights from seeing his daughter. The extent of this generosity of spirit is revealed when Delfis agrees to Sipriaigne's plan (ll. 8531-54), that Florimont be smuggled in to see Romadanaple disguised as Delfis' apprentice (ll. 8721-22). This is not entirely without an element of self-interest as Delfis is in love with Sipriaigne, Romadanaple's mistress, and he is well aware that this will advance his cause, but it is nonetheless a generous thing for Delfis to agree to. Its discovery could lead to his death, as Delfis well knows (ll. 8723-4).[68]

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[68] For a discussion of the role played by both Delfis and Sipriaigne as go-betweens, see Gretchen Mieszkowski, *Medieval Go-Betweens and Chaucer's Pandarus* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 95-100. She notes that both are portrayed as possessing courtly characteristics.

Though the scene in which Florimont, after a great deal of planning from the 'chaperones', eventually sneaks in and is able to see Romadanaple is portrayed with humour, there is nothing to suggest the scorn or vitriol that we see heaped upon the lower classes in other texts of the time.[69] The absence of such scorn, coupled with the favourable portrayal of Delfis, perhaps suggests that Aimon was pursuing a policy of deliberate *detractio* as regards the lower classes, that in some ways he was attempting to counteract the more traditional, evil, *fils à vilain* portrayal of the non-noble classes. This is reinforced by the fact that most of the humour in the scene comes at the expense of Florimont himself, rather than of Delfis, as Aimon exploits the comedy inherent in a knight being without his sword.[70] Overall, Delfis walks a fine line – he uses his business dealings to aid the hero, which is bound to earn him audience approval, but by remaining present and acting as a chaperone with Sipriaigne to this illicit meeting, Delfis ensures that nothing untoward may happen, thereby refusing to abuse his position of trust within the court and suggesting that members of the non-noble classes are perhaps worthy of trust after all.

This use of *detractio* in the idea that the lower classes are not completely treacherous, that members of them may also be generous and think of others, is also demonstrated by Florimont's brief spell as the Povre Perdu. Though this episode displays Aimon's flair for comedy and aptly shows the imbalance and damage caused by a subversive lover, it also suggests that largesse is not solely the province of the nobility. Although Florimont only adopts the *persona* of the Povre Perdu, and therefore ultimately remains a member of the noble classes, nonetheless the significance of a change of name, suggesting to a medieval audience something more essential than simple use of words, should not be overlooked. It is as the *Povre Perdu* that Florimont wins not only the respect and admiration of Philip's court but also Romadanaple's love.[71] Florimont's apparently lowly status appears initially to be a stumbling block to Romadanaple's feelings towards

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[69] In fact, what seems to be going on is a humorous send up of both *Partonopeus de Blois* and Chrétien de Troyes *Cligés*, thus providing us with evidence that Aimon had Chrétien in his literary landscape. This idea will be discussed in Chapter 5.

[70] This provides an ideal opportunity for Aimon to insert humorous references to his hero being 'unmanned', as Florimont thinks longingly of his absent sword (ll. 8873-74).

[71] Damian, for example, acknowledges Florimont's apparent impoverished state but nonetheless allows that despite this he is courteous and likeable. As we have seen, he goes so far as to suggest that, correctly dressed, Florimont may even seem noble: ' «Lor sires n'es[t] pas bien vestus, / Mai il n'est mies esperdus. / Re[s]pondre seit et escouter, / Si n'est pas vilains de parler, / Frans est et dous et amiables / Et sor totes gens acoentables. / C'il fust vestus, a son vissaige / Semblet que il soit de paraige, »' (ll. 5579-86).

him, as she tells herself that no man lower than herself will win her love and that she feels nothing for Florimont:

> « Jai nen avrait m'amor, per foi,
> Nus hons, c'il est plus bas de moi.
> Et de cest povre que me taint?
> ....
> Mout ai poc de regar[t] de lui. »
> (ll. 5681-92)

The fact, however, that she has to tell herself such things, to keep at bay the rebellious thoughts that are attracted to the mysterious stranger, whom she has not yet even seen, suggests that her feelings run in a very different direction. When she does first set eyes on him, it is made perfectly clear that Romadanaple is hopelessly in love with Florimont:

> Ele repensoit mout a lui;
> Un penser avoient andui.
> Li uns de l'atre nel savoit;
> Mai amor[s], qui s'entremetoit
> De faire l'un a l'atre amer,
> Andous les faissoit mout penser,
> Sutilment et per grant mervelle
> De l'un cuer a l'atre s'entraille
> (ll. 6213-20)

The fact that the hero is accepted despite his presumed low birth would seem to suggest that, although *Florimont* may not actively advocate the cause of the lower classes, it certainly seems willing to portray them in a better light than other contemporary texts. Indeed, this is probably the best path for a twelfth-century poet to take: a hero who came from the non-noble classes to win the heart of a princess through his generosity and bravery may be a modern-day fairytale, but would have been a great deal too radical in the Middle Ages, and would have undermined the plausibility of Aimon's characterisation for his audience. As it stands, Florimont's brief spell as the Povre Perdu can be used to explore the dynamics of social class, whilst retaining the narrative 'safety net' of the comfortable knowledge that the hero, despite current appearances, is indeed a fully noble man.[72] That Delfis recognises this and is willing to put his resources, albeit bourgeois ones, into

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[72] Similar ideas of 'hidden' nobility can also be found in *Guillaume d'Angleterre, Guillaume de Palerne* and *Otinel.*

assisting the hero again allows Aimon to offer a different perspective on class distinctions, without resorting to any revolutionary suggestions that the *status quo* should not be maintained.

Aimon thus uses his representation of largesse to put forward a different conception of the non-noble classes, combining *detractio* with *adiectio* to take away the malignance normally associated with the lower classes and instead suggesting that they are capable of both material and spiritual generosity. That this was a deliberate choice becomes clear when we consider that the *Roman d'Alexandre* and *Partonopeus de Blois* – both important intertexts for *Florimont* – each warn against placing trust in the lowborn class. The question as to why Aimon would do this and choose not to follow the romance ideologies promoted by his contemporaries in doing so is an interesting one, and one to which there is more than one possible answer. If Aimon himself had ties with the bourgeois class or came from the smaller, impoverished nobility then he might relish the opportunity to argue against the picture of his class traditionally painted/endorsed by the powerful magnates of the land. Kibler tells us that first the lower aristocracy, then untitled and unlanded persons, benefited from the determination of the twelfth-century Capetian kings not to accept advice from the powerful princes of the land.[73] As such, it is not beyond the realm of possibility that, were Aimon of the lower nobility, he or people of his acquaintance might have profited from Capetian generosity and might have sought to redress the grasping, avaricious portrayal of the lower and bourgeois classes in popular literature. Another potential reason for Aimon's more favourable depiction of the bourgeois class lies in what it enables him to say about largesse. Throughout the course of *Florimont*, Aimon seems to be enunciating a philosophy of largesse. By using *adiectio* to make largesse into a structural tool which underpins his hero's development, Aimon is able to explore the nature of largesse, to consider more than one type and to speculate on how these different types might work. Having examined the varying kinds of largesse and the motivations behind them, Aimon then presents the one which he feels is the best – the largesse that is supported by prowess, conquests and

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[73] 'Beginning in the early twelfth century... the monarchy slowly began assembling a group of advisors who were separate from the magnates of the kingdom. These latter... could not be trusted to give impartial advice or to sustain the policies of the monarchy. To replace them in the *curia* the Capetian rulers promoted, first, impoverished knights (*milites*) from the lower aristocracy... and, second, beginning late in the reign of Louis VII – that is, in the 1170s, at precisely the time of Lambert's *Alexandre en Orient* – untitled, unlanded clerics,' Kibler, p. 122.

sense.[74] By extending his conception of largesse to include other characters – and a bourgeois one in particular – Aimon ensures that it is seen as a complete philosophy of liberality, and not merely a particular attribute of a specific character as in the *Roman d'Alexandre*.

In rewriting the motif of largesse so as to offer and explore a philosophy on the art of giving, in making it a social virtue which Florimont needs to learn rather than an innate value with which he is born, and in painting a potentially radically different portrait of the non-noble classes, Aimon strays far from Alexander the Great, the self-appointed model whom he had set himself. On the surface this seems a nonsensical move – why should he remodel Alexander and his liberality when, as we have seen, both were amply feted in the Middle Ages? I would argue that these adaptations show a playful nature, a delight in challenging himself via the medium of rewriting, a delight which we will come across elsewhere in this thesis. However, such playfulness also houses an implicit level of competition that is in keeping with the *aemulatio* ('the writers attempt to outstrip the source') of medieval rewriting. In transforming a motif into a narrative structure which charts his hero's development, Aimon highlights his own originality. By allowing the source from which he has drawn the motif to be readily apparent within his work, however, Aimon also obliges his audience to recognise this originality. Yet this is not the sole reason for Aimon creating a little distance between *Florimont* and the portrayals of Alexander the Great. We have seen that the portrayal of Alexander in the Middle Ages suffered from a certain ambiguity: that although poets evinced a desire to depict Alexander as an ideal medieval prince, the facts of his life could not always easily be made to fit such a mould, resulting in a sometimes contradictory portrayal of his life (see pp. 58-59). In effect, in choosing to recount the life of Alexander the Great, a historical personage the facts of whose life were verifiable and well-known, Aimon's predecessors and contemporaries were, to a certain extent, limiting themselves with what they could hope to accomplish. Alexander's very greatness became a limitation, which imposed boundaries on how they could depict him and his life. His fame was such that they were unable fully to contradict events in his life which might suggest that he was not the perfect prince; though they might

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[74] It is worth noting that once Florimont has absorbed this lesson and is practising it in an exemplary fashion there is a great deal less emphasis on largesse see for example, the quote on p. 91 in which Florimont returns lands and wealth to the defeated Camdiobras.

embroider episodes the better to stress Alexander's courtly virtues they could not alter the fundamental nature of his life-story.

I would suggest that it was an awareness of the limitations caused by Alexander's reputation which led Aimon to the idea of making his protagonist grandfather to Alexander, as it offered him a greater freedom.[75] Because Alexander's grandfather was an unknown entity in the Middle Ages, Aimon is able to draw all the benefit of being connected to the legendary Macedonian – there would be an audience likely to be interested in his text, and the possibility that it may be fully incorporated into the wider Alexander tradition – with none of the drawbacks.[76] *Florimont* represents a *tabula rasa*, a blank page connected to Alexander but one capable of being 'perfected' in a way denied to Alexander because of the latter's status as an historical person. This process of 'perfecting' is shown in Aimon's rewriting of Alexander's largesse; the cynical manipulation of people through a mercantile commodity-exchange is gone and has been replaced by an idealised system based on honour and prowess which was more in keeping with the courtly ethics of the twelfth century. Gone too is the insisted-upon distrust of all non-noble classes, as Aimon proposes a philosophy of largesse which enables all to be generous. In this 'perfecting' of his chosen hero we see how Aimon exercises considerable skill in taking an underlying paradox from his source material and using it as a basis for his own narrative. That narrative, in keeping with *aemulatio*, thus surpasses the model it imitates, and its hero surpasses in stature the hero who is to follow. When he sums up the end of Florimont's life at the close of his romance, Aimon tells us of the two succeeding generations:

Florimons tint loc tens la terre,
Que nes uns hons ne li fist guerre.

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[75] Gaullier-Bougassas refers to this when she states that Aimon perhaps chose to tell the story of Alexander's grandparents rather than the well-known story of his parents precisely because it offered a greater liberty: 'Il ne choisit pas de réécrire autrement l'histoire de Philippe et d'Olympias... peut-être parce qu'il ne veut pas rivaliser trop directement avec une version très connue. S'il préfère s'intéresser aux aïeux, c'est qu'il jouit d'une plus grande liberté,' *Romans*, p. 368.

[76] We might also suggest that, in making Florimont Alexander's grandfather, Aimon offers an early example of a trend prevalent in the thirteenth century which described the *enfances* of popular heroes, or the adventures of their children and grandchildren. See for example the *enfances Guillaume* and the *enfances Vivien*, which depicted the childhood adventures of, respectively, the great hero Guillaume and his nephew, Vivien. For an examination of this phenomenon see Julie A. Baker, 'The Childhood of the Epic Hero: Representation of the Child Protagonist in the Old French *Enfances* Texts', in *The Child in French and Francophone Literature*, ed. by Buford Norman (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004), pp. 91-107. *Les enfances Guillaume, chanson de geste du XII siècle*, ed. by Patrice Henry (Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1935) and *Les enfances Vivien*, ed. by Magali Rouquier (Geneva: Droz, 1997).

Son fil remeist aprés sa mort;
Mai plusor gens l'en firent tort.

....

... Alixandres conquist puis,
Ses fils, qui fut de grans vertus,
Assez plus que il n'ot perdu:

....

Mais se fut et pechiés et tors:
Cil qui le devoient servir
Le firent a dolor morir.
(ll. 13583-600)

For both his son and grandson, Aimon has a 'but'; for his own hero, however, there are neither 'ifs' nor 'buts'. Florimont lives up to his name as supreme flower of all the world.

This examination of *Florimont*'s intertextual links with the *Roman d'Alexandre* has revealed that Aimon de Varennes was a very *aware* poet, one who consciously used his awareness and understanding both of the society around him and of his predecessors' texts in his own work. We can see his awareness of largesse as a topic that had captured his fellow poets' imaginations and his understanding that, as a concept, largesse presents not a two-dimensional process but a multi-faceted way of life, capable of many differing expressions. This awareness and understanding is shown not only in the various models (successful or otherwise) of largesse that he presents, but also in his rewriting of Alexander's largesse. In transforming it from a commodity-exchange largesse whose real focus is Alexander (either on what he expects to gain in return for it or on how it enables him to control his men) to a gift-exchange process, Aimon reveals an understanding of the philosophical motivations behind largesse as he places the emphasis on the *affectus*, the spirit which dictates liberality, rather than on the *effectus*, the mere fact of generosity.

His comprehension of the nuances involved in the debate surrounding largesse is coupled with an awareness of the diverse ways in which narrative elements can be used to structure a romance. He rewrites not just motifs (largesse in this case) from his predecessors but also what may be described as narrative techniques – here, the idea of using different models to present and explore a common preoccupation. His rewriting of these concepts is permeated by a structural awareness: Aimon's 'borrowings' are expanded (*adiectio*) and used to present a philosophy of largesse (a good man is a generous man and the best largesse will always be supported by prowess) and to create a structure for

Florimont which links its tonally different halves.[77] His use of the model exploration technique is present in a block (as in *Partonopeus*) as Floquart explains the seven different types of largesse, but I would like to suggest that this block serves as a structural pivot point which manages the transition from one intertext to the next[78] and as a complement to the larger model exploration which runs throughout *Florimont*, drawing attention to it. This larger model exploration is of course constituted by the different stages in Florimont's largesse, where we see different models in action and which serve as a further structural device, each section marking an important development of the hero's character or landmark in his life.

Finally, we have seen that Aimon was extremely aware of the work of his predecessors and contemporaries. This is shown by his decision to depict Florimont as Alexander the Great's grandfather, in recognition of the fact that his predecessors' portrayal of Alexander was restricted by the latter's existence as a historical figure. We also see it in his knowledge and use of the model exploration technique as found in *Partonopeus de Blois* and other contemporary texts: Aimon must have been aware of these works in order successfully to rewrite elements taken from them. However, the manner in which he presents these rewrites suggests a desire to highlight his own creativity and poetic dexterity, a desire entirely in keeping with the competitive rewriting ethos found in twelfth-century France. Thus Alexander could be seen as a 'flag', a pennant with which to grab the audience's attention before Aimon presents a perfected, sanitised version (described as Alexander's grandfather no less!) who suffers none of the flaws of the historical personage and who can embody courtly characteristics with no underlying ambiguity. Similarly, Aimon's depiction of a model on a complex subject (that of largesse) which is clearly superior to all others, seems almost a challenge to his predecessors, as if he were demanding to know why they had not provided answers for their audience. Above all Aimon de Varennes presents a range of different rewriting techniques, which he applies to various aspects of his intertexts before putting them together in a skilful, innovative

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[77] This difference in tone stems from Aimon's major intertexts and *Florimont*'s relationship with them. The first half of *Florimont*, up to Florimont's separation from the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* and its disastrous consequences for his largesse, has many intertextual links with *Partonopeus de Blois*. The second half however, after Florimont has relocated to Philipopolis, is more concerned with establishing him as grandfather to Alexander the Great, and references to *Partonopeus* as an intertext cease. This idea will be examined in greater detail in the following chapter, which deals with *Florimont*'s links with *Partonopeus*.

[78] It comes at the end of what may be described as the *Dame de l'Ile Celee*, *Partonopeus* section and just before Florimont moves to Philipopolis where he marries Romadanaple and establishes himself as Alexander the Great's grandfather.

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manner. This is epitomized by the way in which his use of *transmutatio* and *adiectio*, when applied to largesse and the model exploration technique, serve to link two of *Florimont*'s intertexts. Such a mastery of technique, coupled with Aimon's awareness of his contemporaries' work, suggests that any examination of *Florimont* will have to be equally as aware and will need to take into account popular, twelfth-century texts as well as the rewriting techniques and all their myriad permutations available to Aimon. That we have been able to see and describe these permutations suggests that the choice of Kelly's model through which to explore and understand rewriting techniques is both an appropriate and fruitful one. What remains to be seen is where else this model may take us. We have seen that Aimon is a deliberate, intelligent and focussed rewriter, but there are many questions which our examination has not yet answered and which require further investigation. *Florimont*'s relationship with *Partonopeus de Blois* for example: in his adaptation of the model exploration idea we have seen that Aimon was clearly aware of *Partonopeus* and, in light of this awareness and his multi-layered rewriting of ideas from the *Roman d'Alexandre*, it is worth examining what other specific elements and ideas Aimon may have taken from *Partonopeus*. Similarly, we have seen in his combination of the largesse and model exploration concepts that Aimon is capable of combining his intertexts to further his own ends. We must ask ourselves, given his level of skill, whether this is the sole instance where Aimon has fused different intertexts together or whether there will be further 'hybrid' examples elsewhere in his text. If this is indeed the case then are these intertexts the *Roman d'Alexandre* and *Partonopeus*, or has Aimon introduced more intertexts as a means of further drawing attention to his creativity? What could these (potential) further combinations tells us about the art of rewriting or about Aimon's attitude towards his intertexts? These are important questions if we are to re-assess *Florimont* by the criteria according to which we believe it to have been written, and are key to understanding the reasons for *Florimont*'s apparent popularity throughout the Middle Ages. The following chapters will answer these questions, proving that Aimon's deft manipulation of the *Roman d'Alexandre* was not a happy chance of fate but rather the product of a talented, capable story-teller with a clear understanding of the power of rewriting, a writer who, like the romance he crafted, is worthy of more attention than modern scholars have so far bestowed.

Chapter 3

Florimont and *Partonopeus de Blois*: Contesting Rewriting [1]

Having commenced the exploration of Aimon's rewriting strategies and practices with the textual tradition that he himself cites as his model – the story of Alexander – it is logical to move next to the text which most critics have cited as his intertextual model, *Partonopeus de Blois*.[2] It should not surprise us that Aimon, who has clearly capitalised on the popularity of the *Roman d'Alexandre* as a means of promoting his own work, should also engage with *Partonopeus de Blois*, another key text from the latter part of the twelfth century. *Florimont's* episode of the *Dame de l'Ile Celee*, with its somewhat humorous evocation of an affair with a fairy mistress figure has been taken as a clear rewriting of the popular *Partonopeus de Blois*. Alfred Risop discerned the influence of *Partonopeus* on the episode of the *Dame* in 1895 (see below) and successive scholars have followed in his footsteps, some seeing the influence of *Partonopeus* in more than just the episode of the *Dame*.[3] As a result, *Florimont's* precise date of 1188 is usually offered as a *terminus ad quem* for *Partonopeus*.[4] A well-known work, *Partonopeus* inspired a continuation and was translated into several European languages.[5] It was a key text in the birth of Old French

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[1] A paper based on an early version of the Chapter and entitled 'The Monster Mutated: The Intertextual Influence of *Partonopeus de Blois* on Aimon de Varennes' *Florimont'*, has been published in *Reflections: New Directions in Modern Languages and Cultures*, ed. by Sarah Buxton, Laura Campbell, Tracey Dawe and Elise Hugueny-Leger (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), pp. 3-16.

[2] *Partonopeus de Blois*, ed. by Gildea. All future references will be to this edition. I have chosen to use the Gildea, rather than the more recent Collet and Joris edition for reasons of clarity: the majority of existing scholarship on *Partonopeus* uses the Gildea and all line references are to his work. Collet and Joris' introduction is to be recommended however: *Le Roman de Partonopeu de Blois*, ed. by Collet and Joris. With regard to the spelling of *Partonopeus*, I have chosen to adopt the position preferred by Eley *et al* which suggests that the sooner a manuscript was produced after the composition of a romance, the greater the probability of its preserving the original spelling used by the author for proper names. Consequently, 'Partonopeus' will always be spelt with the flexional 's' as this is how it appears in the earliest surviving manuscripts. This approach is discussed by Eley *et al* at <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/partonopeus/generalintroduction.htm>.

[3] With regard to the relationship between the two Laura Hibbard notes that *Florimont* is 'similarly written in praise of a lady' and also 'brings in classical names and allusions.' Laura Hibbard, *Mediaeval Romance in England* (London: Oxford University Press, 1924), p. 200, footnote 1. She also cites Gustav Gröber who 'thought that *Florimont*... shows in part the influence in style and structure of *Parténopeus* [sic].' Gustav Gröber, *Grundriss de romansiche Philologie*, p. 589, cited in Hibbard, p. 200, footnote 1.

[4] For a look at the dating of *Partonopeus*, see p. 106

[5] *Partonopeus* is preserved in seven complete manuscripts, one excerpt and two manuscript fragments. It is cited by contemporaries as a known, popular text, on at least four occasions: at ll. 25-34 of Denis Piramus' *Vie Seint Edmund le Rei*, ed. by H. Kjellman (Göteborg, 1935, rep. Slatkine, Geneva, 1974); in a 13th-century fabliau *Deux bourdeurs ribauds* (ll. 82-89) cited in Evelyn Birge Vitz, *Orality and Performance in Early French Romance* (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 1999); by Uc Brunenc, a provençal troubadour, cited by

romance;[6] it influenced many later works and was often imitated.[7] It is therefore important to see how Aimon responds to this second major landmark on the literary landscape and to compare it with his treatment of the *Roman d'Alexandre*. Unlike the romanticised ideal of history offered by the *Roman d'Alexandre*, *Partonopeus de Blois* is clearly a piece of fiction. It is an anonymous poem which tells the tale of the young hero, Partonopeus, who is magically transported across the sea and seduced by an apparent fairy mistress named Melior. The two enjoy an illicit relationship for nearly two years before Partonopeus' mother persuades him to break his *amie*'s taboo. In the ensuing pandemonium Melior is revealed to be the Empress of Byzantium. She had been possessed of magical powers which had enabled the young lovers to live in secrecy. However, Partonopeus' betrayal had shattered these powers and she banishes him when their affair becomes known. The rest of the text deals with reuniting the hero with his beloved.

As we have seen, that *Florimont* and *Partonopeus* have a relationship of some kind has long been accepted. Yet despite a general consensus that there are some links between the two texts, the exact nature of this relationship has yet to be defined and this provides a compelling reason for re-examining *Florimont* in light of *Partonopeus*. Anthime Fourrier suggests that *Florimont* is almost entirely based on *Partonopeus*, noting numerous analogies between the texts and commenting in addition that *Florimont* owes 'la disposition générale de sa matière' to *Partonopeus* (p. 460). Douglas Kelly refutes this, allowing that there are 'striking parallels' between *Partonopeus* and the episode of the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* in *Florimont* but remarking that 'the parallel structure of the Maiden part of the romance can not be construed as indicative of a resemblance in the OVERALL [sic] array of plots in the two poems' ('Composition', p. 278). Yet even concerning this episode of the *Dame* there is scholarly disagreement: Risop sees it almost as a carbon copy of *Partonopeus*, stating: 'Diese Episode ist... Zug für Zug der Partonopeussage nachgebildet' ('Ungelöste Fragen', p. 440, footnote 2).[8] Hilka, however, points to the differences in the taboos the respective heroes are under and instead likens *Florimont* to Marie de France's

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Fourrier, p. 441; and mentioned by the author of the *Ovide moralisé* in the early 14th century, cited by Fourrier, p. 446. It was translated into English, German and Icelandic.

[6] See Penny Simons and Penny Eley, 'The Prologue to *Partonopeus de Blois*: Text, Context and Subtext', *French Studies*, 49 (1995), 1-16; Penny Simons, 'A Romance Revisited: Reopening the Question of the Manuscript Tradition of *Partonopeus de Blois*', *Romania*, 115 (1997), 368-405 and Eley and Simons, 'A Re-assessment'.

[7] See for example Renaut de Beaujeu's *Le Bel Inconnu* or Hue de Rotelande's *Ipomedon*.

[8] Fourrier concurs with this view: 'tout cet épisode de la liaison avec la fée de l'Ile Celée est calqué sur *Partonopeus*', pp. 454-55. See also below, p. 125.

Lanval with regard to the taboo Florimont is placed under: 'Dagegen liegen bedeutsame Berührungen mit Marie de France vor' (p. cxi). With such a disparity of opinion it is difficult to know what to think. Is all, or indeed any, of *Florimont* based on *Partonopeus*? It would seem that there is a relationship of some sort between the two but the extent of such a relationship escapes easy definition. A close examination of the texts – looking in detail at the episode of the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* and any links it may have with *Partonopeus* and/or other texts – will shed some light on this issue and bring us closer to defining the nature of the relationship between *Partonopeus* and *Florimont*.

Before we begin our discussion, however, we shall look briefly at the dating of the two texts so that we might be as sure as possible as to which direction the influence between the two texts runs. For *Florimont*, of course, we have an exact date – that of 1188, furnished by Aimon himself at the end of his text (ll. 13 677-80). For *Partonopeus* the matter becomes more controversial. As we have seen, the influence of *Partonopeus* on *Florimont*'s episode of the *Dame* has meant that *Florimont*'s date of 1188 is traditionally accepted as a *terminus ad quem* for the composition of *Partonopeus*. In line with this *Partonopeus* was thought to have been composed at some point in the 1180s – Anthime Fourrier's proposed date of between 1182-85 being accepted by the majority of scholars. However, in a recent evaluation of the text Penny Eley and Penny Simons put forward a convincing argument for *Partonopeus* having instead been composed at some point during the 1170s. In the latest edition of the text Olivier Collet and Pierre-Marie Joris discuss the debate surrounding a date of composition and consider all arguments before concluding that the question of *Partonopeus*' date is one that 'remains open' (p. 21).[9] What is perhaps most important from our particular viewpoint is that, in all cases, it is agreed that *Partonopeus* precedes *Florimont*.

It might seem tempting to begin a comparison of the texts with an examination of the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* episode, since this is where the majority of critical interest has been focussed. Though we will discuss this important section below, I believe it is important first to situate this episode in its contextual frame and consider if, as has been suggested, there are links between the two texts outside of this particular episode. As such we will begin our consideration at the most logical starting point – by looking at the prologues of the two

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[9] For full details of the debate concerning the dating of *Partonopeus* see Fourrier's chapter on *Partonopeus* in *Le courante réaliste*, Eley and Simons, 'A Re-assessment', and Simons and Eley, 'Prologue'. See also *Partonopeu de Blois*, ed. by Collet and Joris, pp. 14-22.

texts. We have seen (see Chapter 2) that Aimon indicated his text's relationship with the Alexander material near the start of *Florimont*. It would seem logical therefore to expect that, were Aimon seeking to establish a relationship of any kind with *Partonopeus*, there would be some sign of this in or near the start of his poem. A cursory glance at the two prologues indicates that there are some similarities between them. Both poets set their tales in the distant – some might say imaginary – past. The *Partonopeus* poet initially refers to this rather indirectly, noting that clerks may criticise him for choosing to write about 'ancient times' in the vernacular rather than in Latin (ll. 77-79). Aimon, on the other hand, directly states that he is telling a tale of the ancients:

> Aymes de Varanes retrait
> Ceu que li ancÿens on[t] fait,
> Les fais conte des ancïens
> (ll. 37-39)

In and of itself, that both Aimon and the *Partonopeus* poet set their tales in antiquity does not offer definitive proof that Aimon had *Partonopeus* in mind as an intertext, particularly if we consider that the *matière d'antiquité* provided a rich and popular source of material for medieval authors.[10] Taken alongside this we have the fact that both poets stress (albeit in different manners) that their texts are in the vernacular rather than in Latin: the *Partonopeus* poet mounts a stout defence detailing exactly why he is *not* wasting his time by writing in the vernacular (ll. 81-101) whilst Aimon informs us that he deliberately chose to put his story into the vernacular from Latin: 'Ensi com il l'avoit empris / L'ait de latin en romans mis,' (ll. 35-36). Though this is suggestive, it again does not offer proof that Aimon was engaging with *Partonopeus* as an intertext. What is more significant, however, is that in both texts the prologue is immediately followed by the recitation of an illustrious genealogy which provides a suitably 'heroic' background for the poem's hero. Where the *Partonopeus* poet presents a Trojan genealogy, Aimon chooses to present a Roman one, evoking Romulus and Remus, founders of Rome,[11] but looking back to an even earlier time with, presumably, even greater men: that of Alexander and his ancestors – Philip of Macedonia and Florimont (ll. 120-162). It seems too great a coincidence to

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[10] That antiquity did indeed capture the imagination of medieval rewriters is shown by the *Roman d'Enéas*, the *Roman de Troie* and the *Roman de Thèbes*, all three of which are set in this period.

[11] We will see this reference again in Chapter 5, which examines *Florimont*'s relationship with the *Roman d'Enéas* amongst others.

suppose that both poets would independently choose to refer back to genealogical myths dealing with the creation of Europe immediately after their prologues. Rather, I would suggest that this is an attempt on Aimon's part to establish a link with *Partonopeus*, perhaps even to go a step further than the *Partonopeus* poet by referring to a more ancient time. The reference to a Roman genealogy has a dual purpose: it sets the *Roman d'Enéas* up as an intertext for *Florimont* (see discussion in Chapter 5), whilst at the same time revealing Aimon's awareness that the genealogy presented in *Partonopeus* (ll. 135-498), rewrites the foundation myth 'propaganda' found in the *Roman de Troie* and the *Roman d'Enéas*.[12]

We have seen some of the similarities between the prologues of the two texts. Let us now turn to consider the differences between the two as these may be no less important in terms of what they reveal. Aimon differs from the *Partonopeus* poet in that he insists that his story is a true one, with no lies, whereas the *Partonopeus* poet declares that even the most fanciful tales and imaginings may contain elements of the truth and teach us how to behave.[13] This is perhaps not particularly significant, yet it is interesting to note that both poets use the word *fable*. This becomes even more interesting if one considers Denis Piramus' comment referring to *Partonopeus* as 'fable' and 'songe' in his *La vie seint Edmund le Rei*. He states:

> Cil ki Partonopé trova
> E ki les vers fist e rima
> Mult se pena de bien dire,
> Si dist il bien de cele matire ;
> *Cume de fable e de menceonge*
> *La matire resemble sounge,*
> Kar iceo ne put unkes estre
> (ll. 25-31, my italics)[14]

Is it possible that Aimon was using this judgment as a bridge between his own story and that of *Partonopeus*?[15] In insisting on the veracity of his own work and declaring that it is

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[12] See Simons and Eley, 'Prologue' for the development of this argument.

[13] *Florimont*: 'Signor, ceste istore est vertable, / Ne n'i a mensonge ne flabe,' (ll. 861-862). *Partonopeus*: 'Car nus escris n'est si frarins, / Nes des fables as Sarrasins, / Dont on ne puist exemple traire / De mal laissier et de bien faire,' (ll. 103-06, see also ll. 107-112).

[14] That he is referring to the prologue of *Partonopeus* is made clear in his dismissal of the claim in ll. 27-29 that good lessons may be learned from what is 'untrue' or fictitious. Short has also linked Denis Piramus' prologue with *Partonopeus*. See Ian Short, 'Denis Piramus and the truth of Marie's *Lais*', *Cultura Neolatina*, 67 (2007), 319-40.

neither a *songe* nor a *fable*, he links his text to *Partonopeus* whilst at the same time ensuring that Denis' censure could not be applied to his own text.

Aimon's revelation that *Florimont* has been composed for the love a woman (ll. 8-9) is also intriguing. It is made clear at various points throughout *Partonopeus* that the poet has an *amie* (see for example ll. 1872-86, ll. 4049-52, ll. 4543-48 or ll. 7546-52) and he reveals at the end of the text that he has composed *Partonopeus* for her, offering to write further if it has pleased her (ll. 10609-624). Though this is could be no more than a coincidence (poets dedicating their work to an *amie* was hardly uncommon) it is nonetheless worth noting that the *Partonopeus*' poet's first reference to being in love comes, as does Aimon's dedication, in his prologue (ll. 57-60).

The evidence considered thus far offers pause for thought. Individually these similarities do not offer definitive proof that Aimon was engaging with *Partonopeus* as he wrote his own prologue. However, their each occurring within or immediately after his prologue has an accumulative weight which perhaps suggests that Aimon was indeed seeking to evoke – however briefly – the earlier poem. This idea may be seen to gather weight if we consider that both poets state in their prologues that much may be learnt from their work. The *Partonopeus* poet comments: 'Ce puet en cest escrit aprendre / Qui ot et set et wet entendre,' (ll. 133-134). In *Florimont*, meanwhile, Aimon writes: 'Asseiz i puet de bien aprandre / Qui de boin cuer i veult antandre,' (ll. 5-6), using the same rhyme pair as *Partonopeus*. This is a commonplace expression and it is possible that Aimon's use of it is uninfluenced by its presence in the *Partonopeus* prologue. That it occurs with a host of similarities which may be engaging with *Partonopeus* is worthy of note however. Much the same may be said of further verbal resonances within the prologues: *Florimont*'s l. 10, 'Que tei l'orait que ne l'antant,' is remarkably similar to *Partonopeus*' l. 50, 'Tex l'escoute ne l'entent pas.' Again this is an ordinary expression, with proverbial overtones. Aimon's use of it may indicate a desire on his part to be seen as possessing *auctoritas*, a way of conferring additional legitimacy (alongside his references to Alexander the Great) to his work.[16] However, given its context, it could also be seen as a deliberate echo of *Partonopeus*, perhaps a way of preparing alert 'readers' to watch out for further links to the

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[15] If Kjellman's dating of shortly after 1170 (p. cxxviii) is accepted for the *Vie Seint Edmund* then it is quite possible that Aimon had encountered it.
[16] Taken together with his use of material from the *Roman d'Alexandre* we might even see this as a gesture in the direction of the more 'historical' writing found in the *romans antiques*.

earlier text. That Aimon is not averse to using his predecessor's lines in this way is shown by verbal parallels elsewhere in the text. *Florimont*'s l. 448, 'Que iluec chiet li bras en mer,' evokes the descriptions of Chief d'Oire given in *Partonopeus* at ll. 1659, 1725, and 1768. Meanwhile, Romadanaple's mouth is described as 'Bien faite bouche por baissier' (l. 6013) – a line which is remarkably similar to that used by the *Partonopeus* poet to describe Partonopeus' own mouth: 'Basse a la boche a bien baisier,' (l. 569). These lines seem to be examples of what Kelly, following Macrobius, terms 'paraphrase': 'literal or slightly modified adoption of various lines,' (*Conspiracy*, p. 51).

The bulk of the parallels between the prologues of the two texts discussed so far may well be the result of *Partonopeus* unconsciously influencing Aimon as he wrote *Florimont*. However, Aimon's awareness of the composition process and of rewriting techniques – shown by his manipulation of material drawn from the *Roman d'Alexandre* – make it difficult completely to rule out the possibility that the parallels are a deliberate reference to *Partonopeus*. Indeed, the possibility that Aimon's prologue was influenced by that of the *Partonopeus* poet becomes more likely when we consider the inclusion of a second prologue (ll. 9195-9272) in which Aimon moves from paraphrase of *Partonopeus* to a more competitive form of *aemulatio*. No longer content with stating that much may be learned from his text, in his second prologue Aimon uses *adiectio* directly to list *what* may be learned from listeners attentive to *Florimont*:

> Et qui welt oïr ceste istore
> Et retenir en sa memore,
> Se em boen poent i welt antandre,
> Assez puet oïr et aprendre[17]
> D'umelité et de largesce,
> De richeté et de povresce,
> D'amor et de chevelerie,
> De largesce, de cortesie
> Et de conquerement sens honte,
> Si com l'istore le reconte.
> (ll. 9263-72)

In explicitly listing what, precisely, may be learned from his own text Aimon both differentiates his work from that of the *Partonopeus* poet – who, as we have seen, states

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[17] It is worth noting that Aimon has deliberately re-used the rhyme pair from the *Partonopeus* prologue and his own initial prologue. Though this may have been done for reasons of convenience, I would instead suggest that this is a deliberate way of 'marking' the text, to draw attention to his *aemulatio*.

only that much may be learned his work (ll. 133-34) – and implicitly challenges his predecessor: his list seems designed to make one wonder if the much that may be learnt from *Partonopeus* includes humility, largesse and lessons in poverty, love and chivalry. This move to a potentially more competitive form of *aemulatio* lends weight to the idea that the parallels between the *Partonopeus* prologue and Aimon's initial prologue are not mere coincidence. Rather the hypothesis that they were indeed designed to evoke *Partonopeus* becomes more plausible if we consider that after this second prologue, in which Aimon goes a step further than his predecessor, references of any kind to *Partonopeus* cease abruptly (see discussion pp. 141-142).

From the evidence considered so far it would seem that Aimon has indeed, in some way, cited *Partonopeus*. What the parallels discerned in the prologues of the texts have been unable to tell us however, is the *manner* in and *extent* to which Aimon has reworked *Partonopeus*. This chapter aims to explore the methods and the scale of his rewriting and use the understanding garnered from this exploration to re-evaluate Aimon's skills as a poet. We shall discover a more complex form of *aemulatio* than the appreciative emulation which marked a great many of his modifications of material drawn from the *Roman d'Alexandre*. Instead, by examining changes which Aimon made to material as diverse as the female protagonists and the gifts given to the heroes through to the taboo constraining the hero and the part played by parental figures, we can start to see whether Aimon's approach to *Partonopeus* is the same as his rewriting of the *Roman d'Alexandre*. In particular we will focus on the process of *aemulatio* and its competitive streak whereby a poet seeks to show how models found in existing texts may be treated in different (and implicitly better) ways.

The treatment of female protagonists seems the most logical starting point at which to begin our search for further evidence of rewriting *Partonopeus*, as this is the area that has traditionally been used to link the two romances (see pp. 107-108). The first, and most obvious, parallel between the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* and Melior is that they are both presented as fairy mistresses. In and of itself, this is, of course, far from sufficient proof that the two are intentionally related, as the *lai* tradition provides plenty of examples of fairy mistresses from which both Aimon and the *Partonopeus* poet may have drawn

independently.[18] However, when we take into account the fact that both poets have incorporated the fairy mistress from the *lai* into a narrative structure belonging to romance, and, more importantly, when we examine the contrasts between the heroine as fairy mistress and the heroine as romance protagonist, the evidence of a deliberate reference by Aimon becomes much more persuasive.

In *Partonopeus* we have a single heroine, Melior, yet her portrayal hints at a dual or split personality. In the first half of the romance we see her as a fairy mistress, possessed of limitless wealth, able to lure Partonopeus across the sea and manipulate a deserted city with her magic before secretly coming to him under cover of darkness. In the second half, however, she is stripped of her magical powers and revealed to be not an all-powerful supernatural being but a human woman whose power now stems from earthly riches.[19] Moreover, by being the prize to be awarded to the winner of the wedding tournament, Melior allows herself to occupy the far more traditional role of romance heroine, seemingly the antithesis of her initial *persona* as fairy mistress. It can be argued that, in the two different stages of the romance, she represents two different heroines.[20] Though she manifestly remains as one person throughout the text, with character traits linking her different faces – for example, her independent, manipulative streak remains the same throughout and ensures a degree of character unity – there are considerable differences between the woman we encounter when we are first introduced to her and the woman who finally marries Partonopeus.

Are these different aspects visible in any way in the female protagonists of *Florimont* and is this duality in any way present in the *Dame de l'Ile Celee*? Intriguingly, the answers to these questions are both yes and no. There are a number of similarities between Melior and the *Dame*: Melior had crossed the sea to see Partonopeus in France; the

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[18] Indeed, as we shall see a little later, it seems likely that Aimon was also aware of, and possibly drawing on, Marie de France's *Lanval*, in his creation of this episode. This suggests that we should be cautious when discussing similarities between Melior and the *Dame* as Aimon may well have had the *fée* from *Lanval* as a frame of reference as well.

[19] Laura Hibbard seems also to have noted this duality in Melior's nature. She notes that 'comparisons of the *fees* in *Lanval*, *Desire*, *Graelent* and *Guingamor*, with Melior shows that she is essentially of their sisterhood' (p. 209) before going on to describe Melior's rationalization as a human queen, the taboo being a whim rather than an essential part of her nature and the pain she feels at being separated from Partonopeus as 'inconsistencies' which can be attributed to the precepts of courtly love, (p. 209).

[20] For an examination of the different roles occupied by Melior see Bruckner, *Shaping Romance*. She notes that *Partonopeus* plays with traditional gender roles, reversing them as Melior is accorded power throughout the romance. She comments that Melior exchanges 'the role of powerful fairy mistress for that of haughty, but hesitating lyric *domna*,' (p. 110) in the second half of the romance.

Dame leaves her land and crosses the sea to come to Florimont. Both offer themselves and their lands to the heroes. Each gives her *ami* a sword and allows him temporarily to leave her on two occasions (Fourrier, pp. 452-454). Although interesting are these similarities enough in themselves to suggest a firm connection between Melior and the *Dame de l'Ile Celee*? It is here that we must proceed with caution as both cases share a number of details with Marie de France's *Lanval*; all three 'fairies' leave their lands and offer themselves freely to the heroes under condition of a taboo for example, as well as each bestowing magical gifts upon their *amis*.[21] However, it should be noted that there are instances which differentiate first *Partonopeus*, then *Florimont*, from *Lanval*. Lanval's *amie* for example, unlike Melior and the *Dame* with Partonopeus and Florimont, does not offer Lanval a sword, nor does he undergo any extended periods away from her during the course of their relationship. Indeed, there are differences even where the three share common ground – where Melior and the *Dame* each specify that they had crossed the sea to see their beloveds (ll. 1373-76 in *Partonopeus*, ll. 2453-54 in *Florimont*), Lanval's *amie* states only that she had left her land and travelled far to meet him (ll. 110-112).

The similarities between Melior and the *Dame*, coupled with the differences which distinguish them from the *fée* in *Lanval*, would seem to suggest that, although Aimon may have been aware of *Lanval* (see discussion pp. 122-124 and pp. 133-138) as a possible fairy mistress model, his portrayal of the *Dame* as a fairy mistress is more closely modelled on that of Melior than on that of Lanval's mistress. Nonetheless, there are differences between Melior and the *Dame*. As Douglas Kelly points out: 'the manner in which they encounter their lovers, and the location of that meeting and its attendant circumstances' ('Composition', p. 278) are different, which might suggest that the *Dame* is not based on Melior. Indeed, in some respects, the *Dame* is even more obviously a fairy mistress than Melior was portrayed to be.[22] Her sudden appearance when Florimont is alone, for example, has more in common with that of Lanval's *amie*, indisputably a fairy mistress, than with anything that Melior does.[23] Moreover, the *Dame*'s attitude towards Florimont

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[21] For a close examination of the nature of the taboo in each text see pp. 122-128. See pp. 128-139 for a more detailed consideration of the gifts in each text.

[22] Harf-Lancner notes that the *Dame* 'ne soit jamais explicitement désignée comme fée,' but that 'tous les indices de la féerie sont rassemblés.' 'D'*Enéas*', p. 126.

[23] Despite this similarity I do not believe that Aimon presented the *Dame* in this manner as a deliberate recollection of *Lanval*; though both fairies appear when the hero is alone, Lanval is greeted by two of his *amie*'s handmaidens and escorted into her presence (ll. 55-93) where the *Dame* comes alone and approaches

betrays her status as a supernatural being who *knows* she will be irresistible; she is so certain that he will accept her as an *amie*, for example, that she brings a sword to give to him at their first meeting. She shows none of the uncertainty or self-doubt that we may expect from a human heroine:

> « Je sai bien que assez sui bele.
> Jai tant ne puels aler, se croi,
> Que plus bele trusses de moi. »
> (ll. 2484-86)

It is she who first proposes that they become *amis* and who then, less than fifty lines later, suggests that Florimont abandon his country and his family to live with her.[24] Even as she agrees to stay, following his refusal, one senses that it is a temporary measure that she consents to merely to humour him:

> « Florimont, j'ai pitié de toi,
> Por [t'] amor ferai ton voloir;
> Moi et ta gent poras avoir »
> (ll. 2530-32)

Such arrogance contrasts sharply with the insecurity seen in Melior's repeated attempts to reassure Partonopeus that she is not anything unnatural and the almost anxious manner in which she seeks his approval and explains her situation after the first time they make love, in order that he might not think her virginity too easily surrendered (ll. 1312-34, in particular ll. 1329-32).[25] It is difficult to imagine the *Dame* evincing such self-doubt, and in that respect she makes a more convincing fairy than Melior did. Indeed, her arrogance is so much more marked than Melior's that one suspects Aimon of deliberately exaggerating it as a warning about the fairy mistress *persona* as incarnated by Melior and to draw attention to his reworking of the earlier text. This is the *adiectio* form of *mutatio* and its use

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Florimont directly (ll. 2427-35). Rather, the *Dame*'s appearance, travelling unguarded, underscores her otherworldly nature.

[24] In this respect we might once again compare her with Melior who, although she allows Partonopeus to visit France, expects the young hero to leave his country and family and live in Chief d'Oire until they can marry (ll. 1447-72). Differences with Lanval's mistress make themselves felt here also: though Lanval does eventually leave with his *amie* there is no mention of him doing so until the queen's false accusations put his life at risk.

[25] For an example of her attempts to reassure Partonopeus that she is not unnatural, see her careful protestations of Christian faith, l. 1149 and ll. 1535-56.

here suggests that Aimon's attitude towards *Partonopeus* differs from the imitation shown towards the *Roman d'Alexandre*. What his purpose may be in re-writing *Partonopeus* in this fashion is revealed as we move on to consider whether there is a more traditional romance heroine in *Florimont*.

