FAMILY, FOLLOWERS AND FRIENDS:

THE SOCIO-POLITICAL DYNAMICS

OF THE

ANGLO-NORMAN ARISTOCRACY,

1100-1204

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ABSTRACT

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Three groups are examined: the family, followers and friends. The structure, functions and tensions of these groups are described and their dynamics analysed in the fields of decision making and conflict resolution.

The approach offers a dialectic between Latin and French sources, historical and literary, and social science theories. This opens up new avenues for analysis and allows a holistic description of medieval politics and society.

The family comprised parents and their children. Within this small unit affection was very strong; outside, it quickly declined. Although uncles and nephews had political links there was considerably less emotional attachment between them than between parent-child and sibling relationships.

Three types of follower are examined: household retainers, enfeoffed tenants and 'neighbours'. Household knights had the strongest emotional bonds to their lord and were seen as the most loyal. Tenants who performed homage were called 'men'; 'vassal' is shown to mean 'good follower'. An aristocrat exercised considerable control within his lands and beyond them he maintained some power. In these areas people may have obeyed his will without having any direct link with him. Such people were often called 'neighbours'. Informal influences such as love and fear are shown to have more force than the formal bonds created through homage and oaths. Concepts of 'treason' and 'defiance' are also examined.

Five types of friendship are identified: friendship as courtesy, formal friendship, emotional friendship, company and companionship. Calling someone 'friend' was a sign of politeness. Political agreements, often termed covenants, created formal bonds of friendship. A new methodology for investigating emotional friendship is proposed. Groups with a strong identity were called companies. Companionship was a close bond, usually between two men, that combined elements of formal and emotional friendship.

This description of the socio-political dynamics of the aristocracy offers an alternative to earlier models and greatly enhances our understanding of Anglo-Norman politics and society.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PREFACE

The evidence presented in this thesis comes largely from two distinct types of source, agreements and literary texts. Many aspects of these agreements were discussed at greater length in my MA (1994), and secondary literature to each is discussed there in lengthier appendices. The reference system has been maintained: '?' means there may have been an agreement; '??' means that, although there were negotiations, the settlement was never concluded. Some changes have been made to the status accorded to each agreement. The word *conventio* has been used less extensively than in my MA as there are problems in defining what exactly a *conventio* is and whether this 'all' agreements can be called *conventiones*.

Both the original and translations of literary texts have been used. This is regrettable as sometimes the translations are somewhat less than reliable. Because of comprehension difficulties, the works of Chrétien de Troyes and Béroul were originally read through translation with the intention of later checking and converting the references into the Old French original. However, time constraints have meant this has largely been impossible. This is an acknowledged flaw. Where the precise, original phrase has been crucial to the argument, reference has been made to the line of the original text. This somewhat counteracts the problem but is still far from ideal.

ABBREVIATIONS

ANS	*Anglo-Norman Studies*
Beauchamp	*The Beauchamp Chartulary: Charters 1100-1268*, ed. Emma Mason (Pipe Roll Society, new series, 43; 1983).
Béroul	Line references to Béroul, *Le Roman de Tristan. Poème du XIIe siècle*, ed. Ernest Muret (Paris, 1982); page references to *The Romance of Tristan* trans. Alan S. Fedrick (Harmondsworth, 1970).
Chester	*The Charters of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester, c. 1071-1237*, ed. Geoffrey Barraclough (Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, no. 126; 1988).
Cligés	Line references to Chrétien de Troyes, *Œuvres Complètes*, ed. Daniel Poirion (Édition Gallimard, 1994); page references to *Arthurian Romances*, trans. William W. Kibler (Harmondsworth, 1991).
Dermot	*The Song of Dermot and Earl Richard Fitzgilbert. Le Chansun de Dermot e li Quens Ricard Fiz Gilbert*, ed. Denis J. Conlon (Frankfurt am Main, 1992).
Éerc et Énide	Line references to Chrétien de Troyes, *Œuvres Complètes*, ed. Daniel Poirion (Édition Gallimard, 1994); page references to *Arthurian Romances*, trans. William W. Kibler (Harmondsworth, 1991).
Fantosme	Jordan Fantosme, *Chronique de la Guerre entre les Anglais et les Ecossois en 1173 et 1174*, in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ed. R. Howlett, vol. 3 (Rolls Series, 1886).
Glamorgancia	*Cartae et alia munimenta quae ad dominium de Glamorgancia pertinent*, ed. G. T. Clark, vol. 1 (Cardiff, 1910).
Gloucester	*Earldom of Gloucester Charters: The charters and scribes of the earls and countesses of Gloucester to A. D. 1217*, ed. R. B. Patterson (Oxford, 1973).
GS	*Gesta Stephani*, ed. K. R. Potter, intro. R. H. C. Davis (Oxford, 1976).

Hereford	Z. N. and C. N. L. Brooke, 'Hereford Cathedral Dignitaries', *Cambridge Historical Journal*, 8, no. 3, p. 185.
HGM	*Histoire de Guillaume le Maréschal*, ed. P. Meyer, 3 vols. (Socété de l'Histoire de France, 1891-1901).
HN	William of Malmesbury, *The Historia Novella*, ed. and trans. K. R. Potter (London, 1955).
H of H	Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. T. Arnold (Rolls Series, 1879).
J of H	John of Hexham, *Historia*, in *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia*, ed. T. Arnold, vol. 2 (Rolls Series, 1886).
Lancelot	Line references to Chrétien de Troyes, *Œuvres Complètes*, ed. Daniel Poirion (Édition Gallimard, 1994); page references to *Arthurian Romances*, trans. William W. Kibler (Harmondsworth, 1991).
Le Carroi de Nimes	*Chanson de geste du XIIe siècle*, ed. J.-L. Perrier (Paris, 1972).
Le Couronnement de Louis	*Le Couronnement de Louis. Chanson de geste du XIIe siècle*, ed. Ernest Langlois (Paris, 1969).
Lib El	*Liber Eliensis*, ed. E. O. Blake, Royal Historical Society, Camden 3 series, 92 (1962).
Morganniae	Rice Merrick, *Morganniae Archaiographia*, ed. B. Ll. James (South Wales Record Society, I, 1983).
Orderic	Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. and trans. Marjorie Chibnall (Oxford, 1969-80).
Perceval	Line references to Chrétien de Troyes, *Œuvres Complètes*, ed. Daniel Poirion (Édition Gallimard, 1994); page references to *Arthurian Romances*, trans. William W. Kibler (Harmondsworth, 1991).
PR6HenryII	*Pipe Roll of 6 Henry II*, vol. 2 (London, 1884).
Red Book	*The Red Book of the Exchequer*, ed. H. Hall (Rolls Series, 1896).
Regesta 2	*Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum* vol. 2 1100-1135, eds. C. Johnson and H. A. Cronne (Oxford, 1956).
Regesta 3	*Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, vol. 3, *1135-1154*, eds. H. A. Cronne and R. H. C. Davis (Oxford, 1969).

R of H	Richard of Hexham, *De Gestis Regis Stephani et de Bello Standardi*, in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ed. R. Howlett, vol. 3 (Rolls Series, 1886).
Rot Chart	*Rotuli Chartarum*, ed. T. D. Hardy (Record Commission, 1837).
Round	J. H. Round, *Geoffrey de Mandeville: a study in the Anarchy* (London, 1892).
Stenton	F. M. Stenton, *The First Century of English Feudalism 1066-1166*, 2 edn. (Oxford, 1961).
Stubbs	*Select Charters and Other Illustrations of English Constitutional History from the Earliest Times to the Reign of Edward I*, ed. W. Stubbs, 9 edn. (Oxford, 1913).
Torigni	Robert de Torigny, *Chronica*, in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ed. R Howlett, vol. 4 (Rolls Series, 1889).
Thomas	Page references to *Tristan in Brittany*, trans. Dorothy Leigh Sayers (London, 1929); line references to 'Tristan' in *Les Tristan en vers*, ed. Jean Carles Payen (Paris, 1974).
TRHS	*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*
Yvain	Line references to Chrétien de Troyes, *Œuvres Complètes*, ed. Daniel Poirion (Édition Gallimard, 1994); page references to *Arthurian Romances*, trans. William W. Kibler (Harmondsworth, 1991).

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis analyses socio-political relationships in the Anglo-Norman world of the twelfth century. The twelfth century saw major changes in many fields[1] and it is against this background of change that the developments described in this thesis should be set.

Our prime concern will be the impact of social relations on the political world. While it may have been preferable to examine all socio-economic groups, the sources for this period do not allow this to be done; we will therefore be concerned only with the aristocracy.[2] We are, indeed, concerned with the aristocracy and not 'the nobility' for *nobilis* could refer to a middling social group as well as the aristocracy, whilst even the highest social group could contain people who were *ignobilis*.[3] Given these semantic problems it seems safer to use the more neutral and wide-ranging term 'aristocracy'. Use is also made of the term 'magnate'. By this term I mean major aristocrats who dominate a wide region.

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[1] For example, in demography (population increase and movement to areas such as the Middle East and from Germany eastwards), in the economy (extension of the area under cultivation, improved agricultural techniques leading to greater productivity, expansion of trade and increased urbanisation), in warfare (particularly the continued rapid growth of castle construction that was spurred on by the Norman Conquest of 1066), in knowledge (particularly scholasticism, and including knowledge of the wider world, such as Africa and the Middle East), in religion (such as the development of crusade and the growth of new monastic orders such as the Cistercians), in architecture (witnessing the transition from Romanesque to Gothic), in literature (a change from oral-based epics to written courtly Romance), and in government (particularly increased use of the written word, the emergence of an embryonic civil service, and legal reforms). Changes such as these may have created a new awareness of progress and a belief in a move towards greater perfection: G. Duby, 'The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century: Audience and Patronage', *Love and Marriage in the Middle Ages*, pp. 152-53.