There is no trace in the *Dame* of the more traditional romance heroine that Melior gradually becomes. The breaking of her taboo and the subsequent loss of her powers reveal Melior to be an entirely natural human being, and we see her struggling with her love for Partonopeus even after banishing him. Her emotion is so great that she cannot utter his name without stuttering and fainting (ll. 7273-80). With the *Dame* however, we find no evidence of such weakness. Her initial separation from Florimont seems almost business-like as she sums up their relationship and states that he may keep everything she has given him, except her love (ll. 3783-92). Furthermore, it is Florimont who seems to find their parting traumatic as he faints more than forty times whilst the *Dame* faints just once, almost as a matter of form:

> Florimons c'est entre ses bras
> Plus de .XL. fois pasmez,
> Puels c'est a la terre getez.
> La damoisele se pasma,
> Et quant revint, si le baissa,
> (ll. 3852-56)

That the *Dame* then goes on to replace Florimont and have a magician son can only confirm the suspicion that her heart and emotions are not entirely human, and certainly *not* those of a traditional romance heroine.

Yet this is not to say that there are no traces of such a character in *Florimont*. There is an entirely stereotypical romance heroine – beautiful, young and submissive – in the character of Romadanaple, daughter of Philip, founder of Philipopolis. Rather than having two *personae* present in one character as the *Partonopeus* poet had done with Melior, Aimon has taken the step of separating the two and expressing them in two very different characters – the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* and Romadanaple, the heiress whom Florimont is destined to marry. In so doing he externalises a tension that the *Partonopeus* poet had expressed internally (a neat combination of *mutuatio* and *mutatio*; *mutuatio* as he replicates the idea of distinct characteristics for 'different' heroines and *mutatio* as, unlike in

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Partonopeus, these 'different' heroines are made into separate characters). For if the *Dame* is a fairy mistress, then Romadanaple is every inch a romance heroine, very much the foil for the romance's hero. She is less a character able to act independently in her own right and more an idealised, passive object who can be used to structure and further plot devices.[26] She also serves as witness to the hero's transformation from a callow young man, who had beggared himself and his people in an excessive reaction to the loss of his first love, into a capable adult who epitomizes the link between prowess and largesse, and who is worthy of being ancestor to Alexander the Great. She is a submissive daughter, content to live the life her father has ordained for her, and is a very *safe* woman.[27] She is the complete antithesis of the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* and represents a counterpart to Melior in the second half of *Partonopeus*, after she has been made safe and humanised through the loss of her powers.[28] Harf-Lancner has also commented on the anti-thesis of the *Dame* and the romance princess typified by Romadanaple. She links the unsuitability of the *Dame* for Florimont with that of Dido for Eneas before going on to note that 'cet antagonisme entre la fée et la princesse, flagrant dans les lais de *Lanval* et de *Graelent*, constitue dans *Florimont* la première mise en forme romanesque d'un schéma narratif qui s'épanouira dans *Le Bel Inconnu*,' ('D'*Enéas*', p. 130).[29]

Such externalisation is an example of re-writing which combines *imitatio* and *aemulatio*. The *imitatio* is shown by Aimon's use of *mutuatio*; the idea of two opposing *personae* – one fairy, one romance heroine – is recognisable as coming from *Partonopeus*. The tradition of *aemulatio* is evoked by Aimon's use of *mutatio* in putting his 'borrowed'

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[26] In this sense Romadanaple seems to fit Roberta Krueger's description of a romance heroine perfectly: 'romances cast women more often as desired objects than active subjects in chivalric adventures or quests.' Roberta Krueger, 'Questions of gender in Old French courtly romance', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance*, pp. 132-149 (p. 137).

[27] Before she first meets the *Povre Perdus* her father instructs her: '« S'a vos parolet, belement / Li respondez et doucement. »' (ll. 6059-60). Romadanaple's reply to this is merely: '« Sire, » fet ele, « jai folie / N'orait per moi ne vilonie, »' (ll. 6061-62). This impression of Romadanaple as a very safe, very traditional romance heroine, unwilling to step outside the boundaries drawn for her, is reinforced at a later meeting with Florimont; Florimont asks if he might serve her, having come from his country specifically for her (ll. 7357-66) and Romadanaple very correctly responds that if he seeks recompense he should see her parents as she will give him nothing: '« Se vos iestes venus por moi, / Les sodees avrez del roi. / Sire, preneis de son avoir. / De moi ne poriés riens avoir; / .... / D'ous avrez tost un riche don; / De moi n'av(e)riés gueredon, »' (ll. 7369-78).

[28] For an examination of this humanising of Melior in *Partonopeus*, see Colleen P. Donagher, 'Socializing the Sorceress: The Fairy Mistress Theme in Lanval, Le Bel Inconnu and Partonopeus de Blois', *Essays in Medieval Studies*, 4 (1987), 69-90.

[29] Harf-Lancner's argument is developed on pp. 128-130. Despite this, it might nonetheless be argued that the germ of this idea can be found in *Partonopeus*, in the disparate halves of Melior's character, and that it is Aimon's development, rather than creation, of this idea, which enables its use in *Le Bel Inconnu*.

idea to a different, original use and expressing the two *personae* in two separate characters, rather than as two halves of one changing whole. But these are not the only re-writing processes at work here: Aimon also uses *adiectio* as a way of commenting on his intertext. In taking the different generic roles present in Melior and externalising them in this way, Aimon has deliberately exaggerated character traits associated with each *persona*, and, in so doing, presented his own commentary upon them. Thus the danger of the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* is stressed repeatedly as it is made clear that she is not a positive influence on our hero, as the conversation between Florimont's tutor, Floquart, and his mother illustrates:

> « J'ai grat paor. » – « Maistre, de coi? »
> « Que mes sires ne soit perdus.
> Femes ont atres deseüs.
> Je croi bien qu'il ait trovee
> La pucele d'Ille Selee.
> Cele l'en puet mener o soi,
> Sertes, nel vairés mais, se croi. »
> (ll. 3688-94)

She becomes synonymous with the depression leading to poverty engendered in Florimont after she leaves him, and Florimont himself associates her with death more than once. For example, in the course of revealing his identity to Rysus, Florimont explains that: '« La dame de l'Ile Celee, / Sire, m'avoit la mort donee, »' (ll. 7169-70) before going on to say how Rysus had helped him:

> « Si m'avez geté de dolor;
> De mort m'avez torné en vie,
> De povreté en signorie. »
> (ll. 7206-08)

Moreover, on more than one occasion the *Dame* is clearly linked with the various antagonists of the text. She first appears immediately after Florimont has killed a monster, explaining that it had killed her father, her brother and her sister-in-law. In itself, this is not in the least suspicious, yet it is interesting to note that she is also associated with Garganeüs (the giant demanding tribute from Florimont's parents) as he recognises Florimont's sword (ll. 3491-94) and that even Camdiobras (waging war on Romadanaple's father after being

refused her hand), before the end of the war and his friendship with Florimont, speaks of her with a degree of familiarity (ll. 9893-96).[30]

Romadanaple, on the other hand, offers a complete contrast to these dubious associations and ultimately negative influence on Florimont. Her beauty and her goodness are repeatedly emphasized (see for example, ll. 990-999, ll. 5999-6028) as she is portrayed as an almost idealised version of a woman, hence a suitable wife for the hero that Florimont is destined to become. As a princess she is a far more suitable partner for Florimont than the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* could have been, and her appropriateness is shown in the way in which her positive influence counteracts the damage caused to Florimont by the *Dame* and her sudden departure. Romadanaple causes Florimont to forget the *Dame* completely. When he first sets eyes on her, the poet observes: 'Li amor[s] de l'Ile Selee / Fut perdue a cele entree,' (ll. 6155-56). This healing influence is nowhere more evident than when we consider Florimont's fighting prowess. At the start of his relationship with the *Dame*, as Florimont fights Garganeüs and his men, his rallying cry is that of the *Dame*: 'Et Florimons ait escrïee / L'ansangne de l'Ile Selee' (ll. 3613-14). As their relationship progresses, however, the *Dame* is seen to be detrimental to Florimont's prowess. When Floquart suggests that Florimont should go and fight for Philip as it would win him great renown (ll. 3731-35) we see Florimont making an excuse that he does not have enough equipment or companions for a campaign of that sort (ll. 3741-43). This excuse is offered, we are specifically told, because Florimont now prefers being with the *Dame* to fighting: 'Car il amoit muelz de s'amie / Le de(s)dui[t] que chevelerie' (ll. 3737-38). Even more worryingly, directly after this we learn that the *Dame* is ready to take Florimont away with her, suggesting that he is almost completely under her influence:

> Florimons per matin leva,
> A s'amie parler ala.
> La damoisele l'atendoit
> *Por ce que mener l'en devoit*
> (ll. 3747-50, my italics)

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[30] Harf-Lancner has also commented on the negative portrayal of the *Dame*, noting that Florimont's desire to follow the *Dame* is linked to the turning of Fortune's wheel which is an antagonistic force within the text as it seeks to foil Florimont's heroic destiny ('D'*Enéas*', pp. 127-128). As we have seen, she also points to the *Dame*'s marriage and the behaviour of her magician son, Nectanebus, as evidence that she is not a positive influence, stating: 'Cette association de la fée et de l'enchanteur rejette… la Dame de l'Ile Celée du côté d'une magie maléfique,' (p. 131).

Fortunately, Florimont's mother Edorie breaks the *Dame*'s taboo and prevents this. Yet it seems as if the damage has already been done – Florimont ceases fighting altogether when he loses the *Dame*. Crucially, he takes part in no chivalric activity until he has journeyed to Philipopolis and has met Romadanaple. Indeed, we learn that after meeting Romadanaple Florimont abandons the cry of 'perdu', which had been his since losing the *Dame*, in favour of the cry 'novele' to signify his new love:

> Il respont: « L'ansangne perdue. »
> Quant li menbra de la pucele,
> « Non, » fait il, « l'ansangne novele
> Crïez por ralïer ma gent. »
> (ll. 6602-05)[31]

This suggests that Romadanaple's wholesome influence has fully counteracted any lingering adverse influence that the *Dame* may have left.[32]

What emerges from this analysis is that Aimon has recognised certain clear narrative themes and patterns which are characteristic of *Partonopeus* and has transposed or reworked them as he brings them into his own text. These transpositions may well be the reason behind the different scholarly views mentioned at the start of this chapter, may specifically explain why some critics (Risop, Fourrier) view the portrayal of Melior and that of the *Dame* as 'similar' whilst others (Hilka, Kelly) see it as 'different'. Aimon may have been seeking to achieve just that balance of 'the same but different' to show his reference to his source, but also his reinterpretation of it. His reinterpretation represents a form of *aemulatio* – it is a reference back to his source but it also shows how it can be done differently and, in so doing, he causes his work to vie with his source as we decide which we prefer. Indeed, in some ways his reinterpretation is a commentary upon the earlier text. His division and clear demarcations of the two *personae* – the safe woman as beneficial, the strong woman as harmful – would suggest that Aimon was attempting to redress what he perceived to be an erroneous element of *Partonopeus*, the reversal of gender balance in favour of women. In making the *Dame* so clearly a fairy and so clearly a detrimental influence, he produced what he felt to be a more appropriate version of the fairy mistress

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[31] It is also worth noting that this battle-cry is associated with a further sign of Florimont's 'recovery' from the *Dame*. He utters it in the fight against Camdiobras when he sees a ring that Romadanaple had given him, a ring which presumably replaces the ring that the *Dame* had given him (ll. 10 478-81).
[32] Harf-Lancner also notes this, 'D'*Enéas*', p. 131.

myth, with a more satisfactory outcome in terms of gender balance. Different re-writing methods (*mutuatio*, *mutatio* and *adiectio*) have thus been combined to create a form of *aemulatio* that has been used as a means of both commenting on and correcting a source text, precisely as the most accomplished forms of *aemulatio* were meant to do.

We must next ask ourselves if, and if so, to what extent, Aimon has remodelled other aspects of the fairy mistress element? Moreover, do any such transpositions conform to a strategy of asserting his own text whilst also implicitly commenting on that of his predecessor, as we saw with the transformation of the fairy mistress *persona*? There are a number of similarities between the early stages of Melior's and Partonopeus' romance and the episode of the *Dame de l'Ile Celee*. Both Partonopeus and Florimont are placed under taboos by their *amies*. However, the natures of these taboos differ: Partonopeus is forbidden to see Melior, whereas Florimont can look at his *amie* as much as he wishes but is, rather, forbidden to reveal their love to anyone.[33] Indeed, as both Hilka and Fourrier point out, the taboo Florimont is placed under is the same as that of Lanval in Marie de France's *lai*, also forbidden to reveal his affair to anyone.[34] Compare *Lanval*:

> 'Amis', fet ele, 'or vus chasti,
> si vus comant e si vus pri:
> ne vus descovrez a nul hume!
> De ceo vus dirai jeo la sume:
> *A tuz jurs m'avrïez perdue,*
> *Se ceste amurs esteit seüe;*
> mes ne me purrïez veeir
> ne ele mun cors saisine aveir'
> (ll. 143-150 my italics)

With *Florimont*:

> « Quant tu vodras a moi parler,
> N'amener compaignon o toi,
> Si poras si parler o moi;
> Ne conter riens de nostre amor
> Ne a amin ne a signor.
> *Se nostre amor estoit seüe,*

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[33] Partonopeus does not suffer from this particular taboo; see how willingly he tells his mother of Melior's existence and their love.

[34] As we have seen (pp. 107-108), when talking of Florimont's taboo and the insistence that his affair with the *Dame* remain secret, Hilka notes 'bedeutsame Berührungen mit Marie de France' (p. cxi). Fourrier comments that 'l'imitation du *Lanval* de Marie de France ne fait pas de doute (p. 453, footnote 27).

A toz jors mais m'avrais perdue;
Ne por amour ne por avoir
Ne me poroies mais ravoir »
(ll. 2534-42, my italics)

The repetition of the rhyming pair from *Lanval* may be coincidence but, given its context of a replication of the taboo from *Lanval*, it perhaps suggests that Aimon is engaging with *Lanval* and deliberately evoking it as an intertext.

If this is indeed the case then one might think that although, as we have seen, the *Dame* clearly engages with Melior, the taboo that the hero is under does not appear to link *Partonopeus* and *Florimont* as texts. Yet there is one aspect of Florimont's taboo which does recall that of Partonopeus. The conditions of Partonopeus' taboo mean that, although he can see and take pleasure in Melior's home and lands – his hunting trips could almost be said to encourage his discovery of her lands – he is expressly forbidden to see her person. Florimont's situation with the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* on the other hand, is the exact opposite. He has a different constraint; he is able to see his beloved yet he never once sees her home or her lands. This is not presented in the form of a taboo – it is his own choice not to leave with her when the *Dame* first invites him, as he feels torn between his love for her and his love for his family and people – yet the reaction of other characters to her land hints at some kind of mystery surrounding it. It is difficult to find and even more difficult to leave. Floquart comments:

« Ille Selee est en la meir;
A poengnes i puet on entrer,
Que nen i vient per aventure.
Mai del trover nen a on cure;
Sens grant travail n'en puet pertir
Qui entrer i welt ne venir »
(ll. 3695-700)

Indeed, the very name itself is suggestive of an impudent reference back to *Partonopeus*. '*L'Ile Celee*', The Hidden Isle, is a rewriting of Partonopeus' circumstances: Florimont can see his *amie*, whilst her land is hidden from him and from all other mortals, unlike Partonopeus who can see all of Melior's lands, but cannot see the woman herself.[35] Even

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[35] We might also note the similarity with the narrator figure in *Partonopeus*, who complains that he can see, but only see, his beloved (ll. 1879-1886).

more interestingly this reference to the *Ile Celee*, a mysterious island from which Floquart fears Florimont would never return, also hints tantalisingly at Avalon in Marie de France's *Lanval*, an island where the hero and his *amie* disappear to, never to be heard from again:

> en un isle qui mult est beals;
> la fu raviz li dameiseals.
> Nul n'en oï puis plus parler
> (ll. 601-603)[36]

This could, of course, be coincidence but I would suggest that, in his depiction of his hero's taboo and of the Ile Celee, Aimon is weaving together elements taken from both *Partonopeus* and *Lanval* and demonstrating how they may be used to create something different. The parallelism of reversing the circumstances of Partonopeus' taboo whilst at the same time evoking Lanval's taboo seems too neat to be coincidental; rather it perhaps suggests a poetic strategy of taking a significant feature from works Aimon was familiar with and playing a variation upon it in his own work. This seems a clear example of medieval imitation – modification of material which is nevertheless still recognisable. These modifications are, moreover, playful in nature; they show Aimon's awareness of the earlier texts but draw attention to his own creative – or rather re-creative – processes, inviting us to admire his creative dexterity. In thus foregrounding his own work he conforms to his overall strategy of using *aemulatio* as a way of presenting his own work in an advantageous light.

That Aimon's rewriting of the circumstances of the taboo to evoke *Partonopeus* as well as *Lanval* was not a coincidence seems confirmed when we look at the way the taboo is broken in each text; in *Partonopeus* and *Florimont*, yet not in *Lanval*, the mother of the hero plays a prominent part in the breaking of the taboo.[37] Both Partonopeus' and Florimont's mothers are instrumental in their son's separation from his *amie*. Partonopeus' mother tries first – and unsuccessfully – to separate her son from Melior by tricking him into an alliance with the king's niece. When this fails she tries again during Partonopeus' second return to France by asking the bishop of Paris to intercede and save her son. Their

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[36] In her introduction to the *Lais* Laurence Harf-Lancner links this disappearance with the hero's death, commenting: 'la disparition de Lanval en Avalon, l'île des fées, place les retrouvailles des amants sous le signe de la mort,' *Lais* ed. Karl Warnke, p. 14. Such a negative association is perhaps replicated in the dangerous reputation which the Ile Celee possesses.

[37] In *Lanval* the hero himself breaks the taboo as he angrily boasts to the queen that even the most humble of his *amie*'s handservants is more beautiful than the queen (ll. 298-304).

combined efforts eventually lead to Partonopeus agreeing to carry a concealed lantern with which to look at Melior, a lantern which then causes the lovers' separation, as Partonopeus uses it to break Melior's taboo. In *Florimont* meanwhile, Florimont is forced to lose his *amie* forever because his mother had secretly followed him as he went to meet her; by seeing his *amie* she immediately breaks the terms of the taboo Florimont is under. Fourrier sees this as proof that Aimon was basing his work on *Partonopeus de Blois*, stating: 'tout cet épisode de la liaison avec la fée de l'Ile Celée est calqué sur *Partonopeus*: le rôle décisif de la mere et la folie de Florimont ne laissent aucun doute' (pp. 454-55). Hilka, however, sees only a distant relationship between the two: 'die Rolle der Mutter, die die Trennung des Liebesverhältnisses herbeiführt, erinnert nur enfernt an *Partonopeus*' (p. cxii) whilst Douglas Kelly points to the differing sequels as weakening the parallel established by Fourrier ('Composition', p. 278). The evidence seems inconclusive; though the mother's involvement would suggest – as Fourrier notes – that Aimon was basing his work on *Partonopeus*, the differences in their behaviour are more than sufficient to allow Hilka's remark that the texts are only distantly related. Partonopeus' mother is acting on her own initiative and has to try more than once before she succeeds in dividing the lovers, whereas Florimont's mother is advised by Floquart and is immediately successful.

However, the argument for a definite link between the two texts becomes more compelling when we consider the role that *nigremance* plays in each. In *Partonopeus* it is his mother's fear of *nigremance* which drives and motivates her, as she fears that her son has been enchanted by a 'fee' (l. 4369). Moreover, it is this fear which eventually convinces Partonopeus that he has made a grave mistake in loving Melior (ll. 4442-46). Without it, Melior and Partonopeus' relationship would, in all probability, have remained both stable and secret until Partonopeus was old enough for them to marry. In *Florimont*, by contrast, we have an almost complete reversal of the situation as *nigremance*, rather than being feared and the cause of the break up of the lovers' relationship, is instead embraced and used by those who love the hero to break up what both poet and characters in the text consider to be a very unhealthy relationship for the hero. It is through his knowledge and use of *nigremance* that Floquart becomes aware of Florimont's relationship with the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* and knows how to separate them:

> Floquars l'ait bien aperseü
> Per nigromance [et] coneü

Que o li s'en veloit aler,
A la duchese vet parler:

....

« Quant il irait, donez vos soing
Et si alez aprés de loing
Si que Florimons ne vos voie,
Aprés en alez tote coie.
Si la damoisele vos voit,
Tornez vos en a grant esploit:
Puels l'avrait a toz jors perdue. »
(ll. 3683-6, 3713-19)

The transposition of the nigremance motif offers further proof of Aimon's disapproval of overly forceful women and goes some way towards correcting the female-dominated gender balance of most of *Partonopeus*. Partonopeus' mother acts on her own initiative, seconding first Lohier, the king of France, then the bishop of Paris to her cause, and hence causing her son great unhappiness. Though it is the bishop who persuades Partonopeus as to the possibility of Melior being a demon (ll. 4434-70), it is once again his mother who devises the means which, though well-intentioned, will ultimately end his relationship with Melior:

Sa mere li dist d'autre part
Qu'el a molt bien porveü l'art
Par coi le verra tote nue;

....

Une lanterne atant li baille
(ll. 4471-77)

In contrast, Florimont's mother is led by a man – Floquart – and does her son a great service by saving him from a dangerous relationship.

Further details serve to clarify the exact nature of the link between the two texts at this point. Partonopeus' mother, as we have already seen, acts on her own initiative and, with the help of her 'lieutenants', causes the break up of her son's relationship. Yet having served this narrative purpose she then seems to vanish from the text – she is mentioned when Partonopeus returns to France after his banishment from Chief d'Oire, but after Partonopeus vanishes into the Ardennes forest we hear nothing more of her. There is certainly no mention of her in the joyous resolution to the text as Partonopeus wins both

tournament and beauty contest before claiming Melior as his bride.[38] In Aimon's mind this could make her both dangerously independent (and we have seen how he seemed to have disapproved of this in Melior) and an unresolved issue; the audience may be left wondering if Partonopeus ever saw his mother again, if he ever forgave her for persuading him to break Melior's taboo. This is certainly *not* the case with Florimont's mother. Not only do we know that in breaking the *Dame*'s taboo she was clearly acting in Florimont's best interests, and just as clearly under male direction, but Aimon also presents us with a clear resolution to any familial disharmony resulting from the breaking of the taboo. As with Florimont himself, Florimont's parents also suffer from the taboo's breaking: their lands and people are ruined through Florimont's misguided largesse and they themselves are taken prisoner by the Emperor of Carthage for Florimont's having killed the Emperor's nephew, Garganeüs. These trials come to an abrupt end when Florimont learns of their imprisonment and hastens to their rescue (thus confirming his freedom from the *Dame*'s influence; she who sought to separate Florimont from his parents permanently).[39] This results in a touching parental scene as Florimont is reunited with his father in Clavegris. That this reconciliation takes place with his father seems significant; one might suggest that it reaffirms the (for Aimon) more appropriate gender balance offered by *Florimont* as a whole as well as highlighting the lack of any such father figure in Partonopeus' life.[40] This becomes even more significant when we see that, in recompense for his trials, Mataquas is given the city of Carthage, referred to as Dido's city (l. 13, 548), as a second domain ('a l'estaige' (l. 13, 547)).[41] This effectively erases all influence of the *Dame*, as bad for Florimont as Dido was for Eneas, as the city made famous under Dido's rule is restored to a 'proper' male hierarchy and all ideas of powerful female rulers vanish. Thus Aimon has used *mutatio* to re-affirm *Florimont*'s links with *Partonopeus* whilst at the same time conforming to a strategy of promoting his own work over that of his competitors. Hence he uses *immutatio* (substitution; some material is deleted and new material is inserted into its

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[38] Interestingly, there is mention of Partonopeus' cousin – King Lohier of France – who is delighted to recognise Partonopeus (ll. 10, 587-592).

[39] In rescuing them he shows a fine mind for strategy and reveals his mature military skills as he overcomes all safeguards and enters the fortress alone, suggesting that we are meant to see Clavegris as the crowning episode of Florimont's military career.

[40] An idea that is bolstered when we consider that, after being reunited with Mataquas, father and son then go to find Edorie, Florimont's mother. Where the reunion with his father is described in loving detail, the reunion with Edorie is afforded only a single couplet – ll. 13, 549-50.

[41] This again suggests that Aimon has the *Roman d'Enéas* in mind as an intertext. Further details of the ways in which he rewrites the *Enéas* and of the influence it exerted upon *Florimont* can be found in Chapter 5.

place) to rewrite the idea of the hero's mother separating him from his beloved as a manner of reinforcing his disapproval of female characters (deleting the initiative shown by Partonopeus' mother and instead replacing it with a passive acceptance of male instructions). By using *adiectio* to introduce a reunion between the hero and his parents (most especially with the hero's father) Aimon both re-affirms his stance with regards to gender, and promotes his own work above that of the *Partonopeus* poet by pointing to an area that seems to have been left unresolved in the earlier poet's work.

Aimon's rewriting of the taboo is thus congruent with his depiction of the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* as an extreme version of the fairy mistress *persona* of Melior even as he introduces resonances of another intertext – Marie de France's *Lanval* – which allow him to create a new model of taboo and relationship to present to his audience. That this model differs from the models which form its component parts shows the medieval process of *mutuatio* and *mutatio* at work – the lifting and transformation of recognisable 'parts' (ideas, motifs, lines) from one or more models, combined together to create a new model which shows how these parts may be developed differently.

In adapting the taboo Florimont is under so that it is consonant with his other changes and suggests disapproval of overly forceful women Aimon manipulates a key idea of the fairy mistress myth – that of a *geas* or taboo – to maintain a level of consistency in his work. This same consistency is also present in his modifications of details. As we have seen (p. 115) one of the details linking the fairy mistress *personae* of Melior and the *Dame* is that they both offer a sword to their *amis*. Though we do not see Melior giving Partonopeus a sword, we do see him use it in combat against Sornegur, as thoughts of Melior inspire him (ll. 3401-08). With Florimont however, we not only see the *Dame* giving him a sword (ll. 2461-62), but we also witness the excessive way in which she stresses that nobody must know that it came from her:

> «L'espee garde asiment,
> Mai le fuere ferais senglant
> Por persevance de la gent.
> Faire l'estuet seleement:
> C'il te demandent de l'espee,
> Dirais qu'el mostre l'ais trovee »
> (ll. 2643-48)

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This last line in particular is worth noting. In insisting that Florimont tell his loved ones that the sword has come 'out of' the monster, the *Dame* inadvertently draws a parallel between herself and the monster, which reveals the true nature of her role within the text (she is a monster who curbs the hero's independence and who stunts his growth). This parallel serves to further her connection to Melior in the first part of *Partonopeus* however, as Partonopeus' mother fears that Melior is a monster and that this is the reason behind her taboo. Yet this mention of a sword, coming as it does in close connection with a monster has a greater significance; it hints at the myth of Cupid and Psyche, with which *Partonopeus* was closely associated. Like Partonopeus, Psyche, a beautiful young maiden, has a lover she has been forbidden to look upon. She lives, seemingly alone, yet attended by invisible servants in a beautiful palace and is visited each night by her mysterious lover. Psyche's sisters convince her that she has been married to a hideous serpent and eventually persuade her to conceal both a lamp and a dagger in the bedchamber in order to ascertain the true form of her husband and, if necessary, to kill him. Her ruse is discovered and the lovers are forced into a painful separation. The parallels with *Partonopeus* are immediately apparent. Thomas H. Brown states: 'That a relationship exists between the Cupid and Psyche tradition and *Partonopeus de Blois* can scarcely be doubted',[42] whilst Laura Hibbard comments that *Partonopeus* has 'generally been recognised as a mediaeval transformation of the beautiful legend of Cupid and Psyche' (p. 205).

If we turn to consider whether any such relationship exists between *Florimont* and the Cupid and Psyche tradition, the matter becomes intriguing. Brown notes that *Florimont* offers 'some close parallels to the Cupid and Psyche tradition' (p. 197). The only parallel that he cites, however, is that Florimont, like Psyche, 'is not supposed to behold his lover' (p. 197). In this he is mistaken – Florimont has no difficulty in looking at his lover, rather he has been forbidden to tell anyone of their relationship.[43] This is not to suggest, however, that there are no resonances between *Florimont* and the Cupid and Psyche myth. The *Dame*'s connection with the monster, which is described as having the body of a flying serpent (l. 1975), could perhaps be seen as a tentative nod towards the serpent's body

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[42] Thomas H. Brown, 'The Relationship between *Partonopeus de Blois* and the Cupid and Psyche Tradition', *Brigham Young University Studies*, 5 (1964), 193-202 (p. 193). Brown offers a thorough examination of the relationship between *Partonopeus* and the Cupid and Psyche myth, as well as an outline of the differing critical approaches that have been adopted towards this relationship.

[43] Hilka also makes this apparent, suggesting that an imitation of the Cupid and Psyche myth should not be assumed at this point: 'Eine Nachbildung der Partonopeussage (Psychemythus)... ist für den Hauptzug kaum anzunehmen, da hier der Liebhaber selbst die fee nicht bei Licht erblicken darf', p. cxi.

supposedly worn by Cupid in Apuleius' myth. Much the same may be said of the sword the *Dame* gives Florimont and her insistence that he say that it comes from the monster; though it recalls Melior's gift to Partonopeus, it may also be said to evoke the dagger given to Psyche in order to slay a monster. Yet *Florimont*'s own relationship with *Partonopeus* makes it difficult to discern specific references to the Cupid and Psyche tradition within the text; any such resonances may be referring directly to the myth, yet they could equally well have been mediated by *Partonopeus*. Brown rightly points out that *Florimont* 'appeared later than *Partonopeus* and could have drawn its Cupid and Psyche motifs from this source' (p. 197). The resonances that we can discern, however, fall into place if we consider the possibility that Aimon may be engaging with the Cupid and Psyche tradition *via Partonopeus*: that he may be engaging with *Partonopeus* as a *rewriting* of the Cupid and Psyche myth. Thus the sword that the *Dame* gives Florimont may evoke both *Partonopeus* and the Cupid and Psyche tradition. Similarly, the *Dame*'s connection with the monster and its possible nod towards the classical myth seems to gain in significance if we consider that it occurs in *Florimont*'s '*Partonopeus* episode'. This theory becomes more intriguing when we consider the balance of power between the genders in the Cupid and Psyche myth and the reworking of this power presented in *Partonopeus*. Hibbard suggests that 'the striking reversal in *Parténopeus* [sic] of the specific rôles [sic] of Psyche and the God of Love is possibly to be accounted for by reference to the supposedly Celtic stories which exercised so potent an influence on the romance' (p. 207).[44] We have seen that Aimon's modifications of the fairy mistress *persona* and his portrayal of a very human heroine in Romadanaple seem designed to present within his own text a more usual balance of power than that found in *Partonopeus*. It would seem as if Aimon has perceived the reworking of the Cupid and Psyche myth within *Partonopeus* and worked to restore certain elements of the myth to their original positions within his own work. If this is indeed the case, it can only underscore the fluid, inclusive nature of medieval rewriting: a nexus of genres is presented as elements of classical and Celtic legend, mediated by romance, here undergo a further transformation.

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[44] See also Helaine Newstead who remarks: 'The story is usually explained as a medievalized version of the legend of Cupid and Psyche, with the roles of the hero and heroine reversed under the influence of Breton lais of the fairy mistress type.' Helaine Newstead, 'The Traditional Background of *Partonopeus de Blois*', *PMLA*, 61 (1946), 916-946 (p. 916).

Drawing back from these speculations, we are on slightly firmer ground, however, in affirming a relationship between *Florimont* and *Partonopeus* and the *Dame*'s gift of a sword to Florimont – with or without the potential nods towards the Cupid and Psyche tradition – would seem to confirm this. Aimon has taken a detail present in his predecessor's work – the idea of receiving a sword from a fairy mistress *amie* – and rewritten it to fit into his own. He has, moreover, adapted it so that it further highlights what we have learned from his modifications of the taboo and the fairy mistress *persona*. We are told that the *Dame* has come ready prepared to give it to Florimont, having brought it with her from the Ile Selee.[45] In taking this sword detail from *Partonopeus* and developing it in this way, Aimon is furthering his portrayal of the *Dame* as an archetypal fairy mistress: not only is she certain that Florimont will accept her but it also appears that she *knew* he would defeat the monster, and so came prepared to greet him. Such use of *adiectio* to enhance her supernatural status ties in with Aimon's strategy. He creates a caricature of the treatment given to the motif in *Partonopeus*, underlining his correction by exaggerating the gender imbalance he has detected in his source.

Another detail concerning the sword which echoes back to *Partonopeus* can be seen in the hero's wearing of the weapon. Partonopeus refuses to let anyone belt his sword on for him as Melior wishes to knight him and belt his sword around his waist the day they are married:

> "Et vos prie d'armes porter,
> De tornoier et de joster,
> Fors que ne soiés chevaliers;
> Qu'el wet que ce soit ses mestiers
> De vos çaindre primes l'espee
> Au jour que vos iert espousee"
> (ll. 2017-22)

Consequently, as he goes to fight Sornegur, his sword is tied to his saddle: 'Mais il n'a c'une sole espee, / Cele est a son arçon torsee,' (ll. 2987-88). It is also worth noting that the sword the *Dame* carries with her to give to Florimont is described as hanging from her saddle: 'Une pucele sus seoit, / Que vers le damoisel venoit. / Une espee pent a l'arson,' (ll. 2429-31). The repetition of 'arçon', as in *Partonopeus*, may be unimportant, but the

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[45] The sword is mentioned (l. 2431) almost as soon as Florimont first sees the *Dame*, and she herself informs him that she had brought it with her from the Ile (ll. 2635-36).

repetition of the motif (and the words used to describe it) seems too neat to be mere coincidence. Rather I would suggest that it is a way for Aimon to signal to his audience his emulation of *Partonopeus*. Such a signal would be particularly timely as it is with the arrival of the *Dame* that much of the intrigue traditionally associated with *Partonopeus* begins. In *Florimont* meanwhile, we are specifically told, as he goes off to fight the monster, that the hero does not wish to belt his sword on as he is still a youth and not yet a knight: 'L'espee saindre ne veloit / Por ce que damosiaus estoit' (ll. 2125-26).

Again, this detail is 'the same but different' from its antecedent. The reference in *Florimont* comes before the *Dame* has given him a sword and in that respect has nothing in common with *Partonopeus*. Yet the presence of a comment upon unknighted heroes being too young for belted swords, and the emphasis upon the provenance of the sword and the consequence of the way it is worn, are too suggestive to be coincidental. This is lent even more weight when we consider that Florimont deliberately links the belting on of his sword with his memory of the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* at a later date: 'Si ot sainte la bone espee, / Seli n'ot il pas oblïee,' (ll. 4755-56). The treatment of the motif of the hero's sword strongly suggests that Aimon retained details from the earlier romance and transformed them to better suit his own work. Once again Aimon is drawing attention to his own creative abilities. Here, in a straightforward adaptation rather than a playful reversal of material, Aimon places the detail of the sword before us as evidence of his own compositional cleverness. By having Florimont himself refuse to wear his sword belted, Aimon highlights his hero's lesser dependence on his mistress' wishes – a stark contrast to Partonopeus who so happily defers to Melior's wishes. Indeed, by placing Florimont's determination not to wear a sword before his introduction to the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* and thus highlighting his independence, Aimon further emphasises the destructive nature of the *Dame*, for it is after meeting her that Florimont loses his independence for a time, as is shown by Floquart's fears that Florimont will be persuaded to abandon his family and leave for the *Ile Celee* (ll. 3680-85). That Floquart has good reason to fear is shown immediately after his discussion with Florimont's mother, as we see that Florimont now prefers being with the *Dame* to demonstrating his prowess and, indeed, is ready to leave with her (ll. 3737-50). Meanwhile, Florimont's recollection of the *Dame* as he belts on his sword furthers our impression of his strong character as it comes when Florimont leaves his parents and joins with Rysus to offer his services to King Philip. Though he clearly still remembers the *Dame*, Florimont is

here shown to be consciously moving on with his life – in a way that Partonopeus, equally devastated by the loss of Melior, was unable to do.

Yet a sword is not the only gift which Melior and the *Dame* bestow on their respective *amis*. Beyond the sword though, Melior's gifts to Partonopeus are not replicated in *Florimont* suggesting that there is nothing further as regards gifts to link the two texts. Melior assures Partonopeus before his first return to France that he will have access to all her wealth, encouraging him to give generously as she will provide anything that he might need:

> "Si soiés larges de doner,
> Car ne vos estuet pas douter
> Que vos n'aiés asés de coi,
> C'assés avrés avoir par moi"
> (ll. 1921-24)

This promise is made good when, upon his arrival in France, Partonopeus comes across twelve very handsomely outfitted *somiers* loaded down with gold and silver (ll. 1995-2016). These *somiers* are gifts from Melior and help Partonopeus as he rallies people first to his mother's, then to his cousin Lohier's causes. This has strong echoes of *Lanval* as the fairy assures her lover that he will never want for anything and encourages him to give generously, as she will ensure that he has everything that he may need:

> Un dun li a dune après :
> ja cele rien ne vuldra mes
> que il nen ait a sun talent ;
> doinst e despende largement,
> ele li trovera asez.
> Ore est Lanval bien assenz :
> cum plus despendra richement,
> e plus avra or e argent
> (ll. 135-42)

Thus, in two texts which Aimon has previously engaged with, the fairy mistress figures provide the heroes with a seemingly unlimited supply of wealth. We might compare this with the *Dame* who, albeit indirectly, is the cause of Florimont's complete loss of wealth; it is after she leaves that Florimont spirals into the destructive cycle of over-generosity which leads to his destitution. This is made particularly clear just as Florimont is

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beginning to free himself from the *Dame*'s influence. After receiving Floquart's instructions on the proper employment of largesse, Florimont is moved to accompany Rysus and his men as they journey to join Philip in his fight against Camdiobras. As he breaks this news to his father, however, the true extent of the poverty occasioned by the loss of the *Dame* becomes apparent as Florimont is obliged to borrow his father's horse after confessing that he himself has no mount, no equipment and no money:

« Peires, » fet il, « quel la ferai ?
Que hernois ne argent nen ai.
Sire, je n'ai poent de hernoi. »
« Fils, si menez mon palefroi ;
Maigres est, il n'est mie biaus,
Mai assez est fors et isniaus
Et si vos porait bien porter. »
Li dus li a fet enceler
(ll. 4695-702)

This picture presents a sharp contrast to both Partonopeus and Lanval; where they both have access to unlimited wealth and are distributing gifts Florimont appears himself to be in need of this type of gift. Indeed, one of Rysus' squires assumes, upon seeing Florimont, that Florimont has come to meet the group in the hope of receiving some largesse from the prince as he is clearly in need of it:

« C'est mes sires, car i alez.
Se de son avoir li querez,
Il vos en donrait volentiers;
Que je croi qu'il vos ait mestier.»
(ll. 4467-70, my italics)

Such a contrast – apparently unlimited wealth versus seeming destitution - might seem enough to confirm that there are no further links concerning gifts between our texts. Indeed, a closer look at other gifts from the *Dame* does nothing to disprove this at first glance. The *Dame* gives Florimont a magic ring the sight of which will cause people to do whatever Florimont asks of them if it is in their power:

« Garde l'anel: tel ne millor
Ne troverais de sa valour.
Mentres que tu l'anel avrais,

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A home ne demanderas
Riens ne fasset le tien voloir
De seu qu'il avrait le pooir, »
(ll. 2637-42)

There is no such ring – or indeed, any ring – in either *Partonopeus* or *Lanval*, suggesting that Aimon has drawn his inspiration for the ring from elsewhere.[46] One potential text from which Aimon may have drawn inspiration regarding a magic ring is Marie de France's *Yonec*, in which Muldumarec, a knight with the ability to transform his shape, gives his human *amie* a ring which will ensure, as long as she wears it, that her possessive husband remembers nothing of her illicit liaison with Muldumarec. It is interesting to note that Muldumarec gives his sword to his *amie* at the same time as he gives her this ring, perhaps suggesting that the *Partonopeus* poet may have known *Yonec*.[47]

Curiously, however, when we consider the effects that each of these gifts – two blanket bestowals of wealth and one magic ring – have in each of our texts, and the uses to which the three heroes put these gifts, similarities begin to emerge. If we look first at *Partonopeus* we see that he uses the wealth that Melior provides for him to give gifts generously in an attempt to attract knights first to his mother's cause and then to Lohier's fight against Sornegur (ll. 2061-64, ll. 2300-06, ll. 2311-17). We are told, implicitly and explicitly, that people flock to his banner for the gifts that he distributes but that they stay because of his character (ll. 2307-08, ll. 2318-20). Moving onto *Lanval* we see that the hero uses the wealth provided by his *amie* to fulfil duties one would normally expect a king to perform.[48] He looks after the poorer knights, pays prisoners' ransoms, clothes court entertainers and is generally extremely generous:

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[46] One wonders whether this inspiration may have come from the *Lai de Desiré*, in which a mysterious lady showers her *ami* with wealth and gives him a gold ring which will disappear should he 'meserre' in any fashion. This ring disappears, signalling the loss of his *amie*, when Desiré tells a hermit of his secret affair. Whether or not this ring may have inspired Aimon in his own depiction of a magic ring is unclear (dates for the composition the *lai* range from between 1170-1180 to potentially the end of the thirteenth century) and both time and space preclude a fuller discussion of the matter here. It is worth noting, however, that Prudence Mary O'Hara Tobin sees links between the *Lai de Desiré* and both *Lanval* and *Partonopeus* (pp. 166-167). For an examination which considers the date of composition for the *lai* as well as its possible influences and an edition of the text see Prudence Mary O'Hara Tobin, *Les lais anonymes des XIIe et XIIIe siècles* (Genève: Droz, 1976), pp. 157-205.

[47] For a discussion of links between *Yonec* and *Partonopeus* see p. 141. For more on whether Aimon may have been familiar with the *lais* of Marie de France, see Chapter 5, pp. 211-213.

[48] For an examination of how the gifts given link *Lanval* and *Partonopeus* see Newstead, pp. 927-28. She postulates that the similarities derive from a common tradition associated with the fay Morgain.

N'ot en la vile chevalier
ki de surjur ait grant mestier,
que il ne face a lui venir
e richement e bien servir.
Lanval donout les riches duns,
Lanval aquitout les prisuns,
Lanval vesteit les jugleürs,
Lanval faiseit les granz honurs,
Lanval despendeit largement,
Lanval donout or e argent :
n'i ot estrange ne privé
a qui Lanval n'eüst doné
(ll. 205-16)

Unbeknownst to Lanval, this generosity has the effect of bringing him to the attention of Gauvain and other powerful knights of the court, thereby unwittingly advancing him to a more rightful place in the court's hierarchy:

Ensemble od els esteit Walwains,
e sis cusins, li beals Ywains.
Ceo dist Walwains, li frans, li pruz,
....
'Par Deu, seigneur, nus faimes mal
de nostre cumpaignon Lanval,
ki tant est larges e curteis
e sis pere est si riches reis,
que nus ne l'avum amené.'
(ll. 227-35)

If we look at the use to which Florimont puts the *Dame*'s ring a mixture of the gifts' effects from *Lanval* and *Partonopeus* becomes apparent. Florimont recognises that the ring may be used to provide unlimited wealth of a sort (see below) and, like Partonopeus, he uses this wealth to further his own ends. These ends, interestingly, resonate back to *Lanval* as the wealth Florimont obtains through the ring is used to establish Florimont in the city – and court – of Philipopolis. He sends Floquart on ahead to secure lodgings for them, aware that the ring will enable him to do so:

« Biaus maistres, l'anel porterez;
La piere valt avoir assez:
Nes uns hons ne la puet veoir
Que ne fasset vostre voloir.

> Maistres, cil que l'anel vaira
> De son pooir vos servira »
> (ll. 4921-26)

Moreover, as Floquart is negotiating with Delfis about their lodgings, there is the suggestion that it is seeing the ring that tips the balance in his favour; Delfis hesitates somewhat and it is only *after* seeing the ring that he tells Floquart that he would be more than happy to take them in:

> Ne li di(s)t mot ne ne respont,
> Une piece c'est porpensez;
> Puels est ses vis vers lui tornez.
> Delfis l'ait forment esgardé,
> Car mout ait richement parlé,
> En son doi vit le bon anel.
> «Sire, » fait Delfis, « mout m'est bel
> ....
> Se il welt o moi herbergier. »
> (ll. 5082-88, 5091)

Like Partonopeus, Florimont uses the wealth the ring provides him to give generous gifts through Delfis (ll. 5145-50) and crucially, as with Partonopeus, though people are initially drawn by his generosity, his good character ensures that everyone who can help him does so willingly: 'Por sa bonté chascuns faissoit / De son voloir seu qu'il pooit' (ll. 5713-14). If we look at the sort of gifts that Florimont distributes we may once again perceive hints of *Lanval*. Though he does not pay ransoms or clothe court entertainers it is stressed that Florimont will look after any poor knight or squire:

> Il fist savoir as cheveliers,
> As damoisiaus, as escuiers
> Que ne prangnent avoir d'autrui
> Ne livreson fors que de lui ;
> Que il lor en donrait assez
> Et volentiers et de boen grez
> (ll. 5145-50, see also ll. 4951-60)

Though the gifts and the uses to which they are put are not the same in each text there are nonetheless intertextual strands linking *Florimont* with both *Partonopeus* and *Lanval* here. The narrative strategy of using unlimited otherworldly wealth as a means to

fulfil the hero's ends has been borrowed from *Partonopeus*[49] whilst the ends themselves –
the establishment of the hero in a foreign court – evoke Lanval's situation as his *amie*'s
wealth assures his place in Arthur's court, a court which had previously spurned him (ll.
19-26). The successful combination of elements from both *Lanval* and *Partonopeus*
suggests that Aimon's *mutatio* was deliberate and had a particular purpose. What this
purpose may have been becomes clearer if we look closer at the ring and consider the
context and timing in which Florimont chooses to employ the spending power offered by
the *Dame*'s ring. When Partonopeus is lavishly bestowing gifts on one and all after his first
return to France, his love for and relationship with Melior are strong. Interestingly however,
Florimont does not choose to use his gift of spending until he sends Floquart to Philipopolis
– long after his relationship with the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* is over. Though in the period of
his relationship with her he does distribute gifts amongst his friends and people, these gifts
stem not from her ring but rather from Florimont's own prowess. After defeating
Garganeüs he distributes all the resultant wealth amongst his men rather than claiming any
for himself: 'Mout i trova d'or et d'argent, / Si le dona tot a sa gent,' (ll. 3625-26). Such
financial independence during the course of their relationship is a subtle way of offsetting
the apparent gender imbalance which would seem to have the fairy mistress figure in
complete control.[50] Being in charge of his own money allows Florimont a measure of
control that he might otherwise lack.[51] It is only after his relationship has long since
finished – and his independence and status as a pro-active hero are no longer threatened by
her – that Florimont chooses to make use of the *Dame*'s gift. Thus the ring is used to
reinforce *Florimont*'s links as a text with *Partonopeus* but its use is deliberately delayed
until a point where Florimont as a hero has been freed from any danger represented by the
Dame and her associations – a way for Aimon to declare his text's independence from

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[49] This link of strategy is bolstered by the fact that, in both cases, we see the young hero helping an important
monarch who cannot win his war without the hero's aid.

[50] That this financial independence was the norm, rather than the exception for Florimont, is shown earlier by
his distribution of wealth acquired through his prowess during the course of his service to King Medon of
Slavonia (ll. 2979-82). See Chapter 2 for Florimont's approach to largesse and how his relationship with the
Dame subverts this.

[51] That Aimon would wish to provide his hero with some form of independence, rather than allowing the
Dame total domination of their relationship, is hardly surprising. We have already seen from his modifications
of the fairy mistress persona that Aimon seems to have viewed powerful women with mistrust. Such mistrust
is perhaps an example of what Roberta Krueger is referring to when she notes: 'No characters embody the
potential powers and dangers of women more poignantly than fairies and women who have been trained in
magic... these fantastic women enjoy autonomy denied to historic women in courts and households.
Romance's beguiling fairies reveal much about the fears and desires of authors and audiences concerning
women, sexuality and power.' 'Questions of Gender', p. 143.

Partonopeus even as he reaffirms *Florimont*'s ties to it. It is significant that Florimont's relationship with the *Dame* is then the indirect cause of Florimont's later poverty (see Chapter 2, pp. 81-85), thereby destroying his financial independence: a further narrative twist on the theme of a woman as source of fabulous wealth. In this way Florimont's use of the *Dame*'s gift after she has caused his penury may perhaps be seen as just reparation for the damage caused by her departure. Having undergone this trial of the reversal of Fortune's wheel, Florimont emerges purged of all taint of the *Dame* – safe to use her gift as he sees fit – and worthy of rebuilding his life as the hero of a more masculine, epic narrative. Here again Aimon's individual creativity is expressed in terms of known literary exemplars as he borrows ideas from them and adapts them to his own purposes, showing how known motifs may be treated in a different manner. Aimon's *mutatio* of the gifts given by the *amies* is thus in keeping with his other modifications of the fairy mistress myth as it reinforces the importance of an independent hero.

The modifications and transpositions of details and ideas taken from *Partonopeus* and *Lanval* show Aimon using *aemulatio* in a variety of forms and ways. By turning the fairy mistress *persona* into a detrimental rather than a beneficial influence Aimon positions his work in relation to those of his predecessors and offers an implicit commentary on the fairy mistress figure, suggesting that powerful women are not to be trusted. Yet he also draws attention to his own compositional proficiency, showing different facets of his rewriting with his use of *aemulatio*. He changes details from *Partonopeus* (the transformation of the sword motif, for example, shows a subtle use of *adiectio* which is made into a more competitive form of *aemulatio* by details such as Florimont's refusal to wear a belted sword before being knighted), but does not stop there, also changing some of the narrative strategy of *Partonopeus* and combining it with elements drawn from *Lanval*. In doing so Aimon reveals himself as a poet capable of deconstructing his predecessors' work to their constituent parts and shaping the resultant raw material to show how these parts may be developed differently. We see this most particularly in terms of the portrayal of female protagonists as Aimon seems to have felt that powerful women upset the natural gender balance of a text, and has therefore sought to tone down or write out such undesirable characteristics.

It has become clear that Aimon's practice of *aemulatio* is both sophisticated and complex. Aimon transposes elements of his models, changing them in ways which suit his needs and highlight his abilities as a poet. What makes this strategy of transposition particularly interesting, and ironic, is that at least one of his predecessors – the *Partonopeus* poet – had used a similar technique in his approach to his own predecessors' works. I have argued elsewhere that the *Partonopeus* poet shows evidence of just such a strategy with regard to both Benoît de Sainte-Maure's *Roman de Troie* and the *lais* of Marie de France.[52] With regard to Benoît's work the *Partonopeus* poet places the description of Melior's chamber at Chief d'Oire on a par with Benoît's description of the 'Chambre de Beautés' in the *Troie*. In a far more compact description he uses a variety of techniques, from modification of details through to deliberate *aemulatio*, designed to suggest the superiority of *Partonopeus* and to draw attention to his compositional skills whilst highlighting the shortcomings of his predecessor in the process. Simons and Eley, too, have shown that the prologue to *Partonopeus* interacts with that of the *Troie* ('Prologue'). By changing details such as the begetting and the behaviour of Eneas, the *Partonopeus* poet idealises Marcomyris, Partonopeus' ancestor, presenting him as a more desirable leader than the Eneas of the *Troie* – an indirect criticism of Benoît's work and of its commissioning patron Henry II of England. Such criticism of Benoît's text has the effect of valorising the *Partonopeus* poet's re-writing: a clear example of *aemulatio*. That such re-writing was 'intended to surpass the source author's achievement and demonstrate how much better the source material can be treated, or, at least, how it may be treated in a different way,' (Kelly, *Conspiracy*, p. 43) is shown by the *Partonopeus* poet's treatment of the description of the Chambre de Beautés passage of the *Troie*.[53] I have suggested that the *Partonopeus* poet uses *aemulatio* in his description of Melior's room at Chief d'Oire to suggest once again that his own work is superior to that of Benoît.[54] For example, where the third automaton of the Chambre is able to play music so sweetly that those listening can not feel sorrow or

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[52] Joanne Young, 'Aspects of Intertextuality in *Partonopeu de Blois*' (unpublished master's thesis, University of Sheffield, 2004).

[53] For a full discussion of his modifications of the prologue see pp. 10-12 of Young, 'Aspects of Intertextuality'.

[54] His casual attitude towards magic, the presentation of a room able to turn negative emotions into positive ones and the similarity between the actions of the second automaton in the Chambre and Melior's descriptions of her entertainments for her father all suggest that the *Partonopeus* poet was re-writing aspects of the *Troie* in an attempt to undermine his poetic rival and to evoke the supremacy of his own writing. For a full consideration of the similarities between the Chambre de Beautés and Melior's room at Chief d'Oire, see pp 13-19 of Young, 'Aspects of Intertextuality'.

pain, we are told that Melior's room inspires such delight in people that even the most saddened or angry man would feel their spirits lift upon seeing it. Thus, the Chambre can only prevent negative emotions, but Melior's room is apparently capable of turning such negative emotions into positive ones. Similarly, Benoît uses the appearance of magic (and not the 'fact' of magic) in his descriptions of the fabulous automata to entrance his audience (ll. 14 668-40). The *Partonopeus* poet, however, takes this a step further by liberally scattering specific instances of magic throughout the first half of his tale – let us not forget that two floating candles lead Partonopeus to Melior's suite – to suggest that the presence of magic in his text is nothing out of the ordinary.

The *Partonopeus* poet also uses *aemulatio* to distinguish his work from that of his other predecessors; where he liked or found a use for a motif he 'borrowed' it, modifying enough details to show his own creative processes whilst leaving enough traces of the original idea to enable us to track it to its source tradition or text. This is particularly true of his adaptations of ideas taken from Marie de France's *Lais* where, although he used and adapted ideas for his own purposes, he rarely evinced a desire to suggest that his own work was superior to that of Marie.[55] For example, the beauty contest at the end of *Lanval* which determines the hero's innocence is adapted within *Partonopeus* to enable Partonopeus to win Melior's hand. Similarly, Melior's careful exclamations of Christian faith, designed to put her would-be lover at ease (ll. 1149, ll. 1535-56) seem inspired by Yonec's mother's fear that her magical lover, Muldumarec, is unnatural and comes from the Devil. He calms this fear by professing his faith and then taking communion from her chaplain (ll. 153-67). The *Partonopeus* poet adopts this strategy of soothing fears, yet allows a lingering doubt to remain with regard to Melior in order to motivate the fears of Partonopeus' mother. Could Aimon be attempting to beat the *Partonopeus* poet at his own game as it were? Is it possible that he has deliberately taken the *Partonopeus* poet's technique of rewriting passages with additional flourishes and used it to rewrite elements from *Partonopeus*?[56]

The theory that Aimon was indeed attempting to use techniques that the *Partonopeus* poet had himself employed is lent weight when we consider that Aimon chooses to reintroduce his work with a second prologue mid-way through the text. This re-

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[55] For an examination of parallels between *Partonopeus* and *Guigemar*, *Lanval* and *Yonec* see Young, 'Aspects of Intertextuality', pp. 20-51. See especially p. 51 for the *Partonopeus* poet's attitude towards his re-writing of certain elements from the *Lais*.
[56] That some of these elements are combined with material from *Lanval* as well draws more attention to Aimon's capabilities as a poet.

introduction comes after *Florimont* has been smuggled into the palace and has secretly met with Romadanaple, the heroine who replaces the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* in his affections.[57] Interestingly, after this scene and Aimon's re-introduction there are very few further references to *Partonopeus*. It seems that, having shown his abilities by using the very techniques favoured by the *Partonopeus* poet to establish the validity of his own text, Aimon moves on to other (and, by implication, perhaps better) matters.

A close look at the second prologue confirms this impression. We are told once more that Aimon de Varennes is responsible for this work and informed that it was undertaken out of love for a certain Vialine (l. 9213).[58] A final reference to *Partonopeus* may be seen in the following lines:

> Et qui welt oïr ceste istore
> Et retenir en sa memore,
> Se em boen poent i welt antandre,
> Assez puet oïr et aprendre
> D'umelité et de largesce,
> De richeté et de povresce,
> D'amor et de chevelerie,
> De largesce, de cortesie
> Et de conquerement sens honte,
> Si com l'istore le reconte
> (ll. 9263-72)

These lines serve to link this second prologue with Aimon's first.[59] This is where the similarities between the two prologues come to an end however. The second prologue is a complex and etymologically orientated affair. Word games and puzzles abound as Aimon contemplates the origin and meaning of his own name and gives us Florimont's Greek name, Eleneos (ll. 9204-06, ll. 9220-30). These games recall other instances in the text where he has similarly indulged in such armchair linguistics: when re-naming Floquart 'Quacopedie', for example, Aimon painstakingly details what this means (ll. 4735-36). Indeed, on almost every occasion where he uses a Greek word, Aimon seems to delight in showing us how erudite he is by explaining its meaning in French (see for example, ll. 693-96, ll. 713-16).

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[57] This meeting, which I term the 'bedroom scene', is pivotal to our understanding of the romance and will be looked at in depth in Chapter 5.
[58] Most critics have understood this to be an anagram of the name Juliane. For a discussion of this question, see Novati, pp. 488-491.
[59] See above, pp. 111-113.

Yet why use such etymology? More specifically, why use it here in the second prologue after letting it lie dormant as it were, for so long? I would argue that here it serves as a way of re-aligning Aimon's text, as another way of differentiating it from *Partonopeus* and the fairy mistress narrative which had dominated the first part of Aimon's work. The use of Greek words and the etymology that accompanies it is a means of recalling the text's geographical and historical roots. It reminds us that the text is set in ancient Macedon – historically the home of Alexander the Great – and also prefigures *Florimont*'s ultimate realignment with the *Roman d'Alexandre* rather than with *Partonopeus*.[60] Viewed from this perspective, the positioning of the second prologue is highly suggestive. After this prologue, there is very little, in narrative terms, to link *Florimont* to *Partonopeus* or that would suggest that Aimon was trying to engage with his predecessor. Instead, the romance focuses on Florimont's destiny as his military prowess wins both Philip's war and, ultimately, the hand of Philip's daughter. This concentration on military matters has little to do with *Partonopeus*, where military concerns seem subordinate to the mystery of Melior's magical powers and the resolution of a love intrigue. After the second prologue, the narrative takes on a more epic flavour – as if, by writing a second prologue Aimon had wished to recommence his own text and to take it in a direction that he perceived to be better.[61]

This idea receives confirmation when we consider that Florimont's encounter with – and eventual marriage to – Romadanaple is the start of the genealogy that will directly tie *Florimont* to the *Roman d'Alexandre*, as they are presented as the grandparents of Alexander the Great. A desire to re-align his text with a different contemporary success could certainly explain Aimon's insertion of a second prologue, whilst the etymology contained within this prologue seems to reinforce the Greek/Alexander link. Thus it would seem that Aimon's use of *aemulatio* to hoist the *Partonopeus* poet on the petard of his own

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[60] It is worth noting at this point that *Partonopeus* also has Greek roots, in the form of its links with Byzantium and Melior's position as Empress. However, in a deliberate example of *aemulatio*, Aimon 'improves' upon these fictional Greek connections by linking his own hero with the historical, ancient Greek figure, Alexander the Great.

[61] This is not to discount the Continuation of *Partonopeus* which, after the account of Anselot's adventures, becomes a great deal more military and epic in its outlook than the main text had been. Indeed, Fourrier notes several points of similarity between the Continuation of *Partonopeus* and *Florimont* (pp. 458, 459). That the Continuation may also be using the *Roman d'Alexandre* as an intertext makes the relationship between all three texts – *Partonopeus*, the *Roman d'Alexandre* and *Florimont* – all the more complex. Unfortunately, time and space preclude an in-depth exploration of these links but this is certainly an area worthy of future research. I am grateful to Professor Penny Eley for the loan of as yet unpublished material which examines the relationships in this area.

compositional practices comes to an end with this second prologue. It is as if, having shown his mastery of a technique favoured by his predecessor, he now feels free to move on and to proclaim his allegiance to a text that he suggests is even greater than *Partonopeus* – the *Roman d'Alexandre*.

Florimont's relationship with *Partonopeus* is a complex and essentially intertextual one. Aimon does not scruple – why should he, working in an era and in a genre defined by their relations to earlier texts? – to use his knowledge of *Partonopeus* and other fairy mistress models within his own romance. Yet this is not done in the form of slavish imitation. Rather, Aimon embraces a 'same but different' approach. He uses *Partonopeus* as a point of reference, a text that his audience may well have been familiar with, a starting point almost, but differentiates his own text from it by transposing the narrative patterns that he finds. These transpositions reveal more than one rewriting strategy as Aimon shows his ability by carefully combining more than one 'aemulative' response to his intertext. From *adiectio* through to *immutatio* and the more complex *transmutatio* Aimon masters the processes of rewriting and bends them to his will to create a form of reflective rewriting – not content with rewriting for rewriting's sake, or with simply suggesting his own poetic superiority (though both of these undoubtedly also play a part), Aimon's rewriting reveals his attitude towards *Partonopeus* as it aims deliberately to create a more 'proper' or more usual gender balance between hero and heroine. Yet in doing so Aimon is not merely suggesting his own work's supremacy, he is using the very techniques practised by his predecessor to undermine *Partonopeus* and showing his own compositional mastery in the process. Of course, this makes his transpositions of material all the more ironic. Aimon's adaptations of the *Partonopeus* model represent the culmination of a careful and complex rewriting strategy and suggest a sophisticated compositional talent in Aimon.

What makes Aimon's transformations particularly interesting, however, is that even as they suggest flaws in one source text – *Partonopeus* – they also bring to mind a second source text used to confer additional textual authority to *Florimont* – the *Roman d'Alexandre*. Thus his intertextual technique is not a one-dimensional response to a single text, but rather he plays references to one text off against allusions to others. In the case of the *Roman d'Alexandre* it appears that Aimon has found a narrative model more to his taste than that afforded by *Partonopeus*. His rewriting of *Partonopeus* is markedly different from

his rewriting of the *Roman d'Alexandre*. Though in both cases Aimon has shown a desire to highlight his own creative ability, with his adaptations of the *Alexandre* he revealed a respect for the material, carefully linking his own hero to Alexander, suggesting that any modifications he made stemmed from Alexander's status as an historical – and thus flawed – figure rather than any imperfections in the 'narrative' of Alexander's life. This is not the case with *Partonopeus*, where Aimon demonstrates a range of responses to his predecessor, from simple re-casting, via transposition to playfully ironic retelling to suggest that he disapproves of parts of the *Partonopeus* narrative, and wishes to show how certain of those elements may be developed differently. The compositional skill needed to do this, coupled with the appeal to two well-known romances of the late twelfth century would certainly have contributed to the popularity of *Florimont* in the medieval period. Indeed, this skill may also account for some of the divergences in critical appraisals of *Florimont*: his stance towards his intertexts is presented from varying perspectives and in multiple guises. It is often so subtle that, at first glance, *Florimont* may well be taken as an imitation of a preceding work. It is only upon closer examination and bearing in mind the medieval practices and standards of *aemulatio* that *Florimont* emerges as a true gem, indebted, but in no manner inferior, to a number of contemporary texts, *Partonopeus* among them.

Key amongst the practices which make *Florimont* so subtle is Aimon's ability to weave together more than one intertext, to fuse different works together as a way of creating a new whole. His use of both the *Roman d'Alexandre* and *Partonopeus de Blois* – this second text itself combined with elements from Marie de France's *Lanval* – as important texts within *Florimont* show his ability to do this; and despite the difference in tone between *Partonopeus* and the *Alexandre*, *Florimont* nevertheless emerges as a coherent narrative. We must next ask ourselves if Aimon is capable of applying this talent on a more focussed level, whether or not he can fuse different texts not only within *Florimont* as a whole but within single motifs, themes or scenes within his romance.

Chapter 4

Florimont, Partonopeus de Blois and *Le Roman d'Alexandre*: The Possibilities of Fusion in Rewriting

It is clear from our analysis so far that in composing *Florimont*, Aimon has engaged in a process of rewriting that has involved both the *Roman d'Alexandre* and *Partonopeus de Blois* as principal intertexts amongst references to other texts. We have seen that the *Roman d'Alexandre* gives both structure and tone to the second half of *Florimont* (as Florimont defeats Camdiobras, marries Romadanaple and inherits Philipopolis), whilst *Partonopeus* provides the impetus for the first half of *Florimont*, most particularly the hero's disastrous relationship with the *Dame de l'Ile Celee*. It seems obvious then, that Aimon is using more than one intertext and is combining his intertextual references. What we must next ask ourselves is whether Aimon has a deliberate purpose for this fusion – is it an end in itself, or is it a way of expressing further ideas, of highlighting yet more aspects of his rewriting ability? Given the dominance of the *Roman d'Alexandre* model in the second half of *Florimont*, Aimon may perhaps have envisaged this model as a way of correcting that suggested by *Partonopeus*; but is this the only direction in which the influence flows, are elements from *Partonopeus* used to comment on the Alexander model? The answers to these questions can be found if we focus on a theme which is present in both intertexts – that of education. That education is a significant theme in both the *Roman d'Alexandre* and *Partonopeus de Blois* is clear. In the literature of the Middle Ages there is a great emphasis on Alexander having none other than Aristotle, the archetypal learned man and greatest of all philosophers, as his tutor.[1] One of Alexander's own virtues, meanwhile, is that he is considered to be an educated king and thus worthy of respect. Cizek comments that in the French *romans* dealing with Alexander, the young prince 'bénéficie d'une éducation à la fois chevaleresque et humaniste' ('Considérations', p. 223) whilst in his consideration of Alexander's education George Cary goes even further, remarking that Alexander is often used as an example of a learned prince: 'in every medieval period Alexander's education was represented as including all those subjects which the imagination of the writer

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[1] Wilhelm Hertz comments: 'Fast alles, was mittelalterliche Sage und Dichtung von Aristoteles zu berichten wissen, betrifft sein Verhältnis zu Alexander', before going on to devote thirty three pages of his study to a consideration of the portrayals of Aristotle as Alexander's tutor. Wilhelm Hertz, *Gesammelte Abhandlungen von Wilhelm Hertz*, ed. Friedrich von der Leyen (Stuttgart & Berlin: J. G. Cotta, 1905), p. 1.

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considered essential to the perfect prince; and in every case he learnt them well' (*Medieval Alexander*, p. 108). *Partonopeus*, meanwhile, though not providing a detailed description of the hero's education, features a lengthy description of that of the heroine, Melior, a trait which was unusual for the period of composition and which would undoubtedly have attracted Aimon's attention.[2]

Aimon's deliberate emphasis on Florimont as grandfather to Alexander (see ll. 11, 380-86 and ll. 13, 579-94) suggests that it is logical for us to consider Florimont's education in light of that of Alexander. When considered with Aimon's use of largesse as both a motif and a structuring device it, this emphasis on Florimont's ancestry suggests that Aimon wants a link between Alexander and Florimont to be established in the minds of his audience. If Florimont shares Alexander's attribute of liberality (and we have seen that he does), he is also likely to foreshadow his descendant in the field of learning, suggesting that, after largesse, education is the most logical point for Aimon to turn towards, given Alexander's reputation as a learned king. Given that education represents a single part of the larger Alexander story, a close examination of it affords us an opportunity to focus in more detail on the different versions of Alexander's life, to see if we can determine which one(s) Aimon knew. Thus, we shall compare Florimont's education with the various depictions of Alexander's education, looking not just at Alexandre de Paris' *Roman d'Alexandre* but also at the surviving verses of Alberic de Pisançon's poem, at manuscripts A and B of the decasyllabic Alexander (the *ADéca*) and at the L redaction of the *Ralix (Amalgam)*. In doing so we shall attempt to discover which, if any, description Aimon was familiar with and to further our understanding of Aimon's attitude towards the Alexander material as an intertext for *Florimont*. Is the relatively respectful attitude that we have previously discerned with regards to Alexander still present or does Aimon re-use the 'corrective re-writing' strategy that he adopted with regard to *Partonopeus*?

Florimont's education, then, comes early in the romance (ll. 1901-15). The night Florimont is conceived, his father, Duke Mataquas, has a prophetic dream about his son's future. He comes to the wise man, Floquart, for an explanation of this dream and Floquart assures Mataquas that his son will 'love greatly' (l. 1882). Aimon takes this opportunity to

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[2] The description of Melior's education and the powers that it provided her with occupies 48 lines. This is longer than the longest description of Alexander's education which, at 38 lines, can be found in the L manuscript of the *Roman d'Alexandre*. Given that Aimon has both the *Roman d'Alexandre* and *Partonopeus* as intertexts it is highly unlikely that he would have been unaware of the exceptional nature of Melior's education.

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provide his audience with a description of Floquart's education (ll. 1863-72), before
moving on to the birth of Florimont and the description of Florimont's education, a
description which comes immediately after the news of his birth and his naming:

> La dame son emfant porta,
> Au nueme mois s'en delivra,
> Et per le consoil de la meire
> Comanda Mataquas li peires
> Meïsmes le jor qu'il fut neiz
> Qu'il fust Eleneos nomez;
> Car eleneos en grezois
> Dissoit Florimont em fransois.
> Bien le fist norir et garder
> Li dus tant que il sot parler.
> Quant it sot entendre parole,
> Ses peires le mist a escole
> Et a maistre Fouquart le rent.
> Et il l'aprist mout doucement
> Et si dist que a son vivant
> Ne pertiroit mais de l'enfant.
> Florymons mout bien aprenoit
> Tot seu que il savoir devoit.
> Li dus le fist bien doctriner
> De chevacher, d'armes porter,
> De lance roidement ferir
> Et a cheval d'escut covrir,
> Jeus des taubles, d'eschas mater,
> As dames belement parler,
> Et puels d'espreviers et d'ostors,
> De counoistre faux jugeors,
> Parler em plait cortoissement
> Et conoistre faux jugement,
> D'escremie, de champions,
> De menu ferir de bastons,
> De harpe et de vïele aprist.
> (ll. 1885-1915)

This description tells us several things. Lines 97-100, in which the young Florimont is
handed over to his tutor, Floquart, prepare us for the close relationship which will develop
between the two (see pp. 187-190) as Floquart swears his will not leave his charge's side so
long as he shall live (ll. 99-100). They also hint indirectly at the important part Floquart
will play in the events to come – having seen him swear never to leave Florimont, it should
come as no surprise to see him partake in many of Florimont's adventures. The brief

statement that Florimont learns all that he should ('tot seu que il savoir devoit', l. 102) might perhaps be seen as an indication that *Florimont* could be read as a 'miroir de prince' (see Chapter 2, pp. 85-86). Though the idea of *Florimont* as a 'miroir de prince' certainly fits with the didactic tone occasionally adopted by Aimon (see Chapter 2, p. 60 and below, p. 192) the generic overtones of line 102 means that we cannot find absolute confirmation of this idea here. The specifics of Florimont's curriculum, however, do seem to suggest that Florimont's education was as wide-ranging as any prince might hope. Florimont is trained in the arts of a warrior and a hunter; he is taught the skills of a leader when he is taught to recognise false judges; finally, he learns the social skills (how to play chess, musical instruments and how to converse with ladies) which will enable him to be a good courtier. His education seems complete.

In many ways this description follows standard practice for that of the education of a romance hero: it is included as a part of the general 'early life' presentation and includes elements, both courtly and martial, felt to be necessary components of any noble education.[3] Our question thus becomes, is Florimont's education more like any particular previous model than it is a generic romance education model?[4] Is there a particular text – or texts – from which Aimon may have drawn inspiration? There are two areas from which it seems most likely that Aimon may have borrowed ideas. It is possible that Aimon may have drawn ideas from a popular contemporary text – *Florimont*'s interactions with the *Roman d'Alexandre* and *Partonopeus de Blois* have shown us that Aimon was not afraid to make use of well-known works, so we shall be asking if there are any models of education in well-known works which stand out from the norm in any way. The second area to which Aimon may have looked for inspiration is the body of texts which constitute the Alexander corpus. Having engaged with the *Roman d'Alexandre* with regard to his hero's liberality it seems likely that Aimon would have been aware that, second to his generosity, Alexander was also known as a learned king. As such we will also be looking at the models of education portrayed in the Alexander texts to see if there are any significant similarities with *Florimont*.

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[3] For a discussion of the concept of a generic romance education model see Simons, who develops the idea that education functions as a semi-autonomous narrative unit within a text. Penny Simons, 'The Theme of Education in Twelfth-and Thirteenth-Century French Epic and Romance' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Sheffield, 1990), p. 208. See also pp. 48-101 of the same.

[4] Simons' doctoral thesis covers the conception of such a generic model in detail. See previous footnote.

Turning first to consider any possible parallels with a well-known contemporary text, it is worth noting that in its array of subjects Florimont's education is evocative of that of Tristan, whose education was similarly varied and extensive. Merritt Blakeslee has said of Tristan's wide-ranging education that it can be grouped as follows:

(1) Training in the arts of refinement and learning that will fit him for the role of courtier: literature, music and the courtly games of chess, tric-trac (a kind of backgammon), and dice;

(2) Training for the role of statesman and future leader of a people; law, customs and languages;

(3) Training in the arts of the hunt, the 'deduit' *par excellence* of the nobility of the twelfth century, as well as a rehearsal for war; and

(4) Training in the arts of war and physical exercise: horsemanship, jousting, the mastery of weapons, and physical gamesmanship.[5]

In broad outlines Florimont's education might be said to recall that of Tristan as each of the four groupings suggested by Blakeslee is also present in Florimont's education. Like Tristan he learns the skills of a courtier – how to play musical instruments and the games of chess and backgammon; his ability to recognise false judges and to plead courteously could be described as training in law whilst the martial and hunting arts are also both present. Moreover, in making Tristan so accomplished his education, certainly in Gottfried's text, plays an important role in the text by preparing him for his life, by making him into the person he needs to be. Blakeslee notes that the portrait of Tristan which emerges from his education is that of 'an individual mentally agile and physically redoubtable, eminently qualified to assume the position of leadership... and equally qualified to lead the life of exile and outlaw that will be his position' (p. 22). In this respect, Tristan's education may have stood out from the generic model and drawn Aimon's eye, an idea which becomes more plausible if we consider the role that education as a theme plays in *Florimont*, in tying together two of Aimon's intertexts.[6] Despite this, there are important differences between Florimont's education and the model offered by Tristan: the academic element present in Tristan's education is missing from that of Florimont. Tristan learns languages and literature – not only is there no mention of these in Florimont's education, we are not even

[5] Merritt R. Blakeslee, *Love's Masks: Identity, Intertextuality and Meaning in the Old French Tristan Poems* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1989), pp. 21-22.
[6] See pp. 168-192 for the development of this argument.

told that he learns to read or write.[7] Florimont is also taught, unlike Tristan, how to talk to ladies as a part of his courtier's education, whilst his martial education is emphasised in a way that Tristan's is not,[8] with fighting skills appearing in two different sections of his education. Overall it would seem that although Florimont's education is strongly evocative of that of Tristan, the number of differences between the two precludes our suggesting that Aimon has used Tristan's education as a model for that of Florimont.[9]

Turning to consider the models of education offered by the French Alexander texts we see that, with the interesting exceptions of the *ADéca* and the L manuscript, the results are similarly inconclusive: although there are similarities in many places, the differences are simply too great to enable us to affirm that Aimon was drawing on a particular text as model. Alberic de Pisançon was the first poet to write about Alexander's education in Old French, but unfortunately only a fragment of his work remains (105 verses), with the fragment breaking off in the middle of his description of Alexander's education. This fragment pays close attention to both the military and academic aspects of Alexander's education, with a more social side being represented by the musical instruments that he is taught.[10]

Magestres ab beyn affactaz,
De totas arz beyn enseynaz,
Qui.l duystrunt beyn de dignitaz
Et de conseyl et de bontaz,
De sapientia et d'onestaz,
De fayr estorn et prodeltaz.

L'uns l'enseyned, beyn parv mischin,
De grec sermon et de latin,
Et lettra fayr en pargamin
Et en ebrey et en ermin,
Et fayr s eyr et a matin
Agayt encuntre son vicin.

Et l'altre doyst d'escud cubrir

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[7] This is not to suggest that Florimont is not taught these skills. See discussion pp. 174-175.

[8] Blakeslee describes Tristan's skills as a warrior as 'necessary, if banal, proof that he is worthy of Iseut's love'; he needs to learn such skills as prowess is 'fundamental to Tristan's literary character' but they are later 'evoked explicitly in only two episodes', p. 24.

[9] For a more detailed look at Tristan's education see Blakeslee, pp. 18-22. He gives a detailed overview as well as listing differences between the various poems.

[10] For the text of Alberic's romance see *The Medieval French* Roman d'Alexandre, vol. III, prepared by Alfred Foulet (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949), pp. 37-60.

Et de ss'esspaa grant ferir
Et de sa lanci en loyn jausir
Et senz fayllenti altet ferir;
Li terz ley leyre et playt cabir
E.l dreyt del tort a discerner.

Li quarz lo duyst corda toccar
Et rota et leyra clar sonar
Et en toz tons corda temprar,
Per se medips cant ad lever;
Li quinz des terra misurar
Cum ad de cel entrob e mar.
(ll. 82-105)

There are some similarities between Alberic's description and Florimont's education. In both the hero is taught to cover himself with his shield, to strike well with a lance and to recognise false judges or to be able to distinguish real from false (Alberic: ll. 94, 96, 99, *Florimont*: ll. 1905-06, 1910). However, these similarities are somewhat generic in nature; it is to be expected that any hero worth his salt knows how to use shield, lance *and* a sword effectively. It is true that a ruler's training in judicial matters is somewhat rarer. However, the differences far outweigh the similarities. Where great emphasis is laid on Alexander's academic education in Alberic, with the hero learning no fewer than four languages, it is not explicitly stated that Florimont even learns to write, let alone in four different languages! Instead, more emphasis is devoted to social skills in *Florimont*, a subject absent in Alberic; Florimont learns how to play backgammon and chess, and how to address ladies (ll. 1907-08). The general nature of the similarities and the stress laid on different aspects of the hero's education would suggest that although it is possible that Aimon was aware of Alberic's text, it is unlikely that he used it as a source for his description of Florimont's education.

This same mixture of similarities and important differences is also present in the depiction of Alexander's education in Thomas of Kent's *Roman de Toute Chevalerie*, which Brian Foster dates to between 1174 and 1200.[11]

La mere fist l'enfant mult nettement norir:
Itant crust en oyt aunz qe bien pot roy servir.

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[11] Thomas of Kent, *Le Roman de Toute Chevalerie*, ed. by Brian Foster, 2 vol (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1976). All further references will be to this edition. For his discussion of the dating of the text, see pp. 73-76 of his introduction in Volume 1.

Dis mestres ly bayllent, a qui deit obeir,
Dont li uns l'aprent sey chaucer e vestir,
Ly autre a parler e cum se deit contenir,
E li autre a juer, chevaucher e eskirmir
E a porter armes e a cheval seir,
Poyndre e ate[i]ndre e a trere e ferir.
Li set ly apernent les [set] arz retenir,
Cum il deit aposer e argumenz falir,
Chanter par musique e de toz mals garir,
E cum deit parler a trestoz a pleisir,
E longer e hautur mesurer par avir.
Assez aprent l'enfes si a chef put venir;
D'estre yvre ou jolifs n'ot il point de leisir;
A peine put il manger, beivere ou dormer.
(Stanza 19, ll. 427-42)

There are similarities between the description in this text and the description of Florimont's education. Like Alexander in Thomas of Kent, Florimont is also taught how to bear arms, how to ride and the art of sword-play/jousting.[12] The similarities however, are generic in nature – one would expect that all future knights will be taught how to ride a horse and how to handle weapons, so it should come as no great surprise that both Thomas' Alexander and Florimont learn these skills. The differences, meanwhile, are more significant – Thomas of Kent's Alexander is taught how to dress himself and how to behave appropriately. Though these subjects are realistic, there is no mention of them in Florimont's education, suggesting that Aimon did not draw inspiration from Thomas of Kent for the description of Florimont's education.

Alexandre de Paris' description of Alexander's education, meanwhile, runs thus:[13]

Aritotes d'Athenes l'aprist honestement;
Celui manda Phelippes trestout premierement.
Il li moustre escripture, et li vaslés l'entent,
Grieu, ebrieu et caldieu et latin ensement
Et toute la nature de la mer et du vent
Et le cours des estoiles et le compassement
Et si com li planete hurtent au firmament
Et la vie du siecle et quanqu'a lui apent
Et connoistre reison et savoir jugement,

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[12] 'E li autre a juer, chevaucher e eskirmir / E a porter armes e a cheval seir,' (Stanza 19, ll. 432-33) *Roman de Toute Chevalerie*. See *Florimont* ll. 1904, 1913.
[13] Alexandre de Paris' text can be found in *The Medieval French* Roman d'Alexandre, vol. II. All future references to the Alexandre de Paris text will be to this edition.

Si comme rethorique en fet devisement;
Et en aprés li moustre un bon chastïsement,
Que ja serf de put ere n'et entour lui souvent,
Car maint home en sont mort et livré a torment,
Par losenge, par murtre, par enpoisonnement.
Li mestres li enseigne et li varlés aprent;
Il en jure le ciel et quanqu'a lui apent
Que ja nus sers par lui n'avra essaucement.
(Branch 1, ll. 333-49)

Here there is no mention of Alexander's military skills or training. Attention is paid to the academic side of learning as we are told, as in Alberic, that Alexander learns four languages. Astronomy is also present but is presented as more of an academic subject than a magical one. Simons notes that it 'is divested of its magical, mysterious potential and becomes simply an academic subject.'[14] Social skills are afforded a token reference yet the main thrust of the description is to warn Alexander against putting his trust in lowborn servitors. This distrust of the lowborn is to become an important theme for Alexandre de Paris; by including it in the description of Alexander's education he indicates its importance, and suggests that this education may be seen as a locus for promoting the 'moral' of his work.[15] Such a description would not work as the basis for Florimont's education: a refusal of anything magical after portraying Floquart's skills in 'astronomie et nigromance' (l. 1866) and just before the episode of the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* would be hypocritical to say the least. Equally, at no point in the text does Aimon stress the dangers of trusting in base people. He uses education as a means of charting the development of his hero rather than as a way of introducing what will become a political leitmotiv.[16] The distinct differences both in the descriptions of the heroes' education themselves and in the poet's approach to education suggest that it is unlikely that Aimon based the description of Florimont's education on Alexandre de Paris' portrayal of that of Alexander.

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[14] Penny Simons, 'Theme and variations: The education of the hero in the *Roman d'Alexandre*', *Neophilologus*, 78 (1994), 195-208 (p. 203).

[15] It is worth noting that Aimon does something similar with largesse. See p. 164 for the development of this idea.

[16] With regard to not trusting base people, Simons comments that: 'Alexandre de Paris makes his romance, at least partly, into a kind of *exemplum* to illustrate this truth... The warning... recurs as a leitmotif throughout the romance, beginning with its appearance here in the description of the hero's education,' Simons, 'Theme and variations', p. 203. The way in which Aimon uses education to show Florimont's evolution as a character will be discussed later in this chapter.

Such a lack of evidence perhaps suggests that Florimont's education was entirely uninfluenced by that of Alexander. However, if one compares the description of Florimont's education with those of Alexander's found in the L redaction of the *RAlix (Amalgam)* and manuscripts A and B which represent the decasyllabic Alexander (the *ADéca*), similarities between the descriptions become immediately apparent. Moreover, they also suggest that Aimon has once again employed the *aemulatio* skills he put to good use in manipulating material from *Partonopeus de Blois*.

Florimont's education	Alexander's education in the L MS[17]	Alexander's education in the *ADéca*
		A MS (Arsenal Version)
Florymons mout bien aprenoit	Chiunc Maistres mist li rois a cel enfant garder	Li reis Felips quist a son fil doctors:
Tot seu que il savoir devoit.	Des plus sages k'il pot en son regne trover.	De tote Grece eslist les .vii. mellors.
Li dus le fist bien doctriner	S'oïr volés les nons, je les sai bien nomer:	Cil li aprenent des esteles les cors,
De chevacher, d'armes porter,	Aristote, Clichon, Tholomer et Homer,	Del firmament les soveirains trestors,
De lance roidement ferir	Li quins Natanabus qui si sot enchanter.	Les .vii. planetes e les signes auçors
Et a cheval d'escut covrir,	Icil le sorent bien apprendre et doctriner.	E les .vii. arz e toz les granz autors,
Jeus des taubles, d'eschas mater,	Primes l'ont mis a letres, si sot latin parler,	D'eschas, de tables, d'esparvers e d'ostors,
As dames belement parler,	E por mius entroduire le firent desputer.	Parler ot dames corteisament d'amors,
Et puels d'espreviers et d'ostors,	Tous les set ars li firent apprendre et recorder,	De jugement surmontoer jugeors,
De counoistre faux jugeors,	Et il aprist si bien k'ainc ne trova son per.	Bastir agait por prendre robeors.
Parler em plait cortoissement	Le bos et le riviere li refisent hanter,	
Et conoistre faux jugement,	Tant ke de cest mestier ne li estut douter	(A6, ll. 48-57)
D'escremie, de champions,	Maistre ne veneor ki l'en peüst gaber	
De menu ferir de bastons,	Pour bien prendre se beste, son chierf ou son sangler	**B MS (Venice Version)**
De harpe et de vïele aprist.	Des oisiaus sot maistre de paistre et de garder	Li rois Felipes quist a l'enfant dotors :
	Et de tenir bien sains et de faire müer,	De tot Greçe eslut le .vii. meillors.
(ll. 1901-15)	Et as boines rivieres savoit faire voler	Cil li apristrent des estoiles les cors,
	Faucons et espreviers et ses ostoirs geter,	Del firmament les sovrans raisons,
	C'asés prendoit oisiaus quant s'aloit deporter;	Les set planetes e les signes auçors
	E che est uns deduis ke on doit mout amer.	E les .vii. ars et toz les set auctors,
	As eschés et as tables l'aprisent a jouer	De nigromançe e d'enchanter les flors,
	Tant c'assés sot d'un gu son compaingon mater.	D'escas, de tables, d'esparviers e d'astors,
	A escremir l'aprisent , car mout s'en vaut pener;	Parler a dames cortoisement d'amors,
	Bien sot son chief couvrir et maintenant jeter,	De jugemant sormonter jugeors,
	Son compaignon ferir, blechier et encontrer.	Bastir arguait por prendre robeors.
	Après li ensaignerent ses armes a porter	
	E ses chevaus a courre et bien esperonner	(B7, ll. 63-73)
	Et a ferir d'espee, de lance behourder;	
	Et preudome a connoistre et chierir et amer	
	Et le felon haïr et destruire et grever.	
	Bien sot felon tolir et preudome doner,	
	Et selonc lor maniere sot cascun honerer.	
	D'estrumens li aprisent, tymbre et harpe a soner,	
	De rote et de vïele et de gige canter,	
	Et sons et lais et notes connoistre et atremper,	

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[17] The text of the L manuscript may be found in *The Medieval French* Roman d'Alexandre, vol. III, pp. 101-154.

	Et par le sien engien en tous tons cans trover. Natanabus ses maistres dont chi m'öés conter Cil li aprist par art son engien a doubler Et en plusieurs mainieres d'engien a tresgeter. (L8, vv. 185-223)	

Let us first consider the points raised by the *ADéca* manuscripts before moving on to consider any similarities suggested by the L manuscript. Parallels revealed by a close comparison of the Arsenal (A manuscript) and Venice (B manuscript) descriptions with Florimont's education suggest not only that Aimon may have been familiar with the *ADéca* but also that the structure of the curriculum plays a highly important role. There are a number of distinct verbal parallels. Like the Alexander of the *ADéca*, Florimont is taught backgammon and chess, and hunting with sparrow-hawks and goshawks. This is not only a repetition of the same words in the same order ('espreviers', followed by 'ostors') but in each text this constitutes the sole reference to hunting, suggesting that Aimon based at least this part of his hero's education around that of Alexander in the *ADéca*. This hypothesis is strengthened when we look at what follows – Alexander learns how to 'parler a dames cortoisement d'amors,' (l. 55 in MS A, l. 71 in MS B) whilst Florimont learns how to 'As dames belement parler,' (l. 1908).[18] Further confirmation of Aimon's awareness of the *ADéca* can perhaps also be seen in the structure of Florimont's education. The structure of Alexander's education in the *ADéca* can be briefly described thus: an academic section (MS A ll. 48-53, MS B ll. 63-69); reference to social and hunting skills (MS A l. 54, MS B l. 70); the hero learning how to talk to ladies (MS A l. 55, MS B l. 71); and a final section on judicial training (MS A ll. 56-57, MS B ll. 72-73). At first glance, the structure of Florimont's education seems quite different. It can be broken down into the following segments: Florimont is taught martial skills (ll. 1904-06), he then learns social skills and how to talk to ladies (ll. 1907-08); he is then taught to hunt (l. 1909) before the emphasis is placed on his judicial training (ll. 1910-12); we have a second reference to his military instruction (ll. 1913-14) before the description concludes with Florimont learning how to play musical instruments. It is interesting to note that, with the exception of an academic course, the constituent elements of the *ADéca* education are all present in this list. Though the order of their presentation is different, I would argue that this repetition (and even the lack of scholarly pursuits) is not coincidence but instead represents deliberate *mutatio* on Aimon's part as he rearranges material from the *ADéca* in a manner better suited to his own purposes. The omission of an academic section is, I feel, a deliberate use of *detractio* and can be explained by the medieval belief that education

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[18] It *is* true that in the *Roman de Toute Chevalerie* the young Alexander learns how to 'parler e cum se deit contenir,' (l. 431) and how to 'parler a trestoz a pleiser,' (l. 438) and a dating of 1175-1185 means that Aimon may have been aware of Thomas of Kent's work. However, there is no specific mention made to talking to ladies, as we have in both the *ADéca* and *Florimont*, and the overall lack of similarities between the *RTCh* and *Florimont* rather discounts the former as an influence on Aimon.

emphasised that which was already inherent in a man's nature, rather than greatly altering his character.[19] Desclais Berkvam for example, comments that 'the son of a noble is born with the potential for fighting and for generosity, but his *norreture* must bring it out and reinforce it,' before going on to remark that: 'the child is born with his or her future role.'[20] Thus, by depicting Florimont's acquisition of martial skills first, Aimon prioritises them and could be seen to be emphasising his hero's warlike nature.[21] This concentration on the more 'military' side of matters fits in with the generally more 'epic' flavour that runs throughout the latter two-thirds of *Florimont* and which was briefly commented upon at the end of the previous chapter. Such a desire to highlight his hero's soldierly character may perhaps explain *Florimont*'s second reference to the hero's military skills. By returning to Florimont's fighting abilities Aimon is once again drawing attention to the quality of his hero and suggesting that he is worthy of comparison with Alexander the Great. There is, moreover, a secondary reason for this *detractio* with regard to Florimont's academic skills – namely that Aimon has already, less than a hundred lines previously, depicted an academic education in the description of Floquart's education (ll. 1863-72) and he seems to have done so for specific reasons (see discussion pp. 169-70, p. 174). Having established his hero's martial dominance, Aimon goes on to include all the other elements from Alexander's education in the *ADéca*. That he goes so far as to add additional elements (a second reference to Florimont's fighting skills, the inclusion of more social skills with the musical instruments) reveals something of Aimon's intentions as it betrays a desire to have as complete an education as possible for his hero. Florimont's military training is second to none, his social skills are carefully constructed and finely honed and he is also shown to be a fair and courteous lord when administering justice. In short, his education provides him with almost all the qualities needed to become the epitome of lordship and further establishes him as more than worthy of producing a successor who will conquer the world. Indeed, by including elements

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[19] Simons notes that 'education in medieval narrative operates as a means of expression for what nature has determined within the child, rather than as a means of supplying what is not already there'. She goes on to comment that 'once the hero has become what nature designed he should be, the education process has done its task and need no longer be considered. Since... education is the junior partner to nature, giving expression to nature's work, but never changing or adding to it, it gives the recipient no skills that were not already in some sense his own'; Simons, 'Theme and variations', p. 205.

[20] Doris Desclais Berkvam, '*Nature* and *Norreture*: A Notion of Medieval Childhood and Education', *Medievalia*, 9 (1983), 165-180 (p. 176).

[21] It is unlikely that this strategy would be deemed necessary for Alexander whose military exploits in conquering most of the known world would be well known to medieval audiences. His martial credibility would not need to be established.

not present in Alexander's education in the *ADéca*, Aimon – we might again suggest – is wishing to present not only a hero worthy of comparison with Alexander, but some form of a 'perfected version' of the legendary Macedonian.