[2] Duby has asserted that official documents reflect only the deliberate and deliberated attitudes of a single social group - the élite - and as a consequence hide whatever was spontaneous or restricted to other social groups: Georges Duby, *The Three Orders*, p. 7. As a result the documents can tell us only about the *mentalité* of the aristocracy as it is only this group that has left us with surviving testimony. An aristocracy can be defined through status, wealth or property: Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community', p. 351. In a larger study it would be interesting to also consider groups such as towns, peasants and military orders. Active urban political communities can be seen in Maine after 1066 (Normans against local men of Maine), Flanders c. 1127 (the murder of Charles the Good); Cambrai in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries following a disputed episcopal election); Cologne in 1074 (episcopal versus merchant faction); Rouen in the 1190s; Pisa from the second half of the twelfth century, in Florence in the fourteenth, in Cremona 1209-10 and in Pavia. These were 'political division[s] resting upon well-defined topographical blocs, at least at certain times': Jacques Heers, *Parties and Political Life in the Medieval West*, trans. David Nicholas, in *Europe in the Middle Ages. Selected Studies*, vol. 7, ed. Richard Vaughan (Amsterdam, 1977) pp. 80-82, 225-30. These groups may have stressed equality: Althoff, pp. 85-86. In such a study in must not be forgotten that there were many links between urban and rural localities: Heers, *Parties and Political Life in the Medieval West*, pp. 118-26; Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 33.

[3] D. B. Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain, 1000-1300* (London, 1992) pp. 2-9; Susan Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*, p. 45; Holt, *The Northerners*, pp. 57-59. Confusion also exists for other possible terms: *illustres, primates, proceres, primores, principes, magnates, maiores,* and *optimates,* for instance, all refer to a group within society which one could term 'the aristocracy': Crouch, *Image of Aristocracy*, pp. 2, 15-38. *Dominus* and *senior* can refer to both kings and lesser lords: Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*, p. 36.

The thesis is cast in the form of a social history of the type advocated by Georges Duby in his 1970 inaugural lecture.[4] The approach is similar to that of sociology as it seeks to find typical modes of action rather studying individual actions.[5] The aim is to understand social relations and how they impact on the political world.[6] This is synchronic analysis for it describes a society as if frozen in time. Studies of the family, followers and friends are concerned with social relationships. The combination of these studies and the search for deeper connections results in an analysis of social structure - of society as a whole.[7] However, being an historian I am also interested in developments over time. Whereas 'social structure' describes a society frozen in time, 'social organisation' allows for evolution.[8] This is diachronic analysis for it is a description of change over time. The aim of the thesis is therefore to construct models of social relations, to combine these to produce a model of the social structure, to chart the evolution of this organisation over the twelfth century, and to analyse how this influenced political behaviour. Following the description of social organisation there will therefore be an analysis of decision-making before finally assessing the relationships between social organisation and politics.

We will concentrate on three categories of relationships: family, followers and friends.[9] The first member of this trinity is based on biology, the second on political structure, and the third is a larger but less defined group that also serves as a unifying force for the other groups. Together with the pursuit of self interest, they largely determined the nature of loyalty in the Middle Ages. We will look at each category separately but will also examine how they were inter-connected.

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[4] G. Duby, *The Chivalrous Society*, trans. C. Postan (London, 1977) pp. 1-14. Duby prefered the word 'social' to that of 'culture': G. Duby, 'Problems and Methods in Cultural Society', in *Love and marriage in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1994) p. 133. Social history can be defined as 'the empirical reconstruction of past social and political systems, structures and their properties': D. Crouch, 'From Stenton to McFarlane: Models of Societies of the Twelfth to the Thirteenth Centuries', *TRHS*, 6th series, vol. 5 (1995) p. 179. See also C. Lloyd, *Explanation in Social History* (Oxford, 1986) pp. 14-17.

[5] Weber claimed Sociology to be interested in typical modes of action and History to be concerned with the causal explanation of individual events that influence human destiny: Max Weber, *Economy and Society. An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. Guenther Roth amd Claus Wittich, trans. Ephraim Fischoff, Hans Gerth, A. M. Henderson, Ferdinand Kolegar, C. Wright Mills, Talcott Parsons, Max Rheinstein, Guenther Roth, Edward Shils and Claus Wittich (New York, 1968) vol. 1, p. 29.

[6] This aim is broad but not all-encompassing. It does not include, for instance, ecology, demography and economy, areas that, when combined with politics and society, would form a 'history of civilisation'. See G. Duby, 'The History of Value Systems' in *Love and Marriage in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1994) p. 136.

[7] On the distinction between social relations and social structure see Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, trans. Claire Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest Shoepf (London, 1963) pp. 279-80.

[8] Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, p. 286. However, one should not expect great change: Duby has claimed that 'the history of value-systems does not undergo sudden change': Duby, 'The History of Value Systems', p. 136. He explains that the process is slow because ideological trends occur within a cultural framework that is built on bequested structures that are passed on through the system of education and reinforced by language, ritual and social convention: Duby, 'The History of Value Systems', p. 138.

[9] Vernacular literature supports this division. The *Song of Roland* records that when Charles and the Franks reach Rencesvals and see the dead:'They bewail their sons, their brothers, and their nephews, / their friends and their lords': *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 2420-21. The same division is seen in the *Song of Dermot* for we are told that Dermot's opponents include his 'relatives, kinsmen and friends [*pareins, cosins e amis*]' and men

The approach is very much that of a reductionist. I have tried to assume nothing about socio-political relationships. Unless there is evidence for a relationship I have not mentioned it. But where there is evidence for something it has been included, whether or not this fits in with received opinion. Through adopting this strategy it is hoped that the results are not tainted with preconceptions about medieval relationships. Of course, one cannot be wholly divorced from the ideas of the present, but the attempt is still worthwhile. The result is one that both questions and re-affirms orthodox opinion. Much may appear to be hair-splitting; but the hope is that it is hair-splitting with precision. Only through defining our terms carefully - and knowing how contemporaries used expressions - can we fully understand the dynamics of political society in the past.

In an attempt to view society as contemporaries viewed it I have avoided words and phrases used by historians describing this time. As such I have avoided terms such as 'fealty' and 'vassal', preferring contemporary words like *fidelitas* and *homo* or direct translations: faithfulness and man. Such a policy may seem a touch pedantic, but it is only by steering away from such anachronistic labelling that we can hope to perceive the organisation of society in the twelfth century, let alone how it was viewed by contemporaries.[10] For this reason - and because of the confusion it can bring - I have also avoided using the adjective 'feudal'. One will not find a 'feudal lord' or a 'feudal system' and find no institution of 'feudalism'.[11]

If one were to take the most formal rendering of the texts available to us then perhaps one could indeed talk of the 'institution of vassalage' and perhaps even of a 'feudal system', but such a rendering is not necessarily correct. In keeping as close as possible to the original

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from his household: *Dermot*, Ll. 149 (*pareins, cosins e amis*), 208 (*gent demeine*). This is an important observation as it means that (at least some) contemporaries also thought in these categories.

[10] In a similar vein, John Hudson has written that there is a danger of applying modern analytical terms to the Middle Ages as 'it risks focusing on definitions too specific to one system of law, and neglecting the terms of thought during the period': John Hudson, *Land, Law and Lordship*, p. 68, referring in particular to the modern distinction between succession and inheritance.

[11] The problems and uses associated with the word 'feudal' have long been the cause of dispute among historians: see for example F. M. Stenton, *The First Century of English Feudalism, 1066-1166* (Oxford, 1961 edn.); F. L. Ganshof, *Feudalism*, trans. P. Grierson (London, 1964 edn.); Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, trans. L. A. Manyon, 2 vols. (London, 1965); E. A. R. Brown, 'The tyranny of a construct: feudalism and historians of medieval Europe', *American Historical Review* 17 (1974) 1063-88; John O. Ward, 'Feudalism: interpretative category or framework of life in the medieval West', *Feudalism: comparative studies*, ed. E. Leach, S. N. Mucherjee and J. O. Ward (Sydney Studies in Society and Culture, no. 2, 1984); Susan Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals. The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (Oxford, 1994). It is perhaps strange that historians who shy away from 'feudalism' are more prepared to use the more awkward label of 'bastard feudalism': P. R. Coss, 'Bastard feudalism revised', *Past and Present* no. 125 (1989) 27-64; P. R. Coss, D. A. Carpenter and D. B. Crouch, 'Debate: Bastard Feudalism Revised', *Past and Present*, no. 131 (1991) 165-203. The attitude of some historians to using the phrase has been strange. J. S. Critchley, *Feudalism* (Guildford, 1978) wrote 'what is puzzling is why it is used.... The word is easily avoided after all.... Comparative studies have been responsible for a great deal of nonsense, much of it to do with feudalism' (p. 7) and showed how anything bad or unprogressive has been labelled as 'feudal' (especially pp. 159-91). Yet he did not shirk from using in a single page (p. 44) 'feudal lordship', 'feudal tenure', 'feudal concepts of

Latin, and attempting to not impose our own preconceived notions on the texts, it is perhaps wiser to translate passages informally. This approach has important consequences as the frequency with which twelfth-century writers used terms such as 'vassal' and 'fealty' is far lower than the frequency by which modern historians have used them.[12] This suggests that our view of twelfth-century society has been distorted by our approach to the work of translation; not finding what we expected to find, we invented it.