In a note written primarily to support the hypothesized existence of a now lost version of the *Alexandre décasyllabique*, which would have been used as a template for the dodecasyllabic, L version, Marjorie Rigby confirms that Aimon was familiar with at least one of the descriptions of Alexander's education ('The Education of Alexander the Great and *Florimont*). Comparing ll. 1907-1910 of Florimont's education with ll. 54-56 taken from the *ADéca* A manuscript of Alexander's education she comments

> The resemblance is too striking to be accidental. It can hardly be doubted that Aimon lifted these lines *en bloc* from the decasyllabic version, and altered them only as far as his metre and rhyme-scheme demanded.
> (p. 392)[22]

This of course makes any similarities between Florimont's education and the education of Alexander in the L manuscript crucial to our understanding of how these texts may have interacted and engaged with one another. Though some of the parallels shown by a comparison of Florimont's education with that of Alexander in the L manuscript may perhaps be termed generic, with elements such as training at arms which featured commonly in descriptions of education, the sheer volume of them is enough to suggest a relationship of some kind between the two. The Alexander of the L redaction and Florimont both learn (although not in the same order): to bear arms, to use their lances, to use their shields effectively, to play both backgammon and chess, to play the harp and the viol and the art of *escremie*. Certain of the subjects covered are somewhat generic, yet the use of the exact same word or phrase would seem

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[22] This seems to suggest that Rigby views Aimon's reference as the work of an indolent poet who chose phrases already written rather than crafting his own. I would instead suggest that it is a deliberate form of *imitatio*, designed explicitly to link Florimont's education with that of Alexander. Rigby then notes similarities between *Florimont*'s ll. 1905-06 and Alberic's description of Alexander's education, ll. 94-6 (p. 392), suggesting that Aimon may have used a now-lost form of the decasyllabic version of Alexander's life, which would have contained a stanza detailing weapons training. She finds support for this suggestion in Paul Meyer's note that the influence of both Alberic and the Arsenal *ADéca* are readily apparent in the description of Alexander's education in the L redaction. Rigby argues that it makes more sense to believe in the existence of a now-lost decasyllabic version of Alexander's life than to think that two writers, independent of one another, would each choose to use both Alberic and the Arsenal version (p. 393).

to suggest a relationship of some kind between the two.[23] Interestingly, even the structures of the two heroes' educations are similar. Both start with a reference to the heroes' fathers confiding their son to those responsible for educating them (L: ll. 165-86, *Florimont*: ll. 1896-97). At this point, the descriptions would seem to diverge; L briefly lists Alexander's tutors and his excellence in academic areas before giving a detailed explanation of his hunting skills, whilst Aimon immediately depicts Florimont's martial education. However, after this separation, both poets mention their hero's training in chess and backgammon (L: l. 205, *Florimont*: l. 1907). Following this, the L poet details his hero's martial education whilst Aimon moves on to Florimont's hunting skills. Details are then given of each hero's more social skills, or training in how to rule. Alexander is taught to recognise and love *preudhommes*: to take from 'felons' and to give to 'preudomes' whilst honouring everyone as he ought (ll. 213-216). Florimont is taught to recognise all manner of falsity and to make a courteous legal plea (ll. 1910-12). This parallel is followed by a second slight divergence as Aimon returns to Florimont's military training, describing his ability with a 'baston' and in single combat (ll. 19136-14). After this, however, the texts converge once more as both poets reveal the musical side of their heroes: Alexander is taught the 'tymbre,' 'harpe,' 'rote,' 'vïele,' and 'gige' whilst Florimont is taught the 'harpe' and 'vïele'. These similarities, taken together with the verbal echoes noted above, seem enough to confirm a relationship between *Florimont* and the L redaction.

The question now becomes, what is the nature of this relationship? For Rigby, one suspects that this would further confirm her hypothesis of a lost Alexander manuscript, one upon which both Aimon and the L redactor would have drawn. Though this is a perfectly credible suggestion, I would like to propose a potential alternative, an alternative which does not rely upon the existence of a manuscript which may or may not have existed. I would like to suggest that the parallels between *Florimont* and the L redaction are strong enough to make a direct link between the two plausible. The latest possible dating that we have for the L redaction is that of 1280 (that being the date of the L manuscript itself), and between this and 1184/5 (the earliest date at which the L redaction could have broken away and differentiated itself from the hybrid *Roman d'Alexandre*) we have a ninety-five year gap. For *Florimont* and the L redaction to have had a direct relationship, *Florimont* needs to fall within this gap. Dating to 1188, *Florimont*

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[23] Both Alexander and Florimont use their shields for cover. L: 'Bien sot son chief couvrir et maintenant jeter,' (l. 206). *Florimont* : 'Et a cheval d'escut covrir,' (l. 1906). Both poets also use variations of the word 'escremie' (L: l. 205, *Florimont*: l. 1912).

certainly falls within this time-span but it is here that an exact date for the L redaction becomes important. If it appeared in the first three years after the *Roman d'Alexandre* then it is possible that Aimon may have been aware of it and may deliberately have used it as an intertext for *Florimont*. If, however, it appeared after Aimon had written *Florimont* (and the balance of 92 years makes this the likelier scenario), we are left with the intriguing possibility that Aimon may have influenced the L redactor. The Eliot Monograph edition tells us that the L redactor sometimes drew on Alexandre de Paris' *Le Roman d'Alexandre*, sometimes on an L* archetype which predated L, sometimes reworks an episode found in his source, and occasionally seems to invent new material.[24] If this is indeed the case, there is nothing to prevent the L redactor working elements of Florimont's education back into that of Alexander. After all, Florimont is portrayed as Alexander's grandfather so it would make sense for the pair to have similar educations.

This is not as implausible as it initially sounds – *Florimont*, as we have seen from the number of extant manuscripts, was clearly very popular throughout this period and was, just as clearly, closely associated with Alexander. Keith Busby describes the inclusion in manuscripts of tales from a hero's youth or of his offspring and ancestors as 'a compositional principle... that determined the manufacture and ordering of cyclical manuscripts,' ('Codices manuscriptos', p. 264). He suggests that this principle is 'clearly responsible' for the content of BN fr. 792, a manuscript in which the *Roman d'Alexandre* is preceded by *Florimont* (p. 264). This demonstrates that (at least) one manuscript compiler associated *Florimont* with Alexander. Indeed, as we have seen, Busby's comment suggests that the two texts were seen as being interdependent: 'BN fr. 792 thus provides a context both for *Florimont* as the foundation romance of Alexander's dynasty and for *Le Roman d'Alexandre* as a continuation of Florimont's line,' ('Codices', p. 265).[25] This close association of the two heroes lends weight to the idea that the redactor was reworking *Florimont* as he described Alexander's education – an idea that becomes even more persuasive if we consider that the manuscript to which Busby refers, BN fr. 792, is dated to the last quarter of the thirteenth century; a timescale which, interestingly, coincides with the latest possible date for the production of the L manuscript.

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[24] See Elliot Monographs edition, vol. III, pp. 11-24.

[25] See also Introduction, p. 8. Busby also refers to *Florimont* 'representing' the 'Alexander matter' in the Visconti-Sofia library In Pavia. Busby, *Codex and Context*, p. 778. That this association persisted well into the nineteenth century is shown by Ward's *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts British Museum*, the contents page of which lists *Florimont* as a part of the Alexander cycle.

It would seem that Aimon has thus chosen to combine elements from the description of Alexander's education in the *ADéca* (and possibly also from the L redaction) with material of his own invention when writing his depiction of Florimont's education. In doing so, he once again highlights his own compositional practices and proficiency: he uses *adiectio* to provide as complete an education as possible for Florimont, thus drawing attention to his originality as well as his rewriting abilities. The choice of the *ADéca* as an intertextual model meanwhile, reveals Aimon's awareness of the different models portraying Alexander's life (we have already seen that he was familiar with Alexandre de Paris' work). Indeed, the choice of the *ADéca* model rather than that of the *Roman d'Alexandre* perhaps indicates some sort of intratextual commentary on Aimon's part: is it possible that he viewed the *ADéca* as a poetically superior work? Whether or not this is the case (and it is a question requiring detailed further study) the deliberate decision to use more than one Alexander model in his portrayal of Florimont reinforces our belief that Aimon wished to present a 'perfected' version of who Alexander could have been. In Florimont he offers us a character visibly associated with (one might even say based around) the Macedonian but who suffers from none of the flaws affecting the historical personage of Alexander.

The nature of *Florimont*'s relationship with the different versions of Alexander's life is further complicated by the presence of an important theme which we have previously examined: that of largesse. There is no reference made to liberality in either Alexandre de Paris' description of Alexander's education, nor in those of the *ADéca*. However, in the L manuscript, we are told that in addition to being taught to recognise and cherish 'preudome', Alexander is also taught: 'Bien sot felon tolir et *preudome doner*,' (L, 1. 215, my italics). Though only a small reference, its mere presence would be enough to remind the audience – and any potential rewriters – of Alexander's towering reputation for generosity. What makes this disparity with the earlier descriptions of Alexander's education particularly interesting is that, immediately following on from the formal description of Florimont's education, Aimon had devoted a lengthy section of verse to the importance of largesse (ll. 1918-54), as Florimont's father lectures him on the wonders of this greatest of all virtues. With regards to the L manuscript, depending upon the date of composition of the L redaction, this either means that Aimon had used *adiectio* to expand upon the reference to liberality present in the L redaction or, more likely, that the importance given to largesse at this point of *Florimont* had prompted the composer of the L redaction, aware

of Alexander's own reputation for generosity, to mention it in his own depiction of the Macedonian's education.

However, it is in relation to Alexandre de Paris' *Roman d'Alexandre* (the text used in Chapter 2 for the discussion of Alexander's liberality) that the emphasis on largesse at this particular point in *Florimont* takes on new meaning. Its position, immediately following the formal description of Florimont's education, evokes the position of Aristotle's first warning about the untrustworthiness of serfs. This admonition is used to close the description of Alexander's education (its position perhaps an indication of its importance) and thereafter becomes a leitmotif which runs throughout the text. I would argue that by choosing to emphasise the importance of largesse as a means of finishing off Florimont's education, Aimon is doing with largesse what Alexandre de Paris had done with the distrust of serfs – introducing a motif which will then run throughout the narrative. In doing so he uses a combination of rewriting techniques: *adiectio* (where Aristotle offers a brief warning on base behaviour, Florimont's father delivers a lengthy exposition on the glory and honour that largesse may bring a man) is joined with *transmutatio* (as the motif has been moved from its original position as part of the formal description of the hero's education) in a demonstration of Aimon's rewriting prowess. In doing so Aimon reinforces his text's ties with the Alexander legend, but by placing largesse apart (almost as if it represented a sort of second education) Aimon also emphasises the importance that largesse will have in his text and differentiates his work from that of Alexandre de Paris in which largesse is little more than a leitmotif attached to Alexander. Moreover, by positioning it thus, as a corollary to Florimont's education, Aimon is signalling to his audience that largesse is very much a virtue which his hero needs to *learn* about; as such, he is using it as a way of differentiating Florimont from Alexander.

Thus, Aimon uses a strategy similar to the one he used when adapting material from *Partonopeus*: he uses *aemulatio* to transpose elements of his intertext and re-arrange them according to his own liking and priorities. With the *Partonopeus* material this strategy was used to draw attention to Aimon's proficiency as a poet and to comment negatively on his intertext. Here, however, it seems to be used in a slightly different way. It still displays Aimon's poetical subtleties but serves mainly to emphasise Florimont's credibility as a hero worthy of comparison to Alexander. Such care in the presentation of his hero matches the approach that emerged in Chapter 2: Aimon reshapes the Alexander material for his own creative ends. His position is

generally positive and does not appear to display the kind of corrective rewriting seen vis à vis *Partonopeus de Blois* in Chapter 3.

Having thus looked at the hero's education in the Alexander material and how this may have influenced Aimon's portrayal of Florimont's education we shall now turn to *Florimont*'s other established intertext, *Partonopeus de Blois*, to consider what effect, if any, education in this romance had on *Florimont*. Here we immediately run into a snag as we are not given a formal description of Partonopeus' education. Indeed, with the possible exception of advice given to him by his beloved (advice to which we shall return later), the eponymous hero does not seem to receive education of any kind.[26] Yet the romance itself is not devoid of any descriptions of education; quite the reverse. The anonymous poet gives a detailed – and lengthy – depiction of Melior's education. Though there is nothing unusual about choosing to describe her education,[27] the forty-six lines spent detailing both her education and the powers that this education then provided her with is atypical, and differs considerably from the 10-15 lines more typically given over to educational descriptions.[28] We have already seen from our examination of *Partonopeus* as an intertext that Aimon seems to have disapproved of Melior on the basis that she is too strong a character (for a woman) and has too much power over the hero. Given that a great deal of this power stems directly from her education, it is to be expected that Aimon will, in some way at least, rewrite this education.

If we compare Melior's education with that of Aimon's own heroine, Romadanaple, then it would seem as if Aimon has deliberately chosen to 'write out' Melior's education by very pointedly establishing one or two similarities before then making Romadanaple's education as different as possible to that of Melior as a way of indicating his disapproval of overly-strong women and at the same time of reasserting a more proper male-female balance in his own

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[26] This is not to suggest that Partonopeus is uneducated, merely that the poet chooses not to give us a description of his hero's education. This perhaps stems from the poet's desire to portray his protagonist's status as ambiguous in the initial part of the romance. There is a deliberate tension between the childlike and adult aspects of Partonopeus: though when we first meet Partonopeus he embarks on adventures worthy of grown knights, he is repeatedly referred to as 'enfes' (see for example ll. 677, 766, 823) prior to his seduction of Melior. This tension would be undermined were the poet to include a description of Partonopeus' education as it would pin him firmly to one side of the adult/child boundary, rather than leaving him the freedom to flow fluidly between the two.

[27] The education of a hero or heroine was a commonplace of twelfth-century romance: 'Education is a frequently occurring feature. Descriptions of and references to education are found in many texts... Education is regarded both as worth narrating in its own right and as useful material to exploit for perhaps larger literary or other effects'; Simons, 'Theme and variations', pp. 195-196.

[28] For a discussion of what constitutes a typical education description see Simons, 'The Theme of Education in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century French Epic and Romance', pp. 48-101.

romance. If Aimon has indeed adopted such a strategy then it would certainly explain another difference of opinion between Fourrier and Kelly. Fourrier sees the education of the heroines as a direct point of contact between the two texts, remarking that Romadanaple, like Melior, 'reçoit une éducation très poussée dans les arts libéraux' (p. 451). Kelly however, dismisses this comment, stating that: 'heroines enjoying a liberal education are frequent in romance' ('Composition', p. 278). A careful comparison of the education of each heroine supports Kelly's analysis as virtually no exact similarities can be found and exact similarities would be necessary in this area, given the commonplace element of education in twelfth-century romance (see footnote 27). The education of each heroine is described as follows:

Romadanaple	Melior
Et quant ele ot .V. anz passez	Mes pere par argus fu cers,
Que savoit bien parole antandre,	Des ço que fui petite en bers,
Li rois li fist letres apanre.	Qu'il n'avroit nul autre oir de moi,
Une mestre li ont querue	S'en prist grant cure et grant conroi
Que estoit de Sipre venue	De moi afaitier et garnir
De Nicosye la cyté,	De l'empire par sens tenir :
Ou avoit lonc tens conversé ;	[Maistres oi buens et de grant pris,
Por se savoit des ars assez	Et je molt bonement apris ;]
Que ses peires fut bien letrez ;	Maistres oi de tos escïens
Sele refut mout bien letree.	Par foïes plus de deus cens.
Davant le roi fut amenee ;	Dex me dona grasse d'aprendre,
Sipriaigne estoit nomee	Et d'escriture bien entendre.
Por ce que de Sipre fut nee.	Les set ars tot premierement
Li rois li dist : « Venez avant,	Apris et soi parfaitement.
Sipriaigne, je vos comant	Aprés apris tote mecine :
Ma fille, si la m'aprenez.	Quanqu'est en herbe et en racine,
Or et argent avrez assez	Et d'espisses, de lor valor ;
Et en avrez boen gueredon :	Aprés, le froit et la chalor,
Dame serez de ma mason. »	Et de tos maus tote la cure
Sipriaigne respont briement :	Et l'ocoison et le nature ;
« Sire, a vostre comandement	Fesique ne puet mal garir
Soit del luier et de l'avoir.	Dont je ne sace a cief venir.
Je l'aprendrai mout bien por voir. »	Puis apris de divinité
Li rois en sa chambre demaingne	Si que j'en sai a grant plenté,
La maistresce et sa fille maingne,	Et la viés loi et la novele
La pucele par la main prent	Qui tot le sens del mont chaële.
Et a sa maistresce la rent.	Ains que eüsse quinze ans passés
Sipriaigne l'ait bien aprise	Oi mes maistres tos sormontés.
Et doctrinee en mainte guisse,	Aprés apris espirement,
De totes riens li aprenoit	Nigremance et enchantement.
Que pucele savoir devoit,	Tant en reting et tant en soi,
De re[s]pondre et d'escouter,	Envers moi en sevent tot poi ;
Souef et doucement parler,	Cil qui puet faire tant d'effort
Et de gramaire li lissoit.	Qu'il sace bien argur et sort,
La pucele bien aprenoit,	Et fesique et astronomie,

En lissant trovoit es ators
Des grans batailles et d'amors ;
Mai a amors plus entendoit
Que as batailles ne faissoit.
La pucele ait .X. ans passez,
De grammaire savoit assez.

(ll. 1000-40)

Et nigremance, lor aïe,
Tant seroit sages et poissans
Qu'il en feroit mervelles grans :
Par ce fist Mahons les vertus
Dont il fu puis por Deu tenus ;
Et j'en ai fait tant maintes fois
Mervelles grans de tans endrois
En mes cambres priveement
Que se ce fust voiant la gent,
Par tot en fust la renomee,
Mais je n'en woil estre escriee.

(ll. 4583-4628)

These quotations make it easy to see the differences in the education of the two heroines yet they also bring forward certain similarities; one detail worthy of note is the extent to which both Melior and Romadanaple's fathers influence the education of their daughters. When detailing her education, Melior explains that it had been her father's decision that she be educated thus, as he wished to prepare her to rule the Empire (ll. 4583-880). With Romadanaple meanwhile, we see that Philip is very much involved with her education; it is his decision that she learn to read and write, and his desire that a suitable mistress be found for her (ll. 1000-03). We can also see that the number of lines devoted to the description of the heroine's education is, in both texts, unusually long. We have already seen that the description of Melior's education is of an atypical length. Aimon devotes forty lines to Romadanaple's education and her mistress and this too is much longer than average: I would argue that this is a deliberate, strategic choice on Aimon's part as he uses the technique of *mutuatio* (the lifting of material from a source) to establish a link between Romadanaple's and Melior's educations, the length of the description providing the bridge. Using *mutuatio* to establish this link serves a further purpose as it calls attention to the rewriting involved in Aimon's replication of this feature; this is where the differences in the two heroines' educations become very important as we see a clear case of *immutatio* (substitution). The curriculum could not be more dissimilar – where Melior studies 'nigremance' (l. 4612), Romadanaple learns 'souef et doucement parler' (l. 1032); where Melior has several male tutors, Romadanaple has a single, female tutor, and we have no examples of verbal matches to suggest a deliberate reference back to *Partonopeus*. Yet it is precisely these differences and this lack of direct echoes which argue all the more persuasively *for* a relationship with *Partonopeus*, as Aimon uses education as another way of expressing his disapproval of Melior. Her education is more typical of the education of a male heir – or romance hero – than

that of a recognisable twelfth-century lady or heroine.[29] She learns 'les set ars' (l. 4595), 'tote mecine' (l. 4597) and 'fesique' (l. 4603). Romadanaple's education, on the other hand, represents the almost diametric opposite of Melior's: in keeping with her overall portrayal of heroine it is far more demure and a great deal more feminine. She studies:

> Que pucele savoir devoit,
> De re[s]pondre et d'escouter,
> Souef et doucement parler,
> Et de gramaire li lissoit
> (ll. 1030-33)

There is no medicine, no magic and no astronomy for her – Aimon's heroine is perfectly passive and not likely to cause trouble in the way that Melior does. It is Melior's education – an education more in keeping with that usually offered to a male heir – which provides her with the powers she uses to manipulate events in the first half of the romance and which gives her her initial power over Partonopeus. Given that Aimon seems to have disapproved of such power in female hands (the equally powerful *Dame* is shown to be a detrimental influence on Florimont) it is no surprise to see that the education of his own heroine is very different to that of Melior.

Yet Aimon is not content with merely providing his heroine with what he feels to be a more appropriately feminine education as a pointed retort to Melior's masculine pretensions. We see a different aspect of his rewriting (one which reveals his poetical subtleties) if we look for a 'Melior-type' education in his romance. Logically, we might expect that the obvious recipient for such an education would be Florimont himself, particularly given the male nature of Melior's studies. But we have already seen to what degree Florimont's education is influenced by that of his purported grandson, Alexander the Great. Would Aimon also try to re-assign elements of Melior's education to that of Florimont, thus tying two of his intertexts together in a single theme in his text? Even a cursory consideration of Florimont's education, put alongside that of Melior reveals the negative answer to this question. Where Melior learnt 'espirement' (l. 4611), 'nigremance' (l. 4612) and 'fesique' (l. 4617), Florimont learnt how to ride, how to joust and how to fight (ll. 1904-06). Where Florimont learnt hunting and how to address ladies (ll. 1908-09), Melior learnt 'divinité' (l. 4605) and how to cure all ills (l. 4601). Yet this is not to suggest

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[29] Matilda Bruckner comments: 'her father made sure his only heir received what might otherwise be considered a male education, the entire encyclopaedia of twelfth-century learning', *Shaping Romance*, p. 123.

that Aimon did not re-write elements of Melior's education at all and it is here that the answer to the above question turns from a resounding 'no' to an emphatic 'yes' as we see Aimon's two intertexts bound together through the character of Florimont's tutor, Floquart. There are clear similarities between the description of Floquart's education and that of Melior:

Floquart

Mout estoit bien fondez des ars.
Li maistres avoit nom Foucars;
Mout avoit apris en s'emfance
Astronomie et nigromance
Et savoit de dialetique,
De gramaire et de musique
Et de retorique savoit,
De fisique asi s'entendoit ;
Tot savoit quanqu'il a mestier
Ou a clerc ou a chevelier.

(ll. 1863-72)

Melior

Les set ars tot premierement
Apris et soi parfaitement.
Aprés apris tote mecine :
Quanqu'est en herbe et en racine,
Et d'espisses, de lor valor ;
Aprés, le froit et la chalor,
Et de tos maus tote la cure
Et l'ocoison et le nature ;
Fesique ne puet mal garir
Dont je ne sace a cief venir.
Puis apris de divinité
Si que j'en sai a grant plenté,
Et la viés loi et la novele
Qui tot le sens del mont chaële.
Ains que eüsse quinze ans passés
Oi mes maistres tos sormontés.
Aprés apris espirement,
Nigremance et enchantement.

(ll. 4595-4612)

Charles François has already commented on the importance of Floquart in *Florimont* ('Avec Florimont'). Where the *précepteur* is often an episodic or secondary character, here he is given a main role: 'en même temps que son propre porte-parole il [Aimon] en a fait la conscience de son héros et un instrument de sa destinée. Ce mentor est partout, dans *Florimont*' (pp. 9-10). Despite the importance of this role, however, it is nevertheless slightly unusual that we are given such a detailed description of Floquart's education: in romance texts it is more common to describe what a tutor teaches, rather than what he has been taught. This can be seen as a further reference to the *Roman d'Alexandre*: in establishing clear links between the education of Alexander and that of Florimont, Aimon is, in effect, putting Floquart on a footing with Aristotle, archetypal learned man and most famous of Alexander's tutors. As such, it is to his advantage to ensure that Floquart appear as prestigious as possible. He seems to have done this by transposing Melior's

education onto Floquart (a classic example of the *transmutatio* rewriting technique) which suggests that he found it impressive, and worthy of comparison with Aristotle's learning. In Aimon's mind Floquart is a more appropriate recipient of such an education, as he is male and has a tutee also destined for greatness.

If we compare the education of Floquart with that of Melior, then, we see a number of similarities. The curriculum here is broadly the same, save that the constituent subjects have been reversed in *Florimont*. Both learn the seven arts. Melior learns them before she learns anything else (l. 4595), and then progresses onto medicine, *nigremance* and astronomy. With Floquart however, Aimon lists his knowledge of 'astronomie et nigromance' (l. 1866) first and then moves onto subjects such as music and rhetoric that would be involved in the seven arts (ll. 1867-69). We are also told that both learn 'fisique' (l. 1870 for Floquart, l. 4617 for Melior). Such distinct verbal parallels suggest that Aimon's 'borrowing' and remodelling of material from *Partonopeus* may be a deliberate choice rather than a matter of unconscious influence; his reversal of the subjects of the curriculum neatly mirrors the reversal in his own narrative of the thematic patterns to which those elements belong in their original context.

The technique becomes more sophisticated, however, with the presence of the rival intertext, the *Roman d'Alexandre*, also in the frame. Floquart appears to represent a pivot upon which the opposing intertextual forces are balanced, as becomes clear when we examine his role in the narrative as tutor. There are a number of points of comparison of the role of the tutor between the three texts: firstly we have the tutor-like role which Melior assumes over Partonopeus when she offers him advice, then there is the obvious comparison to be made between Floquart and Aristotle, both as a tutor and as a 'character';[30] finally it is important to consider the relationship between the tutors and their heroic tutees. In each case we shall consider what we may learn about Aimon's rewriting techniques and his attitude towards his intertexts.

In his role as tutor to the hero of the romance it is Floquart's duty to offer advice to Florimont, a task which he performs on more than one occasion, just as Aristotle does to Alexander. He repeatedly stresses to Florimont the importance of largesse, another motif

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[30] This is in inverted commas as, though Floquart is indeed a character, Aristotle is a historical, rather than fictional, figure and it is this very historicity, I suggest, which has an effect on the delineation of Floquart as a character.

associated with Alexander.[31] He notes that those to whom he gives will remain grateful and, if necessary, come from afar to aid him (ll. 2751-2760). He also advises Florimont to be humble and to endure his suffering for, as with largesse, this will elevate his status, improving his reputation and his honour:

> « Per humelité, por largesce
> Puet on venir a hatesce;
> Que bien et mal ne puet soffrir
> Ne puet a grant honor venir »
> (ll. 4815-4818)

There is perhaps nothing extraordinary in Floquart's advice in and of itself: it comes scattered throughout the text, as and when the situation demands it. However, it becomes more interesting when Floquart – in his role as tutor and in the advice that he gives to Florimont – is compared with Melior and the manner in which, to a certain extent, she tutors Partonopeus.[32] Such a comparison is only natural, given that we have already seen that Aimon seems to have bestowed Melior's education on Floquart. Are there any similarities in their roles as tutors? Partonopeus lacks an authoritative male role model in his life. He is thirteen when Melior lures him to Chief d'Oire and we are told nothing of his education or of any masters that he may have; the only man in his life that we know of is King Cloëvis, whose relationship with Partonopeus, if we are to believe Simons and Eley, is less straightforward than that of a positive role-model and eager tutee.[33] The only time that Partonopeus' own father is mentioned is as Melior informs us – and Partonopeus – that he has died (l. 1917). Thus, with the absence of any male authority figures Partonopeus has a large gap in his life and, perhaps more importantly, no one to instruct him on how a knight should behave. In a surprising reversal of traditional roles, it is Melior who fills this gap. After granting him permission to return to Blois after a year at Chief d'Oire, she then proceeds to issue him a set of instructions on how to behave whilst he is there; instructions which are more parental – perhaps even paternal – than they are personal. As Floquart does throughout

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[31] We have already examined this obsession with largesse and the way in which it affects *Florimont*'s intertextual relationship with the *Roman d'Alexandre* in Chapter 2.

[32] For how such tutoring ties in with her fairy mistress persona see Bruckner, *Shaping Romance*, p. 124.

[33] They note that the references to King Cloveis' affection for his nephew bracket the description of Partonopeus' great beauty and suggest that it may be this beauty, rather than familial love, which is the cause of Cloveis' affection: 'There is more than a suggestion here that the king loved his nephew primarily because of the way he looked,' Penny Simons and Penny Eley, 'Male Beauty and Sexual Orientation in *Partonopeus de Blois*', *Romance Studies*, 17 (1999), 41-56 (p. 44).

Florimont, she lays great stress on the importance of largesse and being generous towards people:

> "Si soiés larges de doner...
> Ne soit bons chevaliers trovés
> Que vos avoirs ne soit donés "
> (ll. 1921, 1925-26)

She also tells him to be humble, how to speak to people and to honour God and the Church:

> "Humles soiés as povres gens...
> Vostre parole n'aiés chiere;
> A trestos soit douce et pleniere.
> Honorés Deu et sainte glise "
> (ll. 1927, 1929-31)

She gives him exactly the type of advice that we might expect his father or his tutor to give him.[34] In this respect then, despite her being his *amie*, Melior may be seen as Partonopeus' tutor. This idea is furthered when we see that Melior tells Partonopeus to be affable and approachable in his speech with everyone and Floquart advises Florimont to have good relations with everyone.[35] Indeed, in her exhortation to honour God and the church it might be said that Melior steps even further from her *amie* as her advice echoes that of Perceval's mother, given to her son as he leaves home:

> "Biax filz, as prodomes parlez,
> ....
> Sor tote rien vos vuel proier
> que an yglise et an mostier
> alez proier Nostre Seignor
> que il vos doint joie et enor."[36]

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[34] For more on what tutors typically say to their students, see Simons, 'The Theme of Education in Twelfth-and Thirteenth-Century French Epic and Romance', pp. 50-53. See also Doris Desclais Berkvam, *Enfance et maternité dans la littérature française des XIIe et XIIIe siècles* (Paris : Champion, 1981).

[35] Melior: "'A trestos soit douce et pleniere,'" l. 1930. Floquart: ' « Soies de boen acoentement, »' (l. 2753).

[36] Citation taken from the University of Ottawa's online transcription of MS A of *Perceval*, <http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/lfa/activities/textes/perceval/cgrpres.htm> [accessed 04/01/10]. For a discussion of Perceval's education and how he applies the advice given to him by his mother and others see Penny Simons, 'Pattern and Process of Education in *Le Conte du Graal*', *Nottingham French Studies*, 32 (1993), 1-11.

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The evocation of a mother figure occasioned by Melior's instructions serves to reinforce our impression of Melior as a dominant, controlling figure in Partonopeus' life. It suggests that perhaps it is not her place, as an *amie* and not a parent, to be advising Partonopeus in this manner and, in this presentation of a controlling female figure serves also to recall Partonopeus' own mother, a similarly dominant woman who seeks to manipulate her son's life. By having Floquart to some extent 'echo' Melior's advice, Aimon draws attention to his rewriting of *Partonopeus*, implicitly reinforcing his disapproval of overly strong female characters. Unlike Partonopeus, Aimon's own hero does have an authoritative male role-model (indeed, if one includes his father then Florimont has two male role-models; the presence of more than one perhaps indicating the importance which Aimon attached to this concept) and this role-model repeats and expands upon the advice offered by Melior. This suggests that Aimon has given Melior's role as tutor to a recipient more suited to advising a young man – i.e. an older man. This *transmutatio* is also combined with *adiectio* as the advice that Floquart offers is spread throughout the narrative, coming at many important points, whereas Melior's instructions to Partonopeus are concentrated before his first return to Blois. Such a use of *adiectio* perhaps indicates that Aimon is presenting Floquart (the more appropriate, male teacher) as a better tutor than Melior – one who will stand by his tutee and will always be on hand to offer advice.

Through the character of Floquart then, it becomes clear that Aimon's practice of *aemulatio* is both sophisticated and complex; it binds together two intertexts towards which Aimon seems to have had two very different attitudes, and uses different rewriting techniques to do so. In transferring Melior's education to Floquart Aimon transposes elements of *Partonopeus*, moving them to a new pattern which is suggested by reference to a rival intertext – the *Roman d'Alexandre* – as, in basing his hero's education on that of Alexander, Aimon creates a need for the hero's tutor to be worthy of comparison with Aristotle, Alexander's most famous tutor. By having Floquart give Florimont echoes of Melior's advice to Partonopeus, Aimon affirms *Florimont*'s relationship with *Partonopeus* (and his disapproval of a strong female character) in his audience's mind, even as he prepares the way for Floquart to be compared with a further tutor figure, Aristotle.

Indeed, this preparation is also present in Aimon's depiction of Florimont's education. There we saw that the titular hero's education was based on that of Alexander and seemed, moreover, designed to be as complete as possible in order to bolster Florimont's credentials as

ancestor to the great Alexander. There is, however, a flaw in this theory; namely that, as an education purporting to be complete and apparently based on that of Alexander, it is extraordinarily light on the academic front. Such an omission seems more peculiar when we consider that the versions upon which Aimon is likely to have based his description both contain a detailed depiction of the academic nature of Alexander's tuition. I would suggest that this is a deliberate omission on Aimon's part, and that the reason for this omission is to be found in the character of Floquart. Floquart's education occupies lines 1861-1872 whilst the description of Florimont's education follows close on its heels at lines 1901-1915, a mere twenty-nine verses later. In contrast to Florimont, Floquart's education is predominantly an academic one: not only does he learn the seven arts of the *trivium* and *quadrivium* (ll. 1867-70); he also learns 'astronomie et nigromance' (l. 1866). He is, we are told, a very learned man.[37] In this respect, the presentation of Floquart conforms to the importance attached to a ruler surrounding himself with learned men. Penny Simons charts this importance in the Old French poem, *Dolopathos*, noting that the king is praised for 'his adherence to the advice of wise men' and that he wishes his son to learn philosophy, 'that by means of learning he may be a better king.'[38] Such an emphasis on the academic nature of Floquart's education may perhaps explain Aimon's reluctance to repeat such subjects in the description of Florimont's education, which follows closely after it. Indeed, this hypothesis is given weight when we later learn, from Floquart himself no less, that there *was* an academic side to Florimont's education. When advising Florimont, after learning that his young charge wishes to become a knight, Floquart states:

« Florimont, tu es bien lettrez:
Tu doies estre aiques senez
[Et] ancor puels assez apprendre,
S'a mes paroles wels entendre. »
(ll. 2741-44)

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[37] His introduction to the text, as Florimont's father seeks an explanation to his strange vision, makes this perfectly clear: 'En sa cort un tel maistre avoit / Que on nul millor ne savoit,' (ll. 1861-62).
[38] Penny Simons, 'Reading and the Book: Frame and Story in the Old French *Dolopathos*', in *The Book and the Magic of Reading in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Albrecht Classen (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1998), pp. 35-60 (p. 46).

He later comments that Florimont is well educated enough to be able to feel at home in any court in the world.[39] These references to Florimont's academic abilities would certainly lend weight to the idea that academic subjects were not mentioned in the initial discussion of his education, not because Aimon did not wish his hero to have these abilities, but rather because he had given them to Floquart whom, we can assume, would in turn pass them onto Florimont.

This leads us to a closer examination of the role played by Floquart. In a story which is explicitly linked to Alexander the Great, as *Florimont* is, Aimon would have been aware that any tutor figure would almost inevitably be compared with Aristotle, philosopher and most famous of Alexander the Great's tutors. This section, therefore, will consider Floquart's initial presentation in *Florimont*, noting similarities between Floquart's introduction and the manner in which Aristotle is introduced in the *Roman d'Alexandre*. It will then compare the advice offered by Aristotle and Floquart in their role as tutor before moving on to examine the tutor-tutee relationship. Questions raised by this examination will then be taken into account when studying the portrayal of the tutor in each text. The potential impact any findings may have on our view of Aimon's relationship with the Alexander romances as an intertext will be explored as we progress.

Floquart plays a key role within *Florimont* and we have seen that his impressive education seems described in order to enable him to compete, or at least to stand on an equal footing, with Aristotle. As a wise philosopher whose name was well known in the Middle Ages, a philosopher, moreover, who was known to have served as tutor to Alexander the Great, Aristotle needs no formal introduction in the *Roman d'Alexandre*. His name would have been synonymous with learning, and audiences would have understood the significance of having him as a tutor. This is *not* the case for Floquart who, as a character created for *Florimont*, would not have enjoyed the world renown of Aristotle.[40] As such, Aimon takes the time to introduce Floquart, to present qualifications that will establish him as a credible and worthy tutor to a glorious hero, himself ancestor to the great Alexander. These qualifications take the form of the description of Floquart's education and the way in which he is introduced into the text. We have

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[39] ' « Florimont, mout ies bien apris. / El mont n'ait terre ne païs / Ne cort, se tu i wels aler, / Que bien n'i puisses converser, »' (ll. 2889-92).

[40] That Aimon was successful in his creation of a learned tutor figure in Floquart is demonstrated by the character of Flocart, a necromancer apparently based on Floquart, who appears in the *Roman d'Abladane*. This romance, an anonymous and unfinished prose composition dated to around 1260, tells the story of the city of Amiens during the reign of Caesar and the Roman Emperors. L. F. Flutre, 'Le *Roman d'Abladane*', *Romania*, 92 (1971), 458-506.

no description of Aristotle's education in the *Roman d'Alexandre* – but then, his fame would ensure that no such description is needed: the mention of his ability as a 'devineours' is more than enough:

> Les bons devineours fet querre par le regne,
> Devins et sages clers communalement amene ;
> Premiers i est venus Aritotes d'Ateine
> (Branch I, ll. 271-73)

With Floquart, however, the description of his education is necessary to convince the audience that he too is an erudite man, able to interpret visions or dreams should the need arise. Thus we are told that Floquart: 'Mout avoit apris en s'emfance / Astronomie et nigromance,' (ll. 1865-66). Line 1865 is particularly interesting here: not only does Floquart know 'astronomie et nigromance,' but it is stressed that he learned a great deal about them in his youth/childhood. The implication behind this is that he has since been exercising these skills for many years and that the audience may have total confidence in him. This confidence is increased when we consider the placement in the text of Floquart's education and of his first appearance.

Directly before the description of Floquart's education, Duke Mataquas has a strange dream the night that his son is conceived, a dream which he concludes is a vision sent by the gods (ll. 1713-1856). Returning to his court, he seeks an explanation of his vision – at which point Floquart is introduced with the description of his education.[41] His credentials having been established by the detailing of his education, the Duke's obvious confidence in Floquart to understand his mysterious dream serves to increase audience confidence in, and respect for, the tutor:

> Mataquas le fist demander.
> Li maistres vet a lui parler.
> Li dus le voit, a une part
> En moengnet per la main Fouquart.
> Li vission le conte et dist,
> Et [c]il l'ait tot mis en escrit
> (ll. 1873-1878)

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[41] Laurence Harf-Lancner briefly lists these dreams and their classifications according to Macrobius. 'Le *Florimont* d'Aimon de Varennes', p. 243.

The positioning of this episode is also important when we consider that Floquart is not yet Florimont's tutor. Thus, when it is time for Florimont to receive an education the audience is already, to a certain extent, familiar with Floquart and aware that he is capable of tutoring the Duke's son.

Yet this episode is significant not just in its introduction of Floquart as a learned man, worthy of comparison to Aristotle; it also has some intriguing similarities with the initial introduction of Aristotle in the *Roman d'Alexandre*. Aristotle is first mentioned after a young Alexander has had an unusual dream; Philip summons 'devineours' from the length and breadth of the land in order to interpret this dream. Interestingly, although Aristotle is the first to arrive (l. 273), he is not the first to offer an explanation of Alexander's dream: both Astarus and Salios de Minier offer interpretations which greatly displease Philip (Branch I, ll. 277-309). Aristotle is the third to explain Alexander's vision and his explanation impresses Philip a great deal more than the two preceding ones.[42] Indeed, Philip is so impressed that when the time comes for Alexander to receive an education, Aristotle is the first person for whom Philip sends (Branch I, ll. 333-34). Thus, we see that Aristotle is introduced to the text in order to interpret a dream for the hero's father and that only after this interpretation does he become tutor to the hero.[43] This is remarkably similar to Floquart who is introduced to the text in order to interpret a dream for the hero's father before then becoming the hero's tutor. There are of course differences between Floquart and Aristotle – we have no depiction of Aristotle's education (unlike Floquart, Aristotle's reputation as a learned man preceded him) and in *Florimont* it is the hero's father, rather than the hero himself (Florimont not having been born when Floquart is introduced to the text), who has the dream which needs interpreting. Indeed, it is interesting to note that this dream occurs the night that Florimont is conceived (ll. 1711-16). As with Alexander, there are early indications of Florimont's greatness but, unlike Alexander, these indications relate to the moment of his conception rather than to that of his birth. Is this perhaps a way in which Aimon may be hinting that his hero's destiny may be as glorious – or possibly even more so – than that

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[42] 'Quant Phelippes l'entent, mout grand joie en demaine. / Phelippes ot grant joie du songe qui bien prent, / Mout ama Aritote et le tint richement, / Tout li abandona son or et son argent,' (Branch I, ll. 322-25).

[43] Though it is Alexander himself who has the dream, it is Philip who sends out a summons so that the dream may be interpreted: 'La ou il sot sage homme jusqu'a la mer Vermeille / Por espondre le songe ses mesages traveille. / Phelippes a mandé la sage gent lointiegne, / les bons devineours fet querre par le regne' (Branch I, ll. 268-271).

of Alexander?[44] Floquart's introduction to the text thus serves two purposes; there are enough similarities with Aristotle's introduction in the *Roman d'Alexandre* to suggest that a comparison between the two tutors may be being set up, whilst the differences between their introductions seem to reinforce the idea that Florimont's destiny is, at the very least, as noteworthy as that of Alexander.

Yet what could possibly motivate a comparison between Aristotle and Floquart? We have already seen that Aimon has made use of the *Partonopeus* tutor model offered by Melior, so why then complicate matters by introducing elements from a second tutor figure? I would argue that this is a further example of poetic *aemulatio* on Aimon's part, serving to draw attention to his creative skills: the ability to combine elements from two such disparate figures into a coherent whole emphasises Aimon's poetic proficiency. It also underlines Floquart's role as a structural pivot: a figure upon whom the relationships with two widely different intertexts are balanced and conjoined. Moreover, this comparison with Aristotle fits quite nicely with Aimon's policy. We have already seen that he was aware of the *Roman d'Alexandre* and was using it as an intertext. The inclusion of Floquart's education to establish him as a scholar worthy of comparison with Aristotle would seem to confirm our earlier view that Aimon considers the Alexander romances in a positive light, and adapts them as a way of circumscribing the problems caused by the historical reality of Alexander and Aristotle. Yet this clear view becomes slightly murkier when we discuss the advice each tutor gives his hero, and explore the tutor-tutee relationship in each text.

Just as there were similarities between the advice proffered by Melior and Floquart, so too there are similarities between the advice offered by Aristotle and Floquart. Perhaps the most important of these concerns largesse. When advising Alexander to elect twelve peers to be his companions, Aristotle comments:

> "Et amez touz voz homes et leur fetes gent don.
> Ce sachiez: qui bien donne, volentiers le sert on,
> Par donner puet l'en bien amoloier felon;

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[44] Alexander and Florimont are not the only heroes whose birth and destiny have been foretold in a dream. There is a similar tradition attached to William the Conqueror in which William's mother dreams of a tree, representing William, whose branches will cover the whole of Normandy and England. In the context of the relationship Aimon is establishing between Alexander and Florimont it is difficult to imagine that Aimon was unaware of the prophetic nature of Alexander's dream. See Herman Braet, 'Le songe de l'arbre' for a discussion of this tree as it is found in *Florimont*, in Wace's *Roman de Rou* and in Benoît de Sainte-Maure's *Chronique des ducs de Normandie*.

Qui tout veut trestout pert, des auquans le voit on.
Se voulez estre larges, plus en serez preudon
Et conquerrez les terres jusqu'en Oceanen,"
(Branch I, ll. 676-81)

The main thrust of this advice is then repeated later in the text before Alexander resumes the fight against Darius:

Envers les gentieus homes soit de molt dous respons
Et envoit a lor femes mantiaus et peliçons,
Car se besoins li sort, grans iert li guerredons:
Cil soffriront por lui iers et tençons
(Branch III, ll. 23-26)

Be generous to your men as it will ensure they serve you more willingly. Be generous as it will help you to conquer lands. Be generous as your men will then be prepared to suffer for you. Floquart offers very similar, if not the exact same, advice to Florimont:

« Ton avoir done largement
....
Per seu serais loing menteüs,
Ameis, servis et reseüs,
Et se tu ais de gent besoing,
Il te vendront servir de loing, »
(ll. 2754, 2757-60)

Like Aristotle before him he sees a connection between giving and conquering and comments on the great honour a man may achieve through largesse:

« Adés done, toz jors conquier;
Largesse te doit essaucier.
Mout vient on tost a grant hatesce
Et a grant honor per largesce »
(ll. 2773-76)

These similarities would perhaps reinforce the thought that Aimon is basing Floquart on Aristotle, using the philosopher as a positive role-model. It is here, however, that the differences in the advice offered by the two tutors must be taken into account. Though both connect largesse

with conquest, they also both offer further morsels of advice. For Aristotle, this consists mainly in insisting, over and over, that his tutee should not, under any circumstances, trust a low-born man and should certainly never allow one to advise him. This motif is introduced at the start of the text as an integral part of Alexander's education:

> Et en aprés li moustre un bon chastïement,
> Que ja serf de put ere n'et entour lui souvent,
> Car maint home en sont mort et livré a torment,
> Par losenge, par murtre, par enpoisonnement
> (Branch I, ll. 343-46)

It then becomes a leitmotif which runs throughout the text (particularly in Alexandre de Paris' version) as Aristotle takes every opportunity to ensure that his warning has been taken in.[45]

If we turn to consider Floquart, it is at this point that we see a difference in the pattern of apparently basing the tutor figure on Aristotle, or showing concern that the tutor in *Florimont* be at least able to compete with Aristotle. At no point does Floquart advise Florimont never to place trust in lowborn advisors. Indeed, as we have already seen (p. 170-171), the advice he offers to Florimont is varied and wide-ranging: from theoretical advice on the nature of love (ll. 2777-830) to practical advice on how to treat both defeated enemies (ll. 2857-62) and men who have served him (ll. 2831-32). This could not be more different to Aristotle's repeated insistence that Alexander should never trust any serfs. If Aimon was indeed basing the role of Floquart on Aristotle, as previous evidence has led us to believe, why would his advice differ so greatly from that of Aristotle? One possible answer lies in the ambiguity surrounding Aristotle's role in the *Roman d'Alexandre* and indeed, surrounding his figure in the Middle Ages. Both his portrayal and his presence are highly inconsistent throughout the text.[46] On the one hand he is an eminently erudite, respected philosopher who is seen sharing his wisdom with Alexander; see, for example, ll. 672-696 of Branch I as he advises Alexander to choose twelve peers. On the

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[45] See for example Branch III, ll. 19-21, where he advises Alexander not to believe his serfs before his barons, or Branch III, ll. 68-70 where he outlines the dangers represented by the serfs: "'Assés voit on de ciaus qu'ont lor segnors traïs, / Ques ont empoisounés ou as coutiaus murdris; / Ton conseil ne lor di ne en aus ne t'afis.'"
[46] Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas notes that in Alexandre de Paris' work, the portrait of Aristotle, 'seems to oscillate between the image of a virtuous master and that of an accomplice in the Greek king's desire for total power', 'Alexander and Aristotle', p. 59. This article offers a very useful and very complete examination of Aristotle and Alexander's relationship in the various versions that have come down to us.

other hand, the representation of him in Branch IV as he pays tribute to the dead Alexander

seems more evocative of a crazed hermit than a wise scholar:

> Bien fu de philosophe ses fais et ses abis,
> Ne li chaloit de soi, tous estoit enhermis;
> Barbë ot longe et lee et le poil retortis
> Et le chief deslavé et velus les sorcis;
> De pain et d'eaue vit, ne quiert autres pertris
> (Branch IV, ll. 1020-24)[47]

This impression is reinforced when his tribute to Alexander takes on a blasphemous tone as he

declares that had Alexander lived he would have been a god on earth and accuses the gods

themselves of being jealous.[48] The image of him as an over-wrought old man is completed when

he has to be reprimanded before fainting to the ground:

> Qant doi autre gramaire, Varo et Egesis,
> Li senerent de loins que trop iert esbahis,
> Qant il des dieus mesdist, trop est de sens maris.
> Ja chaïst jus pasmés, tous est esvanuïs
> (Branch IV, ll. 1071-74)

Gaullier-Bougassas describes this transformation as one which 'seems to call into question his

[Aristotle's] stature as *maître de sagesse*,' noting an 'ironic attitude' in the description of his

unkempt appearance ('Alexander and Aristotle', p. 63). She attributes this ambivalence in the

portrayal of Aristotle to a reaction to the philosopher's ideas as they became more well-known.

She writes: 'the introduction of ambiguities into the portrait of the philosopher coincides with

progress in the knowledge of Aristotelian philosophy and the increase in resistance to it' (p. 65).

Such ambiguities in the portrayal of Aristotle certainly seem to fit in with a more general

air of ambivalence as regards Aristotle in the Middle Ages. Though in many ways an immensely

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[47] Wilhelm Hertz also refers to this vastly altered image of Aristotle and sees it as part of an ongoing gradual transformation of how the philosopher was viewed throughout the ages, particularly given that earlier sources had described Aristotle as a relatively young man, who took great care with his appearance (pp. 24-25). He states: 'Wie der milde, liebenswürdige und bescheidene Vergil in den späteren Jahrhunderten zum finsteren, barschen und hochmütigen Murrkopf geworden ist, so verkehrte sich der feine Weltmann Aristoteles in einen verwahrlosten Cyniker mit langem breitem Bart, struppigen Haaren, ungewaschenem Kopf und zottigen Brauen,' *Gesammelte Abhandlungen*, pp. 25-26.

[48] '"Alixandre, de toi nos ont li dieu traïs; / Se tu peüsses vivre seul dis ans acomplis, / Tu fuisses dieus en terre aourés et servis, / Et te feïsons temples, auteus et crucifis. / Ahi! Dieus, molt par es envious et faillis'" (Branch IV, ll. 1064-68).

popular and highly respected figure (and, as such, almost perfect as the role-model of a tutor for Floquart), Aristotle's reputation had a dual aspect. Hand in hand with the tradition of the wise philosopher there ran a tradition which was a great deal less favourable towards the scholar. This tradition reached its apex in the thirteenth-century poem, *Le Lai d'Aristote*, in which the philosopher is both humbled and humiliated. After chastising Alexander for preferring dalliances with a young Indian maiden to the execution of his duties as a ruler, Aristotle is then ridiculed as, unable to follow his own advice, he loses all dignity by agreeing to carry the same maiden around a garden on his back, on the understanding that this will persuade her to dally with him as she had done with Alexander. Medieval audiences would have been aware of this two-sided tradition concerning Aristotle, and any writer wishing to make use of Aristotle's prestigious reputation would have to take care not to import inadvertently this rather less prestigious aspect of Aristotle's reputation as well. It makes Aimon's decision to choose him as a model for Floquart particularly interesting and, I argue, it explains some of the differences between the two figures as Aimon seeks, if not to surpass Aristotle, then at least clearly to differentiate his own, fictional tutor from the historical figure of Aristotle.

We have previously seen that Aimon seems to have viewed the Alexander material available to him in a relatively positive light; his hero's education is based around that of Alexander, whilst with the introduction of Floquart he seems to be making an effort to ensure that his tutor could be compared with the great Aristotle. With the advice, however, it seems that Aimon has taken this approach a step further: by having Floquart stress the importance of largesse, as Aristotle does, Aimon re-affirms the connection between the two tutors. However, by then having Floquart offer a lot more advice, advice which is both useful and relevant to the situations his tutee is in, Aimon highlights Floquart's abilities as a tutor, perhaps suggesting that he has more to offer than Aristotle.

Much the same may be said of his presence within the text. Aristotle is very rarely at Alexander's side and there are whole episodes of the text where he seems to vanish entirely.[49] Such is not the case with Floquart who remains a constant presence throughout *Florimont*,

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[49] Gaullier-Bougassas has also commented on this. With regard to Aristotle's absence during the majority of Alexander's oriental adventures, she remarks that Alexandre de Paris 'a alors choisi de le [Aristotle] faire disparaître du récit.' She suggests that this may be so that he does not enter into an argument over Alexander's behaviour which would discredit the Macedonian in the audience's eyes. However, she then goes on to propose that 'son absence s'explique peut-être plus profondément par le fait qu'il n'incarne plus la loi, qu'il est complètement « absorbé », dominé par son ancien élève'; *Romans*, p. 392. This suggestion reinforces our hypothesis (discussed below, pp. 183-185) that Aristotle and Alexander's relationship is by no means as close as it initially appears.

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accompanying his tutee almost everywhere. Although Florimont is allowed space for his own adventures, Floquart is always available to offer advice, do his master's bidding or to come up with a plan.[50] The difference between them is too marked not to be deliberate, especially when we consider that Aimon has deliberately established points of comparison between the two and that it is unusual for a secondary character in Floquart's role to be given the prominence that he is.[51]

I would suggest that there are two reasons behind the deliberate differences between Floquart and Aristotle. The first and most obvious reason is, of course, that Floquart is not solely a rewriting of just the Greek tutor: he also incorporates elements taken from *Partonopeus*. Part of the reason behind Floquart's prominence as a male role-model active in his tutee's life must stem from Aimon's desire deliberately to rewrite Melior's unhealthy influence over Partonopeus (an influence occasioned precisely because he lacked a male role-model). Indeed, as *Florimont* progresses and Floquart becomes more of a wise, companion-type figure to Florimont, we might ask ourselves if Floquart's steadfast loyalty to Florimont might not, to some extent, be modelled on Gaudin, the older knight who keeps company with and advises Partonopeus in the latter stages of *Partonopeus de Blois*. In addition to this, I would argue that the second reason behind Aristotle's and Floquart's differences lies in Aimon's awareness of the dual nature of Aristotle's reputation and that, although wishing to avail himself of the impressive elements of this reputation, he wants to distance himself (and through him, his text) from any elements which may lead us to view Floquart – and thus potentially also *Florimont* – as an object of ridicule. One way of doing this is to emphasise the positive and to minimise the negative and I suggest that Aimon de Varennes makes the most of this strategy. Thus it is that Floquart seeks ever to be at his master's side, and it is he who devises the plans for defeating Camdiobras and for the successful taking of the impregnable island of Clavegris.[52] Even here, however, Aimon is careful not to allow the image of Aristotle to dissipate completely as he allows some vestige of the ridiculous to remain. So it is that the audience is privy to Thecier's cruel jests at Floquart's

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[50] For example, though Florimont fights the monster alone, it is Floquart who prepares his armour for him (ll. 2075-97).

[51] See François, 'Avec *Florimont*', pp. 9-10.

[52] This is not to suggest that Floquart is in charge of Florimont, nor that Florimont is incapable of making his own decisions, merely that Floquart is a supportive, attentive tutor who seeks to aid his pupil to the best of his ability. For examples of Florimont using his own initiative see ll. 2327-36, (where he designs the weapon which will ultimately enable him to defeat the monster plaguing his people) or ll. 7162-78, (where Florimont takes Rysus into his confidence by confessing his true name to him).

expense and, more crucially, to Floquart's own attempts to fight alongside Florimont against Camdiobras. This latter seems designed to make the audience laugh at Floquart – and he certainly cuts a ridiculous figure as he staggers around the battlefield, before Rysus tells him to guard prisoners rather than fight, as he fears Floquart's exploits will cause Florimont to have a heart attack (ll. 10, 681-712)![53] Despite this, I would argue that, although Aimon wants to keep the figure of Aristotle in his audience's mind, he nonetheless softens the ridicule directed towards Floquart in a sort of *detractio* (deletion, concentration or omission of material). Though we are still encouraged to laugh at Floquart, the cruel mockery of the type we find in the *le Lai d'Aristote* tradition has been removed, leaving in its place a gentle, wry appreciation of the tutor figure determined to do his best and not to leave his master/pupil's side, no matter the cost to himself.

Thus we see that Aimon has used different rewriting techniques (*imitatio* to establish links between Aristotle and Floquart; *detractio* as he softens the jokes directed towards the tutor, turning them from cruel japes into gentle jests, and *adiectio* as he expands upon the advice offered by Melior) to manipulate the tutor figure as presented both by Melior and the figure of Aristotle in the *Roman d'Alexandre*. I would suggest that this is done in order to create as complete a tutor figure as possible, one who can equal, if not surpass, the characters of Aristotle and Melior as tutors. His use of *adiectio* indicates a desire to create a tutor who can be seen as being more effective and more supportive than Melior, whilst his use of *imitatio* and *detractio* with regards to Aristotle clearly show a desire to create a character worthy of comparison with the philosopher, just as Florimont needs to be made worthy of comparison with the famous Alexander, but also, I argue, a desire to have that character, in some ways at least, be able to surpass the character of Aristotle. The components of such a desire are two-fold. On the one hand, Aimon would want to distance his character from the negative aspects of Aristotle's reputation, which saw him labelled as a venal old man. On the other hand, he saw an opportunity which would have been irresistible to any rewriter – a chance to change something, an opportunity to present his character in a more positive light, softening the less salubrious aspects of Aristotle's reputation. For Aimon's predecessors and contemporaries producing the Alexander romances, Aristotle was *not* an invented character. He was a factually established, historical

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[53] For a further instance of the audience being encouraged to laugh at Floquart, see lines 10131-141, where citizens of Philipopolis themselves laugh the first time they see the tutor armed for war.

figure and portrayals of his 'character' would have had to take this into account – even if only partially. As with their depictions of Alexander, the writers were limited: because of Aristotle's fame, because he was known for reasons other than his tutorage of Alexander, there were certain things that they could not portray Aristotle as doing. They could not have him live his life for Alexander, or accompany his pupil everywhere for example. Aimon faced no such limitations and in adapting the tutor figure of Aristotle he would have seen the opportunity to present a figure that is recognisably based on Aristotle but who shares none of the philosopher's limitations. One might almost say that he seeks to present an idealized version of Aristotle – the tutor figure as he *could* be, were he not burdened with historical facts.

This hypothesis is furthered when we consider the complex tutor-tutee relationship in each text.[54] In the *Roman d'Alexandre*, at first glance, it would seem that Aristotle and Alexander enjoy a close relationship and that Alexander listens respectfully to his tutor's advice. When Aristotle advises that Alexander choose twelve peers, Alexander not only suggests that Aristotle be the one to pick them, but then also ensures that they are elected the same day that they are devised:

> "Vostre merci, biaus mestre, ci a bonne reison,
> A maint homme est il mieus de la vostre aprison;
> Eslisiez vous meïsmes de qui noz les feron."
> ....
> En icel jour que furent eslit li douze per,
> Que li roys Alixandres les ot fet deviser
> (Branch I, ll. 685-87, 696-97)[55]

Such prompt and generous action suggests both a close relationship between tutor and tutee and that Alexander has a great deal of respect for his tutor. However, a closer look reveals that their relationship is not as clear-cut as we may first expect. Aristotle's periodic absences from the action may perhaps suggest that their relationship is not necessarily very close, whilst the siege of Athens makes it perfectly clear that any respect Alexander has for Aristotle only runs up to a certain point. Convinced that Aristotle will ask him to lift the siege and spare his native city, Alexander swears that he will do nothing that Aristotle proposes: 'Seur la loy leur jura et par foi

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[54] Laurence Harf-Lancner has remarked that: 'le couple maître-élève formé par Florimont et l'enchanteur Floquart évoque celui d'Alexandre et d'Aristote', 'Le *Florimont* d'Aimon de Varennes', p. 248.

[55] Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas describes this as 'an attitude of perfect obedience and blind confidence', 'Alexander and Aristotle', p. 61.

lor affie / Que ja n'en fera riens qu'Aritotes l'en die,' (ll. 1732-33). This suggests that, although Alexander will listen to Aristotle, he will not then necessarily take the philosopher's advice – particularly if it clashes with what he himself wishes to do. Alexander will do as he wishes and he does not intend to allow Aristotle to influence him in any way.[56] Athens is spared only because Aristotle, aware of Alexander's oath, advises Alexander to continue. Alexander's independence from – and, to a certain extent, his disregard for – his tutor is also evident when Aristotle discusses Alexander's war with Darius. Gaullier-Bougassas has pointed out that Aristotle's speech at this point seems very much an effort to justify Alexander's actions. She notes that Alexandre de Paris 'fully exploits' Aristotle's authority in order to: 'obliterate the image of the greedy and bloodthirsty conqueror found in many historical texts, and to legitimize his expansionist politics. The philosopher endorses the conflict with Darius as a just war... a divine mission' ('Alexander and Aristotle', p. 61). I would suggest that Aristotle's reason for doing this is at least in part because he knows that he will be unable to dissuade his 'pupil' from the intended course of action, the siege of Athens having already demonstrated Aristotle's awareness of Alexander's unwillingness to listen to his teacher. Alexander states that he will do nothing which Aristotle suggests when it comes to sparing the city:

> Quant l'entent Alixandres, touz li cors li formie;
>
> ....
>
> Et dist aus douze pers: "Nel me conseilliez mie."
> Seur la loy leur jura et par foi lor affie
> Que ja n'en fera riens qu'Aritotes l'en die
> (Branch I, ll. 1728-33)

Aristotle manages to save the city by proposing that Alexander burn it (Branch I, ll. 1774-79).[57] This suggests that while Aristotle may putatively be in charge – he is, after all, Alexander's 'master' – Alexander is in reality the person holding all the power in their relationship. That their

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[56] Wilhelm Hertz has also noted this selfish tendency in the conqueror, commenting: 'Alexander will aber nun einmal seinen Willen haben, gleichviel ob dieser klug oder toll sei', *Gesammelte Abhandlungen*, p. 32.

[57] The possibility that Aristotle's influence over Alexander was limited is reinforced by Gaullier-Bougassas' comment in footnote 49 and by her summation of Aristotle's behaviour at Alexander's death. She suggests that it is as if Aristotle had become a 'sycophant, a courtier, so subject to his former student that he places him above all laws, even those of the gods – as if the master were absorbed by his former disciple', 'Alexander and Aristotle', p. 64.

relationship was in reality not very close, and that Alexander was very much in charge, is made clear when we consider, that in the historical Latin texts available in the twelfth century, we learn that Alexander has Aristotle's nephew assassinated. Gaullier-Bougassas notes that these texts 'disclose nothing about Aristotle's reaction,' before going on to comment that: 'they suggest, nonetheless, the likely beginning of a conflict; above all, they cast light on the limits of the influence of the philosopher's teaching' (p. 57).

This is not the case with Florimont and Floquart: quite the reverse in fact. A surface glance at their relationship would suggest that even though Floquart is nominally his tutor, it is once again the hero who is the dominant power in the relationship. When preparing to fight the monster that has been plaguing his father's territory, for example, Florimont has no qualms in summoning Floquart and telling him to prepare his armour:

> Il en ait son maistre apalé
> Et Floquars i vient de boen gré.
> Li maistres li dist: « Que vos plaist? »
> Et Florimons li dist si fait:
> « Que fassiés tost apparillier
> Telz armes com m'orés ditier »
> (ll. 2075-80)

That Floquart is used to receiving such orders from his pupil is confirmed when we see the prompt manner in which he acts upon them:

> Floquars fet seu que il demande.
> Les armes telz com il comande
> Ait faites en la ville fere
> (ll. 2095-97)

This pattern is repeated after Florimont's first, failed, attempt to kill the monster: he sends for his 'master' to prepare his armour once more and, this time, the speed with which Floquart obeys his pupil is mentioned:

> Lors ait son maistre demandé,
> Se li a dit et comandé
> Qu'il li fasset une faux faire
> ....

Floquars ait fet hastivement
Mout bien tot son comandement
(ll. 2327-29, 2337-38)

We also see Floquart performing relatively subservient tasks, which furthers our impression that Florimont is the dominant partner in their relationship: Floquart bathes and bandages Florimont's wounds before then preparing his food (ll. 2339-41); he travels to Philipopolis on nothing more than Florimont's word that the ring he bears will enable him to carry out Florimont's instructions (ll. 4895-4926).

However, this impression of the power dynamics within their relationship is completely over-turned upon closer examination as we see that Floquart actually possesses a great deal more power and influence over Florimont than Aristotle did over Alexander. The close nature of their bond is shown when Florimont, wanting to become a knight but at a loss as to how to go about it, turns to his tutor before anyone else and goes to Floquart with his dilemma:

A home ne dissoit son estre,
Mai mout vosist cheveliers estre.
Un jor mist Floquart a raison,
A lui s'en vet en sa mason
(ll. 2713-16)

Floquart then tells him exactly what to do and Florimont is not slow in acting upon his advice (ll. 2723-40, ll. 2926-44). Their intimacy is further emphasised when Floquart states that he will accompany Florimont on his journey and Florimont himself then seems more than happy with this proposal:

« Se tu wels vers le roi aler,
Je meïsmes irai o toi. »
Dist Florimons: « Et je l'otroi. »
(ll. 2896-98)

Indeed, the very way in which this exchange is presented is suggestive of a mutual respect: Floquart makes all of his preceding advice conditional, saying that *if* Florimont wants to act on it, only then will he accompany Florimont. Florimont's prompt response meanwhile not only indicates his courtesy but also seems to be a matter of course, as if it were only natural that his

tutor should accompany him. Such an assumption would suggest that Florimont holds his tutor in high regard. I would like to suggest that this mutual respect and level balance of power between Floquart and Florimont betray the influence of *Partonopeus* just as much as that of Aristotle and Alexander's relationship. By creating a deep bond between Florimont and Floquart Aimon rewrites the bond between Partonopeus and Melior-as-tutor. Where Melior had been portrayed as a kind of mother figure, anxiously instructing Partonopeus on how best to behave himself, the respect and consideration which Florimont accords to Floquart posit him as a secondary father figure, one capable of guiding the hero towards real independence whilst at the same time doing whatever was necessary to protect the hero from malignant influences.[58]

The close nature of their relationship is once again reinforced as we see that Floquart feels perfectly within his rights to upbraid and reprimand his tutee. When Florimont refuses to leave his bed after losing the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* as his *amie*, it is Floquart who goes to him and persuades and bullies him into getting up. He appeals first to Florimont's sense of honour and his duty towards his people, stating that Florimont's heart is for prowess, as shown by his defeat of the monster; it should not be affected like this by a woman, before then imploring him to get up as his depression is causing the people who depend on him to suffer (ll. 3924-31, ll. 3936-40). When this fails, as Florimont responds that he feels he may die (l. 3946), Floquart becomes more forceful, stating outright that that such talk is madness, implying that Florimont is behaving like a woman and then comparing him to both Narcissus and Piramus:

> Floquars li dist: « S[e]u est folie,
> Se vos por ce perdez la vie.
> Feme devroit tel cuer avoir;
> Mai hons est de grinor pooir.
> Volez vos sembler Narcisus
> De folie ou Piramus? »
> (ll. 3955-60)

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[58] This is best shown in Floquart's willingness to perform subservient tasks (see above) – a willingness which encourages his tutee to issue orders and act in a manner befitting his status – and the decisive action he takes to prevent Florimont from leaving with the *Dame de l'Ile Celee*. Both of these traits indicate a selflessness in Floquart's role as tutor, a selflessness which contrasts sharply with Melior's instructions to Partonopeus. Though these instructions are presented in a language similar to that which Floquart uses with Florimont, I would suggest that part of the reason behind Melior's instructions is a desire, on her part, that Partonopeus 'perform' well in society, as she knows that his behaviour will reflect back onto her. After all, in taking Partonopeus from his family, Melior became, *de facto*, responsible for his education and the hurried behavioural instructions before he departs for Blois seem to indicate an awareness of this.

Beyond its effect on Florimont – Floquart's harangue is such that Florimont is eventually persuaded to leave his bed (ll. 3981-82) – this reprimand is interesting in itself. The lines 'Feme devroit tel cuer avoir; / Mai hons est de grinor pooir' imply that Floquart – and by extension Aimon – has fixed ideas on what constitutes appropriate behaviour for both women and men. This is congruent with Aimon's depiction of gender roles and of the *Dame de l'Ile Celee*. Her behaviour is clearly not that of a submissive woman and as such her influence, as we have already seen, is shown to be detrimental to Florimont (see Chapter 3, especially pp. 118-121). Yet the question of gender is not the only one raised by this short speech as the mention of Narcissus and Piramus has intertextual implications. The close association of Narcissus with the idea of Florimont losing his life for love is perhaps a reference to *Narcisus et Dané*, a twelfth-century retelling of Ovid's tale.[59] Similarly, the reference to Piramus may be designed to evoke the lai of *Piramus et Tisbé*, dated to circa 1160.[60] That both of these heroes are held up as negative examples for Florimont suggests that these two texts are also part of the intertextual fabric which makes up the background to *Florimont*. These do not feature in Hilka's list (pp. cxii- cxxxiii) of potential references.[61] Aimon thus refers to additional intertexts even as he uses Floquart to re-affirm his text's relationship with the Alexander material, suggesting that he sees his own romance as an engagement with a range of earlier models.

We see no similar displays of impatience or reproaches from Aristotle, which reinforces the impression that his relationship with Alexander is not very intimate – he does not feel close enough to his pupil to be able to rebuke him in such a way. Interestingly, it also suggests, particularly when coupled with his 'justification' of Alexander's behaviour towards Darius, that Aristotle perhaps does not *dare* remonstrate with his tutee in this manner. The stark difference between the power dynamics of the tutor/tutee relationship in each text suggests that Aimon has once again played with his intertext, this time reversing the implied power structure in order to suggest or to further the impression that Floquart is a better tutor than Aristotle. His close relationship with Florimont ensures that he is seen as a more rounded, consistent character than Aristotle, who pops in and out of the different branches of the Alexander romances, whilst the

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[59] *Narcisus et Dané*, ed. by Penny Eley, Liverpool Online Series, Critical Editions of French Texts 6 (Liverpool: University of Liverpool, 2002). See p. 10 of the introduction for a discussion of the dating of *Narcisus et Dané*, <http://www.liv.ac.uk/soclas/los> [accessed 19/12/09].

[60] *Piramus et Tisbé*, ed. by Penny Eley, Liverpool Online Series, Critical Editions of French Texts 5 (Liverpool: University of Liverpool, 2001). See pp. 11-12 of the introduction for a discussion of the dating of *Piramus et Tisbé*, <http://www.liv.ac.uk/soclas/los> [accessed 19/12/09].

[61] In the above passage he sees only a reference to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, see p. cxiii.

obvious trust and affection which subsists between Florimont and Floquart means that even at times where we may be encouraged to laugh at Floquart, it is always in a gentle, rather than a snide fashion.[62]

Our examination of the tutor-tutee relationship in each text has thus confirmed our hypothesis regarding the nature of the intertextual relationship between *Florimont* and the *Roman d'Alexandre*. Aimon seems to have viewed the Alexander romances favourably – enough to base the depiction of his own hero's education on them and to want to establish a clear link between the two through the tutor figure. Despite this, Aimon was aware of the limitations of writing about historical figures; Alexander and Aristotle could not be portrayed as living for one another because historical fact (and, indeed, the legend associated with that historical fact) shows quite plainly that they did not do so. Thus he instead gives us characters based on the historical figures but who share none of their limitations – idealised, perfected versions of historical figures and their relationships. In doing so I would argue that Aimon fulfils the role of a medieval poet as outlined by Marie de France, that of realising and exploiting the potential of classical works (see Chapter 1, pp. 45-46) but also that he encapsulates the essence of rewriting; to take something familiar – be it a story, a character or a legend – and to present it in a different, in an improved manner. Aimon's skill lies in leaving enough for his audience to be able to recognise the figures of Alexander and Aristotle and in changing everything else – from names and stations to how they relate and how the audience should react to them – in order to present an improved version.

Our considerations of the hero's education and the role of the tutor have revealed the key role that education may play when establishing intertextual links. If we take a moment to consider the tutor figure and ideas of intertextual links in a broader sense before moving on to examine how the idea of the tutor figure interacts with that of education, then we will appreciate the degree to which intertextuality plays a part in Aimon's creative process. For it is not only Aristotle who influenced Aimon in his portrayal of Floquart. We have already seen that Melior also had a role in defining how Floquart is portrayed, as Aimon sought to create a strong male tutor figure for his hero in order to correct the gender imbalance that he perceived in *Partonopeus de Blois*. Similarly, we have seen how Floquart's role as a structural pivot ensures a smooth transition from a *lai* type to a more epic type narrative in *Florimont* (see discussion pp.

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[62] See above, pp. 183-184.

170-173, p. 178). Yet Floquart is not the only pivot in this transaction. The role of the tutor, so integrally linked to that of education, also plays an important part. In each text, we see that the tutors add a more didactic tone to proceedings and in so doing ensure that in both texts, education becomes more of a structuring element. William W. Kibler notes that the Alexandre de Paris version of the Alexander legend 'proclaims its didactic purpose in its opening lines' before going on to describe the *Roman* as a 'mirror for princes' (pp. 111, 112). Douglas Kelly points to the use that Alexander's education has, stating that 'his brilliant education has a place in Alexander's life of conquest'.[63] François Suard underlines the importance of the role that education plays when he states that knowledge can both pre-figure Alexander's conquests and is the means of achieving them:

> La connaissance, parce qu'elle est métaphore d'une prise de possession du monde, peut donc "mettre en images" une conquête à venir. *Elle en est aussi le moyen.* La subtilité d'Alexandre, forgée par l'enseignement d'Aristote, et même sa connaissance des lettres, lui permettent de déjouer tous les périls.[64]

This enables us to see how education is used as a structuring element in the Alexander romances. Floquart's didacticism, meanwhile, ensures that education becomes a structuring element of *Florimont*. Every time he offers Florimont advice it is done so in a very didactic manner – a lesson to be absorbed by the hero – [65] meaning that each development in the hero's character is punctuated by an informal continuation of his education.[66] This creates a further intertextual link between the Alexander romances and *Florimont* as Aimon replicates in his own work the importance of education and the structure it can provide. Yet, as we have seen, this link also incorporates elements of *Partonopeus* as an intertext for *Florimont*. By tying the theme of education together with both *Partonopeus* and the Alexander romances in this manner, Aimon

[63] Douglas Kelly, 'Alexander's *Clergie*', in *The Medieval French Alexander*, pp. 39-55 (p. 44).
[64] François Suard, 'Alexandre est-il un personnage de roman?', *Bien dire et bien aprandre*, 7 (1989), 77-87 (p. 83, my italics).
[65] See in particular his explanation of the seven types of largesse, ll. 4202-4358, his admonition not to rise to Thecier's bait when that knight makes disparaging comments about the *Povre Perdu* (ll. 4810-18) and his instructions on how to behave upon learning that Florimont is in love with Romadanaple (ll. 8265-8301). This aspect of *Florimont* has been particularly noted in MS G (BN 24376), which bears annotations in both French and Italian next to didactic passages (see Introduction, p. 6). With regard to these passages Hilka notes: 'Unsere Dichtung enthält merhere didaktishe Exkurse, die Aimon der ritterlichen Sphäre seiner Zeit anpasst,' p. cxxxii.
[66] When Florimont is suffering with his love for Romadanaple for example, Floquart encourages him not to mope as this may cause gossip prejudicial to his reputation, ll. 8265-79.

creates an intertextual link which aids in *Florimont*'s transition from having *Partonopeus* as its dominating intertext, to instead focusing on the Alexander romances.

Education has shown us the complexity of Aimon's intertextuality. It goes beyond the straightforward rewriting and expansion of concepts found in a well-known text of which Aimon approved, which we saw in his treatment of largesse. Nor is it solely a corrective rewriting of subversive elements of a popular romance, which we saw in his adaptation of the *Partonopeus* material. Rather it is as if Aimon is engaging directly with the process of romance composition and the concept of this new type of writing, the romance, not in order to subvert it, but to explore its possibilities, to see what it is capable of. The *Roman d'Enéas* which, with its emphasis on the love intrigue between Enéas and Lavine (see Chapter 5, p. 236), might be described as the first 'romance', appeared only thirty or so years before *Florimont* – as a genre, romance was still developing as Aimon composed *Florimont*, there were no set rules as to what did or did not constitute a romance. Aimon explores how malleable this new form can be. By allowing his theme to encompass elements from texts which might be said to be from different genres Aimon shows the fluidity of the nascent genre of romance, highlighting its flexibility and strength by the way in which his intertexts interact within the new text. They are not left as disparate, separate passages but are instead bound together on a structural and thematic level. This joining underscores our understanding of romance composition as a highly referential (to other romances, to 'non-romance' texts) process, but it also shows Aimon's innovation. The *Partonopeus* poet had previously fused different models within his romance, but by binding two models together, by thinking of the rewriting process in terms of its constituent elements, Aimon is able to examine how these constituent elements – in this case the theme of education – affect one another, and to control the effect that they will have in *Florimont*. Thus Melior's education, as given to Floquart, comments simultaneously on *Partonopeus*, *Florimont* and the *Roman d'Alexandre*: it reinforces our assent to Aimon's disapproval of Melior, and underscores the importance of Floquart as a role-model to Florimont whilst also supporting the favourable impression of the Alexander material examined elsewhere in this work. It is the multi-faceted nature of this intertextuality, the ability to look both inwards to create convincing situations within his own text, and outwards to comment on his intertexts which makes the nature of Aimon's rewriting so fresh and so extraordinary. This ability seems proven in the personage of Floquart. In binding his intertexts – and their presence within *Florimont* – together in the

character of Floquart, Aimon turns the tutor into a Janus-like figure: a figure who fulfils a pivotal role within his own romance but one who is capable of looking towards both *Partonopeus de Blois* and the *Roman d'Alexandre* (two seemingly very different texts) as intertexts. By weaving elements of Melior's education and advice together with a position and a textual introduction corresponding to those of Aristotle, Aimon produces a character who comments on two of his key intertexts and creates a coherent whole which enables us to compare the texts even as we marvel at Aimon's rewriting ingenuity. This combination of intertexts is a strategy which we will examine in greater detail in the following chapter as we consider how Aimon has replicated this multi-textual resonance in the bedroom scene between Romadanaple and Florimont and in the character of Sipriaigne, Romadanaple's mistress.

Chapter 5

Florimont, Partonopeus de Blois, Cligés and *Le Roman d'Enéas*: The Polyphony of Rewriting[1]

We have seen in the previous chapter how Aimon balanced and united two important intertexts (*Partonopeus de Blois* and the *Roman d'Alexandre*) on and within a single character – Floquart – using the theme of education as a means of tying the intertexts together and allowing them to comment upon one another. By thus combining them Aimon draws attention to his own creative skills and cleverness in a manner entirely consonant with the poetic rivalry that we know existed in the Middle Ages.[2] At the same time he also draws our attention to the deliberate steps that he is taking, revealing rewriting and the fusion of different texts, models and motifs as essential features of romance writing – the fundamental tools of romance authors as it were. The aim of this chapter is to see whether Aimon has drawn more than one intertext together in a similar way elsewhere in his text, and what effect, if any, such combinations of intertexts have had on *Florimont* as a whole.

By looking at a key scene in the romance, we see more of Aimon's exploitation of multiple intertexts: this is the 'bedroom scene' in which a disguised Florimont slips into the palace in order to see Romadanaple clandestinely. In many ways a fierce critic of *Florimont* (see Chapter 3), Anthime Fourrier has praised the artistry of this scene, commenting that the scene and its build-up: 'sans nul conteste, ne manque ni de verve ni d'habileté dans la gradation des effets: c'est un fabliau mondain' (p. 462). This scene is chosen precisely because it lies at a central point in *Florimont*'s narrative, coming at an intersection as Aimon moves from one narrative form towards another, from the strongly feminized fairy mistress narrative of the type offered by *Partonopeus de Blois*, and towards a more epic tone of the type suggested by the *Roman d'Alexandre*. I suggest that Aimon chooses to unite *Partonopeus de Blois* with Chrétien de Troyes' *Cligés* – itself a response to the poems of Tristan and Yseut (see below, pp. 197-199) – and writes the central bedroom scene

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[1] A paper based on an early version of this Chapter and entitled 'One Voice Above the Clamour: A Chorus of Texts in Aimon de Varennes' *Florimont*' has been published in *In Search of the Medieval Voice: Expressions of Identity in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Lorna Bleach, Katariina Nara, Sian Prosser and Paola Scarpini (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), pp. 109-126.

[2] In his discussion of rewriting in the *Bel Inconnu* Donald Maddox shows how respect for a previous text(s) can go hand in hand with competition, commenting that: 'although Renaut displays his allegiance to Chrétien by imitating his works in meticulous detail... there is also profound rivalry', 'Inventing the Unknown', p. 121.

between Florimont and Romadanaple in the light of the relationship between these romances. In addition to these intertexts we can also see how the characterisation of Lavine from the *Roman d'Enéas* influences that of Romadanaple in this key scene, suggesting a positive role model for Aimon's heroine, in contrast to the negative exemplars of Melior and Fénice from *Partonopeus* and *Cligés*. Moreover, as it is a bedroom scene it focuses the audience's attention on matters of gender; masculinity and femininity being important issues in scenes which we would expect to involve sex. Thus it is highly appropriate that it is in this scene that Aimon starts to move his narrative in a more masculine direction: featuring an apparently emasculated hero (see discussion below, pp. 219-221), the *Florimont* bedroom scene ultimately reveals a hero who has reclaimed his masculinity, as opposed to the heroes of *Partonopeus* and *Cligés* who each, in their respective 'bedroom scenes', are manipulated by their *amies*.

The choices of both Chrétien as an author and *Cligés* in particular as a text to rewrite are not arbitrary ones. Chrétien is widely acknowledged to be a master of intertextuality. Simons comments: 'The importance of intertextuality as a fundamental element in the poetics of medieval romance is nowadays so well accepted as barely to need assertion; equally, examples of Chrétien's de Troyes' particular mastery of this technique... abound in the critical literature.'[3] Francine Mora-Lebrun, meanwhile, notes that Chrétien's originality stems from his use of intertextuality, underscoring how closely the two are related in medieval literature: 'Chrétien entrecroise divers modèles pour inventer une poétique originale' («*Metre en romanz*», p. 444). It is, moreover, no exaggeration to claim that Chrétien's work had a profound and lasting effect on romance authors following in his footsteps. Donald Maddox looks in detail at how Renaut de Beaujeu's *Le Bel Inconnu* rewrites elements of Chrétien's oeuvre. He points to the long-standing scholarly interest in how *Le Bel Inconnu* reworks aspects of *Erec et Enide* ('Inventing the Unknown', pp. 101-102) before going on to describe Renaut as the 'most assiduous' of Chrétien's emulators and noting that many of Renaut's critical readers 'express a firm conviction that he was deliberately attempting to call attention to his emulation of Chrétien' (p. 103). Matilda Bruckner supports this theory with a study which focuses specifically on Chrétien's intertextual legacy ('Intertextuality'). She examines first the effect that Chrétien's texts had on individual romances (such as *Partonopeus de Blois* – Bruckner accepts Fourrier's dating

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[3] Penny Simons, 'Pear as Prophylactic? Contraception and Composition in Chrétien de Troyes' *Cligés*', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 49 (2005), 18-41 (p. 18).

of between 1182-1196 – *Le Bel Inconnu*, and Raoul de Houdenc's *Meraugis de Portlesguez* (pp. 227-273)), before moving on to consider their impact with regard to the *Prose Lancelot* (pp. 237-250) and the *Perceval* Continuations (pp. 250-265). Her analysis is both detailed and informative and fully confirms Chrétien's status as a poet whose body of work was extremely influential. Furthermore, within his corpus, *Cligés* is perhaps the most obviously intertextual of his works, engaging with the legends of Alexander the Great and Tristan and Yseut amongst other texts (see discussion over page). Freeman notes that in its absorption and transposition of the *Tristan* material, *Cligés* 'initiates a novel dialogue of intertextual commentary,' claiming this commentary as 'a new path for subsequent romance composition to follow' ('Structural Transpositions', p. 158).[4] Simons notes with regards to *Cligés*: 'it has been long accepted that this is a response to the *Tristan* romances' ('Pear', p. 18) whilst Uitti comments: '*Cligés* presupposes on the part of its reader a sophisticated acquaintance with earlier romances,' and '*Cligés* rewrites the works he [Chrétien] has enumerated [in his prologue]'.[5] More specifically as regards *Cligés* following on from Thomas' *Tristan*, Fourrier remarks: 'celui-ci surenchérit et veut, autant que possible, faire mieux que celui-là' (p. 152).[6] Hilka, meanwhile, has already shown that *Cligés* is certainly there in the background amongst the texts of which Aimon was aware when writing *Florimont*.[7] I would argue, however, that *Cligés* is not just a background text, proposing instead that it is an intertext as important for *Florimont* as *Partonopeus* and the *Roman d'Alexandre*.[8]

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[4] She gives a detailed examination of the ways in which *Cligés* interacts with the *Tristan* material. Deborah Nelson briefly compares the posterior reputations of the two adulterous heroines, commenting that: 'within the framework of the plot, Fénice's deeds receive even more attention than those of Iseut by the world at large because of the spectacular ruse of the false death. The technical difference between the two women – that Fénice's and Alis's marriage was never consummated – made absolutely no difference to posterity'. Deborah Nelson, 'The Public and Private Images of *Cligés*' Fénice', *Reading Medieval Studies*, 7 (1981), 81-88 (p. 83). Heyworth and Murphy also examine the ways in which *Cligés* interacts with other texts: Gregory Heyworth, 'Love and Honor [sic] in *Cligés*', *Romania*, 120 (2002), 99-117. Diana Murphy, 'Duelling Mirrors: Specularity in Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés*', *Romance Languages Annual*, 8 (1996), 74-78.
[5] Karl Uitti, 'Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés*: Romance *Translatio* and History', in *Medieval Studies in Honour of Douglas Kelly*, ed. by Keith Busby, Norris J. Lacy (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994), pp. 545-557 (pp. 546, 548).
[6] For his chapter on *Cligés* see pp. 112-178 of *Le courante réaliste*.
[7] *Cligés* is mentioned no less than twenty times in a list, compiled by Hilka, of motifs traditionally associated with love (p. cxvi ff). He also makes a specific reference to *Cligés* as regards a father giving his son advice about largesse (p. cxxxii) and again when suggesting that the character of Sipriaigne is similar to that of Fénice's mistress, Thessala (p. cxiii, pp. cxxxvii-cxxxviii).
[8] With regard to any potential links between *Florimont* and *Cligés* it is worth noting that MS C (BN 1374) contains both *Cligés* and the first part of *Florimont*.

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This chapter will note briefly the existing relationship between *Cligés* and *Partonopeus de Blois*, examining the dominant themes of what I term the 'bedroom scene' of each romance, before moving on to consider how Aimon combines elements from each in his own bedroom scene, cleverly arranging matters so that each intertext provides a commentary on the other. In the background to this we also see the influence of Lavine's monologues and actions in the *Roman d'Enéas* impacting on Romadanaple's behaviour in this scene and her situation within the text, as well as echoes of *Floire et Blancheflor* and the *Lais* of Marie de France. The result is a funny, artfully drawn scene which highlights Aimon's compositional prowess as it reveals a further mélange of contemporary texts, drawn together in the character of Sipriaigne. An examination of this further mélange will occupy the second half of the chapter.

First though, and as we have already mentioned briefly, we must make clear that *Cligés* is in itself no stranger to intertextuality; having been closely linked with the poems of the Tristan and Iseut legend, it is widely agreed to be a response of some kind to this legend, though the exact nature of this response has caused a certain degree of critical debate.[9] Paul Lonigan notes that: 'generations of critics have debated the question of the relationship between the *Cligès* [sic] and the Tristan legend,' asking: 'is the *Cligès* some sort of moral corrective written to assuage « courtly » outrage; or is it also an effort to surpass previous versions of the subject?' (p. 201) whilst Huguette Legros remarks that: '*Cligès* [sic] est souvent considéré comme un anti-Tristan, un néo-Tristan voire un hyper-Tristan.'[10] Given this close relationship between *Cligés* and the Tristan poems we have to, almost by default, consider the Tristan poems when discussing any potential intertextual connections between *Florimont* and *Cligés*; if they are not to be considered as outright intertexts (with *Florimont* engaging directly with them) then they need at the very least to be considered as texts which have had a substantial influence on one of Aimon's intertexts and thus cast a shadow of themselves into Aimon's own work. In the course of our discussion – which will refer to the Tristan legend where pertinent – we shall see evidence both of indirect engagement with the legend (via the medium of *Cligés*) and of more direct

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[9] Paul Lonigan gives an extensive list of works which relate the two texts in 'The « Cligès [sic] » and the Tristan Legend', *Studi Francesi*, 18 (1974), 201-212 (p. 201, footnote 1). See, amongst others, Jean Frappier, *Chrétien de Troyes* (Paris: Hatier, 1968) ; A. Micha, 'Tristan et Cligès [sic]', *Neophilologus*, 36 (1952), 1-10 and A. G. Van Hamel, 'Cligès et Tristan', *Romania*, 33 (1904), 465-89.
[10] Huguette Legros, 'Du verger royal au jardin d'amour: mort et transfiguration du *locus amoenus* (d'après *Tristan* de Béroul et *Cligès*), in *Vergers et jardins dans l'univers médiéval* (Aix-en-Provence: Publications du CUER MA, 1990), pp. 215-233 (p. 217).

echoes. Regarding the ways in which *Cligés* responds to and interacts with the *Tristan* poems, time and space preclude a full discussion of how Chrétien used and adapted his predecessors' works. It is worth noting, however, Paul Lonigan's remarks on how Chrétien adapts certain of the motifs he borrows from his predecessors as these remarks echo our understanding of rewriting as it is practised by Aimon. Discussing Chrétien's treatment of Alis – the wronged husband – and how he differs from both Béroul's and Thomas' Mark, Lonigan uses the term 'progression'[11] which he defines in the following manner: '« Progression », as used here, does not necessarily imply superiority, but rather that a theme, a scheme, or a device has been developed a step further by Chrétien in his use of his sources' (p. 204, footnote 1). Such a term neatly describes how Aimon has adapted certain ideas or motifs from his intertexts (one might say that he has progressed the motif of largesse found in the *Roman d'Alexandre* for example) and it is one which we will return to later in the chapter in relation to motifs found both in the Tristan legend and in *Cligés*.

Though the majority of work has concentrated on *Cligés'* relationship with the Tristan poems, these are not its sole intertexts. With a protagonist named Alexander, coming from the East and with an interest in largesse, it needs no great leap of the imagination to see a connection with the Alexander legend.[12] Lucie Polak has noted the intra-textual tendency of this intertextuality, commenting with regard to Alexander's (Cligés' father's) knighting ceremony that: 'Chrétien seems to have had in mind the knighting of Alexandre's illustrious namesake.' She traces elements of the ceremony which seem to have come from the *Alexandre Décasyllabique* before then discussing how elements introduced by Chrétien appear as part of Alexander the Great's knighting ceremony in Alexandre de Paris' *Roman d'Alexandre*.[13] Gaullier-Bougassas also notes these similarities in the dubbing ceremonies as she comments that Chrétien's Alexandre was written 'probablement en contrepoint de l'Alexandre historique et surtout de l'Alexandre « épique » des *Romans d'Alexandre*' (*Romans*, p. 21, footnote 30). She suggests that, in his creation of this 'new Alexander', Chrétien 'montre ainsi quelles transformations profondes doit subir à ses yeux le personnage historique et déjà littéraire

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[11] 'Implicit in Chrétien's treatment of Alis is an element of what one might call progression', p. 204.

[12] Emperor Tantalis tells Alexander, Cligés' father, that only a serf would collect wealth and *avoir* and stresses the importance of largesse; both important concepts in the *Roman d'Alexandre*: 'Et cil est a son avoir sers / Qui toz jors l'amasse et acroist. / .... / "Biax filz," fet il, "de ce me croi / Que Largesce est dame et reïne / Que totes vertuz anlumine,"' (ll. 164-194). Such is Tantalis's conviction of the importance of largesse that his sermon on its virtues lasts until l. 217.

[13] Lucie Polak, *Chrétien de Troyes: Cligés* (London: Grant and Cutler Ltd, 1982), p. 23.

d'Alexandre pour s'intégrer à son univers romanesque' (*Romans*, p. 20) The relationship between *Cligés* and the anonymous *Partonopeus de Blois*, meanwhile, has also been well documented.[14] Although there is some debate as to which of the romances came first, for the purposes of this discussion it is merely the presence of an existing relationship between the two rather than their order of precedence which matters. In her 1987 article Matilda Bruckner argues persuasively for a relationship between *Cligés* and *Partonopeus*, citing the similarity between the *translatio studii et imperii* in the Prologue to *Cligés* and the genealogy in *Partonopeus* which traces the hero's roots ('Intertextuality'). Of course, given the then accepted dating of the two romances, Bruckner suggests that *Cligés* has influenced *Partonopeus*. However, in re-assessing the dating for *Partonopeus* and proposing a much earlier date in the 1170s, Eley and Simons have suggested instead that *Partonopeus* had influenced *Cligés* ('A Re-assessment').[15] In addition to the similarities discerned by Bruckner, Eley and Simons cite the mixture of Greek and Celtic elements which inspire both poets and the woman's cry (of Persewis and Fénice respectively) from the audience watching a combat which alerts the hero of each romance to their imminent danger ('A Re-assessment', p. 325-327).[16] Further to this we might also add other similarities: Fénice and Melior are both Empresses of Constantinople (Fénice by marriage and Melior by birth); both heroines use magic to secure their husband – Melior brings Partonopeus to her with her magic and uses it to keep him unseeing and unseen, whilst Fénice uses magic of a sort to deceive Alis and to convince the Constantinople court of her false death; Partonopeus and Fénice are both believed to be dead by their beloved – Fénice through her fake death and Partonopeus through Urraque's determination that Melior keep her belief of Partonopeus' suicide in the Ardennes. Taken together with the work of Bruckner, Eley and Simons these similarities constitute a considerable body of evidence, suggesting a

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[14] For an overview of the arguments surrounding the fraught relationship between these two texts see the introduction to the recent edition of *Partonopeus: Le Roman de Partonopeu de Blois*, ed. by Collet and Joris as well as Bruckner, 'Intertextuality', and Eley and Simons, 'A Re-assessment'.