However, I have used modern terms as an aid to analysis. The use of neutral terms such as 'follower' (instead of 'vassal'), 'aristocracy' (as opposed to 'nobility' and 'baronage') and 'agreement' (replacing *conventio* and 'treaty') do not prejudice opinions by carrying with them the unwanted baggage of expectation and preconception. Admittedly such terms have problems - like 'feudalism' they are constructs without any foundation in the period. But this is also their advantage. So long as we do not make institutions out of these abstract terms they provide a useful analytical tool.[13]

Much attention will be paid to examining the ways in which terms were used by contemporaries. This is used not only to describe the system of terminology but also as a gateway to a wider understanding of the system of attitudes. Lévi-Strauss has shown that the 'kinship system', for instance, comprises not only vocabulary but also a system of attitudes that are psychological and social in nature.[14] This thesis widens this approach to include followers and friends as well as relatives. Through analysing the manner in which terminology is used, light is shed on the attitudes of the Anglo-Norman aristocracy.[15] These attitudes provide the social and psychological background to events and to the behaviour of individuals. It will then be possible to see whether individuals felt bound by this prescribed behaviour.

Our primary concern will not be with the formulations of academics as such formulations may have been divorced from common understanding. Instead we will use

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lordship', 'feudal court', and 'feudal kingship'. Later (p. 67) he comes up with the unhelpful observation that 'like feudal aristocrats, feudal officials... are at their most feudal when they are insubordinate'.

[12] This point is further brought out by a sentence in the *Gesta Stephani*. Regarding Stephen's relationship with Ranulf earl of Chester shortly before the battle of Lincoln in 1141 the chronicle claims that the king was advised '*viro ad foedus redintegrandum ad pacem innovandam recepto*'. Taking the most formal rendering possible, this sentence could by read as 'to take the vassal back for the purpose of renewing the bond of fealty and re-establishing the peace'. By contrast, at its most informal the passage could simply mean 'to take the man back for the purpose of renewing the treaty and re-establishing peace'. In the first rendering a particular 'peace' (as in 'peace treaty') is to be renewed by a vassal re-taking his oath of fealty whereas in the second version 'peace' (meaning the absence of hostilities) is brought back by someone renewing a treaty. This is an important difference. The passage is: *Gesta Stephani*, ed. K. R. Potter, intro. R. H. C. Davis (Oxford, 1976) ch. 54, p. 111.

[13] Hudson has similarly defended Milsom's use of modern legal terminology: Hudson, 'Milsom's legal structure', p. 58.

[14] Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, p. 37.

[15] Milsom's model of the twelfth-century legal system has been justly criticised for its failure to sensitively examine contemporary terminology: Hudson, 'Milsom's legal straucture', pp. 58-59.

sources that originate from as close to the heart of aristocratic society as possible. This means we will concentrate on charters, agreements, chronicles, and literature. Legal texts are used, but with caution as we cannot be certain whether they show reality or an ideal. It should also be remembered that such texts show custom rather than law.[16] Charters and agreements served pragmatic political needs and as such reflect contemporary attitudes and methods. Chronicles and literature show how such formal bonds operated in practice and provide a narrative. They also show how words were used: chronicles, though often reflecting classical use, show the Latin; literature uses the language aristocrats would have spoken and may therefore reveal the phrases employed in their speech and thoughts.

Without understanding how contemporaries understood words we cannot come to a full - or even a reliable - understanding of their society. But historians are faced with an acute problem: the meanings of words change through geography and time.[17] Even within the Anglo-Norman period developments can be seen to have occurred.[18] This urges caution.

Compared with earlier historians I have paid considerable attention to informal structures. This is particularly apparent in the discussions of 'Love and Fear' and 'Friendship'. A complex world emerges. Political society consisted of a complicated web of individuals connected through many types of relationship. These relationships were formed through blood, marriage, formal political structures and informal arrangements based on power and emotion. This view of political society is one of complexity and fluidity. But it is also a humane view for people emerge as rounded individuals with their own feelings and attitudes.

Emphasis is placed on periods of political unrest. This is because it was in such times that loyalty was tested and elaborations stripped away to reveal the beating heart of political society.[19]

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[16] *Glanvill*, for example, has no word for 'rule' (though *ius* is close): he mostly talks of what the royal court was accustomed (*solet*) to do. On this see Paul R Hyams, 'Review of *The Legal Framework of English Feudalism* by S. F. C. Milsom', *EHR*, 93 (1978) p. 859.

[17] Susan Reynolds has argued that many medieval Latin words, including *feodum* and *dominium*, emerged only in the fourteenth century through the work of lawyers, and then gained a wider currency through their sixteenth-century descendents. Nor can one assume that the ideals surrounding the concept of loyalty in the Carolingian period were the same as those for the entire medieval period. See Susan Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*, pp. 3-12, 32, 72.

[18] During the later eleventh century in Normandy the words alodium and beneficium were replaced, and to an extent augmented, by feodum: J. C. Holt, 'Politics and property in early medieval England', *Past and Present* 53 (1972) p. 6; J. C. Holt, 'Feudal society and the family in early medieval England: II. Notions of patrimony', *TRHS* 5th Series 33 (1983) p. 214. Similarly, during the twelfth century the wording of charter regrants shows development: John Hudson, *Land, Law and Lordship* pp. 72-77.

[19] This explains why particular emphasis is placed on the troubled years of King Stephen's reign when, according to the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*, 'The realm [was] in great disarray, / For no peace, truce, or agreement was kept, / And the law of the land was disregarded': *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréschal*, ed. P. Meyer, 3 vols. (Société de L'histoire de France, 1891-1901).

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HISTORICAL SOURCES

As with all historical research, our first concern must be with sources. Much historical research in the last century has concentrated on the examination of charter witness lists. Although much of this has clearly been profitable - particularly the study of individual lordships - they are of limited (though important) value to the study of socio-political relationships in the twelfth century. Why is this?

Historians have concentrated on charters because narrative acounts have been seen as untrustworthy. But here we are concerned not only with the outward form of society but also with the feelings and ideas of those within it. For this purpose chronicles and literary sources are of great value. These sources are full of unwitting testimony and subjective judgements - what to say and what not to say, as well as how to say it - and these judgements are of great value to us. But one must be careful: most chronicle writers of the twelfth century were monks and one must be aware that their values may have been restricted to their own very limited social group. But since many monks and clerics drew their origins from the aristocracy chronicles remain an avenue into the *mentalité* of the aristocracy.

Studies based on charters tend to emphasise the honorial nature of political society. This is only natural as charters were produced in this environment.[20] But this does not necessarily mean that historians should place such emphasis on the honor. Indeed, through concentrating on the honor historians may have neglected other aspects of the political world. In particular, since the honor was part of the legal structure sources produced within this environment tend to emphasise the formal aspects of politics at the expense of such ties as friendship and affinity.

David Bates has argued that eleventh century Anglo-Norman 'witness' lists were sometimes drawn up *after* the charter was drawn up.[21] Although Bates draws his argument from eleventh century evidence it is unclear how long such practices remained.[22] It may be

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[20] Crouch, 'From Stenton to McFarlane, p. 184.

[21] He argues that sometimes charters were taken round for neighbouring lords to sign after the event. As such, witness lists may sometimes reveal not those who were present at court but those whom the lord thought to be important and/or were interested in the terms of the charter (such as family members or people with land adjacent to the area mentioned in the charter). This means that we cannot be certain that those people listed in a charter were present when the terms of the charter were recorded. See D. R. Bates, 'The prosopographical study of Anglo-Norman royal charters: some problems and perspectives', a paper delivered at the Oxford Prosopographical Conference, 30 March 1995.

[22] Hudson has argued that until the middle of the twelfth century many *acta* would have been written up by the receiver: John Hudson, 'Diplomatic and legal aspects of the charters', *The Journal of the Chester*

they continued into the twelfth century, and any legislation prohibiting it is evidence for its continued existence and not for its eradication (if it did not occur, why prohibit it?). Yet even when a witness list was drawn up later it remains that the names recorded must have been known well enough by one of the contracting parties for them to trust that they would testify to the agreement[23] or were so powerful in that field that their consent was needed.

Another problem is whether we can accept witness lists as a reliable guide to the usual attendance of an individual at court. In most baronial cases - if we are lucky - we have a couple of charters for each year. Bearing in mind Bates' warnings, each list reveals the presence of an individual only for that particular day. It does not necessarily follow that he was present on other days. Even where we have someone who attests regularly we cannot conclude with certainty that he attended the court for more than a few days each year. This problem is exacerbated by the tendency to use only people who were important or interested in the terms of the charter as witnesses: less important people and people not concerned with the terms of the charter may have been at court without being recorded as witnesses.[24]

A further problem is that the form and content of a witness list may have as much to do with tradition as with contemporary reality. The prominence of family members over followers and neighbours, for instance, has often been taken as evidence for the importance of family ties. This may not be justified. As such they cannot be seen as a reliable guide to the comparative importance of family, followers and friends. It should further be noted that each of the different forms of charter diplomatic may have had their own form of witnessing.