[15] They comment: 'Reconsideration of the historical evidence points more clearly to a date of around 1170 for the first version of *Partonopeus* than to a later dating in the 1180s' (p. 324), and also remark: 'The historical evidence we have found points to *Partonopeus de Blois* having predated most of Chrétien's extant works' (p. 340). See Chapter 3, p. 108 for more details on the dating of *Partonopeus*.

[16] Sharon Kinoshita considers the mix of Celtic and Greek elements in *Cligés* in great detail in her article, 'The Poetics of Translatio: French-Byzantine Relations in Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés*', *Exemplaria*, 8 (1996), 315-354.

relationship between the anonymous *Partonopeus de Blois* and Chrétien's *Cligés*, regardless of which romance came first.[17]

I would propose that Aimon de Varennes was aware of this intertextual 'conversation' between his two predecessors and appears to make the relationship even closer by combining the two texts as intertexts in one of his own key scenes. This offers us further information on how romance writing functioned in the twelfth century, suggesting that Aimon understood it as very much a composite process. By deliberately engaging in this process as a way of complicating matters, Aimon draws attention both to the process itself and to his own clear understanding of it. His engagement with *Partonopeus* as a rewriting of the Cupid and Psyche myth, meanwhile, has shown us that Aimon is sagacious enough to spot where his chosen intertexts have themselves engaged with other works, making it likely that he was aware of the close links between *Cligés* and the Tristan poems. Indeed, I would contend not only that Aimon was aware of the conversations between *Cligés* and *Partonopeus*, and *Cligés* and the Tristan poems but that he may deliberately have chosen to enter into it, thereby turning two, two-way conversations into an intertextual network, revealing himself in the process to be a reflective rewriter who understands the very heart of intertextuality: engagement with and commentary on, other texts and how they relate to one another.

In *Partonopeus*, the bedroom scene comes near the start of the romance – and, as the first encounter between Partonopeus and Melior, it is before Partonopeus learns anything about Melior and certainly before he is able to see her. This position in the narrative structure is an example of generic tensions at play within the text. Such intimacy with the heroine would ordinarily represent the very summit of a romance hero's desire and would come midway through or towards the end of a text; Chrétien's Lancelot for example, undergoes numerous trials and ordeals before being proved worthy of his single night with Guinevere. However, the same is not true of the *lai*, where male protagonists scale the summit of their desires far sooner than their romance counterparts – Lanval, for example is greeted by the sight of his scantily clad '*amie*-to-be' stretched out on a sumptuous bed and joins her there shortly afterwards, as his *first* encounter with her. *Partonopeus* is, of course, a romance rather than a *lai*, yet by presenting Melior as a fairy mistress in the first half of his text, the poet is embracing a tradition more common to the *lai*. It is therefore apt that the

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[17] For our own purposes, with regard to how Aimon has engaged with each text, it is worth noting that *Florimont* postdates both *Partonopeus de Blois* and *Cligés*.

bedroom scene comes at the start of the romance.[18] Indeed, one could further suggest that the graphic union between Partonopeus and Melior as they have sex for the first time represents the fusion of these two traditions, a sort of textual intercourse so to speak.

This fusion of traditions serves to create a certain amount of suspense and excitement within the scene. As the invisible Melior comes to Partonopeus he fears at first that she may be some form of demon, before her calls on the Virgin Mary convince him otherwise (ll. 1159-63). Even after they have sex the tension is sustained as Melior introduces her taboo and states that Partonopeus must never see her until they are married (ll. 1447-52) – effectively closing them both off from her people so that they might 'enjoy one another' as often as they wish with impunity. Indeed, at first glance this seems to be the dominant, if not the only, theme of the scene – intercourse of a physical and thematic nature on every level. Partonopeus asserts his masculinity with his insertions into Melior's bed and elsewhere, thereby suggesting that he is everything a twelfth-century hero ought to be: virile, dominant and extremely masculine. However, in the aftermath of their union this newly asserted masculinity is called into question as Melior reveals that it is through her actions, and hers alone, that Partonopeus is in Chief d'Oire (ll. 1383-90). Indeed, Simons and Eley have even suggested that Melior summons Partonopeus to her kingdom precisely because she fears that he may not be masculine enough.[19] Such easy manipulation of the young hero suggests that Melior is firmly in charge, and curbs our sense of his authoritative masculinity – in essence suggesting a symbolic castration.[20] This symbolic castration is furthered later in the text when we see Melior, in place of a male role model, instructing Partonopeus on how to conduct himself when he returns to France after his father's death

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[18] Bruckner looks in detail at the fusion of forms present in *Partonopeus*, considering how narrative traits more common to the historical genealogy and the lyric poem are incorporated into the romance. That the *lai* is essential to the development of *Partonopeus* is made clear when she comments, with regard to the anonymous author's writing skills: 'That art and its power are nowhere more evident than in the romance's transformation of what is essentially the simple plot of a *lai*, whose kernel has been enormously amplified by fusion with a diversity of materials and traditions', 'From Genealogy to Romance', p. 37.

[19] Noting intertextual allusions to the 'Trojan vice' of homosexuality and an ambiguous, overtly feminized description of Partonopeus, Simons and Eley suggest that these have been deliberately inserted to cast doubt onto the hero's sexual orientation and comment that: 'The heroine too... appears to have entertained some doubts', before going on to explain how Melior's actions in bringing Partonopeus to her bed may be read as an attempt to ensure that 'he has the appropriate heterosexual desires and will not disappoint her in bed', 'Male Beauty', pp. 47, 48.

[20] Eley and Simons have also noted this imbalance of power between the genders, suggesting that Partonopeus undergoes his period of imprisonment on the island of Tenedon before making his own way to the tournament for Melior's hand, as a way of bringing him out of feminine power (first Melior, then his mother, then Urraque) and of becoming a fully independent hero, in charge of his own destiny, 'A Re-assessment', pp. 329-330.

(ll. 1919-36). Thus we may briefly summarise the *Partonopeus* bedroom scene as having two sub-themes: that of sex but equally that of castration.[21]

We see similar themes at work in the *Cligés* bedroom scenes: as Alis believes he successfully overcomes his virgin bride's timidity to enjoy a lustful consummation of their marriage and as Fénice and Cligés lie naked (presumably post-coitus) underneath the pear tree before Bertrans discovers them. Though not set within a bedroom, the positioning of the protagonists enables us to term this a bedroom scene. Similarly, although Alis does not, in fact, consummate his marriage I would suggest that the scene in which he drinks the potion and dreams his conquest of Fénice serves as a bedroom scene and also reinforces the text's links with *Partonopeus de Blois*. After consuming the beverage Alis retires to bed with Fénice and proceeds to have a dream which he takes to be reality. In this dream he believe that Fénice initially fights him off as any shy maiden would, but that he ultimately succeeds in storming her fortress:

> Et cele mainne grant dangier
> Et se desfant come pucele,
> Et cil la prie et si l'apele
> Molt dolcemant sa dolce amie.
> Tenir la cuide, n'an tient mie,
> ....
> Car por voir cuide et si s'an prise
> Qu'il ait la forteresce prise
> (ll. 3332-3346)

This defence, followed by Alis' victory, is remarkably evocative of the *Partonopeus* bedroom scene, where Melior had sought to fight off Partonopeus before succumbing to his advances. Indeed, Chrétien's insistence that this is all but a dream for Alis (he uses 'neant' no fewer than nine times in the space of a mere five lines as a way of emphasising that what Alis experiences is not real) draws attention to what seems a neat opposite of the situation in *Partonopeus*. Partonopeus cannot see but can most definitely feel Melior, where Alis believes not only that he can feel Fénice but that he can also see her. The irony, of course, is that, like Partonopeus, he does not really see his love, but, unlike Partonopeus, nor does

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[21] In this respect it can perhaps be seen as an example of what Simon Gaunt refers to as the male anxiety about 'the attribution in romance of power and choice to women', *Gender and Genre*, p. 75. For a development of his thoughts on this subject see in particular his Chapter 2 of the same.

he feel her.[22] In this way then the first of *Cligés'* bedroom scenes, as in *Partonopeus*, deals quite definitively both with sex (as Alis believes that he consummates his union with Fénice) and with castration – as the text quite emphatically states that Alis receives 'neant.' In depriving and manipulating her husband in this fashion Fénice effectively emasculates him.

As for Fénice's relationship with Cligés, though we never see them sharing a bedroom, I would argue that the episode in which they are lying together under the pear tree, towards the end of the narrative, may be read as a 'bedroom scene'. As with *Partonopeus*, this episode may be seen as a fusion of two traditions; not in the sense of generic fusion – it remains a romance scene from start to finish – but in its influences. *Cligés* as a whole clearly shows the influence of the Tristan and Yseut legend and Polak has linked this scene in particular with both the tree under which King Mark spies the lovers in Béroul's *Tristan* and the love grotto in which they are discovered in Thomas' *Tristan*.[23] Using Polak as her starting point, Simons further investigates these intertextual references, examining in detail the scene and its ramifications for castration and fertility, where Polak concentrates on the symbolism of the tree in the scene ('Pear'). In addition to this, however, Simons also suggests that this scene cleverly rewrites a contemporary *fabliau*-like tale in which a husband, having seen his wife making love to a squire whilst hidden in a pear-tree, is convinced by the adulterous lovers that what he saw was nothing more than an illusion caused by the magical pear tree (p. 21).[24] In *Cligés* the situation is reversed since, as Simons notes, Alis has already been fooled and what is seen is no illusion but the truth (p. 21). In influence if not in the presentation of the scene itself then, we can clearly see a further fusion of traditions in the creation of this episode.[25]

As with *Partonopeus*, however, this fusion is not all that is happening within the scene. Penny Simons has shown that castration and contraception are concepts central to *Cligés*, noting how they combine with notions of intertextuality in Chrétien's presentation

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[22] This is not to suggest that Chrétien was rewriting *Partonopeus*, or that *Partonopeus* was reworking *Cligés*, as the dating of these two texts is beyond the remit of this work. In drawing attention to the similarities between the two in this area I hope merely to provide additional material to highlight the relationship between the two, material which may enable other scholars to settle the question of which text came first.

[23] Lucie Polak, '*Cligés*, Fénice et l'arbre d'amour', *Romania*, 93 (1972), 303-16 (p. 304).

[24] Lucie Polak also notes the similarities with the same contemporary fabliau ('L'arbre d'amour', pp. 310-311) but does not give details of how Chrétien's scene rewrites the work. Deborah Nelson refers briefly to this fabliau as well, stating that its recollection removes: 'any aura of innocence from Fénice's relationship with Cligés', p. 85, 'Public and Private Images'.

[25] Lucie Polak also discusses these intertextual elements in the chapter '*Cligés* and *Tristan*' in her *Chrétien de Troyes*, pp. 50-69.

of the pear tree scene, with highly ironical results. Though there are no pear trees mentioned in *Florimont*, the notions of castration and contraception that this study raises as important to our reading of *Cligés* are particularly relevant to Florimont's relationship with the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* (see pp. 226-227) and, to a lesser degree, are also present during Florimont's palace tryst with Romadanaple, both areas which we will discuss below (pp. 219-222). Simons lists substances found in medical treatises in circulation in the Middle Ages which were believed to have either contraceptive or abortifacient effects, many of which appear in more than one treatise. She examines the belief that the root of a pear, worn with talismanic intent, may serve as a contraceptive ('Pear', pp. 21-23, see especially footnote 18). She points to details within the scene which suggest that Chrétien was aware of this belief and deliberately chose to associate it with Fénice and her adulterous liaison with Cligés. These details are the presence of fennel and pears (both purported to have contraceptive powers) in the scene and the fact that we only learn the tree is a pear tree at the crucial moment of the lovers' discovery, rather than when it is first introduced in the text:

> The pear and the fennel occurring together constitute hints that the idea of preventing the natural consequences of the lovers' liaison is to be read into this episode... These are reinforced by the way in which the species of the tree is revealed (p. 36).

She goes on to suggest that the revelation of the tree's species also fosters the idea of contraception, pointing out that throughout the description of its beauty and the relation of its appeal to Fénice, the tree is referred to as a grafted specimen (p. 36). The tree is only revealed to be a pear tree when a pear falls and lands on Fénice, waking her just as Bertrans has discovered the lovers. This delayed revelation enhances the idea of contraception as it deliberately associates pears with Fénice and Cligés' coitus and their (thus far) childless union. As Simons puts it:

> The falling pear coincides with a moment of truth, a shattering of illusions. Bertran can now report that Fénice is alive and is the lover of Cligés... and the audience discover that Fénice has a particular preference for pears, which is related in relation to her sexual liaison with Cligés (p. 37).

She shows how the intertextual resonances present in the scene interact with the idea of contraception as practised by Fénice:

> Reading the scene of the lovers' discovery in parallel with the scene of the lovers' discovery in the orchard from Thomas provides another example of the relocation of narrative elements described by Freeman, and suggests that Fénice is indeed successfully using some kind of contraceptive. Although she has secured her wish of indulging her passion with her lover, the example of *Tristan* shows that the isolation from society which has enabled this cannot last. It is therefore in the lovers' interests to have contingency plans against discovery. Whereas Tristan had used the presence of his sword to protect Yseut's reputation, in *Cligés* it is Fénice who acts and who chooses to avoid the consequences of her actions by preventing conception (p. 39).[26]

Thus ideas of intertextuality are closely linked with those of contraception and castration within the pear tree scene. In Béroul's *Tristan* the sword is arguably a symbol of King Mark's castration. Yet its presence between the sleeping Tristan and Yseut convinces the king that he is uncuckolded, thus leaving the lovers free to continue their affair, with King Mark powerless (because ignorant) to stop them. In *Cligés* Chrétien takes the sword from this somewhat subversive use and restores it to a masculine (if ineffectual) purpose by having Cligés use it in pursuit of Bertrans. Yet even this action betrays Cligés' submissive position within his and Fénice's relationship.[27] Simons comments: 'The redundant sword motif is then reassigned from its original narrative function to the violent action of assaulting Bertran. Cligés' act of retaliation, rather than showing him to be powerful, serves more to underline his secondary place to the initiative of his *amie*, for his action is both ineffective and redundant' ('Pear', p. 39). Thus one might suggest that Cligés has, in fact, been doubly castrated within this scene – physically by his *amie*'s contraceptive, rendering his seed impotent, and symbolically by this ineffective use of his sword. With regard to Cligés' use of the sword (albeit ineffectual) we might use Paul Lonigan's term to note that Chrétien has 'progressed' (see p. 199 above) the sword motif found in Béroul, developing it from a passive state (though present the sword is not used in the scene) symbolic of

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[26] The idea that Fénice is indeed using some form of contraception in this episode is lent weight when we consider that further critics have suggested that she later goes on to have at least one child. Douglas Kelly comments: 'Yet Fénice must have had at least one child, as her descendants establish the harem, but her motherhood is not a motif in the romance', 'Chrétien de Troyes', p. 166.

[27] A position that can only be reinforced when we consider that Cligés has effectively given up his quest for honour and prowess by consenting to live as Fénice demands. Kelly comments: 'Cligés in effect abandons knighthood in order to love Fénice in seclusion', 'Chrétien de Troyes', p. 140.

someone else's castration (the sword belongs to Tristan but symbolizes Mark's castration) to a more active state (as Cligés snatches it up and uses it to slice off Bertrans' knee) symbolic not of someone else's, but of its owner's castration. It is important to note this progression as it is a motif that we shall return to in the *Florimont* bedroom scene where, as we shall see, the motif has been developed still further as Florimont's sword, its absence rendering it in some ways even more passive than that of Tristan, symbolizes the castration not of someone else as Tristan's had but the (potential) castration of its owner, as Cligés' sword had.

The castration of the hero at such a crucial point in the narrative reinforces our understanding of the protagonists' depictions. Throughout the text Fénice is seen to be the dominant one in the pair: it is she who plans and decides upon a course of action in her relationship with Cligés. Nicole Guenther Discenza notes that Cligés 'allows Fénice to orchestrate virtually everything for him' whilst also commenting that Fénice 'makes key decisions for both of them without consulting Cligés first'.[28] This seems to be a common view amongst the majority of critics. Peter Noble points out that, even when learning that Cligés loves her, Fénice 'is very much in control of herself and the situation', and that it is hardly surprising that Cligés looks up to Fénice even when they are married 'as there can be little doubt as to which was the stronger character',[29] whilst Fourrier remarks: 'ce qu'il y a de remarquable, c'est que, d'un bout à l'autre, c'est Fénice qui conduit la barque' (p. 14). This represents a symbolic castration of Cligés by Fénice and goes hand in hand with her similarly symbolic castration of her husband, the Emperor Alis: in denying him access to her body (whilst manipulating him to believe he has such access) Fénice is effectively rendering Alis' phallus powerless. In this way then, we might suggest that the underlying theme of the *Cligés* bedroom scenes is primarily that of castration, but that it also suggests the idea of sex: after all, Fénice and Cligés are lying together naked when Bertrans discovers them, whilst Alis believes that his sexual desires are being satisfied. These themes come to the fore once more in the text's epilogue where they are united with a third important theme – that of enclosure (about which, more below). Thanks to her machinations, Fénice is able to rejoice in her own sexual freedom with Cligés – a state of

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[28] Nicole Guenther-Discenza, 'Dialectical Structure in Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés*', *Romance Languages Annual*, VIII (1997), 21-25 (pp. 22, 23).
[29] Peter Noble, *Love and Marriage in Chrétien de Troyes* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1982), pp. 38, 39.

affairs which continues after their marriage as they live together in perfect happiness (ll. 6729-37). However, the epilogue reveals the cost of this sexual freedom, for Fénice's actions lead to the enclosure of successive generations of Byzantine Empresses (ll. 6741-57) and to the castration of all men set to guard the Empresses (ll. 6758-61). Indeed, this could even be described as a double castration: it is true that the guards are castrated yet it might equally be argued that in being enclosed in such a way the women too are 'castrated' as they are left unable to pursue sexual gratification, as Fénice did.

The narrative intersection (from a feminized narrative type to a more masculine one) found in *Florimont*'s version of a bedroom scene is reflected in the juxtaposition within the scene of *Partonopeus* and *Cligés*, a juxtaposition which has to be handled with great care: Aimon has one intertext driving towards sex (*Partonopeus*) and one driving towards castration (*Cligés*). This creates tension within the scene as one cannot logically have both as a dominant theme. Yet this is precisely what Aimon manages to do, by putting them together very carefully and in perhaps the only manner that would offer a chance of success – with humour. This humour comes in part from the intertexts themselves, as the tension and contrast between *Partonopeus*' fairly graphic (for a romance) sex and the castration theme found in *Cligés* would be amusing in and of itself, but this humour is heightened by the manner in which Aimon interlaces elements from his intertexts (of which *Cligés* and *Partonopeus*, though important, are not the sole examples) using them to comment on one another. His humour thus becomes more pointed, lending itself to a gentle mockery of each text.

Such mockery and combination of intertexts is achieved in a variety of ways. The first of these is Aimon's subversion of the themes of visibility and enclosure found in his predecessors' texts. In generalities Florimont's disguise as he slips into the palace to see Romadanaple initially evokes the *Folie Tristan*; as a knight adopting a (relatively) demeaning disguise in order to access his well-guarded beloved Florimont's situation here certainly recalls that of Tristan as he disguises himself as a *fou* and travels to Cornwall in order to see Yseut, closely watched over by Mark. A closer examination, however, reveals that although the general outline of Florimont having to disguise himself to order to see his beloved evokes the Tristan legend, the disguise itself is substantially different and evokes a second text. Tristan takes great care with his disguise, altering himself so much that not even Yseut recognises him. Joseph Bédier notes that he: 'tond sa chevelure, s'arme d'une

massue, se teint le visage, contrefait sa démarche et sa voix.'[30] It is not a disguise so much as a complete transformation. Florimont, however, is disguised as an apprentice tailor, a disguise which seems to consist of him leaving armour and sword behind, carrying scissors in his hands and a bale of cloth on his head, a portion of which is draped over his face. Not for Florimont the make-up, false walk and false voice of Tristan; it is assumed that merely covering his face will be enough to prevent recognition. In the event, this assumption is proved correct when, despite running into first King Philip, then his wife, Florimont is not recognised: because they do not expect to see Florimont in their palace when they have not invited him, his disguise ensures that, although they may physically be able to see him, he is effectively invisible to them. Interestingly, this 'visible-invisibility' caused by covering the hero's face is also present in *Partonopeus*. When Partonopeus comes before Melior to be knighted he is wearing a helmet in accordance with tradition (ll. 7433-36) and he has his head lowered in shame (l. 7515), effectively ensuring that his face his hidden. Believing Partonopeus to be dead (ll. 7528-30) and thus not expecting to see him Melior does not recognise Partonopeus with his face hidden, despite interacting with him, much as Romadanaple's parents will later interact with Florimont but fail to recognise him. Thus, although the necessity of a disguise being needed in order to see Florimont's beloved might evoke echoes of the *Folie Tristan* when it comes to the disguise itself and how this plays out in the text Aimon has woven in elements which recall *Partonopeus*, reminding his audience of *Florimont*'s previous engagement with the earlier text. We might also note that Florimont's 'invisibility' has links with Melior as well as with Partonopeus. It is stressed repeatedly in the planning stage that Florimont must *not* be recognised (ll. 8535-6, ll. 8729-34). In effect, he needs to be invisible in order to see Romadanaple secretly, just as Melior had needed to be invisible in order to see Partonopeus in secret. Aimon's adoption of the invisibility motif progresses the idea by combining Melior's reason for invisibility (a desire to see her beloved in secret) with Partonopeus' later 'visible invisibility' (with his face covered) to humorous effect, as the audience pictures Florimont attempting to navigate the palace with cloth hanging over his eyes.

Such talk of invisibility and secrecy leads naturally to the idea of enclosure; more specifically, to the idea of the enclosure of the heroine in relation to such secrecy and invisibility. A link is established between *Florimont*, *Partonopeus* and *Cligés*, if we

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[30] Joseph Bédier, *Les deux poèmes de la Folie Tristan* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1907), p. i.

consider that each of the young couples have to keep their meetings secret to avoid the wrath of the heroine's rightful guardian or advisors and to protect her place in society. Just as Fénice would suffer public condemnation should her liaison with Cligés be disclosed, so too would Romadanaple's reputation suffer irreparable damage should it be revealed that she has met illicitly with a knight. And, when Partonopeus breaks Melior's taboo and it is revealed that the Empress has been secretly cavorting with an untested youth, both Melior and her reputation suffer accordingly (even the initial reaction of Melior's ladies in waiting – who then come to like Partonopeus for his beauty – is one of condemnation and incomprehension (ll. 4841-60), whilst Melior had previously made it clear that she did not wish to face her barons wrath (see for example, ll. 1449-52, ll. 1568-69).[31] Thus the three texts are drawn closer together by the lovers' common need for secrecy and the enclosure of the heroines.

However, the reason for the enclosure of the heroine in *Florimont* is the exact opposite of the reasons presented in *Partonopeus* and *Cligés*. Melior is deliberately closing Partonopeus off from all access to her people (and is, to a certain extent, thus enclosing herself) in order to prevent their knowledge of her relationship with him, as she feels that they would disapprove.[32] Such a voluntary enclosure echoes what we find in *Cligés*. Fénice is already married and holds the highly respected title of Empress of Constantinople. Thus, in order for her love for Cligés to flourish, she fakes her own death and willingly chooses to enclose herself – not just temporarily within her tomb but seemingly on a permanent basis, first within Jehan's tower, then the tower and the garden. Romadanaple stands as a direct contrast to this. She has no choice in her (relative) isolation and is deliberately enclosed by her father in order to prevent the kind of love which both Melior and Fénice seek from their respective enclosures. When her beauty is such that it encourages knights the world over to travel to Philipopolis seeking to see her, Philip is less than pleased (ll. 1045-52). As a result he summons Sipriaigne, Romadanaple's mistress, and informs her that Romadanaple should not be allowed to see any men:

Li rois li dist: « Je vos comant

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[31] Partonopeus has not yet been knighted and, as such, his position in the eyes of Melior's advisors would have been that of a youth. The disapproving reaction of Melior's knights and other people is clearly shown by ll. 5119-30.

[32] Though Melior's subjects wish her to marry (ll. 1350-52), it has been agreed that she will wait until two and a half years have passed – thus the time limit on her taboo for Partonopeus (ll. 1447-52 and ll. 1479-96).

> Et sore m'amor vos deffant
> De cheveliers de tote gent
> Et de princes, qui que il soient,
> Que Romadanaple ne voient »
> (ll. 1058-62).

This interdiction stems from his knowledge that Love has no respect for rank and his consequent fear that Romadanaple may fall in love with someone whose rank does not reflect her own (ll. 1064-72). In enclosing his heroine in this manner Aimon places her in a not uncommon situation: her status as a beauty under guard can be likened to the situations found in several of Marie de France's *Lais*. *Yonec*, *Guigemar* and *Laüstic* each feature a female protagonist who is closely watched, if not imprisoned outright (ll. 29-36 in *Yonec*, ll. 209-60 in *Guigemar* and ll. 49-50 in *Laüstic*).[33] Indeed, in *Yonec* it is specified that, as with Romadanaple, the lady's beauty is behind her enclosure: 'Pur ceo que ele ert bele e gente, / en li guarder mist mult s'entente' (ll. 29-30). A related motif is evident in *Guigemar* where fear that the lady may take a lover (who would presumably be attracted by her beauty) motivates her enclosure:

> Li sire, ki la mainteneit,
> mult fu vielz huem e femme aveit,
> une dame de halt parage,
> franche, curteise, bele e sage.
> Gelus esteit a desmesure;
> car ceo purporte la nature
> que tuit li vieil seient gelus ;
> mult het chascuns que il seit cus :
> ....
> Il ne la guardout mie a gas.
> En un vergier suz le donjun
> la out un clos tut envirun.
> De vert marbre fu li muralz
> ....
> N'i out fors une sule entree ;
> cele fu nuit et jur guardee
> (ll. 209-24)

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[33] June Hall McCash considers the situations of each of these protagonists in an article which focuses solely on the roles played by women in the *Lais*. June Hall McCash, 'Images of Women in the 'Lais' of Marie de France', *Medieval Perspectives*, 11 (1996), 96-112.

Such similarities of situation might perhaps suggest that the depiction of these Breton heroines informed Aimon's portrayal of his own closely guarded heroine. This becomes more likely if we consider the presence in *Guigemar* of a sympathetic female companion whose role – like that of Sipriaigne – may be to protect the heroine's reputation but who – again like Sipriaigne – aids in bringing the heroine together with her *ami*.[34] It is here however, that similarities between Romadanaple and the heroines of Marie's *lais* come to an end and there is a crucial difference separating them. Romadanaple is a beautiful, unmarried maiden enclosed to ensure she does not fall in love with someone below her rank. One might perhaps argue that such enclosure is, essentially, for her own good. This is not the case for the women in the *lais* – far from it. The women in *Yonec*, *Guigemar* and *Laüstic* are already married; placed in 'truly abusive relationships' they are held as 'virtual prisoners' by 'cruel husbands' (Hall McCash, 'Images of Women', p. 102) who seek to protect their own reputations by ensuring their wives' lack of contact with anyone else.[35] Moreover, Romadanaple is allowed (monitored) access with the outside world. Even before Florimont arrives at court it is to be supposed that she had been introduced to knights under her father's policy of allowing any knight who had served him for three years a brief interview with the princess. Following Florimont's arrival we see Romadanaple as part of the Philipopolis court (still under her watchful father's eye but permitted to speak and interact with people) on two occasions, first as Florimont, Rysus and their companions are initially introduced to the princess (ll. 6029-156) then later at a meal as Florimont and Rysus are taken to see the princess after a dinner at the palace (ll. 7275—315).[36] This is a clear contrast with the wives in Marie's *lais* who enjoy no such freedom; after the discovery of her affair we are told that Guigemar's *amie* is imprisoned in a tower and suffers night and day:

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[34] The figure of the niece in *Guigemar* is a relatively curious one. Linked to the lady she serves by a 'grant amur' (l. 250) she nevertheless seems to vanish from the *lai* after bringing the *Dame* and Guigemar together. There is no mention of her made during the happy period that Guigemar and the *Dame* spend together and no indication as to her fate after the lovers are discovered. The way in which Sipriaigne vanishes from *Florimont* after her important role in the bedroom scene (see discussion below) is perhaps reminiscent of this.

[35] Hall McCash also includes the woman who gives birth to male twins at the start of *Le Fresne* in this group of abused wives, noting that her husband 'virtually imprisons' her after hearing the rumour, started by his neighbour's wife, that a woman could only give birth to two children at once if she had lain with two men, p. 111, note 22.

[36] This seems to be a clear example of the idea of using female beauty as an aid to conquest or dynasty. We already know that Philip usually allows knights to see Romadanaple after three years of service; we learn here that Romadanaple's beauty is considered a direct inspiration in battle (ll. 5907-08) and that Florimont is allowed particular access to Romadanaple because Philip believes him to be the poor warrior whom Philip has dreamed will save the kingdom (ll. 7277-81).

Par le cunseil d'un suen barun
sis sire l'a mise en prisun
en une tur de marbre bis.
Le jur a mal e la nuit pis
(ll. 657-60)

The lady in *Yonec* meanwhile, is not even allowed to speak to other women without the permission of her husband's widowed sister, whom he as set as an additional guard over her:

Altres femmes i ot, ceo crei,
en une altre chamber par sei;
mes ja la dame n'i parlast,
se la vieille nel comandast
(ll. 37-40)

The 'partial' aspect of Romadanaple's enclosure (a limited amount of freedom, albeit under her father's care) is more evocative of the enclosure that Melior had devised for herself: though she willingly encloses herself with Partonopeus during her nights, there is nothing to suggest that this self-imposed enclosure is not broken during the day to allow her to interact with her court. Thus, though Aimon may have been aware of the situations presented in Marie's *lais* as he was devising Romadanaple's situation, the presence of elements evoking *Partonopeus* and *Cligés* – cannot be ignored. Romadanaple, like Melior before her, is unmarried when she is enclosed. Meanwhile, Fénice's stratagem ensures that, like Melior, she is still a virgin when she offers herself to Cligés.[37] Moreover, the reason behind Romadanaple's enclosure is the exact opposite of the mutual reason for Melior and Fénice's enclosures (Romadanaple is presented as being protected from the very thing which Melior and Fénice seek to achieve). Such a marked opposition draws our attention and suggests that Aimon is once again taking elements of an intertext and re-modelling them to suit his own purpose. Yet what might this purpose be? What does Aimon gain by

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[37] Fénice's status is more problematic than that of either Melior or Romadanaple in this area; technically, like the heroines of the *lais*, she *is* married. However, by maintaining her maidenhood for Cligés it might be argued that she perceives herself to be unmarried. This idea is lent weight if we consider that some critics have considered this to be the case; Legros states: 'Fénice n'est pas la femme d'Alis, elle peut donc jouir pleinement des joies de l'amour qui l'unissent à Cligès [sic]', Legros, 'Du verger royal', p. 233, note 46. For a discussion of the legalities of Fénice's marriage, see Sally L. Burch, '*Amadas et Ydoine, Cligès* [sic] and the Impediment of Crime', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 36 (2000), 185-95.

similarly enclosing his heroine, but deliberately reversing the circumstances? It serves principally as a comment on the sexual nature of Melior and Fénice's liaisons. The fact that they need to seek secrecy and enclosure to indulge their love underscores the illicit nature of their relationships with their *amis*. In reversing the circumstances of their enclosure and attempting to protect his heroine from what they seek, Aimon would seem to be reinforcing our understanding that what Melior and Fénice are doing is not appropriate feminine behaviour. The idea that Aimon is playing with elements present in his intertexts in order to respond to the portrayal of the heroines in those texts is furthered when we consider the idea of penetration (both in a sexual and metaphorical sense), an idea which runs alongside that of castration despite (seemingly) being its very opposite.

The concept of penetration – of both a sexual and a 'security-breaching' manner – can be found in the emphasis placed on locks in Romadanaple's enclosure (to prevent any unauthorized penetration of this enclosure and indeed, any unauthorized 'penetration' of Romadanaple herself) and in the careful planning of Melior and Fénice as they devise enclosures safe (so they think) from outside penetration in which they plan to enjoy repeated sexual penetration with their *amis*. Throughout the text, up until this point, Romadanaple has been consistently associated with locks: whenever she enters or leaves a room the door has to be unlocked before her and then locked once more behind her. This reinforces Aimon's point, as it suggests that Romadanaple – and her enclosure – cannot possibly be penetrated, suggesting that she is safer than would be thought possible.[38] When Florimont first meets Romadanaple, for example, the king invites Florimont and Rysus to come with him as he visits both Romadanaple and his wife:

> « Segnor, » fet il, « alons tuit troi
> Ma fille et ma feme querre. »
> *Il vient a l'uis, si le deserre*
> (ll. 6150-52, my italics)

This image of a lock is to become a familiar one as it regulates all access to Romadanaple. On a later visit it is Sipriaigne who unlocks the door to the king, Florimont and Rysus amongst others (ll. 7298-802). Similarly, when the plan to allow Florimont to see Romadanaple secretly is being devised, Sipriaigne has to unlock the door to allow Delfis

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[38] This emphasis on locks is also significant in terms of how *Florimont* interacts with the *Roman d'Enéas* (see discussion below).

access to them (ll. 857-77). As the motif occurs over and over again, the audience might be forgiven for thinking that Romadanaple is kept within an impenetrable fortress.[39] This makes it all the more ironic when, in the bedroom scene, this motif is turned upside down and used to protect the lovers as, when the Queen has left and Florimont is safely in the room with Romadanaple, the door is very firmly locked behind her: 'Quant la dame c'en est tornee, / La chambre fut mout bien fermee' (ll. 8925-6). This serves to reinforce the ease with which Florimont has penetrated Romadanaple's fortress, yet the irony here is that although he has penetrated the isolation her father keeps her in, Florimont does not actually penetrate Romadanaple herself. This is in marked contrast to Melior and Fénice who enjoy repeated penetration in their insecure enclosures.[40] This deliberate lack of penetration highlights the ease of penetrating the palace and Romadanaple's chambers, which in turn can be seen as a comment on Fénice's and Cligés elaborate enclosures, since it reveals how easily even the most 'secure' of enclosures may be penetrated. With enclosure and secrecy thus linking all three texts it seems that Aimon is deliberately engaging with *Partonopeus* and *Cligés* in his own bedroom scene, as his scene suggests that anyone (admittedly, anyone with the right connections and with a little thought) may penetrate the enclosure which apparently keeps Romadanaple so securely contained.[41] Enclosure is shown to be nowhere near as secure as the two previous texts would suggest (thus highlighting the folly of both Melior and Fénice in seeking enclosure as a means of fulfilling their desires). This in turn reflects badly on the two previous heroines, as if Aimon were seeking retrospectively to undermine their power by suggesting that, despite all their careful machinations, they are not as in control of their situations as they believe themselves to be.[42]

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[39] Indeed, Mieszkowski describes *Florimont* as 'fundamentally a story about a locked-up woman trying to break out of her cage'. Though I disagree with some of the conclusions reached by Mieszkowski (see discussion below), that she feels able to describe *Florimont* thus is a sign of how important Romadanaple's status as 'enclosed' is to the text, *Medieval Go-Betweens*, p. 100.

[40] That these enclosures are indeed not as safe as their creators would believe is shown by the 'accidental' manner in which they are both entered. Melior seems not to have considered the possibility that, despite her repeated commands not to, Partonopeus may well break her taboo, just as it seems not to have occurred to Fénice that someone may scale the walls of her abode and thus discover her still living.

[41] Although Delfis and Florimont do have a couple of dangerous moments during the course of their breaching of Romadanaple's 'prison', these seem designed more to add temporary suspense for the audience than to seriously impede our hero's progress. Ultimately, even when it seems certain that they will be caught, we never doubt that they will make their way through safely.

[42] In this respect it is worth noting briefly that they have something on common with another of Chrétien's heroines. Though not directly related to *Florimont*, the portrayal of Laudine in *Yvain* parallels that of Melior and Fénice insofar as the depiction of all three seems to indicate a certain amount of ambivalence with regard

The illusory nature of Melior and Fénice's control over their situations is highlighted by the amount of detail put into the preparation for the bedroom scene in *Florimont*, when compared with the schemes of enclosure and artificial death set into play by Melior and Fénice. There is an inordinate amount of planning put into *Florimont*'s bedroom scene. It is stressed over and over again that Delfis and Sipriaigne risk their lives for this meeting, whilst the elaborate plan to smuggle Florimont into the palace, disguised as a tailor's apprentice, is detailed with an almost military precision.[43] Such precision serves a dual purpose. On one hand it introduces the element of humour to Aimon's writing. Sipriaigne's plan is so detailed it seems to cover all bases, even going so far as to note to what use the material Florimont and Delfis will use as their pretext should be put (she states it should be for dresses for Romadanaple's ladies in waiting, ll. 8525-30). This may prompt giggles as such details could perhaps be described as extraneous or unnecessary. However, as a part of these details Sipriaigne also includes the highly comical image of Florimont carrying bales of cloth on his head. An essential part of the plan, this nonetheless adds elements of humour to the scene as it present the audience with a mental picture of Florimont wandering the palace corridors with a bale of cloth not only balanced (perhaps precariously) on his head but also hanging before his face ('Des dras ait bien covert le vis,' l. 8553). Sipriaigne also specifies that he should be walking in front of Delfis (l. 8554) and carrying scissors in his hands (l. 8545), thus making the image almost farcical as the potential for accidental disaster increases two-fold. Yet using *adiectio* to introduce humour to the episode is not the only purpose of the details in Sipriaigne's plan. They also have a far more sober purpose in that they serve to comment both on Melior's efforts to bring Partonopeus to her land and on Thessala and Jehan's ploys to ensure a successful, hidden future for Fénice and Cligés. Aimon's excessive catalogue of details for an enterprise nowhere near as complicated as those of Melior, Thessala and Jehan, points up

to female control and power. Like Melior and Fénice, Laudine seems to be a powerful figure in control of her actions. The text strips this illusion away as it reveals her control is not what she thinks it to be, instead exposing how precarious and dependent her situation is. For studies which consider Laudine's lack of power see Roberta Krueger, 'Love, Honor [sic], and the Exchange of Women in Yvain: Some Remarks on the Female Reader', in *Arthurian Women: A Casebook*, ed. by Thelma S. Fenster (New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 3-18; Ellen Germain, 'Lunete, Women and Power in Chrétien's *Yvain*', *Romance Quarterly*, 38 (1991), 15-25 and Marc Glasser, 'Marriage and the Use of Force in *Yvain*', *Romania*, 108 (1987), 484-502.

[43] For details on the risks run by Delfis and Sipriaigne see ll. 8481-82, ll. 8707-09, ll. 8721-24, ll. 8907-08, ll. 9150-52. The detailed plan devised by Sipriaigne first appears at ll. 8514-54 and includes details such as Florimont bringing a needle and thread with him (l. 8549) and, specifically, carrying scissors (l. 8545). This plan is then repeated in ll. 8727-40 as Sipriaigne informs Delfis of his role and specifies that the scissors should be 'bien tranchans' (l. 8737).

how improbable and unnecessary their stratagems are. An embassy to France for example, would have secured Partonopeus as a husband for Melior, while Fénice and Cligés could easily have moved away from Constantinople. The stratagems in *Partonopeus* and *Cligés* serve as an attempt to allow their protagonists to have their cake and eat it by giving them rein to indulge in their passions whilst living free from the consequences of such indulgence. The failure of the more complicated stratagems for Melior and Fénice reinforces our impression that these heroines truly do not have as much control as they pretend. Such an example of *mutatio* is particularly clever as it combines elements of both *adiectio* and *detractio*. The minutiae and emphasis on detail in Sipriaigne's plan show *adiectio*, as concrete details are precisely what is missing from Melior, Thessala and Jehan's plans. In using *detractio* to take away the element of failure from their plans meanwhile, Aimon ensures that Sipriaigne's scheme is a resounding success. That he is capable of using more than one rewriting technique as he adapts elements from more than one intertext serves to reinforce our impression that Aimon is a highly skilled, reflective rewriter.

Aimon's skill is evident elsewhere as echoes of *Partonopeus*, *Cligés* or indeed, the *lais* of Marie de France are not the only intertextual traces to be found in Romadanaple's situation. When discussing *Florimont*'s relationship with *Floire et Blancheflor* Charles François comments that: 'séquestrée par un homme puissant qui la fait garder jalousement, Romadanaple est logée à la même enseigne que Blancheflor, prisonnière dans le harem de l'émir' ('Avec Florimont', p. 12). This echo is just one of many traces of *Floire et Blancheflor* which François discerns throughout *Florimont*. Noting – amongst many others – similarities between Florimont's attempted suicide (see Chapter 3) and that of Floire, François comments with regard to *Floire et Blancheflor*'s influence on Aimon's work: 'il n'est pour ainsi dire pas un épisode saillant de ce court récit qui n'ait laissé quelque empreinte dans *Florimont*' (p. 6). Indeed, his conviction that Aimon was aware of *Floire et Blancheflor* is so strong that he suggest not only that one can perceive which version of the poem Aimon may have been familiar with[44] but that the variant – of certain lines – offered by *Florimont* might be used as a sort of control for the manuscripts of *Floire et Blancheflor*. He states: 'Et une fois de plus l'auteur de *Florimont* témoigne en faveur de la

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[44] He comments: 'L'œuvre de son devancier anonyme avait certainement produit de l'effet sur Aimon. Celui-ci en a prisé les péripéties émouvantes, les scènes naturelles, ainsi qu'en témoignent ses réminiscences, *assez précises parfois pour que se distingue, entre les variantes, la leçon qu'il a connue*', p. 18, my italics.

leçon des manuscrits A, C et V, ici adoptée. Ainsi se confirme que celle de B... n'est, comme nous l'avions pensé, qu'une retouche destinée à éliminer de la rime la forme *enfant* en fonction de sujet' (pp. 11-12).

As we have seen regarding the bedroom scene, François notes that Romadanaple's general situation evokes that of Blancheflor, imprisoned in the Tour aux Pucelles, but there are further similarities between the two texts. He also comments that the general pattern of events leading up to *Florimont*'s bedroom scene seems to mirror those of *Floire et Blancheflor* as Floire is smuggled into the tower to see Blancheflor.[45] In each case the hero successfully enters his beloved's enclosure; each has a moment of suspense (two moments in Florimont's case) in which it seems that the adventure has gone terribly wrong and he fears discovery without seeing his *amie*; each hero is saved by a fortuitous turn of events (Gloris realizes that Floire must be the *ami* for whom Blancheflor has been pining; Philip is taken suddenly ill and sends for his wife) before finally being able to spend time with his *amie* under the watchful eyes of a protective figure. As François comments: 'la correspondance des péripéties, en tout cas, est indéniable' (p. 13). Finally, as if to confirm that this 'memory' of *Floire et Blanchflor* is not coincidental, Aimon has an impatient Romadanaple instruct Florimont to come to her couch, much as the earlier Blancheflor had eagerly pulled Floire into her chamber and sat him on her bed.[46] It seems clear that *Florimont*'s engagement with *Floire et Blancheflor* at this juncture is no mere chance; one wonders if, having evoked certain couples of whom one feels he might disapprove (Melior and Partonopeus, Fénice and Cligés), Aimon evokes the recollection of Floire et Blancheflor as a positive example for his own young lovers. Despite this recollection, however, François makes it clear that he feels Aimon used *Floire et Blancheflor* only as a source of ideas and motifs;[47] rather than Aimon aiming to reproduce what was found in the earlier poem,[48] François instead stresses Aimon's independence with regard to his source

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[45] He suggests that 'l'idée première et la ligne générale' for Florimont's disguise and subsequent journey through the palace were 'suggérées par la succession des scènes' in which Floire enters the Emir's tower, p. 13.

[46] François states : 'Et d'un côté comme de l'autre la jeune fille, plus impatiente encore que son bien-aimé, l'attire auprès d'elle sur sa couche (*FB* 227 ; *Flor.* 9076)', p. 13.

[47] 'Il est clair que, pour caractériser les rapports de *Floire et Blancheflor* et de *Florimont*, c'est de source qu'il faut parler, plutôt que de véritable influence. Ce que l'auteur du second de ces poèmes a reçu du premier n'est qu'un appoint de matériaux et de suggestions, allant du simple détail à l'idée d'une scène, voire d'un épisode secondaire', p. 17. One cannot help but agree with François on this point.

[48] One wonders if this evocation of *Floire et Blancheflor*, coming as it does from the heart of Romadanaple's enclosure, might be read as a signal to Aimon's audience, preparing them for a second place of enclosure – the island of Clavegris – which also has links to the earlier text. François notes a number of similarities (such

and his ability to remake material as he saw fit: 'Aimon accommode en général avec la plus grande liberté ce qu'il a retenu de l'oeuvre de son prédécesseur. Ce romancier plein d'allant sait où il va, il compose son récit à sa guise, selon ses conceptions et ses buts propres' (p. 17).

It is precisely this ability to 'know where he is going', to modify others' details and ideas to suit his own ends that we see at work not just in Romadanaple's situation as 'enclosed with some liberties' but which we will see throughout the bedroom scene as a whole. In some respects this is Aimon's most vital intertextual characteristic – the ability to hold onto his own ideas and retain his own voice when invoking others' voices and ideas. Romadanaple's situation is, as we have seen, evocative of those of Melior and Fénice. Yet her position is such that one can also think of Blancheflor and recall the heroines from *Guigemar* and *Yonec*. Aimon's skill lies in not allowing these women to overshadow his heroine: instead he manages all of these intertextual echoes, simultaneously evoking multiple intertexts but doing so without losing the thread of his own text.

This determination to ensure that his own voice is heard above that of his intertexts is an important part of Aimon's use of the castration theme in the bedroom scenes and comes across most clearly as an injection of humour which is used to deflate his intertexts. We have already seen the role that castration plays in *Partonopeus* (although Partonopeus asserts his masculinity and is seen as an effective, non-castrated hero by the end of the text, he spends a large part of the narrative suffering from a symbolic castration as he allows Melior to instruct and direct him) and *Cligés* (Cligés remains symbolically castrated throughout the text, not stepping out of the shadow cast by his *amie*). Now let us examine the role that castration plays in the bedroom scene in *Florimont*. There is a real sense of Aimon toying with the notion of castration with the objects that Florimont carries – and does not carry – as part of his disguise. Dressed as an apprentice tailor he bears a pair of scissors and these are specified as being 'bien tranchans', an epithet usually applied to swords. Yet here the only mention of a sword is very much a tongue-in-cheek one, as Florimont wishes that he had his sword when the Queen accompanies Florimont and Delfis to Romadanaple's chambers and it seems likely that Florimont's disguise will be uncovered: 'Mai en son cuer mout li pesoit / De s'espee que il n'avoit' (ll. 8873-4).

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as the presence of a harem and eunuchs in each place, (pp. 14-15)) between the Emir's tower in *Floire et Blancheflor* and the Clavegris episode in *Florimont*.

This thought of course draws attention to Florimont's apparently emasculated status – a knight without his sword is no true knight, in much the same way that a man without his 'sword' is a eunuch and not a real man. Given that scissors, particularly very sharp ones, may be read as a symbol for castration, it would seem that Florimont is carrying the symbols of his own castration. However, it is worth noting that these very symbols actually serve to protect him, as it is his disguise (an apprentice tailor bearing cloth *and* scissors) which enables him to see Romadanaple secretly where, had he been dressed in his full knightly regalia, he would have been unable to penetrate the palace. Paradoxically then, the scissors as symbols of castration enable Florimont to be more of a man by allowing him to attain that which a courtly knight dreams of – time alone with his *amie*. This is the very opposite of *Cligés*, who would initially seem more masculine as he pursues Bertrans, but who has effectively been unmanned by Fénice.[49] Thus his sword, rather than reinforcing his masculinity, instead becomes the symbol of his emasculation. By having Florimont carry scissors, scissors which are unusually stressed moreover,[50] Aimon is gently mocking *Cligés* by pointing to the protagonist's emasculation and seeming to suggest that 'real' men can perform with blades that are a great deal shorter than swords. This again shows Aimon's ludic skills and suggests that he intends this entire episode to be entertaining for his audience. The incongruity of a knight achieving with scissors what is usually only attainable through prowess, through the use of a knight's sword – time alone with his *amie* – is amusing in itself but this incongruity also focuses our attention on the scissors as an unknightly accompaniment. In having his hero use such mercantile objects to gain access to Romadanaple (Florimont is, after all, carrying the scissors so that people will believe him to be a tailor) Aimon introduces a fabliau tone to proceedings and sets up expectations within his audience that the meeting between Romadanaple and Florimont may well be bawdy in the extreme. This expectation is furthered if we consider the size and shape of the scissors Florimont is to carry. Though Sipriaigne offers no specifications on this subject Aimon's

[49] See the above quotation from Simons with regard to his pursuit being both 'ineffective' and 'redundant' and her speculation that Fénice continues to practise contraception even after marrying Cligés, thereby emasculating her husband, 'Pear', pp. 39-40.
[50] The scissors are first mentioned when Sipriaigne devises the plan (l. 8545), then again as she specifies to Delfis that they should be sharp (l. 8737) and once more as Florimont is donning his disguise (ll. 8791-2). Romadanaple also refers to them after Florimont has successfully entered her chambers. Such an abundance of references stresses the importance of the scissors, as does the fact that the scissors seem integral to the success of the plan. In talking to Delfis, Sipriaigne seems to suggest that it is the scissors, more than anything else, which will convince people that Florimont has a legitimate reason for being in the palace: '« An ses mains li faites porter / Unes sezoires bien tranchans: / Adonc serait bien aparans / Que vos le menez por taillier / Et que il sachet del mestier, »' (ll. 8736-40).

audience would have been aware that, depending on these factors, far from representing Florimont's supposed castration, the scissors could very well symbolise the male parts which Philip most wished to keep away from Romadanaple.

This substitution of scissors for swords represents an example of the *immutatio* rewriting technique and its use here serves as a final 'progression' of the 'sword-linked-to-castration' motif begun in Béroul and developed in *Cligés*. We have moved from a passive sword symbolic of someone else's castration (in Béroul) to an active sword symbolic of its owner's castration to sword-substitute-scissors which combine elements of Béroul and *Cligés* as they are both passive and (ambiguously) symbolic of Florimont's castration. This *immutatio* also has the subversive effect of dispelling the danger felt in the *Cligés* 'bedroom' scene and instead replacing it with tongue-in-cheek laughter. That Aimon is deliberately seeking to poke fun at his intertexts can only be confirmed when we witness what follows. When Romadanaple's mother leaves them and the lovers are safe from discovery (having securely locked the door), Romadanaple is described as lying on her bed, dressed only in her shirt:

> La damoisele se gissoit
> En son lit, pas ne se dormoit.
> Ele ne fut pas tote nue,
> Sa chemise avoit vestue
> (ll. 8935-38)

This positioning – slightly unusual as we might have expected her to rise to greet and say goodbye to her mother – evokes that of Lanval's *amie* when he first meets her in Marie de France's *lai*[51] and serves to add to the illicit nature of the scene, titillating the audience and suggesting, whatever Sipriaigne and Delfis have planned, that sex is a very distinct possibility. This is then countered as Romadanaple tells Florimont to put the scissors down and come to her (ll. 89443-4) – raising a knowing titter from the audience. Having successfully used his phallic symbols to gain access to Romadanaple's chamber, Florimont now finds his phallus is thwarted as he is forced to abandon his phallic symbols in order to get closer to Romadanaple, suggesting that, though Aimon is willing to toy with his audience's expectations, ultimately Romadanaple's maidenhood is safe. Such obvious

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[51] 'Ele jut sur un lit mult bel / (li drap valeint un chastel) / en sa chemise senglement,' (ll. 97-99). Marie de France, *Lais*.

imagery adds humour even as it disappoints audience expectations, and it is this willingness on Aimon's part to toy with the audience which makes the scene so successful on a comic level. Aimon's audience will be familiar with the models he is using – both *Partonopeus* and *Cligés* were well known texts – and Aimon exploits this familiarity, allowing the audience to believe, based on their knowledge of his models, that they know what is coming next: that Florimont and Romadanaple will indulge their passion for one another and that they, the audience, will be treated to a scene full of highly charged sexual imagery. By having Romadanaple insist Florimont put down his scissors before coming to her, Aimon metaphorically pulls the rug out from under the audience's feet, instilling doubt in their minds as to what will happen next and raising wry smiles as they realise they have been deftly duped. Moreover, it also re-affirms what Aimon is doing with regard to his intertexts as it echoes, with a knowing, humorous, deliberate smile, what happens to *their* heroes – they are castrated by their *amies*. Here however, the crucial difference is that everyone – narrator, hero and audience – is fully aware of the situation and content to go along with it, unlike Partonopeus and Cligés who, for the most part, remain unaware of their castration. This is another example of Aimon's rewriting technique. In lifting the motif of the hero being castrated by his *amie* we see the process of *mutuatio* (the lifting of material from a source or sources) at work. However, in changing the details of the motif to present it in a playful, humorous manner, the process of *mutatio* (the adaptation of material to a new context) ensures that the theme of castration serves overall to bolster the hero's masculinity, rather than to work to its detriment as in *Partonopeus* and *Cligés*.

Following on from this Aimon also refers to elements of Alexander and Sordamors' relationship (thus 'doubling' the scene's intertextual links with *Cligés*) – again with humorous results. These references may be seen in the conversation that Romadanaple and Florimont hold just prior to Sipriaigne intervening. This again raises audience expectations as it is written in a playful manner: Romadanaple can be seen teasing and flirting with Florimont as she coyly asks him who had taught him to be a tailor. Florimont replies that love of her put him to it and there follows an extended metaphor, full of phallic imagery (scissors and needles both play a prominent part), in which Love, as a force, is likened to a tailor who made Romadanaple's body with his scissors, before pricking her with his needles by making Florimont so strong. Thimble and thread are similarly a part of this

metaphor[52] and Romadanaple finishes by saying that Love has sewn them tightly together. This metaphor gives the audience hope that their expectations will be fulfilled after all, that Aimon had merely been delaying the moment of gratification and will now proceed to satisfy their expectations:

> La damoisele li a dit:
> « De dras taillier qui vos aprist? »
> « Amors" fait il, "por vos m'i mist. »
> « Voire, » fet ele, « que taillier
> Seit amor[s] et atre mestier.
> De maint mestier fait aservir
> Celui cui ele welt norir.
> Sez sezoires sont mout tranchans,
> Ses agulles sont mout poignans.
> A se(s)zoires tailla mon cors
> Quant a vos l'emportait la fors;
> De des agulles me poignoit
> Et mout grant anui me faissoit.
> Li fils, qui en l'agulle pant,
> Est as amans li lons atans;
> Li deas, qui est sor le doi,
> Ait bien celei et vos et moi.
> La cousture fait ajoster
> Nostre amor et mout bien serrer,
> Que ja mais ne porait chaingier.
> Bien ait amor[s] tot cest mestier.
> Amins, per la foi que vos doi,
> Mout m'est bel quant je si vos voi. »
> (ll. 9088-9110)

Though this works well as a metaphor for their love we must also consider, given the earlier symbolism of Florimont's 'scissors' that the metaphor works equally well for something a great deal less courtly than love. Again the scissors serve well as phallic objects, as do the 'needles' which prick Romadanaple (the introduction of perhaps more than one phallus is potentially bawdy in the extreme!) whilst we may even suggest that the thimble (a sheathing, protective device) is meant to serve as some form of contraceptive. This may initially seem far-fetched but we must bear in mind the fact that there are very few previous scenes in the twelfth-century literature up to this point which contain such

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[52] The thread hangs from the needle and is the lovers' long wait (ll. 9101-102) and the thimble, on the finger, has hidden Florimont and Romadanaple (ll. 9103-04).

detailed sewing imagery.[53] That Aimon should choose to include it here, at such a crucial point (as the audience is hoping Florimont and Romadanaple will get down to business, rather than merely talk about it), speaks to a specific purpose and draws attention to the scene as it is unique.

Such a reading becomes even more persuasive when we take into account where else tailoring/weaving has played a prominent part in love symbolism. In *Cligés*[54] the hair that Sordamors has sewn into the shirt that the Queen gives to Alexander becomes symbolic of their love for one another in a courtly fashion as we witness, first Sordamor's reaction when she realises that Alexander is wearing it; she slides closer to him and decides she will attempt to speak to him:

> Tant qu'a son braz et a son col
> Vit Soredamors le chevol
> Dom ele ot la costure feite.
> Un po plus pres de lui s'est treite,
> Car ore a aucune acheison
> Dont metre le puet a reason.
> Mes el se panes an quel meniere
> Ele l'areisnera premiere
> (ll. 1375-82)

and we might also note Alexander's reverent treatment of the shirt when he is informed that Sordamors had sewn it:

> Neporquant, quant il est an eise,
> Plus de .cm. foiz le beise,
> Mes bien se garde qu'an nel voie.
> Molt an fet tote nuit grant joie
> Qant il est colchiez an son lit.

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[53] In his introduction Hilka refers to Gautier d'Arras' *Ille et Galeron* in which Galeron likens the pain of loving Ille to a tunic, made by Love out of suffering and long sighs, (p. cxxix in Hilka's introduction, ll. 6262-71 in *Ille et Galeron*). Gautier d'Arras, *Ille et Galeron*, ed. by Penny Eley (Exeter: Short Run Press, 1996). Although the imagery here is relatively detailed (referring to seams and stitches) the use to which it is put is so different that I do not think that Aimon, though he may have been aware of this reference, was deliberately trying to react to it. I know of no other texts which discuss sewing in such detail or in so marked a manner. It suggests that Aimon is deliberately wishing to highlight this scene as standing out from the norm. In its tone it also brings the scene closer to that of a fabliau. Household objects used as euphemisms for sex occur frequently within the fabliau and in later farces such as *Ramoneur de Cheminee*. Interestingly Rutebeuf's *La dame qui fist trois fois le tour de l'église* for example, features a lady who uses the excuse of going to buy thread whenever she has a liaison with her lover.

[54] Though the idea of tailoring and sewing is certainly used in *Cligés*, the vocabulary is nowhere near as detailed as that used in *Florimont*, hence I do not feel that this remark contradicts the preceding one.

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A ce ou n'a point de delit
Se delite an vain et solace:
Tote nuit la chemise anbrace,
Et quant il le chevol remire,
De tot le mont cuide ester sire
(ll. 1623-32)

Aimon does something similar in the bedroom scene in *Florimont*, deliberately using the language of tailoring to evoke the shirt episode from *Cligés*. However, rather than this symbolism inhabiting a courtly register as happens in *Cligés*, here the metaphor has a far earthier, tongue-in-cheek aspect as it evokes sex rather than courtly love: the focus has shifted from the elevated status of courtly love to flirtatious innuendo worthy of a *fabliau*. By deflating and bringing bathos to the symbolism used for Alexander and Sordamors' love, Aimon suggests that such symbolism is overblown and encourages his audience to enjoy a sly laugh at the melodrama of the situation in *Cligés*, whilst at the same time appreciating his own work.[55] One may even suggest that by having a conversation worthy of a *fabliau* in this scene, Aimon is attempting an intertextual mix of genres of the kind Chrétien had evoked in the pear tree scene of *Cligés*.[56]

This idea is lent further weight when we consider the presence of Delfis in this scene. Though he behaves in a courtly manner his status is nevertheless that of a merchant and his profession is crucial to the development of the scene, as it provides Florimont with a disguise. Mieszkowski comments that Delfis is 'attuned to courtly conventions, but his bourgeois status and professional identity are equally important for his role in this story' (p. 96). Merchants are staple characters for the *fabliaux*, whether they play cuckolded old husbands, made fools of by their wives, or dashing young specimens paying court to courtly ladies, and Delfis's presence thus adds a further element of *fabliau* tone to this romance episode. Indeed, we may even suggest that Aimon is changing the rules of Chrétien's game: where Chrétien had evoked a popular *fabliau* in *Cligés*, Aimon does not engage with any specific *fabliau* in *Florimont*. Rather, by having his noble, romance protagonists carry on a conversation worthy of a *fabliau*, Aimon references the *fabliaux* as

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[55] This doubling of references to *Cligés* serves to make Aimon's use of Chrétien's text even more pointed and obvious.
[56] This mix of genres is indirectly alluded to by Polak during her discussion of the sexual symbolism associated with pears during the Middle Ages. After considering the renown of the 'célèbre fabliau de la femme qui trompe son mari sous un poirier' (p. 310) she posits that Chrétien may have been familiar with some form of this tale, 'L'arbre d'amour', pp. 310-16. See also Simons, 'Pear', pp. 19-21.

a genre and potentially provides the elements for a new addition to this genre within his own work. Thus he uses humour to deflate *Cligés'* irony with a bathos deliberately designed to make his audience laugh. He takes ideas present in *Cligés* – the importance of tailoring for example – and rewrites them as a part of this bathos as a means of helping him achieve his end; namely, valorising his own work whilst at the same time depreciating that of his predecessor. Thus in just one, cleverly constructed scene, Aimon suggests both noble couples from *Cligés*: Alexander and Sordamors, and Fénice and Cligés. Humorously re-writing aspects of key episodes for each couple – the pear tree scene for Fénice and Cligés and the shirt episode for Alexander and Sordamors – he deliberately pokes fun at each of them; at Cligés' emasculation and at the melodrama surrounding the start of Alexander and Sordamors' relationship. Yet behind his comedy there lies a serious point that seems to be close to Aimon's heart: he laughs at *Cligés*, yet by having Florimont follow Romadanaple's orders up to a point, before proving that he is his own man and can go against her wishes, Aimon points to this lack in *Cligés* and seems to suggest that this is what Fénice needs (see discussion below). Moreover, in blending aspects from these key scenes and inserting elements from another genre (the presence of a merchant and the bawdy tone more common in *fabliaux*) Aimon shows an intertextual agility similar to that of Chrétien himself.[57] That he uses these elements as a way of reinforcing his point (that behaviour such as Fénice's is ultimately foolish) shows that Aimon uses his fusions, his rewriting with a clear purpose and to create an unambiguous tale. *Florimont* has none of the ambiguity, feminine authority or irony which so marks *Partonopeus* and *Cligés*. Rather, Aimon uses his intertextuality to offer a sort of antidote to that practised by his predecessors, to show that rewriting references could be equally as complex without creating ambiguity for the audience.

Aimon's positioning of the bedroom scene is presented in such a manner as to highlight his rewriting and intertextual skills. Coming at the heart of *Florimont*'s narrative (marking the end of one narrative type and the beginning of another) the scene looks back to Florimont's 'bedroom' scene with the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* and forward to his conjugal night with Romadanaple, as well as falling at the midpoint between the corresponding scenes in his intertexts (coming near the start of *Partonopeus* and towards the end of

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[57] This is not the only area in which Aimon bears comparison with Chrétien de Troyes. Hilka notes in his introduction to the text that Aimon's direct speech is surpassed only by that of Chrétien: 'Die Behandlung der direkten Rede zeigt eine bemerkenswerte Technik, die nur durch Crestien überboten wird', p. cxxxiv.

Cligés). Although not a great deal is said about Florimont's first moments with the *Dame*, it is nonetheless made clear that penetration takes place:

> La pucele vers lui se trait;
> Florimons delez li s'estait,
> *Acolait lai et si la baisse,*
> *De tot son voloir li fist aisse*
> (ll. 2627- 30, my italics)

This penetration once again leads us back to castration and contraception as we wonder how it is that the *Dame* does not fall pregnant despite this, and (presumably numerous) other couplings. It cannot be that she is incapable as we learn after their separation that she goes on to have a son with Neufas.[58] The implication is that she may have used some form of contraception. If we are reading *Cligés* in this manner then it is interesting to read Florimont's affair with the *Dame* in a similar way. Thus we may postulate that in this respect the scene shares something in common with Romadanaple and Florimont's first bedroom scene; despite the differences as regards physical penetration, Florimont is effectively castrated in both scenes. There is one crucial difference though – in the scene he shares with Romadanaple, Florimont's castration is a joking one; we know he is in control of the situation (see above discussion). With the *Dame* however, he is unmanned in a far more serious manner: both literally as it would seem that the *Dame* does something to ensure that his masculine seed is rendered infertile and metaphorically as the *Dame* is in complete charge of their relationship – a fact highlighted by her possible use of contraception as it is a decision that Florimont has no part in. As such, the theme of castration links the two scenes whilst bringing their differences to the fore. Where Romadanaple is enclosed and the scene takes place within those confines (by her not violating them herself we might suggest that it takes place within the confines of an understanding society, prepared to indulge young lovers provided they don't go too far?),[59] the *Dame* is not confined; her spaces suffer no restraints of any kind and she is not confined

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[58] 'Et quant vint en l'Ile Selee, / Por la dolor de son ami / Estet puels trios anz et demi; / Mai a quart an prist Neüfas / Qui estoit niés Qamdiobras. / [Un fil en ot, et quant fu nez, / Netanabus fu apelez],' (ll. 3861-66b).
[59] An idea which would perhaps be seen to receive confirmation if we consider the fact that we know, in terms of the narrative, that Florimont and Romadanaple are destined for one another. As such, anything that the young couple do (again, provided that they do not go *too* far) to achieve this destined end may be forgiven.

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by society as Romadanaple is.[60] The *Dame*'s liaison is evocative of this; she is subversive and dangerous and her meetings with Florimont take place outside, in the woods, reflecting the unorthodox nature of their relationship. In terms of the second half of *Florimont*, the chaperoned bedroom scene ties in equally well. At the same time as looking backwards to Florimont's relationship with the *Dame*, it also looks forward to his marriage to Romadanaple – to the traditional, 'acceptable' bedroom scene where, as a married couple, they have every right to share a bedroom. Interestingly, this scene has even fewer lines devoted to it than Florimont's first experience with the *Dame*.[61] Once again though, penetration takes place and, in contrast to the earlier scenes, here it is a fruitful penetration and leads to Romadanaple conceiving a son: 'Quant li rois a sa feme jut, / Et sa feme un fil consut' (ll. 11 379-80). Thus we see that the central, chaperoned bedroom scene acts as a mediator. To start with, we have the *Dame*; penetration of the womb, but her 'castration' of Florimont means that there is no conception. Then we have the chaperoned bedroom scene with its joking castration and penetration of a kind, but featuring a natural form of contraception (abstinence). This then leads on to a scene where we have full penetration and no form of castration whatsoever, which in turn leads, naturally, to conception and a son. Meanwhile, the themes of secrecy, enclosure and penetration which permeate the scene link it to the corresponding scenes in *Partonopeus* and *Cligés* as well as to its counterparts within the two halves of *Florimont*. In creating the scene in this manner Aimon has created a nexus of intertextuality and textual intercourse that deliberately draws attention to itself.

The portrayal of Romadanaple in this key scene is also of interest and creates interplay between the two intertexts, undermining both Melior and Fénice., as well as creating echoes of heroines from other texts. The heroines of *Partonopeus* and *Cligés* are both strong, female protagonists. So strong in fact, that for significant parts of their respective texts, they overshadow and dominate their male counterparts. For the majority of the text Romadanaple stands as a stark contrast to such domineering female behaviour – a submissive daughter towards her father and, after their marriage, a dutiful wife towards Florimont who duly conceives and produces a son before vanishing completely from the

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[60] It should nonetheless be noted that the *Dame* deliberately keeps her relationship with Florimont distant from her people: '« Iluec ma galie m'atant, / Et si i ait mout de ma gent. / Ne veloie que nus venist / o moi por ce que non oïst / Seu que vorons fere ne dire, »' (ll. 2545-49).
[61] A mere two lines to be exact.

narrative. In this scene, however, we see a change in her behaviour: she becomes more forward and more assertive, going so far as to tell Florimont what to do at some points, in echo of her more famous predecessors. As the scene opens, the narrator informs us that he suspects Romadanaple would wish her mother dead rather than Florimont, as the Queen has entered with Delfis and the disguised Florimont, who would both face death were the Queen to uncover their secret:

> Mai la pucele, se m'est vis,
> Vosist que sa meire fust morte
> Ansois que cil que les dras porte
> (ll. 8876-78)

This is shocking, particularly when we consider that Romadanaple had previously submitted to her enforced enclosure with goodwill and had even repented of her love for the Povre Perdu as she was all too aware of the social gulf between them (ll. 5667-692).

This difference in behaviour continues as she tells Florimont to come to her (ll. 8943-44), ponders the appropriateness of embracing Florimont (a point to which we shall return) (ll. 9021-36) and, ultimately, kisses him, telling him to remove his outer clothing, to climb into bed with her and there to lie in her arms:

> La pucele fut bien a aisse,
> Vers soi le trait, .c. fois le baisse,
> « Sire, car metez si davant
> Cele robe que sor vos voi,
> Si venez si jesir lez moi.
> Amins, venez entre mes bras;
> Car je ne quier atre soulas »
> (ll. 9065-78).

This newly assertive Romadanaple has more in common with Melior and Fénice than with Romadanaple's previous behaviour. I would suggest that this is a deliberate echo, an *imitatio* of character traits, particularly when we consider that, for a time, Florimont acquiesces to her wishes as readily as Partonopeus and Cligés do to their mistresses. When she first tells him to come to her, for example, Florimont moves forward eagerly and sits on the floor at her feet:

Il fist mout bien tot son voloir,
Tost les mist jus, s'ala seoir,
Davant li c'est assis a terre
(ll. 8945-7)

His obedience continues as he hurries to disrobe after her injunction, almost as if he cannot believe his good fortune:

Quant li Povres Perdus l'antant,
De grei fist son comandement,
Isnelement c'est despoilliés
(ll. 9079-81)

After establishing this link with his two intertexts, Aimon then proceeds to undermine Romadanaple's newfound assertiveness and strength through use of humour. One crucial difference between this scene and the bedroom scenes in *Partonopeus* and *Cligés* is the presence of the chaperones. Where Melior and Fénice had each sought to be alone with their lovers, Romadanaple accepts the presence of not one but two chaperones, in the form of Delfis and Sipriaigne, and it is from the presence of these chaperones that a great deal of the scene's humour stems. This humour reveals Romadanaple's behaviour to be thoughtless and foolish in the extreme, suggesting that Melior and Fénice's behaviour had been equally selfish and that we should view them as figures to be mocked rather than emulated. Gretchen Mieszkowski would have us believe that in this scene

Romadanaple is as strong as her choice of lover would suggest. She shows no trace of the diffidence, humility, and reserve that diminish female speakers like Sordamors... She is outspoken, direct, insistent and determined. In her interactions with Florimont, she is as strong a speaker as he is.
(p. 100)

Whilst this may be true of the early and mid-way points of the bedroom scene, this all changes after Sipriaigne has intervened. The moment Sipriaigne fears her command to Romadanaple not do anything untoward is being broken, she hurries forward to interrupt the lovebirds and assure herself that this is not the case:

Sypriaigne s'en done soing,
Adés les esgardoit de loing,

A lit en est alee droit,
Dist : « Damoisele, seu que doit
Que vos avex si tant esté ?
Avez mon comant trespassé? »
(ll. 9133-38)

This interruption and the presence of her mistress as a chaperone produce a remarkable change in Romadanaple. The commanding, authoritative Romadanaple vanishes and is replaced by a petulant adolescent who seems unable to think beyond her most immediate wants. Though she reassures Sipriaigne that she has not been doing and will not do anything foolish, Sipriaigne is left feeling none too reassured (ll. 9150-54) and addresses Florimont directly, asking him to leave as King Philip is in the habit of visiting his daughter in the evening, and may well have recovered from his earlier indisposition (ll. 9155-64). Romadanaple's response to this is quite simple: she clutches at Florimont as if he were a soft toy and replies that she hopes her father never gets better:

Dist la pucele: « Non fera.
Se Deu plaist, anui ne girra. »
Son ami prent et si l'acole
(ll. 9165-67)

That such behaviour is exceedingly childish is shown by Sipriagne's response; she points to the folly of Romadanaple's behaviour, fully aware of the risks they are running,[62] and appeals directly to Florimont, as if she feels he is the sensible one of the pair:

Dist Sypriaigne: « Tu es fole.
De moi et de toi ais grant tort.
Vuels nos tu oz livrer a mort?
Sire, por Deu de ci levez. »
(ll. 9168-71)

Florimont's response to this is a great deal more mature than that of Romadanaple – he embraces his love and then stands and dresses himself, ready to leave:

Il ait acolee s'amie,
....

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[62] Mieszkowski remarks: 'It is very dangerous for both go-betweens. They are risking not only their positions but also their lives themselves for this meeting' (p. 97).

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Puels leva li Povres Perdus,
Tost c'est et chasiés et vestus
(ll. 9174-8)

Though it is true that he takes the time to embrace Romadanaple – as is only proper for any courtly lover worth his salt – I would argue that this detail reinforces Aimon's overall message. It allows him to include Romadanaple's response which reveals that, were she to have things her own way, they would spend more time kissing, possibly doing more than kissing. Given the very real danger that they are in, this suggests that Romadanaple's earlier commands were not those of an authoritative, capable character in charge of the situation, but rather the demands of an immature young woman ruled by her hormones: 'Il ait acolee s'amie, / Et cele lui, .C. fois le baisse, / Si feïst plus, s'en eüst aisse' (ll. 9174-76). Thus Aimon uses *adiectio* to introduce humour to the idea of a strong female protagonist and to suggest that a woman is not capable of handling authority wisely.[63] As such he has his masculine hero make the 'correct' decision and forestall the potential danger. This serves as a comment on Aimon's two intertexts, suggesting that he perhaps wishes us to laugh at Melior and Fénice's fancies.

Yet Melior and Fénice are not the only previous heroines to exert an influence on the portrayal of Romadanaple in this central scene. Alison Adams and Laurence Harf-Lancner have both commented on the relationship between *Florimont* and the *Roman d'Enéas* and I would argue that we can see traces of Lavine in certain aspects of Romadanaple's behaviour throughout this scene.[64] In addition to the influence on Romadanaple I would also argue that the presence of the *Roman d'Enéas* as a third intertext is also shown in the character of Sipriaigne, in whom we see a layering of different intertexts to create a grounded, highly realistic character. The references to the *Enéas* may be seen as starting in Aimon's prologue where he briefly runs through the founding of Rome (ll. 121-125) before stating that *his* story takes place before that of Rome (ll. 129-130). Indeed, before he even mentions Rome, Aimon has revealed that he plans to go even

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[63] One might argue against this by suggesting that Sipriaigne, a woman, represents the real authority in the scene. However, Aimon ensures that she is not seen as overly authoritative by also including Delfis as a chaperone. This is emphasised by Sipriaigne's having to appeal to Florimont to break up the lovers' meeting.
[64] Adams, 'Destiny, Love and the Cultivation of Suspense' and Harf-Lancner, 'D'*Enéas*'. Adams compares *Florimont* to the *Roman d'Enéas* in terms of how each text creates suspense in a narrative where the hero's destiny has been foretold. She suggests this is accomplished by the introduction of a love intrigue separate to the hero's destiny and, interestingly, finds *Florimont* the more accomplished text in this respect. Harf-Lancner sees the 'fairy' episode of *Florimont* as being modelled on Enéas' stay in Carthage and draws parallels between Dido and the *Dame de l'Ile Celee*.

further back in time: '*Devant* que Romulus fondest / Rome ne l'empire tenist' (ll. 121-122). He uses the word 'devant' three times in the space of nine lines to reinforce his point and in so doing is entirely in keeping with competitive medieval rewriting practice. The mention of Rome will have served to evoke the popular *Roman d'Enéas* (detailing the pre-history to the founding of Rome) in the minds of his audience. After grabbing his audience's attention with this opening (thus alerting them to look out for references to the *Enéas*) Aimon then establishes similarities between Lavine and Romadanaple in order to present a third role model for his heroine, one whose influence is to be embraced, rather than rejected as with Melior and Fénice.

That there are similarities between the depictions of the two princesses throughout the romances is important. As with Latin, Lavine's father, Philip is aware that Romadanaple will marry a stranger (ll. 1496-1515 in *Florimont*, ll. 3239-42 in the *Enéas*). Both are destined to be the wife of a great hero and 'mother' to a great dynasty: the image of the tree representing Florimont and Romadanaple's descendants gradually growing and spreading to shelter two thirds of the known world (ll. 1813-24) evokes that of Enéas and Lavine's successors who are seen as going from strength to strength, before eventually founding Rome (ll. 10 140-156).[65] Both Lavine and Romadanaple are causes of the war ultimately won by their future husbands. In Lavine's case she – along with Latin's broken promise – becomes the excuse that Turnus uses to wage war on Enéas, wanting to keep the land he now believes rightfully to be his (see for example, ll. 3463-67, ll. 3481-3, ll. 3495-504). This would seem to posit Lavine as an indirect cause of the war, yet it is interesting to note that for Lavine's mother, Lavine is in fact the sole reason for the war. Unlike Turnus, she cares less for the land (though she refers to it when inciting Turnus to war, rightly reasoning that this will serve to motivate him)[66] but simply does not want her daughter to be married to a foreigner:

> „Lasse," fait el, „quel destine,
> que ma fille sera donee
> a un home d'estrange terre,
> ki toz est essilliez par guerre,

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[65] Laurence Harf-Lancner also sees these points as linking the two texts. In addition to this, she adds: 'Les amours de Florimont et de Romadanaple évoquent celles d'Enéas et de Lavine, dans la peinture ovidienne des affres de l'amour naissant, dans les dialogues entre la fille et la mère'; 'D'*Enéas*', p. 131.

[66] The messenger that the Queen sends to Turnus, encouraging him to gather soldiers, stresses that the Queen wants Turnus to have Lavine, the land and the country (ll. 3427-30).

ki s'en enbla par coardise

....

De deul morrai se il la prent;
mar fu onkes Lavine nee,
se a cestui est mariëe,"
(ll. 3361-82)[67]

Romadanaple is similar in this respect as she too is cited as being the reason for Camdiobras' war with Philip (ll. 1189-1200). Despite this, we can also note that hunger for Philip's land is another reason for Camdiobras' war (ll. 1196-98), thus perhaps suggesting that Romadanaple's situation is a deliberate echo of Lavine's. More significant than any of these similarities, however, is the fact that both Lavine and Romadanaple stand in opposition to dangerously independent women with whom the narratives' heroes have had relationships. For Lavine, this 'other woman' is Dido, the fabled queen of Carthage whose relationship with Enéas was doomed from the start and who appears in the *Roman d'Enéas* to be seen as a dangerous figure. Margolis comments that she is 'vulnerable to *fol'amors* and rage' (p. 136) (both thoroughly disapproved of in the Middle Ages) whilst Gaunt goes so far as to suggest that Dido is viewed as: 'no better than a criminal and the French text imparts a sense that the poet took a sadistic delight in killing her'.[68] For Romadanaple the 'other woman' is, of course, the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* and we have seen in what manner she was viewed as constituting a danger to the hero in *Florimont*.[69] Gaunt would seem to be reinforcing this opinion when he comments with reference to Dido that: 'In medieval terms Dido has an inappropriate attitude to the relationship between power and love' ('Gender and Sexuality', p. 11). This comment may equally apply to the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* who, though she offers her land to Florimont (Dido's refusal to offer all of her land to Enéas being behind Gaunt's remark), is obviously the one holding all the power in the relationship, a situation which, in medieval terms, would be inappropriate.[70]

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[67] Margolis comments that Lavine's mother's hatred of Enéas stems from 'earthly sentiments of xenophobia' and 'abhorrence of Eneas's supposed 'coardise' and 'sodomie'.' Nadia Margolis, '*Flamma, furor,* and *fol'amors*: Fire and feminine madness from the *Aeneid* to the *Roman d'Enéas*', *Romanic Review*, 78 (1987), 131-147 (p. 140).

[68] Simon Gaunt, 'Gender and Sexuality in the *Roman d'Enéas*', *Romanic Review*, 83 (1992), 1-27 (p. 12).

[69] See previous chapters, especially Chapter 3, which considers the relationship between *Partonopeus de Blois* and *Florimont*.

[70] Indeed, the link between Dido and the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* is made explicit after Florimont's loss of the *Dame*, when Floquart uses Dido amongst the negative exemplars of lovers in an attempt to draw Florimont from his lethargy (ll. 3970-74). This reference points to *Florimont*'s ongoing engagement with the *Roman d'Enéas*, as well as perhaps preparing the audience for Florimont to fall in love with Romadanaple (aside from the *Dame*, the only other female of note to have been mentioned thus far).

This may seem to have strayed a little from our original point, namely a discussion of how the bedroom scene in *Florimont* weaves together different intertextual strands to create a multi-layered effect. However, it is necessary to understand these background similarities if we are to attempt to understand the influence that the memory of Lavine has on Romadanaple's behaviour in this scene. That Aimon is consciously striving to evoke Lavine as well as Fénice and Melior is, I propose to argue, suggested by two factors. The first of these is Lavine's behaviour when she first realises that she is in love with Enéas, whilst the second is based around Lavine's internal monologues and the debate that Romadanaple holds with herself as to how she should behave when she is 'alone' with Florimont.[71] The first factor is brought to mind as Sipriaigne locks the door behind Romadanaple's mother as the Queen leaves, thus creating an enclosed, safe haven for Florimont and Romadanaple to be 'alone'. As previously commented, Romadanaple is associated with locks and enclosed spaces throughout the text. This becomes particularly significant for the bedroom scene if we consider that the first thing Lavine does when she realises that she is in love with Enéas and can do nothing to alter this fact is to go to the door of her chamber and lock herself in:

> Quant veit que eschiuer nel puet,
> vers Eneas a atorné
> tot son corage et son pensé;
> ....
> Tote ert seule la dameisele,
> *l'uis de la chanbre ala fermer,*
> revient a la fenestre ester
> o el reçut le colp mortal
> (ll. 8062-71, my italics)

In effect, she creates a secure, enclosed space for her to indulge in her love without fear of repercussions – much as Sipriaigne does later for Romadanaple and Florimont when she locks the door to ensure their (relative) privacy. Thus it becomes plausible that this moment in *Florimont* has been inspired by Lavine's desire to be alone in the *Enéas*. It would certainly explain why Aimon chooses to emphasise locks in his portrayal of Romadanaple's enclosure – not only does it reinforce the fact that she *is* enclosed but it also

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[71] 'Alone' is placed in quotation marks because, despite the illusion of solitude, Romadanaple and Florimont are most definitely *not* alone as the presence of both Sipriaigne and Delfis confirms. The young lovers can act as if they are alone, provided they do nothing that their chaperones would view as being improper.

serves as a discreet reminder of the *Roman d'Enéas*. In and of itself this may seem trivial but, taken together with the second factor, Romadanaple's internal debate, it perhaps suggests that the *Roman d'Enéas* is here identifiable as a third intertextual reference in the bedroom scene.

Romadanaple's debate as she hesitates between obeying Love's or Wisdom's dictates when she is alone with Florimont may seem incongruous – one might think that, finally being alone, the lovers would not choose to indulge in self-reflection, knowing that time is of the essence. In reality, however, such a debate is entirely in keeping with the portrayal of Romadanaple. We have been party to previous monologues when she first fell in love with Florimont (ll. 5643-92) and in presenting an internal debate at such a crucial moment, precisely when time is of the essence, Aimon is drawing attention to this facet of Romadanaple's character. It shows her appropriateness as a future wife for Florimont by emphasising her difference from the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* who, though willing to discuss the nature of love when Florimont seems hesitant (ll. 2550-70; see also footnote 78), has no hesitation in offering herself to Florimont. More than this, Romadanaple's hesitation here also recalls Lavine's many monologues as she struggles to deal with both her love for Enéas and the implications of this love.[72] These monologues are central to the portrayal of Lavine and to the love theme in the *Enéas*: of the 1, 658 lines of verse given over to the love intrigue of the *Enéas*, more than a quarter are represented by Lavine's monologues (551 lines).[73] These monologues drew largely (though not exclusively)[74] on Ovid and, together with the romance between Lavine and Enéas, were a large factor in the text's popularity. Polak states: 'In a 'romantic' episode of the loves of Eneas and Lavinia... the author had popularised Ovid's physiology and psychology of love. This episode is thought to account in no small measure for the popularity of *Eneas*' (*Chrétien de Troyes*, p. 17).

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[72] Interestingly, in his introduction Hilka suggests that in his handling of Romadanaple's monologues, Aimon could be placed on an equal footing with both the anonymous writer of the *Enéas* and with Chrétien de Troyes: 'Die volle Meisterschaft zeigt Aimon in der Handhabung des Liebesmonologs und Liebesdialogs und kann in dieser Technik als ebenbürtig zum Eneasdichter und Crestien gestellt warden,' p. cxxxvii.

[73] Adams has commented on the importance of the love theme within the *Enéas*, noting that it differs greatly from Virgil's *Aeneid*: 'But a new narrative interest is also supplied by the love intrigue: the love between Aeneas and Lavinia is the most important innovation to Virgil's text made by the French poet... It is treated in quite disproportionate detail, several thousand lines being devoted to the theme' (p. 61). That so many of these lines are given over to Lavine's monologues reinforces how important they are.

[74] Lucie Polak, for example, briefly discusses how the motif of love entering the heart through the eye found in Lavine's monologue is not Ovidian but comes instead from a neo-platonic tradition common in Arabic poetry and shared by, amongst others, the troubadours, the author of the *Enéas* and Chrétien de Troyes; *Chrétien de Troyes*, pp. 18, 43-44.

This popularity had an impact on later texts as successive authors adopted motifs and ideas popularised in the *Enéas*.[75] In this respect it should come as no surprise that Romadanaple's monologues are Ovidian in form[76] and link our heroine with Lavine who, given the popularity of the *Enéas*, would certainly be remembered for her own debates. This reference is further strengthened when we see that Lavine, like Melior, worries what her *ami* would think of such forward behaviour (ll. 8362-68 for Lavine and ll. 1325-32 for Melior) and, unlike Melior but very much like the later Romadanaple, worries about behaviour inappropriate to her station:

> „Tol, ne dire tel vilenie,
> que ja femme de ton parage
> enpreigne a faire tel viltage,
> qu'a home estrange aille parler
> por sei offrir ne presenter."
> (ll. 8720-24)[77]

Romadanaple's internal debate is given two voices and is presented as being a discussion between two personified entities – Love (Amor) and Wisdom (Sapïence).[78] Where Wisdom urges her to guard her behaviour, not to shame herself or her parentage for him (ll. 8955-58) and to marry a rich King (ll. 8986-88), Love instead urges her to marry Florimont as in doing so she will have both a husband and an *ami* (ll. 9013-16).[79] Lavine's monologues are not set out in this manner – she is clearly presented as speaking to herself throughout – yet it is possible to trace distinct voices within her monologues which may well be described as Love and Wisdom. For example, we might say that it is Wisdom

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[75] Mora-Lebrun studies the influence of the *Enéas*, alongside those of the other *romans antiques*, on late twelfth and early thirteenth century texts such as *Partonopeus de Blois*, *Galeran de Bretagne* and the romances of Chrétien de Troyes and Gautier d'Arras in the fourth part of her book, « *Metre en romanz* », pp. 441-477.

[76] See pp. cxiv and following of Hilka's introduction; his comprehensive list *Florimont*'s love motifs mentions Ovid extensively.

[77] When Romadanaple first contemplates loving Florimont, she comes to herself with a start, realising that she should not love someone whose station in life is below her own: 'La pucele soudaignement / De son penser mout se repent, / .... / « Jai nen avrait m'amor, per foi, / Nus hons, c'il est plus bas de moi, »' (ll. 5667-82).

[78] We might compare this debate of Romadanaple's with that of Florimont, represented by Love (Amor) and Pity (Pitié), as he wonders whether or not to leave his family for the *Dame* (ll. 2502-06). Though Romadanaple's debate is considerably longer than that of Florimont we might suggest that Aimon is deliberately having the lovers mirror one another as a way of reinforcing their rightness for one another.

[79] We might note that this sentiment is similar to that expressed at the end of *Cligés* when Chrétien informs us of his hero's marriage to Fénice. Compare *Cligés*: 'De s'amie a feite sa fame, / Mes il l'apele amie et dame' (ll. 6731-32) and *Florimont*: 'Et ce cestui prans a mari, / Si avrais signor et ami' (ll. 9015-16). One suspects that this is deliberate on Aimon's part.

forbidding Lavine to go and see Enéas herself (ll. 8720-24) or encouraging her to try and love Turnus as well so that her heart will not be broken by the single combat between the two (ll. 8257-78). Similarly, we may suggest that it is Love speaking when Lavine berates herself for even contemplating loving Turnus (ll. 8279-300) and when she decides to send Enéas a message (ll. 8769-75). I would suggest that Aimon has taken these voices implicit in Lavine's monologues and, through a process of *transmutatio*, made them explicit in his presentation of Romadanaple's inner debate, much as he made the two distinct parts of Melior's character into two separate characters with the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* and Romadanaple. In so doing he brings Lavine to mind for his audience whilst at the same time underscoring his originality as a poet. That Aimon is indeed wishing to do this is further demonstrated by the etymological game Romadanaple plays with her name (ll. 7760-86). Where Lavine had been unable to pronounce Enéas' name (ll. 8553-56), Aimon uses the process of *transmutatio* to have Romadanaple re-arrange the syllables of her own name to create 'Plena d'Amors' (l. 7770) as a way of expressing her feelings. 'Plena d'Amors' also serves as a reference to *Cligés* Sordamors.

Yet why would Aimon deliberately wish to remind his audience of Lavine where, as we have seen, he has already associated his heroine with both Melior from *Partonopeus* and Fénice from *Cligés* in the bedroom scene? The answer, I propose, lies in the very forwardness that we have seen linking Romadanaple with Melior and Fénice. For Lavine may also, in some senses, be described as being 'forward.' It is she who shows the initiative in her relationship with Enéas; writing the note declaring her love for him and convincing an archer to shoot it where Enéas would be sure to find it (ll. 8793-840). This is then followed by Lavine sending Enéas a secretive kiss (ll. 8876-79). Despite this, Lavine's actions never cross the line that would make them *too* forward: she realises that she cannot deliver the letter herself, as it would cause too much shame (ll. 8714-24). Indeed we might even suggest that her actions have a kind of background absolution: on the one hand, Love is presented as having completely taken her over (to the point where it can urge her to present herself to Enéas), thus depriving her of some responsibility, whilst on the other hand we know that Lavine is destined to marry Enéas, so surely anything she does in furtherance of this goal cannot be deemed to be too forward?[80] There is no narrative

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[80] Indeed, as further justification we might even suggest that in wanting to marry Enéas, Lavine is showing her extreme good taste and her qualities as a heroine; resisting outside influences which urge her to love the 'wrong' hero and instead proving herself worthy of Enéas by offering her love to him without being urged.

disapproval of Lavine's actions. Indeed, Margolis has suggested that it is Lavine's use of her *engin* and her consequent actions that enable her to stay in control, preventing her from falling prey to the *fol'amors* of Dido and thus suggesting that Lavine's 'forward' behaviour is actually sanctioned by the narrative:

> What allows Lavine to triumph where Dido fell lies in her ability to verbalize and master her emotions. Where the Sidonian Queen was possessed by "folie", Lavine was governed by her "engin"... Lavine's virtue results from a merging of "engin" with "estude" (education) in dealing with love.
> (p. 144)[81]

Lavine thus stands as a third intertextual reference in the bedroom scene.[82] Unlike Melior and Fénice, however, Lavine is a more positive role model for Romadanaple – she is not dangerously independent and is seen as being ruled by her head rather than allowing her hormones full rein when in the first throes of love. When we initially see Romadanaple being a little forward then we may think that, like her role model, Romadanaple is 'allowed' to be a little forward.[83] However, the moment this behaviour steps outside carefully delineated boundaries (in this case Sipriaigne's instructions to make sure that nothing untoward happens), Romadanaple's behaviour is revealed as being 'unsanctioned' by the narrative as the narrator immediately proceeds to paint Romadanaple as a figure for us to laugh at, thereby reminding us of his disapproval of Melior and Fénice.

Yet Romadanaple and the bedroom scene are not the only focal points of intertextuality that we find in *Florimont*. As we saw in the previous chapter, Floquart is a pivot upon which balances the relationship towards two intertexts. Though this is a feat in itself I would suggest that in his portrayal of Sipriaigne, Aimon has created a character whose intertextual references go far beyond those of Floquart and in whom we find a layering of intertexts which may well have defeated a lesser writer. I shall start by examining the most immediately apparent intertextual references for Sipriaigne before moving on to consider how, in actual fact, Sipriaigne is a culmination of several intertextual

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[81] Karen Pratt has also commented on Dido's inability to control her emotions, remarking that: 'Dido is punished by the narrative for her lack of control, her *démesure.*' Karen Pratt, 'The Image of the Queen in Old French Literature', in *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe*, ed. Anne Duggan (Suffolk: St Edmundsbury Press, 1997), pp. 235-259 (p. 250).

[82] It is worth noting that *Partonopeus* also has a relationship with the *Roman d'Enéas*: Melior evokes Lavine when, like her predecessor, she finds herself unable to pronounce her lover's name.