Even if we were to accept that a witness list did name those people present and that the ordering and inclusion of names was not dependent on tradition or diplomatic there are still problems of interpretation. For instance, witness lists tell us nothing about the motivation of the individual.

Taken together these concerns amount to a major problem. Let us take a hypothetical example. Suppose a lord invites his associates to a counsel and a charter is drawn up during the meeting. Who will be recorded as witnesses? If Bates is correct then some of the people on the list will not have been present. Some of those present would be the peers of the lord, some his friends, others his subordinates, and some, perhaps, his superiors. But even when we know such information it does not tell us the motivation behind this attendance. Similar

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Archaeological Society, 71 (1991) p. 154. Webber has also said that charters could have been produced after the event and in a different place: Teresa Webber, 'The scribes and handwriting of the original charters', in A. T. Thacker, ed., *The Earldom of Chester and its Charters. A Tribute to Geoffrey Barraclough, Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society*, vol. 71 (Chester, 1991) pp. 140.

[23] Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community, p. 369.

[24] Hyams has also warned us that witnesses did not necessarily have a claim to the land granted: their consent was recorded because they might cause trouble. See Hyams, 'Review of *The legal Framework*', p. 860.

problems arise when we have multiple witness lists for a single lordship. An examination of these - unless Bates is correct - reveals the minimum number of times an individual was present at court. But it does not show *why* they turned up.

People might go to court for many different reasons. Some might go out of a genuine affection for either the grantor or the grantee. Some might go because they were interested in the subject matter of the transaction. Others might feel obliged to go through fear of the consequences of not turning up - either losing an opportunity to benefit from largesse or provoking the anger of the lord - wrath that might have serious tenurial, political, economic and military consequences. This factor would be particularly strong among tenants of the lord. A few might go simply to 'butter up' the lord and get on his good side irrespective of their real sentiments towards him. Still others might go not to attend that lord but to meet others who would be present. Clearly not everyone at court would have been on good terms with everyone. There are a number of reasons why people might turn up - and still more why they might have been absent (such as illness and prior commitments). For most people several factors are likely to have been involved - self-interest, friendship, obligation, familial solidarity.... By itself a witness list cannot reveal which factors were present.

Yet frequently historians have seen only power relationships when they investigate witness lists. They say things such as 'X was drawn to Y by his power and wealth', that 'Z was creating an affinity'. But whilst this might often have been the case it is foolish to close our minds to other potential reasons why someone may have witnessed a charter. It is at least possible that some of the power relationships inferred from charter evidence by historians had less to do with 'lordship' (based on either tenure or affinity) than with 'friendship'. Where we have only charter attestations it is impossible to conclude with any certainty what the relationship between individuals was based on. It may have rested on domination and fear, but it could equally well have been affection; in most cases probably both were involved. In looking to explain a person's actions historians should perhaps be less willing to ascribe dark motivations and more willing to see the people of the past as fellow human beings.

Yet charters cannot be ignored for they provide a snapshot of political activity and allow key words to be analysed. They also allow individuals and their families to be studied in detail and the wealth of information that they record concerning lordships is essential if we are to glimpse how political dynamics operated.

It is hoped that by bringing an open mind to the questions posed by the above analysis some new light will be shed on the relationships between family, followers and friends. For example, through combining charter witness lists and chronicle evidence it can be

seen that Henry the Young King had a group of long-term friends throughout the 1170s and beyond (see the chapter on Emotional Friendship).

Similar to charters - and yet distinct - are political agreements. It has been argued that these agreements, concentrated in Stephen's reign, show an aristocracy acting without reference to the king and that these agreements led to a 'Magnates' Peace' that limited the extent of private warfare in the later years of the civil war.[25] These are pragmatic political documents created to meet specific problems and thus reflect contemporary attitudes and aspirations. As such they are of particular value as a guide to aristocratic behaviour during the civil war.

Although only a handful of agreements survive in complete texts many more can be found through a careful examination of chronicles.[26] Many of these would have been oral agreements confirmed by oaths before witnesses.[27] As such we cannot be certain that the chronicler preserved the terms and tone of the agreements.

A major drawback with all Latin sources is that in the twelfth century most people did not speak Latin. On the contrary they spoke different vernacular languages, such as English, Anglo-Norman French, Middle High German and Occitan. To understand the mentality of these people, to perceive the world through their eyes, it is necessary to consider texts written in these languages. Only then can we hope to see what most people understood by concepts such as 'family' and 'friendship'.

Another value of literature is that it provides a different perspective of society, one which places greater emphasis on informal aspects of relationships. Although the information they give us should not be taken at face value, the detailing of life within the household and family allows us to glimpse with some degree of clarity important things such as social norms and values, family structure, and the precise meaning of words such as *vassus*. These sources allow for a detailed study of the ideals of socio-political relationships and of what was considered 'acceptable behaviour'. In addition, they regularly show the importance of emotion and friendship. This allows for a more comprehensive study of socio-political dynamics. The result is a sympathetic approach in which people are perceived as complete individuals with complex emotions and a multiplicity of motivations.

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[25] R. H. C. Davis, *King Stephen 1135-54* (London, 1967) pp. 111-14.

[26] On this methodology see John Meddings, 'Loyalty and war in Twelfth Century England' (unpublished MA thesis, University of Leeds, 1994), pp. 6-7.

[27] This point is made by Marjorie Chibnall in discussing agreements recorded by Orderic Vitalis: 'Anglo-French', p. 16. On whether twelfth-century agreements in England were written or oral in nature see Meddings, pp. 9-15.

But using such sources is fraught with difficulty. The poets wanted them to be popular, and the widespread dissemination of some of the texts is evidence of how far they succeeded To achieve popularity poets combined parody, idealism and realism, as well as symbolism and humour. Considerable care is therefore needed to use such texts as a guide to social reality. One has to sift through the text trying to separate the reliable from the imaginary, bearing in mind, of course, that even the imaginary is important for analysing ideas. Such problems are difficult to overcome, but the struggle can lead to important insights.

Literary texts must, in some way, be connected to the environment in which they were produced. At the very least they show us contemporary use of language. It follows that vernacular literature shows us a vocabulary that was used to describe feelings and experiences in the real world. People who came into contact with such literature, whether from private reading or public performance, would have been influenced by it and may have picked up ideas, words and phrases from the literature. It does not necessarily follow that the ideas expressed were mirrored in the real world; but by providing words they may have allowed people to express their feelings in a way they could not have done beforehand.

Vernacular literature expresses secular feeling. Even if some of the authors were clerics most texts present secular life and express secular ideals. The Church is seldom mentioned and clerics play only minor roles. This secularity is useful as it means that the texts may indeed represent a lay view of the world and provide a reliable picture of the attitudes and expressions of lay society.

A further problem when using vernacular texts is the danger of forming a 'composite view' of the Middle Ages. This is where historians take what they want from a plurality of sources whilst ignoring differences between them (of date, region or author). It should always be borne in mind that different people had different views, that an individual might change their mind over time, and that the view expressed might have had as much to do with the attitude of the patron as it had with the view of the author.

A final problem is that many of the texts were produced outside England. Can we use literature as a guide to twelfth-century England? The answer is 'yes', and for two reasons. Firstly, one can see that vernacular literature circulated widely within the French-speaking world.[28] Moreover, it should not be forgotten that the material used by many of the authors was the 'Matter of Britain'. Furthermore, it is likely that some of the authors, such as Marie

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[28] The author of the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*, for instance, seems to show an awareness of the of the French Romance of Alexander.

de France, travelled in Britain. Secondly, many of the authors wrote in the Anglo-Norman dialect.[29] It is worth looking at some of these authors more closely.

The most popular author of the twelfth century was probably Chrétien de Troyes.[30] Here we will be concerned only with his Arthurian romances. These are *Érec et Énide*, *Cligés*, *Lancelot*, *Yvain*, and *Perceval*. Little is known of the man, but he appears to be from the area around Troyes, a hundred miles south east of Paris on the Seine in the region of Champagne. Given his allusions to Classical literature it is likely that he was educated as a cleric, although he could have acquired this knowledge through reading translations.[31] His patrons appear to have included Marie de Champagne and Philip of Flanders[32] but he may have had direct links with the English realm as he shows a knowledge of the topography of Britain that suggests a familiarity with the England of Henry II. There was also a link between England and Troyes in the person of Henry of Blois, abbot of Glastonbury (1126-71) and bishop of Winchester (1129-71): he was the uncle of Henry the Liberal of Champagne and had contacts with contemporary writers such as Geoffrey of Monmouth and William of Malmesbury.[33]

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[29] Gaimar wrote in the Anglo-Norman dialect and had close links with England. He wrote at the request of Custance, wife of Robert fitz Gilbert, under the patronage of Ralph fitz Gilbert and used documents supplied by Walter Espec from Robert of Gloucester. He seems to have been writing 1135-47. Only four manuscripts survive, none of which is contemporary. On the background of the author and his sources see: Gaimar, *Lestoire des Engles*, ed. Sir Thomas Duffus Hardy and Charles Trice Martin, 2 vols. (Rolls Series, 1888-89) vol. 2, pp. xiii-xxiii. The surviving fragments of *Tristan* by Thomas are written in the Anglo-Norman dialect of the mid-twelfth century: *Tristan in Britanny*, trans. Dorothy Leigh Sayers (London, 1929) p. xxix. The poet identifies himself as Thomas at Ll. 2134, 3127. Whilst it is a shame when any text is incomplete our loss is made far heavier in this case because the depth of characterisation and concern with motive is greater in the work than in most others. Jordan Fantosme uses either the Anglo-Norman dialect or that of Poitou. Howlett has shown him to have been a clerk of Henry of Blois bishop of Winchester: '*Chronique de la Guerre Entre les Anglois et les Ecossois en 1173 et 1174, par Jordan Fantosme*' in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, vol. 3, ed. Richard Howlett (Rolls Series, 1886) no. 82, pp. lxii-lxiii. The author identifies himself at Ll. 674, 1152. The *Chanson de Roland*, probably written 1130-1170, although the text may have been revised by a later twelfth-century scribe, is in the Anglo-Norman dialect. See the 'Introduction' to *The Song Of Roland*, trans. Glyn Burgess.