[83] They would share a similar justification; like Lavine, Romadanaple is destined to marry her *ami*.

references drawn from different texts and in this respect is emblematic of *Florimont* as a whole. The most obvious starting point for an investigation of Sipriaigne's intertextual references is Thessala, Fénice's mistress from *Cligés*. Aimon clearly signals that we are meant to compare the two by making a point of the fact that Sipriaigne is named after the place where she was born, as is Thessala. Compare ll. 2985-6 in *Cligés*: 'Por ce fu Thessala clamee / Qu'ele fu de Thessalle nee', with ll. 1011-12 in *Florimont*: 'Sipriaigne estoit nomee / Por ce que de Sipre fut nee'.[84] Aimon takes this detail and uses the process of *imitatio* to establish a link between Sipriaigne and Thessala. This relationship is confirmed by further details, mentioned when Sipriaigne is first introduced, which ensure that his audience will have Thessala and Fénice in mind when witnessing Sipriaigne and Romadanaple's relationship. Both Sipriaigne and Thessala have known their charges from infancy (ll. 1000-03 in *Florimont*, l. 2983 in *Cligés*), and both are well educated – ll. 1007-09 in *Florimont*, whilst in addition to her knowledge of *nigromance* (l. 2984), Thessala is obviously something of a physician (see for example how she manages Fénice's 'illness' (ll. 5712-24) or how she treats Fénice's wounds in Jehan's tower (ll. 6289-94)). Having established this link between the two mistresses, Aimon proceeds to differentiate between the two. Firstly, Sipriaigne and Romadanaple's dynamic is very different to that of Thessala and Fénice. In *Cligés* Thessala is more of a helpmate, very much subservient to Fénice's desires, despite her title of 'mestre' (l. 2982).[85] In *Florimont* on the other hand, Sipriaigne is more of a pseudo-mother figure to her charge, advising Romadanaple on how to conduct herself in her love for Florimont and not afraid to assert her authority over Romadanaple. These differences stem from Aimon's decisions on how to apply his rewriting techniques, for Sipriaigne is far more than a carbon copy of Thessala. Though the two undoubtedly – and deliberately – share characteristics, there is more to Sipriaigne's role. In devising the plan that will enable Romadanaple and Florimont to meet secretly and in listening to Romadanaple's description of her feelings for Florimont (ll. 8511-54, or ll. 8422 ff), Sipriaigne clearly comes into the category that Gretchen Mieszkowski has described as an idealized go-between. These go-betweens 'arrange trysts, carry messages, out-maneuver [sic] meddling relatives, provide an audience for the lovers' eruptions of feeling, and occasionally conceal or disguise the lovers' (p. 2). This is not the case for Thessala, whom

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[84] Hilka notes this point of similarity in his list of *Florimont*'s references, p. cxiii of his introduction.
[85] Indeed, Deborah Nelson says of Thessala that her 'total and unquestioning devotion to her mistress dominates her every decision', 'Public and Private Images', p. 82.

Mieszkowski describes as a 'lovers' helper' rather than a go-between (p. 5). Thus we have an example of Aimon's rewriting at work. In enhancing Sipriaigne's role so that she becomes vital to the tryst – and thus to Romadanaple's health – we see the process of *adiectio* at work, as Aimon manipulates our image of a character we may have thought based entirely on Thessala.[86] But by using *adiectio* in this manner Aimon is not only enhancing his audience's image of Sipriaigne but is also bringing in further intertextual references. By the end of the twelfth century the go-between was an established figure in romance and one around whom rewriting techniques were clustered. Mieszkowski remarks: 'these go-between figures became important impressively quickly in the romances; nine stories involving them have survived from the last third of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries. Surely these writers were building on each other's work, but who was imitating whom remains much debated' (p. 125).

In the texts already established as intertexts for Aimon de Varennes there is one figure who stands out in a go-between role – Urraque from *Partonopeus de Blois*. It is she who escorts Partonopeus safely from Chief d'Oire after he breaks Melior's taboo, she who saves his life as he lies languishing in the Ardennes forest and she who forces Melior to realise the extent of Melior's continuing love for Partonopeus. In terms of her role as go-between Mieszkowski has described Urraque as 'unique', stating: 'no other go-between in these idealized stories intervenes in lovers' lives to the degree Urake [sic] does' (p. 114).[87] I would argue that by having Sipriaigne as a go-between and by having her manage Romadanaple's love life so effectively, Aimon is seeking to remind his audience of Urraque, a similar go-between in one of his intertexts. However, in so doing he uses a process of *detractio* to modify the image of the go-between, ensuring that whilst Sipriaigne's function in the plot may remind us of Urraque, the character herself remains a unique fusion of differing influences and free from what we may describe as Urraque's flaws.[88] Though she has both Partonopeus' and Melior's best interests at heart, in her role of go-between Urraque acquires a great deal of power over them and uses it to control their

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[86] Mieszkowski comments with regard to the go-betweens' actions that: 'without the intervener's help, at least one of the lovers seems to be in imminent danger of death from lovesickness' (p. 1) a category into which Romadanaple may certainly be said to fall as she declares she would rather die for him than live for someone else: '« Muels vodroie por lui morir / Que por atre toz jors guerir. / D'or enavant serai s'amie, / Ou je perdrai por lui la vie »' (ll. 7715-18). See in particular ll. 8405-10, for Sipriaigne's determination that she will not let Romadanaple die of love, without doing her utmost to help her.

[87] Mieszkowski uses the Old English *Partonope de Blois*, having substituted it for the Old French on the basis that it follows the Old French tale very closely.

[88] Mieszkowski describes Sipriaigne as 'a much richer version' of the governess/go-between figure (p. 95).

lives, not necessarily to their benefit. Mieszkowski comments: 'she becomes so caught up in the drama of controlling their lives that she very nearly destroys the marriage she is working so hard to build' (p. 110) and: 'she becomes so involved in her own scheme for the renewal of their relationship that she nearly destroys them as a couple' (p. 114). With his disapproval of dominant women (see Chapter 3 for a full discussion of this idea) it is hardly surprising that Aimon removes such a domineering trait from his own go-between.

With Sipriaigne's character then, Aimon has used two different rewriting techniques to adapt motifs from two intertexts (much as we saw with Floquart), thereby joining the two texts as well as adapting them. But links to *Cligés* and *Partonopeus* are not the sole extent of Sipriaigne's intertextual resonances. I would argue that Aimon also wants Sipriaigne to remind his audience of Lavine's mother from the *Roman d'Enéas*. Though her reason for wishing that Romadanaple would love someone else differs to that of Lavine's mother (Sipriaigne does not want Romadanaple to marry below her station, whereas Lavine's mother did not want her daughter to marry a foreigner), her conversation with Romadanaple regarding love certainly evokes that of their predecessors. Lines 7888-8020 in the *Roman d'Enéas* are given over to a conversation between Lavine and her mother in which her mother, initially trying to convince Lavine to love Turnus, describes the symptoms of love, how it affects someone, its pleasures and its pains, etc. This conversation for the most part takes the form of Lavine asking questions and her mother answering. It was a hugely influential conversation, as is shown by the fact that, nearly thirty years later, Aimon de Varennes inserts a conversation into *Florimont*, focussing on the effects of love, the initial part of which takes the form of Romadanaple asking and Sipriaigne answering, a multitude of questions (ll. 7627-49). Thus Aimon uses *imitatio* to evoke Lavine's mother in the portrayal of Sipriaigne.

However, as with his references to Urraque and Thessala Aimon is not content with merely using *imitatio*. Though Sipriaigne reminds us of Lavine's mother when she first discovers Romadanaple's love for Florimont,[89] this intertextual reference is then transferred to Romadanaple's real mother when Sipriaigne fetches the Queen after discovering Romadanaple lying in a faint because of her love (ll. 7809-15). This is a clever example of *adiectio*, as it means that we now have two mother figures involved in Romadanaple's love

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[89] We might suggest that her cold refusal to become embroiled in what she terms Romadanaple's 'folly' (l. 7705) equals the hard-heartedness of Lavine's mother as she coolly threatens to beat Lavine to death should Lavine love Enéas (ll. 7946-49).

(her biological mother and the woman who has raised her), compared with the single figure of the *Enéas*. More importantly, it allows Aimon's *imitatio* of the *Roman d'Enéas* to become even clearer (see below) and frees Sipriaigne from a possibly harmful intertextual reference (Aimon's audience would have been aware from the *Enéas* that Lavine's mother was 'in the wrong'), allowing her then to absorb other intertextual references which will ultimately aid Romadanaple in securing her destined husband.

That the reaction of Romadanaple's mother when she realises that her daughter is in love is based on that of Lavine's mother is made clear through several uses of *imitatio*. The grounds for realising that their daughters are in love are presented in almost identical language for both Queens. Compare: 'la vit ainsi descoloree, / sa face et sa color muëe, / de son estre li demanda (ll. 8446-49 in the *Enéas*) with, 'La roÿne l'ait esgardee, / Si la vit mout descouloree / Et a chaingier de la quelor, / Seit non ait mal fors que d'amor(s). / « Fille, » fet ele, « quel mal ais? »' (ll. 7835-39, *Florimont*). Both Queens come to the correct conclusion that their daughters are in love (l. 7838 in *Florimont*, ll. 8464-69 in the *Enéas*) and in both cases this realisation is followed by an argument with their daughters in which the princesses try unsuccessfully to convince their mothers that they are not in love and, more importantly, that they are not in love with the 'wrong' man (ll. 7840-7970 in *Florimont*, ll. 8464-8679 in the *Enéas*).[90] If this were not enough to convince us that Aimon is deliberately trying to recall the *Enéas* with this conversation, the manner in which Romadanaple's mother departs echoes that of Lavine's mother: Lavine's mother stalks out leaving her daughter in a faint (ll. 8661-63) whilst Romadanaple's mother leaves her daughter near to death after Romadanaple has heard Povre Perdu's name (ll. 7972-75).

That Aimon has deliberately done this as a means of transferring his references to the *Enéas* to Romadanaple's mother, rather than using Sipriaigne, is confirmed when we see that it is Sipriaigne who remains to comfort Romadanaple in the face of her mother's displeasure: 'Mai sa maistresce la comforte' (l. 7974). This leaves Sipriaigne free to become a go-between as she makes arrangements for Romadanaple to see Florimont secretly. It is here that Aimon's manipulation of rewriting techniques really comes into its own as the elements that he has taken from his intertexts (a well-educated go-between who has her mistress's best wishes at heart), under the influence of his modifications, fuse

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[90] Lavine ultimately confesses her love for Enéas to her mother (ll. 8553-56). Though Romadanaple does not make a similar confession, it is nonetheless worth noting that her mother remains convinced of Romadanaple's affections for the Povre Perdu (ll. 7951-53).

together to create a character who is absolutely crucial for the bedroom scene (in itself a key scene as it allows destiny to take it course, permitting the would-be lovers time together away from parental restrictions). Of course, Sipriaigne is important for the narrative's love intrigue – she devises the plan to smuggle Florimont into the palace and she implements it by going-between to confirm details of it with Delfis. She even proposes to manipulate Delfis' love for her if it will help Romadanaple. However, it is not merely that she is important for this scene, it is almost as if it would not happen without her, as if it is very much *her* show. There can be no doubt that Sipriaigne, the driving force behind all the planning of the scene, is the one who is in charge. Symbolically this is represented within the scene itself by the locking of the door behind the Queen (ll. 8925-26). Though it is not specifically stated that it is Sipriaigne who locks the door, there can be little doubt as we have seen her locking and unlocking it on previous occasions.[91] We have examined what this enclosure means for our understanding of Romadanaple's character. Now let us consider what it means for our understanding of Sipriaigne. By controlling the lock which modulates Romadanaple's space, Sipriaigne is in a position of near absolute authority. Such an authority adds to the impression that this scene is Sipriaigne's big moment. Though she draws to one side, allowing Delfis to distract her as Florimont and Romadanaple talk (ll. 8926-29), she hurries forward to reclaim (metaphorically speaking) centre-stage when she judges that the lovers have had enough time together (ll. 9133-38). It is to Sipriaigne and not to Romadanaple that Florimont listens (ll. 9159 and 9171) when he agrees to leave, effectively ending the lovers' interlude. In this way, Sipriaigne frames the bedroom scene – she is responsible both for planning and for ending it. This use of Sipriaigne to circumscribe the lovers (we see Sipriaigne devising and executing the plan, then Romadanaple and Florimont talking before returning once more to Sipriaigne to close the intrigue) underscores her position of authority within the scene, as it is a literal representation of her importance to it.

In fact, her importance to and for this scene only emerge clearly if we take a moment to consider her portrayal in the rest of the text and to compare it with that of her male counterpart, Floquart.[92] Up to this point, Floquart has been very much in evidence and

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[91] See for example ll. 7298-802.

[92] Aimon's hero and heroine have separate tutors, in contrast to his intertexts: in both *Partonopeus* and *Cligés* the hero has no close advisors to look up to and to guide him and instead relies on his *amie* to a certain extent. The parallel balance of Floquart and Sipriaigne is perhaps designed partly to counter this. The *Roman d'Enéas*

involved in his tutee's life. Whether upbraiding Florimont for his moping after losing the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* (ll. 3955-80), explaining all the different types of largesse (ll. 4199-4358), or carrying out Florimont's wishes to the best of his ability (as, for example, when he rides ahead to Philipopolis to secure lodgings), Floquart has appeared at every key stage in his charge's development and shown himself to be an important character. Which is why, in terms of the love intrigue with Romadanaple and the bedroom scene (important stages in Florimont's development), Floquart is conspicuous by his absence. It is Delfis who first notices that Florimont is troubled (ll. 7981-85) and who realises that Florimont is in love (ll. 8154-55). Indeed, it is Delfis who, together with Florimont, informs Floquart of Florimont's love for Romadanaple (ll. 8260-64). Floquart's response is to encourage Florimont to resume normal life in order not to create gossip around Romadanaple and himself (ll. 8271-8301). This is the extent of Floquart's involvement – from then on it is Sipriaigne and Delfis (following Sipriaigne's instructions) who arrange matters. Yet this is not because Aimon has deemed Floquart to have served his purpose and is ready to discard him – quite the opposite in fact, as Floquart once again plays a prominent part in events after the bedroom scene. Rather, I suggest that Aimon has chosen not to involve Floquart in the bedroom scene as a way of underscoring Sipriaigne's authority. With no competition from Floquart, Sipriaigne is the sole figure with authority over the lovers in the bedroom scene (though Delfis's presence is necessary when arranging the scene, he is there as Florimont's friend and Romadanaple's tailor; he has no authority over them) and the absence of any other authority makes Sipriaigne's seem all the greater.

Yet why such an emphasis on Sipriaigne? And why in this scene? I propose that Aimon manipulates the depiction of Sipriaigne in this scene – and this scene in particular – as it draws attention to his rewriting. The bedroom scene is an intertextual nexus which draws attention to itself as such and by drawing his audience's attention to Sipriaigne, Aimon is giving them the opportunity to admire his skill as he weaves together motifs and ideas from many different intertexts to create a cohesive whole. This idea is given credence if we consider that after the bedroom scene, after having served his purpose, Sipriaigne effectively vanishes from the text. There is no further mention of her. It is as if, having used her as a shining example of his rewriting skills – and effectively issued an intertextual challenge to his contemporary writers in the process – Aimon is content to allow Sipriaigne

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meanwhile, has no tutor as such – rather it is Enéas's father and Lavine's mother who offer advice to the hero and heroine.

to fade into the background, her job done and her moment of glory over. In thus having Sipriaigne as the intertextual highpoint of a highly intertextual scene (which comes, no less, at the centre of the narrative as it moves from one major intertextual influence to a second, equally as important influence), Aimon offers us the key to his rewriting strategy. Not just imitation or correction – though he does plenty of each within *Florimont* – but combining as many references to different texts as possible for the sheer joy of it and to see if it can be done without losing the thread of his own narrative. He sets himself this challenge and Sipriaigne, the bedroom scene – indeed, *Florimont* itself – are his responses to it. For Sipriaigne represents a microcosm of *Florimont* as a whole: a fusion of different intertexts blended seamlessly together through the skilful use of differing rewriting techniques (*adiectio, detractio, imitatio*). This process creates a character – and a text – which is wholly original whilst at the same time allowing the audience to appreciate it and to amuse itself by spotting the references to previous well-known texts. This use of rewriting techniques suggests an author at the top of his game, able to pick and choose elements and motifs that he wished to adapt: such a profusion of intertexts could easily have created a clumsy, inconsistent character in Sipriaigne. That Sipriaigne is instead a successfully realised, 'self-sacrificing and loving' (Mieszkowski, p. 99) mother-type figure to Romadanaple is due to Aimon's adroit deployment of rewriting techniques.

We began this chapter by asking if the theme of education and the character of Floquart were the sole examples of combinations of intertexts in Aimon's work or if other such combinations were to be found in *Florimont*. The bedroom scene and the character of Sipriaigne answer this question in a comprehensive manner. Their multi-layered nature reveals not only that such combinations are not unusual in *Florimont*, but that the breadth and scope of these combinations may surpass all that we have previously seen with regard to Aimon's intertextuality. The combination of texts represented within the bedroom scene (*Partonopeus de Blois, Cligés*, the *Roman d'Enéas*, echoes of the *Lais* of Marie de France together with hints of *Floire et Blancheflor*) should give us pause and cause us to re-assess our understanding of the intertextuality at work in *Florimont*. We have previously seen that both *Partonopeus de Blois* and the *Roman d'Alexandre* are important intertexts for *Florimont* but we have for the most part confined our studies to how these studies have interacted separately with *Florimont* rather than considering them as part of an intertextual network. The discussion of the bedroom scene suggests that this may be a profitable

approach to *Florimont*, as it gives us a sense of the possibilities which such broad intertextual implications contain. It becomes possible to trace the development of a motif through a progression of texts, and to consider how texts are combined in such a way as to proffer a commentary on one another. Significantly, the bedroom scene has shown us that although the *Roman d'Alexandre* and *Partonopeus de Blois* are major intertexts for *Florimont*, shaping the narrative halves of Aimon's work, they are by no means the only intertexts. The use of (potentially several) further well-known contemporary works as intertexts adds another dimension to Aimon's intertextuality as we see that he has engaged with texts which are themselves known for rewriting[93]. We have already quoted Charles François' assessment of Aimon that: 'Parfois on croit sentir, chez l'auteur de *Florimont*, le désir de rivaliser avec son devancier, de reprendre ses inventions pour les renouveler en les traitant selon sa propre technique,' (Chapter 1, p. 31). He is talking about Aimon's relationship with the author of the anonymous *Floire et Blancheflor* but I would suggest that, in view of these interactions with already 'intertextual' texts, it is worth revisiting and perhaps modifying the idea put forward by François in this quote. The plethora of intertextual resonances discernible in the bedroom scene of *Florimont* would seem to suggest that it is not just by reworking ideas or motifs that Aimon seeks to compete with his predecessors. Rather, he seems also to be competing in terms of sheer volume, in an attempt to see how many different intertextual voices can be blended into a harmonious whole; the choice of texts which are themselves rewrites of one sort or another serves here to broaden the intertextual network established by Aimon as the intertexts of his chosen texts then become implicit intertexts for *Florimont*.

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[93] We have already seen that *Partonopeus* reworks the myth of Cupid and Psyche. The *Roman d'Enéas* is, of course, a retelling of Virgil's *Aeneid*, whilst *Cligés* has been widely seen as a response to the legend of Tristan and Yseut. If Aimon is indeed engaging in part with the *Lais* of Marie de France then it is worth noting that these *Lais* are themselves 'retellings' of the Breton *lais* known to Marie.

Conclusion

Our aim in undertaking this study of *Florimont* had been to open up Aimon de Varennes' text in light of current understanding of how intertextuality, in the form of rewriting, functioned in the Middle Ages. Most especially we had hoped to do so through the application of the terms described by Douglas Kelly in his discussion of the arts of rewriting as taught in medieval schools. In doing so we hoped also to provide a framework that future students of *Florimont* would be able to apply to potential further intertexts not discussed in this work. The decision to tackle *Florimont* in this way was prompted by a variety of factors, the first of which was the status of the text itself. After a great deal of early interest (in its place of composition, in its use of Greek and the possibility of references to Aimon de Varennes' real-life love interest), *Florimont* slipped from the critical radar and was for many years relatively neglected. This neglect seems to have come to an end as there has been a revival of interest in the text and we are now hearing calls for a new edition of the romance as more and more scholars begin to take an interest in *Florimont*. That these more recent studies differ from earlier analytical work on the text is a further factor prompting our examination of the text. These differences in opinion can in part be explained by how our understanding of the process of rewriting has evolved over the past three decades.

Paul Zumthor described the medieval practice of *mouvance* (any deliberate alteration in the transmission of a text) as 'une mobilité essentielle du texte médiéval'.[1] This mobility of text has come to the fore in recent years as our understanding of what *mouvance* may encompass has broadened. Critical priorities have shifted, revealing a growing interest in intertextuality within the field of medieval studies. This interest is shown in practical studies which consider specific instances of intertextuality in texts from the medieval era (Chrétien de Troyes being perhaps the most focussed-upon author in this respect) but also in more theoretical analyses which examine the practice of composition and, specifically, of rewriting as a technique of that composition. It is this shift in critical understanding which can help to explain both *Florimont*'s years of neglect and the sudden revival of interest in the romance. Without a full appreciation of the medieval rewriting process and the art necessary to this practice, it is perhaps understandable that earlier critics

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[1] Paul Zumthor, *Essai de Poétique Médiévale* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1972), p. 71, cited in Douglas Kelly, *The Art of Medieval French Romance* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), p. 82.

viewed *Florimont* as a poor derivation of *Partonopeus de Blois*, implicitly criticising its lack of originality and explicitly stating not only that Aimon de Varennes lacked talent but also that the work itself was not a great work of art.[2] However, as scholarly understanding of the rewriting process has deepened so critical attitudes towards *Florimont* have changed; scholars have looked past the label of 'imitation' to reconsider *Florimont* both as a work of art worthy of interest in itself (see Braet, Kelly 'Composition' and Adams) and as a work whose relationship with other texts is an area of potential significance (see Laurence Harf-Lancner's articles on *Florimont*). The time thus seemed right for a new analysis of *Florimont*, one which applied our deeper understanding of the medieval process of rewriting to *Florimont*'s relationships with other texts as a way of broadening our understanding of this relatively neglected work.

In reflecting on whether we have achieved our goals – of opening up *Florimont* and of providing a framework for other potential intertexts – it is useful to consider what we have learned thus far. An initial glance seems to indicate that Kelly's outline of the rewriting techniques used in medieval classes was a useful method with which to approach *Florimont* as we have been able to discern – and to differentiate between – layer upon layer of intertexts and rewriting. It has enabled us to re-assess and deepen our understanding of the relationships between *Florimont* and texts with which it had previously been linked (the *Roman d'Alexandre*, *Partonopeus de Blois*, or the *Roman d'Enéas* for example) as well as allowing us to discover a relationship between *Florimont* and Chrétien de Troyes' *Cligés*, a text not previously linked to *Florimont*.[3] A closer look at these texts, however, reveals more: if we consider the range of intertexts that we have been able to discern using Kelly's analysis, a pattern of sorts emerges as we see that the texts we might class as Aimon's 'principal' intertexts have various things in common. That these intertexts have anything in common lends weight to the idea that they are intertexts that Aimon has chosen to engage with, reworking them in accordance with the medieval practice of rewriting. As well as reinforcing our understanding of rewriting as very much a conscious practice this also raises the question of unconscious – as opposed to conscious – imitation. In this respect we

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[2] With regard to the imitation of *Partonopeus* found in both *Ipomedon* and *le Bel Inconnu* Anthime Fourrier notes: 'Hugues de Rutland et Renaud de Beaujeu imitent en artistes suffisamment maîtres de leurs,' before adding with regard to *Florimont*: 'il en va autrement d'Aimon de Varennes, qui compose avant eux et qui avoue lui-même sa maladresse' (p. 449). He later comments that '*Florimont* se place bien au-dessous de *Partonopeus*. Aimon de Varennes ne sais pas décrire et son invention ne va guère loin' (p. 460).

[3] Hilka notes similarities between the two texts, most especially in the motifs associated with love (p. cxvi and following) and between Thessala and Sipriaigne (p. cxiii) but goes no further than this.

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might differentiate between the broader conception of intertextuality as a process which links all texts and specific instances of rewriting as deliberate manifestations of this process. Rabau shows how intertextuality affects all texts, suggesting that there can be no truly *new* text as the seeds for all texts may be found in the texts already in existence (see Chapter 1, pp. 37-39). Unconscious rewriting might therefore fall under the umbrella term of intertextuality, whereas I would suggest that deliberate modifications of and engagements with previous texts, though examples of intertextuality, might perhaps best be described as conscious rewriting.

In terms of this conscious rewriting, we can learn more about the process if we consider the commonalities of Aimon's principal intertexts. They all seem to have been fairly well-known, established texts. This may indicate one possible reason for their having been chosen as intertexts – when writing a romance, it seems logical that if one wanted one's work to become well-known or be thought well of, that one would seek either to emulate or incorporate elements of texts which have already secured such status. Beyond this, however, it is interesting to note that the majority of them also have a link of some sort with classical antiquity, whether they are based on texts originally written in this period, purport to tell the lives of the heroes of antiquity or link themselves to this period in other ways.[4] This link with the past, and indeed, in some cases the history that they relate, gives a sense of gravitas to the texts, conferring upon them the authority of antiquity in medieval eyes. By incorporating them as intertexts in his own work Aimon implicitly imports this authority and lends its weight to *Florimont*. This perhaps suggest that he was deliberately playing with or seeking to explore what marked a work as an authoritative, 'historical' text. Such a hypothesis would seem to be confirmed by Aimon's presentation of Florimont as grandfather to Alexander the Great (a presentation which, in a sense, appropriates Alexander's majesty and authority for his own hero) and by his brief nod towards the founding of Britain at the start of his work (ll. 143-154). Such nods towards 'official' history might be thought to indicate a desire to locate *Florimont* as a respectable, historical text in the minds of his audience, to establish a sense of credibility before Aimon proceeds with his tale.

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[4] Cligés' father Alexander, for example, may be seen as a romanticised figure of Alexander the Great. *Partonopeus de Blois*, meanwhile, makes clever use of the fall of Troy to present its protagonist with a suitably heroic ancestry.

Yet patterns in the choice of Aimon's intertexts are not all that using Kelly has enabled us to discover. *Mutatio* (the adaptation of material lifted from a source or sources), as explained by Kelly is a wide-ranging term. It encompasses a variety of different techniques (*adiectio, detractio, immutatio, transmutatio*) and this variety – the allocation of different names to different elements which work together in a single process – has enabled us to explore, at first-hand, how the process of writing – or re-writing – functioned in the Middle Ages and the different effects that may be achieved by applying these techniques. In terms of the re-writing that we have observed within *Florimont* it is worth noting that *adiectio* seems to have been the most widely-employed technique, whether Aimon is using it to turn largesse into a structural tool underpinning his hero's development (as we saw in Chapter 2) or to re-unite Florimont with his parents (particularly his father) as a way of re-affirming a normal gender balance in his text (as we saw in Chapter 3). It is also worth noting that *adiectio* appears to be used in conjunction with one or more of the other rewriting techniques almost as often as it is used alone. Thus we see it used with *detractio* (creating a sort of *immutatio*) as the idea of an inherently evil non-noble has been removed, replaced instead with the suggestion – conveyed via Delfis' liberality and Florimont's own spell as the *Povre Perdu* – that non-nobles may be capable of spiritual and material generosity. We might suggest from this that future students choosing to study *Florimont*'s literary affiliations should look for expansions or amplifications of ideas or motifs borrowed from previous texts, no matter how small they might seem, as this often indicates an instance of re-writing – an instance which may, upon closer examination, prove to be more complicated than a simple expansion of material might first suggest.

Though *adiectio* seems to have been the most widely-used technique, it seems to have had a more striking effect (certainly in terms of altering lifted material and creating something 'new' for the text into which this material will be inserted) when used in combination with the other techniques delineated by Kelly. Thus the combination of *adiectio* and *transmutatio*, when applied to the motif of largesse and the idea of using different models to explore a common preoccupation, creates a structure which underpins Aimon's work and ties its two tonally different halves together to create a cohesive whole. Not only this, it also serves to link two of Aimon's intertexts within the text of *Florimont* – as the motif of largesse has been drawn from the *Roman d'Alexandre*, whilst the model exploration idea comes from *Partonopeus de Blois*.

It is in terms of the intra-textual intertextual conversations that the techniques elucidated by Kelly really come into their own. Using them we were able to witness how Aimon fuses a variety of intertexts together in *Florimont*, in a variety of ways: on a thematic level as we saw with his manipulations of the theme of education, in a key scene as we saw in our analysis of *Florimont*'s central bedroom scene and also in his characters, as our discussion of both Sipriaigne and Floquart revealed. We were able to examine how Aimon brought these techniques together, layering them – and his intertexts – in such a manner as to produce a nuanced and polyphonic effect in his fusions of intertexts. As a result, these fusions give us a sense of a poet using all the tools at his disposal to explore the flexibility of rewriting and romance composition, a poet seeking to discover the boundaries of technique and of an evolving genre, as he combines more and more intertexts into a single theme, character or scene.

This sense of a poet seeking to explore the possibilities of a new medium, a nascent genre not yet classified as such, with no defined set of rules, is confirmed if we come back to the third commonality of Aimon's intertexts. They were all relatively well-known and had a link of some sort with antiquity but, crucially, all of Aimon's intertexts were themselves rewrites of one sort or another. Of course, given the very nature of medieval writing (which sought originality in the retelling of familiar tales) one might expect them all to practise re-writing. However, what is particularly interesting about Aimon's intertexts is that, when one considers what they rewrite, a pattern begins to emerge; a pattern which seems to represent the different directions in which romance as a genre was evolving, a progressive pattern which emphasizes the genre's very lack of boundaries at the time Aimon was writing. The *Roman d'Enéas* rewrites a single text – Virgil's *Aeneid*. The *Roman d'Alexandre*, on the other hand, rewrites multiple versions of the same story, placing them alongside one another in a sort of 'super-story'.[5] *Partonopeus de Blois*, meanwhile, evolved in a different way, its author choosing to rewrite multiple texts and combine various influences. Thus the Prologue evokes Benoît de Saint-Maure's *Roman de Troie* and combines it with tropes drawn from lyric poetry and the *Roman d'Enéas*.[6] In this combination of different texts, of ideas drawn from different areas, we see the start of the

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[5] I am reluctant to suggest that Alexandre de Paris has fused texts together in his creation of the *Roman d'Alexandre* as it seems to this author that he instead strove to incorporate all elements from extant texts, and place them in chronological order rather than selecting only elements from each text and putting them together in a different way.

[6] See Simons and Eley, 'Prologue'.

fusion process so prevalent in *Florimont*, as the *Partonopeus* poet places references to different intertexts alongside one another, using them to create a new story with a distinctive feel. Alongside this combination of intertexts we also see the poet incorporating references to single intertexts at various points – there are hints of Marie de France's *Lais* in the boat taking Partonopeus to Chief d'Oire and in Melior's careful protestations of Christian faith for example. Similarly, Chrétien de Troyes rewrites elements of multiple different texts in *Cligés* – one can discern elements of the *Roman d'Enéas* as well as the Tristan legend and hints of the *Roman d'Alexandre*. Indeed, in its presentation and development of the final 'bedroom scene', as Fénice and Cligés lie underneath the pear tree, one might argue that it combines two of its intertexts as both the Tristan legend and the pear tree fabliau appear to have influenced its creation. Aimon seems to have absorbed these lessons from his predecessors as he too chooses to rewrite multiple different intertexts and, in places, chooses to fuse these intertexts together. Where Aimon might be said to differ from his predecessors is in the scale of his intertextuality; he appears to have taken the next logical step by introducing a greater number of individual intertexts and fusing them not just in individual scenes but in characters and at a thematic level as well. Like the *Partonopeus* poet, Aimon uses his rewriting to offer implicit comments on the texts he is reworking. The *Partonopeus'* poet's Trojan genealogy, which rewrites both the begetting and the behaviour of Eneas, instead idealising Partonopeus' ancestor Marcomyris, may be read as an implicit criticism of Benoît's work.[7] Similarly, Aimon's modifications of the Fairy Mistress and traditional heroine *personae* – exaggerating character traits to mark the one as detrimental, the other as beneficial to the hero – may be read as a disapproving response to the strong female protagonists of *Partonopeus de Blois*. By placing intertextual references together in such a way as to allow them implicitly to comment on one another, Aimon may be said to have developed this process. Thus Melior and Fénice's sexual behaviour, which is perfectly acceptable in its original contexts, might be deemed tawdry when it is implicitly contrasted, in *Florimont*'s bedroom scene, with Lavine's view that delivering a note to Enéas herself and of her own initiative would be too forward.

The idea of a poet deliberately exploring the boundaries of a genre in full evolution is lent weight if we consider not only that Aimon seems to have been aware of the rewriting carried out by his intertexts, but that he has also engaged with this rewriting in his own

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[7] See Simons and Eley, 'Prologue' and Young, 'Aspects of Intertextuality', pp. 10-12.

work; a step which again takes the process of rewriting that bit further. In his rewriting of *Partonopeus de Blois* for example, he engages with the adaptation of the gender roles of the Cupid and Psyche myth carried out by *Partonopeus*, both by exaggerating the gender imbalance this reversal had caused in Florimont's relationship with the *Dame de l'Ile Celee*, and by restoring a more 'normal' gender balance in Florimont's relationship with Romadanaple. Similarly, as part of his rewriting of *Cligés* he progresses the motif of Cligés' sword and its link with the concept of castration: a motif and a link that had themselves already been progressed by Chrétien de Troyes as he borrowed them from Béroul's Tristan. Interestingly, with regard to the *Roman d'Alexandre* and the *Roman d'Enéas* Aimon appears to have rewritten the texts' innovations, that is to say, the specific elements which differentiate them from their predecessors and which, in a sense, mark them as rewrites. For the *Roman d'Alexandre* he develops the motif of largesse and engages with the idea that all non-nobles are untrustworthy: both key concepts in Alexandre de Paris' version of Alexander's life-story. With the *Roman d'Enéas* Aimon has engaged with the character of Lavine, a character whose largely expanded role played an important part in distinguishing the Old French text from Virgil's *Aeneid*, and with its implementation of an Ovidian rhetoric of love. Unlike Melior and Fénice, Lavine seems to have been held up as a positive role model for Romadanaple, a heroine whose behaviour is deemed appropriate. Interestingly, perhaps precisely because she is meant as a positive role-model for Aimon's heroine, there is no criticism – implicit or otherwise – in Aimon's rewriting of Lavine. He establishes enough similarities between the two – both Lavine and Romadanaple may be seen as the cause of their fathers' wars, both argue with their mothers after trying, and failing, to conceal their love for men their mothers deems unsuitable, and both are destined to marry great heroes and start influential dynasties – to create an awareness of a connection between the two princesses before modifying, in *Florimont*'s bedroom scene, not Lavine herself, but the inner monologues which had played an important role in differentiating her from Virgil's Lavinia. Thus Lavine's monologues are an inner conversation with herself as she struggles first to acknowledge, then to deal with the consequences of, her love for Enéas, her mind turning first one way then another. In *Florimont* however, Romadanaple's monologue in the bedroom scene, though as emotionally charged as those of Lavine had been, is a great deal more stylized in its presentation. Aimon separates out the different, unnamed strands of Lavine's monologues

and names them, creating distinct entities with different voices, Love and Wisdom, which then vie for dominance in Romadanaple's head. This development may perhaps have been designed to draw attention to Aimon's abilities as it highlights his use of rhetoric to develop a motif drawn from his intertext in a different manner. In this respect his modifications of the monologue motif is certainly in keeping with Kelly's definition of skill of rewriting in which he states: 'mastery of the technique... requires the writer to... demonstrate how much better the source matter can be treated, or, at least, how it may be treated in a different way' (*Conspiracy*, p. 43).[8]

Such deliberate engagement with elements that his intertexts had themselves already rewritten can only reinforce our understanding both of romance composition as a highly conscious process and of the importance of rewriting as an integral part of this process. Further evidence for romance composition being a conscious process can be found if we turn to consider how Aimon shows what he was doing – markers incorporated into the text of *Florimont* to enable an astute audience to spot his intertextual references. Like the references themselves, the markers used to point to these references differ from one another. The most obvious method of pointing to an intertext that we come across in *Florimont* is that of announcing it outright: thus the explicit references to Alexander the Great suggest to all that *Florimont* may be engaging with some version of the Macedonian's life. Other types of markers seem to reply on audience familiarity either with a tradition or with particular texts. The encounter with the *Dame de l'Ile Celee*, for example, takes place when Florimont is alone in a forest. The *Dame*, meanwhile, is herself travelling alone. This might suggest, to an audience familiar with the motifs of the fairy mistress tradition that there is something supernatural about the *Dame*. Similarly, Romadanaple's etymological name-games with her own name evoke Sordamors' musing on *her* name, as well as Lavine and Melior's inability to pronounce their lovers' names. These markers and, indeed, the motifs, ideas and strategies taken from the texts to which these markers point are fully integrated into the narrative of *Florimont*. They do not, as it were, call undue attention to themselves or cause a lack of cohesion in Aimon's tale which might distract from its other charms. This overall cohesion can only increase our opinion of Aimon's skills and abilities as a story-teller and rewriter as it shows a deep understanding of what is needed to craft a fully realised romance.

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[8] See also Chapter 1, p. 47

It would seem, then, that rewriting and intertextuality were apt methods to adopt in our approach to *Florimont*: they have opened up the text to give us a snap-shot of a genre in the throes of evolution and of a poet using all the methods available to him to explore this genre and further advance its evolution. Our discussion of *Florimont*'s intertextuality has also suggested that a close examination of the relationship between *Florimont* and the different Alexander romances could yield potentially fruitful results and tell us a great deal more about Aimon's influence on his successors if, as we have suggested, the author of the L redaction of the *Roman d'Alexandre* used *Florimont* as well as the existing Alexander material in his description of Alexander's education. Obviously this is an area which needs further work before any firm conclusion can be reached but there is a real potential here both to deepen our understanding of the convoluted history of the French Alexander tradition and to re-assess the impact of *Florimont* in this domain. Having identified *adiectio* as the most common rewriting technique we might suggest that future students of *Florimont* be on the lookout for this technique, most especially in combination with other rewriting techniques. Similarly, we might suggest that, when considering texts that *Florimont* may have engaged with, critics look initially at popular texts which have some bearing either on classical antiquity or past times of some sort. It is in this respect that we might suggest a re-evaluation of the relationship between *Florimont* and *Floire et Blancheflor*. We have seen that the two texts are related but it may be worthwhile analysing this relationship in light of the rewriting methods outlined by Kelly to establish the full extent of this relationship.

This examination of intertextuality has not only served to open up the text but has also raised the question of Aimon de Varennes' poetic abilities and, indeed, the status of *Florimont* as a literary text. The discussion of the rewriting techniques employed by Aimon has revealed that he was using the composition techniques available to him (in this case the specific techniques used for rewriting) in a sophisticated, sometimes innovative manner, combining one or more techniques in achieve particular effects in his own work. That he is capable of doing so should give us pause and perhaps make us willing to reconsider *Florimont*'s status: it has been relatively neglected thus far but is what we have learnt from studying its interactions with previous texts enough to form a basis for reconsidering the text as a whole? The decision to approach *Florimont* from an intertextual viewpoint was arrived at after a consideration of the literature currently available on the text, which had

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suggested that intertextual links and rewriting might be an area of some significance. In light of how much we have learnt from our examination of this one particular aspect of *Florimont* we must ask ourselves if it might not be worthwhile returning to these previous studies to see if there are any further areas of potential interest.

In this respect it is worth briefly signalling those areas which have elicited critical interest. One of these is the area that Fourrier saw as *Florimont*'s principal charm – namely, Aimon's knowledge of Balkan geography. We have not had time to consider it here but the geography portrayed in *Florimont* is both remarkably detailed and remarkably accurate. We see this first as Aimon gives details (ll. 165-172) of how one would travel overland from New Babylon in Egypt to Greece, naming Syria, Antioch and Turkey. Aimon displays further geographical knowledge as we are told that Philip sets sail from Damiate, suffers a storm at sea and drifts for days before arriving at 'Avedon' (ll. 443-48) (Abedos). From there we are told that Philip goes overland, travelling through Albania and into Bulgaria (ll. 485-86) before eventually settling where he will found Philipopolis. Similarly detailed knowledge can also be seen in Aimon's description of the war with the Hungarian king Camdiobras. On a large scale this extends to naming Russia as an ally of Camdiobras and Cyprus as an ally of Philip. On a small scale Aimon's geography becomes more interesting as he names specific Hungarian cities (at l. 1623 he refers to 'Magerone', today Mangjelos) and even goes so far as to name a mountain in Apulia (Mount Gargano, l. 3646) and the city (Siponto, l. 3648) at its feet. For further instances of Aimon's detailed knowledge of Balkan geography one need look no further than Hilka's index of proper names, which contains well over fifty geographical references, the majority of which are clustered around the Balkan area. Coupled with Aimon's purported knowledge of the Greek language this is a potentially interesting area of investigation – why did Aimon claim to know Greek and include it in *Florimont*? Can we verify the local legends and geography related in *Florimont*? These would seem to be fruitful areas for future research.

Alongside this it may be worthwhile considering Aimon's skills as a composer and examining other techniques he may have used. Paulin Paris refers to a 'véritable talent de versification et de composition' (vol. 3, p. 51) when talking about *Florimont* whilst also noting a use of dialogue rarely found in other texts.[9] Hilka concurs with this, suggesting

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[9] 'Le poëte [sic] emploie heureusement la forme dialoguée dont j'ai vu peu d'autres exemples dans nos anciens romans', vol. 3, p. 25

that Aimon's use of dialogue is second only to that of Chrétien de Troyes[10] and also commenting that, in his development of Love dialogues and monologue Aimon may be said to equal both Chrétien and the author of the *Enéas*.[11] Together with this use of dialogue we have Aimon's humour and the didactic tone which appears in the narrative at times. Fourrier notes that the monologues and dialogues in *Florimont* 'prennent souvent le ton du « chastoiement », de la leçon morale' (p. 464), whilst Hilka refers to the 'mehrere didaktische Exkurse' (p. cxxxii) contained within the poem. Of particular interest regarding this potential didactic theme are Floquart's lengthy disquisition on largesse and Florimont's discussion with the *Dame de l'Ile Celee* about the nature of love. As we have noted (p. 60), the tone of Floquart's speech is strongly didactic, suggesting that Aimon may have been familiar with didactic literature or may eve have adapted this speech from an unknown source or sources. The presentation of Florimont's discussion with the *Dame*, meanwhile, though we have not been able to examine it in detail, suggests that Aimon was aware of the debates surrounding the concept of love. After coming to the decision that they will be lovers (itself presented in an unusual fashion: Aimon demonstrates awareness of the usual precepts of *fin' amors* when he has Florimont protest that he cannot possibly be the *Dame*'s *ami* for he is not yet a knight (ll. 2436-40)), the *Dame* and Florimont discuss the nature of love and how one behaves when in love. This discussion lasts for nearly a hundred lines (ll. 2550-2622) and is unusual in its positioning of philosophical discussion of love between the two lovers themselves rather than between a lover and confidant. Moreover, that this debate comes at the start of a love affair that is ultimately detrimental to the hero certainly suggests that it is worthy of further investigation. Such an investigation might compare the depiction of love painted by this debate with further, contemporary portrayals of love, both from within *Florimont* itself – how the love discussed by Florimont and the *Dame* compares with that Romadanaple and Florimont feel for one another for example – and from outside our text, with the love portrayed in other romances or with the views of *fin amors* presented by Andreas Capellanus or those found in lyric poetry. Such comparisons would give us a deeper understanding of Aimon's depiction of love, which may in turn deepen our understanding of the text. Aimon had signalled his engagement with largesse – a contemporary pre-occupation – in his Prologue; interestingly, in this same Prologue the concept of love – a second contemporary pre-occupation – is closely entwined with that of

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[10] Quoted Chapter 5, p. 226, footnote 57.
[11] Quoted in Chapter 5, p. 236, footnote 72.

largesse as Aimon compares the love felt in his day with that experienced in Florimont's day, suggesting that since this time Love has been corrupted by Avarice (ll. 53-60). These comments seem to signal the beginning of an engagement not just with the concept of largesse, as we have seen, but with the concept of love also, an engagement which then sees its first important airing in the debate between Florimont and the *Dame*. The link between these two pre-occupations is, as we have seen, a significant one in terms of the plot development of *Florimont*. It is Florimont's disappointment in love – as the *Dame* leaves him – which causes his misapplication of the implicit rules of largesse and leads to his poverty.

Aimon's humour and sense of playfulness are also areas which we have come across repeatedly in our discussion of *Florimont*. We have seen how Aimon combines his intertexts in his presentation of the bedroom scene so as to tease his audience, toying with their expectations by dangling a possible consummation of Florimont and Romadanaple's love in front of them. Fourrier meanwhile mentions another aspect of this playfulness, saying of Aimon's etymological games that 'ces fantaisies nous font sourire' (p. 483). Similarly, elements such as the relationship and banter between Floquart and Thecier provide ongoing moments of light relief throughout the text and seem designed to entertain the audience, suggesting that Aimon is using humour as a further tool in his compositional kit. In those aspects of humour which we have been able to examine in detail we have seen that Aimon seems to have used his humour at strategic points in the text, as a way of emphasising philosophies and of smoothing intertextual transitions. Thus although we feel the urge to laugh at Florimont when presented with the image of him fainting repeatedly in the *Dame*'s arms, the humour – coupled with his later excess – makes a serious point, underscoring Florimont's immaturity and his need to develop, a need closely associated with both love and largesse, important concepts for Aimon and areas around which he seems to have presented his own philosophies. We have examined the role that Aimon's philosophy of largesse plays in structuring the text, but have only touched upon how this philosophy is linked with the portrayal of love, as evidenced by Florimont's reaction to the loss of the *Dame*. Further evidence of a link between love and largesse might be seen in Romadanaple's first thoughts of Florimont. His generosity having ensured that he is the talk of the city upon his arrival, Sipriaigne gives Romadanaple a favourable account of Florimont's behaviour, an account which causes the first stirrings of love in Romadanaple's

heart (ll. 5625-66). A closer examination of Aimon's humour, and the points at which it occurs, would enable us to ascertain if Aimon has consistently deployed humour as a way of highlighting these important areas of philosophy. The introduction of humour into the bedroom scene meanwhile, though it does not seem to highlight any particular philosophy, allows Aimon to incorporate references to the bedroom scenes of two intertexts – *Partonopeus* and *Cligés* – with opposing dominant themes, of castration and congress, without causing these different themes to clash in his own work. Such a use suggests that Aimon was able to use humour in more than one way, as a structural element, a tool to facilitate the interweaving of intertexts as well as a way of reinforcing philosophical points.

It seems that *Florimont* has much to offer not only in terms of what we might learn from further discussions of its rewriting but also in other areas. With this relative abundance of riches – both potential and explored – perhaps we should stop wondering why this text has been relatively neglected and instead proceed with correcting this neglect. In an era where originality was to be found via the medium of retelling popular stories we can hardly be surprised by the success enjoyed by Aimon's romance. Infinitely complex and full of subtle rewrites and delightful touches, it is no surprise that *Florimont* has survived to this day and, at a time when we are rediscovering the importance of rewriting for medieval composition, it is a text more than worthy of the renewed critical interest which scholars have begun to exhibit.

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