[30] A guide to this popularity can be seen in the number of surviving manuscripts. *Érec et Énide*, *Cligés*, *Lancelot* and *Yvain* survive more or less completely in seven manuscripts of the thirteenth century while *Perceval* is preserved in fifteen. The information given here is largely taken from the 'Introduction' found in Chrétien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances*, trans. William W. Kibler (Harmondsworth, 1991). Dorothy Sayers described Chrétien as a 'prolific society novelist' who wrote 'nice' poems for refined ladies and gentlemen and condemned *Cligés* as 'probably the most tedious poem in the world': *Tristan in Britanny*, trans. Dorothy Leigh Sayers (London, 1929) pp. xxix, xxxi.

[31] See 'Introduction' of William W. Kibler, p. 5.

[32] In the prologue of *Lancelot* Chrétien says that he composed the romance for 'my lady of Champagne'. This would seem to refer to Marie de Champagne, the daughter of Louis VII of France and Eleanor of Aquitaine. This places the composition no earlier than 1159 as Marie only became 'of Champagne' on her marriage to the count of Champagne, Henry the Liberal, in 1159: 'Introduction' of William W. Kibler, pp. 4-5. *Perceval*, by contrast, is dedicated to Philip of Flanders. Philip became count in 1168. It is likely that this work was composed before the death of Philip in the Holy Land in 1191 (and probably before he departed on the crusade in 1190) but after the death of Henry in 1181. Since *Perceval* was never completed it is usually taken as being curtailed by the death of Chrétien: 'Introduction' of William W. Kibler, p. 5. This means a working life of 1159-1191, although his earlier works may have been written before this date.

[33] See 'Introduction' of William W. Kibler, pp. 5-6. A further link may be seen in the way the description of Érec's coronation reflects contemporary politics. In 1169 Henry II held court at Christmas at Nantes and used it to force the engagement of his son Geoffrey to the daughter of Conan IV of Brittany. This meeting may be

The lays of Marie de France are more problematic for we do not know the name of the author, the sex of the author, or even if they are all by the same author.[34] There are twelve poems attributed to Marie. Only *Guigemar*, *Lanval* and *Yonec* appear in more than two manuscripts; *Laüstic*, *Chaitivel* and *Eliduc* are found in just one. These lays were probably intended to be read rather than sung.[35] The mentioning of Caerleon, Caerwent, Carlisle, Totnes and Exeter suggests she travelled around Britain and she may have known Gaimar's *Estoire des Engleis* (c. 1135) and have been familiar with Wace's *Brut* (c. 1155).[36] Possible patrons are William de Mandeville earl of Essex (1167-75, dying 1189),[37] William Longsword (the earl of Salisbury from 1196; born c.1150, the illegitimate son of Henry II and Rosamund Clifford) and William Marshal (earl of Striguil and Pembroke from 1189, regent of England 1216-19).

The MS of *The Song of Dermot and the Earl Richard Fitzgilbert* dates from the late 1220s[38] and covers the period 1169-75. It is written in the Hiberno-Norman dialect of the late twelfth and early thirteenth century, which is itself a branch of Anglo-Norman.[39] It appears to be derived from an eye-witness account by Morris (or Morice) Regan who was Dermot's *latimer* (clerk, interpreter, secretary).[40] The poem therefore dates from the very end of our period or just beyond. It is included as it has much to add to our analysis of loyalty. But one must be careful when using this source as a guide to Anglo-Norman practice, such as when the poet calls the Anglo-Norman leaders 'chieftains' (*cheveintainnes*).[41]

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reflected in the coronation scene of Érec in *Érec et Énide*. Firstly, Chrétien's list of guests includes people from all over Henry II's dominions but none from those of his Capetian rival. Secondly, the throne on which Érec is seated has carved leopards on the arms, the heraldic sign of Henry II. Thirdly, Érec's coronation chair was donated by Bruainz des Illes, who may be identified as Brian fitz Count of Wallingford, a key supporter of the Angevins. From this it is possible to argue that Érec *et Énide* was composed, in part at least, to help legitimise Henry's (and Geoffrey's) position in Brittany by stressing the link between the Plantagenets and Arthur. For this deduction see 'Introduction' of William W. Kibler, p. 6. This would place the composition of *Érec et Énide* shortly after 1169. It would also have made it more interesting for his original audience through topical reference.

[34] In all this there is but one reference to Marie. However, 'Dame Marie' is also referred to by Denis Piramus, writing around 1180, who records the popularity of her poems with both men and women at court. It is important to note here that Denis Piramus is only associated with England, meaning that Marie's work was known and popular in England, probably in the 1170s and 1180s, although some of the texts may have been composed in the early 1150s. The final lines of the Prologue dedicate the work to a 'noble king', whom Burgess and Busby believe to be Henry II. Marie herself was probably not Marie de Champagne but may have been Marie abbess of Shaftesbury, Mary abbess of Reading, Marie daughter of Waleran of Meulan (though she may be too young, probably being born in the late 1140s) or Marie daughter of King Stephen (countess of Boulogne from 1154) but none of these is certain. On this see the 'Introduction' to *The Lais of Marie de France*, trans. Glyn S. Burgess and Keith Busby (Harmondsworth, 1986).

[35] *Marie de France*, p. 25.

[36] *Marie de France*, p. 23.

[37] She dedicates her *Fables* to a 'Count William', but this might also refer to William of Gloucester (d. 1183) whose father had supported both William of Malmesbury and Geoffrey of Monmouth

[38] Conlon dates the MS to 1226-30: *The Song of Dermot and the Earl Richard Fitzgilbert. Le Chansun de Dermot e li Quens Ricard Fiz Gilbert*, ed. Denis J. Conlon (Frankfurt am Main, 1992) p. ix. It was dated by Orpen to before c. 1225: in *The Song of Dermot and the Earl*, ed. Goddard Henry Orpen (Oxford, 1892).

[39] Conlon, p. xi.

[40] *Dermot*, Ll. 1-9; Conlon, p. ix-x; Orpen, p. vi

[41] *Dermot*, L. 609.

These are the main literary sources used in this thesis. As we have seen, all seem to be connected with England in some way, whether through patronage, dialect or knowledge of local geography. This means they should be reliable guides to the social and political organisation of the aristocracy in twelfth-century England.

ii

USING THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Anyone who draws a link between two occurences uses theory to do so. Often these theories are 'common sense' observations that can provide convincing explanations, but theories are best stated clearly and explicitly. This can be done by examining theories drawn from social science. The added bonus of this approach is that social scientists may have ideas that the historian working alone would not think of. Considerable attention in this thesis is therefore given to these theories.

It may be argued, however, that modern theory should not be used to examine the past as people were different then.[42] Certainly there are many pitfalls for those who seek to adopt a psycho-analytical approach to the study of individuals. This thesis does not do this. Instead it uses ideas from social psychology, sociology, anthropology and management to examine group behaviour and the bonds within groups. Such theories do not rely on people being seen as individuals and so concerns over whether people in the Middle Ages were 'individuals' can be put to one side. Even if individuality were central to the theories, however, it could be argued that by the twelfth century people were 'individuals'.[43] Moreover, if people were not individuals then they were part of a collective body,[44] and in this case the forces influencing groups today would still have operated and may even have been stronger.

The study of medieval loyalty is, in large part, the study of the psychology of the past. To understand why people were loyal or not it is necessary to assess the factors that may have influenced their decisions. These factors include not only the political forces which historians have long recognised but also the hidden personal ones. What emerges is a more

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[42] This is the view held by A. J. Gurevich, *Categories of Medieval Culture*, trans. G. L. Campbell (London, 1985) pp. 4, 7-8, 15. Although aspects of medieval values are indeed strange to us (such as repeating past authors being seen as laudable and concepts of time and freedom) it remains that there are also similarities. The past may be 'a foreign country', but it is not inhabited by aliens or madmen. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that modern academic scholarship makes frequent reference to authority: footnotes to secondary sources

[43] On this topic see W. Ullman, *The Individual and Society in the Middle Ages* (Baltimore, Maryland, 1966) and Colin Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual, 1050-1200* (Toronto, 1987).

[44] As argued, for example, by Gurevich, pp. 298, 300-1, 306. He sees individuality emerging in the thirteenth century with the growth of portraiture - such as the life-like works of Giotto - and vernacular literature that expressed more shades of emotion: Gurevich, p. 308. There are two problem with this. Firstly, it ignores the possibility that people in the Middle Ages may have been individuals without perceiving that they were. Secondly, the argument is based on interpreting art, but changes in style and genre may not be related to the emergence of individualism. Whilst the depiction of people as individuals shows an awareness of individuality the failure to depict individuality does not mean people were not individuals.

'human side' to the problems people faced and the decisions they made.[45] The intention is not to replace existing explanations of events in the past but to augment them. This is discussed in the section 'Socio-Political Dynamics in Action'.

Historians have used three conceptual frameworks to explain political decisions.[46] The first assumes individuals consistently operated in a logical manner and did so within a 'society' of atomised individuals.[47] This approach seeks to infer the aims of the individual by examining his policies and is often seen in biographies.[48] The second approach is to study how administrative machinery limited or augmented the capacity of an individual to act freely and rationally, such as by limiting his ability to process information or to find alternative sources of information. One may place studies on government machinery and administrative efficiency in this category.[49] The third framework stems from political science and focuses on the influence of local politics on national politics and of national politics on international politics. Here policy makers are seen to take steps only slowly through trying to keep all politically powerful groups satisfied. This is reflected in much modern historiography that emphasises the bargaining nature of medieval politics in which lords had to satisfy their (supposed) followers.[50] Medieval historians have sought explanations in each of these different and contrasting conceptual frameworks; indeed, many have combined two or all three of them in a single work.

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[45] Holt believed that 'to ignore this human quality is to tell a story which is at best arid, and at worst anachronistic. If the task of imagining what these men [the Northerners] were like is difficult, it is none the less essential': Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 17.

[46] These frameworks are described in I. L. Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: A psychological study of foreign-policy decisions and fiascos* (Boston, 1972) pp. 6-7. Janis is concerned with the approach of social scientists but the division works just as well for medieval historians.

[47] This may be seen as the 'classical' approach to historical causation which developed into the 'Whig' interpretation of history. The idea that individuals operate autonomously has parallels in both economics and political science where it is given the label 'liberal theory'; the pioneers of this outlook were writers such as Hobbes, John Locke, J. S. Mill and Adam Smith who stressed the paramount importance of the individual. This view can be attacked from several directions. Firstly, people may not always be rational, and secondly their action may be socially conditioned and socially constrained, or at least influenced by social structure. Such problems may limit the validity of conclusions drawn from such studies. Notions of loyalty and tradition, for example, show that individuals are placed within a social system and do not act with complete autonomy.

[48] Although influenced by other conceptual frameworks, this traditional approach to historical explanation is still seen in, for example, R. H. C. Davis, *King Stephen, 1135-1154* (London, 1967); Marjorie Chibnall, *The Empress Matilda. Queen consort, Queen mother and Lady of the English* (Oxford, 1991); J. H. Round, *Geoffrey de Mandeville: A study in the Anarchy* (London, 1892).

[49] For the Anglo-Norman period see for instance D. B. Crouch, 'The administration of the Norman earldom', *The earldom of Chester and its charters. A tribute to Geoffrey Barraclough*, ed. A. T. Thacker, *Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society*, 71 (Chester, 1991) 69-95, and by the same author the second half of *The Beaumont Twins. The roots and branches of power in the twelfth century* (Cambridge, 1986); also many of the articles in C. Warren Hollister, *Monarchy, Magnates and Institutions in the Anglo-Norman World* (London, 1986); and F. M. Stenton, *The First Century of English Feudalism 1066-1166*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1961).

[50] For instance, P. R. Coss, 'Bastard feudalism revised', *Past and Present*, 125 (1989) 27-64; the chapter on the honor of Breteuil found in Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*; also D. B. Crouch, 'A Norman *conventio* and bonds of lordship in the Middle Ages', in G. Garnett and J. Hudson (eds.), *Law and government: Studies presented to Sir James Holt* (Cambridge, 1994).

But there is a further interpretative category that historians have largely failed to bring into their analysis. This is drawn from social psychology and emphasises that individuals may be influenced by their surroundings to behave in what - at first glance - may appear to be irrational. This approach involves the study of group dynamics, the pressures of conformity to majority and to authority, and the external factors influencing decision making.[51] This approach will be incorporated into this thesis. It is not the intention to replace existing theories of historical explanation but to supplement them, to provide a further dimension to the study of historical causation.

Much of this thesis is concerned with groups.[52] A group may be defined as a collective body of people. Usually the members of a group will have a common background, social view and objective, a shared code of behaviour and dress, and a sense of belonging to the group. The more of these factors present, the more cohesive the group.

People have probably always lived in groups.[53] Membership of a group, however, is different to loyalty to a group since membership can be passive whereas loyalty requires active participation. Moreover, people may belong to a group without being satisfied with it.[54] This is important as it reminds us that people within a group might hold a view different from that expressed by the group's collective voice. To put this in a medieval setting, the attitude of individual rebels might be different from the attitudes expressed by the group. Knowing why people bond together is therefore fundamental to understanding their actions.

Groups are a source of loyalty[55] and to a large extent we define ourselves in the way we draw the lines of our loyalties.[56] This explains why groups have a strong influence on behaviour.[57] This is likely to have had important effects in the Middle Ages. In combat, for

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[51] For detailed references see later footnotes.

[52] 'Group' is used for its neutral qualities rather class and community which have particular overtones.

[53] This reliance can be explained through three theories. Firstly, our family upbringing teaches us to rely on others for aid, information, love, friendship and entertainment; this means that people desire to be in groups. Secondly, we use groups to verify our beliefs and attitudes, so groups provide a useful 'educational' function. Finally, grouping together aids survival as we are better protected and able to farm, hunt, rear children and care for the sick and injured in groups: evolution could mean that there is a genetic reason why people group together. See Robert S. Baron, Norbert L. Kerr and Norman Miller, *Group Process, Group Decision, Group Action* (Buckingham, 1992) pp. 2-4.

[54] For example, since belonging to a group involves exchanging rewards and costs with other members - in both material and psychological terms - we are satisfied by our membership if our profit is greater than what we expected. But whether we stay in the group depends not on this level of profit but on the comparison of this with the expected profit of alternative choices. Thus if there are no better alternatives people may stay in a group despite being dissatisfied with it. On this see Baron, Kerr and Miller, *Group Process, Group Decision, Group Action* pp. 2-4.

[55] Baron, Kerr and Miller, *Group Process, Group Decision, Group Action* pp. xiii, 1.

[56] Such as age group, sex, profession or the organisations of which we are members: Fletcher, pp. 8-9.

[57] For example, people tend to work harder when placed in groups. This is known as 'social facilitation' and occurs both when people perform the same task ('coaction') and when the individual is only being observed ('passive audience'). For the effects of passive audience see for instance J. F. Dashiell, 'An experimental analysis of some group effects', *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 25 (1930) 190-99. This is seen, for instance, in the way people solve multiplication problems faster and learn word-lists better when placed in

example, drive, already highly aroused through fear of death and hope of victory, may have been further increased through the presence of other knights and through being observed by both colleagues and superiors.

Many groups existed in the aristocratic society of the Middle Ages. Among the most prominent and obvious are family, followers and friends.[58] This list is not exhaustive and some of the categories can be subdivided.[59] In addition one could add the community of a region for it is becoming apparent that people in the Middle Ages were aware of belonging to certain regional and urban groups, some of which may have had a political voice.[60] There

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a group environment: for multiplication problems, F. H. Allport, 'The influence of the group upon association and thought', *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 3 (1920); for memory of words, N. B. Cottrell, R. H. Rittle and D. L. Wack, 'Presence of an audience and list type (competitional or noncompetitional) as joint determinants of performance in paired associates learning', *Journal of Personality*, 35 (1967) 425-34. Humans seem to rely on cognitive concerns for without rivalry or competition the effects are diminished: J. F. Dashiell, 'An experimental analysis of some group effects', *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 25 (1930) 190-99. The presence of an expert audience has a greater effect than a non-specialist one: T. Henchy and D. C. Glass, 'Evaluation apprehension and social facilitation of dominant and subordinate responses', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 10 (1968) 446-54; P. B. Paulus and P. Murdock, 'Anticipated evaluation and audience presence in the enhancement of dominant response', *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 7 (1971) 280-91. Social facilitation also works with animals: ants work harder; armadillos eat faster; cockroaches run quicker: S. C. Chen, 'Social modification of the activity of ants in nest-building', *Physiological Zoology*, 10 (1937) 420-36; J. J. Platt, T. Yaksh and C. L. Darby, 'Social facilitation of eating behaviour of armadillos', *Psychological Reports*, 20 (1967) 1136; R. B. Zajonc, A. Heingartner and E. M. Herman, 'Social enhancement and impairment of performance in the cockroach', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 13 (1969) 83-92. Various explanations are possible. Firstly, the mere presence of another creature of the same species increases general arousal causing the dominant response to be activated. In cases of simple behaviour the dominant response is likely to be correct, but for more complex tasks the dominant response is likely to be wrong. For this theory see R. B. Zajonc, 'Social facilitation', *Science*, 149 (1965) 269-74; R. B. Zajonc, 'Compresence' in P. B. Paulus (ed.), *Psychology of Group Influence* (Hillsdale, New Jersey, 1980). Alternatively it may be that the presence of another distracts the individual by generating a conflict in how to allocate attention between the task and the people, a conflict which would cause drive level to be increased: R. S. Baron, 'Distraction-conflict theory: Progress and problems', in L. Berkowitz (ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, vol. 19 (New York, 1986). Again, it may be that the presence of others increases the desire to present a favourable image, causing higher anxiety and concentration - leading to better performance in simple tasks but embarrassment and excessive worry on difficult ones: C. F. Bond, 'Social facilitation: a self-presentational view', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 42 (1982) 1042-50. Each of these three explanations may be correct depending on circumstance: G. S. Sanders, 'Self-presentation and drive in social facilitation', *Journal of Experimental and Social Psychology*, 20 (1984) 312-22.

[58] These have been studied in the medieval Empire: Gerd Althoff, *Verwandte, Freunde und Getreue* (Darmstadt, 1990). The same groups can be seen in crusade recruitment in the thirteenth century: 'If men of such considerable regional influence as Adam of Jesmond or Eustace de Balliol took the Cross, then quite naturally some of their dependents, kinsmen and friends, within their regional society, would follow them': Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade*, p. 111.

[59] Within 'followers', for instance, one can distinguish several different groups, such as household knights, tenants, members of affinities, courtiers/*curiales* to the king and magnates, and the aristocracy of the kingdom in general.

[60] See for example D. B. Crouch, 'From Stenton to McFarlane: Models of Societies in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', *TRHS*, 6th series, 5 (1995) pp. 188-89. The idea of a 'county community' can be seen in clause 48 of Magna Carta in the way information was to be taken by sworn knights chosen by the 'good men' of that county. Here knights appear not as tenants but as members of a community based on residence within a specific county. On this see Miller, pp 77-79; Holt, *The Northerners* p. 2. People of a particular region would often have been brought together, through tenure, governing and defending the country, musters, ceremonial gatherings of the court, regular meetings of the shire, royal visits, endowing local monasteries and in serving together as coroners, foresters and jurors: Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 69. For urban centres forming a socio-economic focus for a region see the example of Coventry in P. R. Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, pp. 53-60. To have any real meaning 'community' must entail a sense of belonging: Carpenter, 'Gentry and community', p. 344. Crusade sources describe people along regional or

may also have been a group that has been labelled 'the community of the realm' in which every political figure of the kingdom was included.[61] Finally, law suits could be brought against a group of people and in these cases the defendants are likely to have developed a sense of common identity whether or not they had had one already.[62] All aristocrats would have belonged to several groups, and each of these would have had a play on his loyalty.[63] The most obvious of these is that he (or she) belonged to that of the Anglo-Norman aristocracy who had pledged faithfulness to the king. Secondly, to a regional group consisting of his geographical neighbours - other nobles of greater and lower standing. Thirdly, if he was not a tenant-in-chief, to the group of followers of his immediate lord. And finally he would belong to the group of his own court with its own household knights and tenants. It is the combination of these groups and individuals that made up aristocratic society.[64] To understand why he acted in the way he did the historian should therefore assess the impact and objectives of these groups on the individual.

Membership of a group has important consequences. To understand the political decisions and motivations of people in the past one must analyse these groups and the social pressures that affected their members. The most important of these psychological pressures is the power of a majority to enforce conformity on dissidents. This is often called peer pressure - and for the Middle Ages it could often be the peers who were applying the pressure. This pressure takes the form of an individual conforming to the opinion of the majority even when the individual initially held a different view.[65] This public agreement may hide private

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ethnic lines, suggesting people thought of themselves along these lines. For example, in the *Gesta Francorum* people are described as *Galli, Franci, Alamanni, Lombardi* and *Longobardi: Gesta Francoram et Aliorum Hierosolimitanorum. The Deeds of the Franks and the Other Pilgrims to Jerusalem*, ed. Rosalind Hill (London, 1962) pp. 2-4. It is interesting to note that people are not described as 'Normans'. On this see G. A. Loud, 'The *Gens Normannorum*. Myth or reality', *ANS* 5 (1982) 104-116, 204-9. However, when the army temporarily divided after Nicea it split into two groups that appear to be of 'Normans' and 'non-Normans': Bohemond, Tancred and Robert Curthose in one group and Raymond of Toulouse, Godfrey of Lower Lorraine, the bishop of Le Puy and Hugh count of Flanders in the other: *Gesta Francorum*, p. 18.

[61] See in particular, Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities*. Magna Carta envisions a *communia totius terre*, which implies a feeling of solidarity throughout the realm: Miller, p. 78; Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 2. It is perhaps worth noting in passing that there is also evidence from contemporary German history for a sense of nationhood - see the praising of German women for their beauty found in the poem '*Ich hân Lande vil gesehen*' by Walther von der Vogelweide (c. 1200) that defines the limits of Germany as 'From the Elbe to the Rhine, And again to Hungary....'

[62] For cases brought against a group of defendents see Milsom, pp. 18-19.

[63] This is not to say that all actions took place in a group environment. In literature knight errantry and quests for the grail are depicted as solitary pursuits.

[64] Following Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthopology*, p. 296.

[65] Although this knowledge is common-place - the ordinary human is easily led - it is worth consulting psychologists for proof of this assertion. The most famous experiment involved subjects being placed in a group envionment and being told to make judgements from simple diagrams (such as matching the length of a line to a choice of three); the other members of the group were instructed to sometimes give a false answer. The results were striking: subjects conformed 32% of the time when faced with a unanimous group, while 74% of subjects conformed at least once; however, when there was one other dissenter subjects conformed just 6%. The test also found that the group could be very small: a group of four was equally effective as a group of 16 at bringing about conformity. On this see S. E. Asch, 'Effects of group pressure upon modification and distortion of judgements', in E. E. Maccoby, T. M. Newcomb and E. L. Hartley (eds.), *Readings in Social Psychology* (New York, 1958). There are problems with using Asch's conclusions as a

reservations or may be through a genuine change of mind. This has important implications for the study of politics, for the Middle Ages as today. It means, for example, that if all other aristocrats in England were in revolt then it is likely that a lone royalist would follow their policy for psychological reasons (not wanting to stand out) as well as pragmatic ones (if he remained loyal he would likely join his king in suffering imminent defeat). A less clear-cut example would be if everyone present in an aristocrat's court advocated rebellion the lord might confirm to the majority and follow their advice even if it contradicted his own views. Fear of personal disapproval and social ostracisation as well as punitive political and military measures in such situations could have played a decisive role in determining political behaviour. This is not to say that everyone would always have conformed to the opinion of the majority, only that some are likely to have done so.

Recalling that people conform to a majority helps the historian understand past events. For example, it provides a psychological dimension to why, in general, in Stephen's reign the south-east was loyal to the king while the south-west sided with Matilda: there were not only practical reasons for following the lead of one's neighbours but personal psychological ones as well. Indeed, the argument can be extended to cover regional conflicts as well: in *any* instance of rebellion a group might stick together through social pressure to conform as well as for rational or selfish reasons such as the expectation of reward for loyal service. Unfortunately the paucity of medieval sources often means it is impossible to assess whether an individual baron was faced with the choice of remaining in a minority of one or of conforming to the majority. Nevertheless the study of potential peer pressure adds a useful dimension to our understanding of loyalty and rebellion.

Groups can also be analysed according to their characteristics.[66] These characteristics are important as they affect how the group (and individuals within the group) behave. Group size has a major affect on behaviour since large groups tend to have a greater division of labour (through increased specialisation) and a smaller proportion of people contributing to group discussions. Within a group people may fulfil informal roles (like 'tough guy' and 'clown') as well as formal roles ('chair' and 'secretary'). Individuals will have status based on these roles as well as personal characteristics such as intelligence, skill, sense of humour and physical attractiveness. High-level people will have more influence and will be treated with greater tolerance. Subgroups may also develop and have a dramatic affect on the structure of the larger group. These subgroups may have a different level of cohesion to the

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guide to real-life situations for the truth was 'obvious' whereas in most real-life situations the truth is not obvious - such as which policy is best. In such circumstances people expect to be sometimes in a minority and may therefore be more willing to stand against the majority opinion. Experiments on conformity using more realistic and subjective judgements reveal more murky results: L. Ross, G. Bierbrauer and S. Hoffman, 'The role of attribution processes in conformity and dissent: Revisiting the Asch situation', *American Psychologist*, 31 (1976) 148-57.

larger group. Within a group communication networks develop that reinforce and reflect the status and role of individuals within the group. In large groups centralisation prevents leaders from being overloaded with requests and information and facilitates the rapid and efficient transmission of news, goals, information and commands throughout the group but can also cause the top level to appear unapproachable and uncaring to those at the bottom; it also means that some people filter information and therefore have power.[67] The (now largely out-dated) idea of the 'feudal pyramid' can be seen as a centralised and hierarchic communication network. These factors - group size, formal and informal roles, status, subgroups, cohesion and communication networks - are all important for understanding socio-political dynamics.

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[66] Baron, Kerr and Miller, *Group Process, Group Decision, Group Action*, pp. 5-14.

[67] This is discussed in the chapter on decision making.

iii

THE NOTION OF LOYALTY

This thesis is also concerned with the nature of loyalty in the twelfth century. Loyalty plays an important part in all our lives and affects our personal relationships as well as our group behaviour. Yet despite this importance it has seldom been discussed by either philosphers[68] or historians.

The notion of loyalty is hard to define. It is clearly more than just acting together as people may act together without any feeling of loyalty. One definition of loyalty is 'the reluctance to exit [i.e. break away from] in spite of disagreement with the organisation of which one is a member.'[69] From this it follows that 'feelings of loyalty raise the cost of exit by exacting a psychological price.'[70] A different definition is 'the willing and thorough-going devotion of a person to a cause.'[71] Both these definitions show that it is not enough to act together: there must be also a feeling of attachment. This means that an element of self-sacrifice is necessary. Loyalty is also more than devotion: it is a willing and thorough devotion. We are therefore dealing with sentiment, and much of this thesis is therefore concerned with analysing emotion.

Before examining the importance of loyalty in the High Middle ages it is worthwhile to look briefly at its importance in our own time. Several times this century loyal behaviour has been at the heart of great political change. In his 1961 inaugural address President John F. Kennedy appealed to national loyalty saying 'Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.'[72] Modern examples of blind devotion to a cause spring readily to mind: those who selflessly marched with Martin Luther King and Ghandi; those who were seduced by the orations of Adolf Hitler. But loyalty is not only present in moments of great political change. Group loyalties can be seen in membership of a company, a political party, or a nation,[73] as well as to one's family and friends. Many modern corporations are now greatly concerned with fostering a sense of common identity and group loyalty within its workforce in the belief this will give it an edge in the world market. Since people can belong to different groups dramatic conflict sometimes erupts. Jean Paul Sartre, for example, said

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[68] As noted by George P. Fletcher, *Loyalty. An Essay on the Morality of Relationships* (Oxford, 1993) p. 6.
[69] A. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Response to Decline in Firms, Organizations and States* (1970), p. 98; cited by Fletcher, p. 5.
[70] Fletcher, p. 5.
[71] Josiah Royce, *The Philosophy of loyalty* (1908, reprinted 1920) pp. 102-6; cited Fletcher, p. 18.
[72] Cited by Fletcher, p. ix.
[73] Fletcher, p. 38.

that if he ever had to choose between his mother and the French Resistance he would choose his mother.[74]

This dramatic quality explains why loyalty has been a recurrent theme in literature since the earliest days,[75] but perhaps it peaked in the Middle Ages. In the Tristan stories Tristan places his love of Yseut above the ties of lordship, friendship and kinship to King Mark.[76] In the *Nibelungenlied* Rüdiger is torn between his personal oath to Kriemhild (backed up by his oath of service to Etzel) and his ties of friendship, hospitality and proposed marriage to the Burgundians. Rüdiger eventually places his formal ties to Kriemhild and Etzel above the ties of friendship but Hagen does the opposite, placing friendship above the ties to his lords by refusing to fight Rüdiger.[77]

This discussion has continued[78] but perhaps the strongest discussion of loyalty in recent times has been on the big screen. This is particularly true of American films on the Mafia.[79] However, conflicts of loyalty are not reserved to fiction. But interestingly, the true story from the nineteenth century of the sheriff Pat Garret shooting his friend William Bonney (Billy the Kid) because he was an outlaw has been turned into a series of novels and films.

Loyalty and betrayal generate powerful emotions. The English langauge reserves some of its most powerful words to describe disloyalty: adultery, betrayal, treason and

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[74] Jean Paul Sartre, *L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme* (1970), pp. 39-42; cited by Fletcher, p. 39.

[75] The Greek tragedy of *Antigone* reveals conflict between the family and the state in which Creon favours the state and Antigone blood: Fletcher, pp. 27-31.

[76] Béroul, *Le Roman de Tristan. Poème du XII⁰ siècle*, ed. Ernest Muret (Paris, 1982); Thomas, *Les Fragments du Roman de Tristan. Poème du XII⁰ siècle*, ed. Bartina H. Wind (Geneva and Paris, 1960).

[77] *Das Nibelungenlied*, ed. Helmut de Boor, 20ᵗʰ edn. (Wiesbaden, 1972).

[78] To bring us up to date, Sir Laurens van der Post's *The Seed and the Sower* has the betrayal of his brother as the driving force behind Jack Cellier's heroic and tragic behaviour.

[79] Many American gangster films have loyalty as their central theme. Since the publication of Mario Puzo's *The Godfather*, if not before, parallels between medieval lordship and the (perceived) structure of the modern Mafia have been easy to draw. *The Godfather* shows public decisions (both political and business) being taken in private and domestic settings such as at a wedding and at mealtimes within the family home; as will be seen, such practice may correspond to medieval reality. Tessio's long-standing and pledged loyalty to the Corleone family is broken by the rising power of the other Mafia families on the death of Vito Corleone, just as the loyalty of a medieval tenant might be tested on the death of his lord. *Mean Streets* has a man who increasingly breaks the New York Mafia's code of accepted behaviour and so tests the loyalty of his friend who is torn between his friend and loyalty to the group. In *Reservoir Dogs* Mr White and Mr Orange act as 'companions'. In *Donnie Brasco* (1997) Brasco/Pistone, an undercover FBI man, befriends a minor mafioso to infiltrate the New York Mafia: the friend pledges his own life as a guarantee of Brasco's loyalty, leading to tension around whether Brasco will put duty above this friendship. It is the same stark choice that confronts Hagen and Rüdiger in the *Nibelungenlied* of c. 1200. These links reached new heights in *A Bronx Tale*. Here we not only get peer pressure ('C' feels trapped when his friends torch a black neighbourhood with molotov cocktails) but also a discussion on methods of lordship. The young C asks Sonny, the local Mafia chief, 'is it better to be loved or feared?' He answers that he would prefer to be feared: in business fear lasts longer than friendship; but it is better to be loved and feared. Sonny goes on to say that Machiavelli taught him the importance of availablity: when you stay in your neighbourhood those that love you feel safe and have more reason to love you whilst those that fear you cannot escape and have more reason to fear you. Most medieval lords probably agreed. Conflicts of loyalty are not restricted to gangster films: *The English Patient* (1997) has the central character betray his country in the hope of saving the woman he loves. Nor is the theme restricted to the English-speaking world: the Serbian film *Pretty Village Pretty Flame* (1996) shows friends from across the ethnic divide fighting against each other in the recent Bosnian war.

idolatry.[80] Dante placed in hell the thief who pretended to be a friend not only because of the theft but also because he 'snaps the ties of close regard.'[81] This again shows how important issues of loyalty are in our culture.

Given this one might expect loyalty to be a prime virtue. For the Middle Ages this may well be true. Gaimar, for example, claims that:

> 'A man who betrays has no law,
> Nor should anyone trust in his faith'[82]

Heroes are often said to be loyal. In his biography William Marshal described as 'that brave, devoted, loyal [leials] man'[83] and the poet declares he 'was ever a man to espouse the cause of loyalty [lealté]';[84] even King John describes him as 'most loyal [molt leial]'.[85] William Marshal himself thought that God favoured those who act with lealté,[86] and this is mirrored by the poet.[87]

But Fletcher notes three ethical problems with the 'virtue of loyalty'. Firstly, blind adherence to any object of loyalty can lead to excessive behaviour such as fascism. This danger was most clearly expressed in Stephen Decatur's toast of 1816: 'Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she always be right; but our country, right or wrong.'[88] Secondly, loyalty conflicts with liberal morality because it prejudices in favour of something and is therefore contradictory to Jeremy Bentham's utilitarianism which sees the ideal being 'the greatest good to the greatest number'.[89] Finally, membership of a group can create passions that encourages suspicion of 'outsiders'.[90] Thus, while perhaps admiring the medieval ideal of loyalty, we should nevertheless bear in mind that loyalty is not without its problems. And, of course, loyalty is not the only ideal.

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[80] Fletcher, pp. 8 and n. 17, 41.
[81] Dante, *The Divine Comedy*, trans. R. Bottrall (1966), Canto 11, Ll. 50-60; cited by Fletcher, p. 10.
[82] Gaimar, Ll. 3721-22.
[83] *HGM*, L. 12124. This is echoed later: he is 'worthy, wise and *leials*' and as noble-hearted, worthy and *leals*: Ll. 16312, 17013.
[84] *HGM*, L. 14590.
[85] *HGM*, L. 13290. But if this is not suspicious enough, the poet even has King Philip of France describe William as brave, noble-hearted and *lealz*: L. 17612; similar expressions are Ll. 19132, 19150.
[86] *HGM*, L. 15708.
[87] *HGM*, L. 16126 (*leals*).
[88] Fletcher, p. 6 and n. 7.
[89] Fletcher, pp. 11-14.
[90] Fletcher, pp. 22-23.

iv

INTERPRETING LOVE AND AFFECTION

Rituals, signs, rites and gestures were important for they clarified situations and showed what behaviour was expected.[91] This included the seating order, kneeling down, kissing, leading someone's horse by the bridal and entering or leaving a room first;[92] to this one could add the order in which charter witnesses were recorded.[93] This shows us that ritual was important in the Middle Ages. However, this does not mean that all expressions of emotion were ritualised and not heart-felt. But even when we are told that people displayed emotion we cannot be sure of the causes.[94]

At the start of *Yvain* Chrétien laments the decline of love from the days of King Arthur to his own:

> 'Today very few serve love: nearly everyone has abandoned it; and love is greatly abased, because those who loved in bygone days were known to be courtly and valiant and generous and honourable. Now love is reduced to empty pleasantries, since those who know nothing about it claim that they love, but they lie, and those who boast of loving and have no right to do so make a lie and a mockery of it.'[95]

In *Yvain* Chrétien makes a further lament: 'People no longer fall in love, nor do they love as once they did, nor even want to hear love spoken of.'[96] How are we to take these laments?

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[91] Althoff, p. 182.

[92] Althoff, pp. 183-84.

[93] If this concern for ceremony seems strange remember that protocol is important in many aspects of modern Western life - from bowing or courtseying before the Queen to shaking hands when you meet a colleague, from the formal ceremony of international treaties to a guest not sitting down until the host indicates he should. In the summer of 1997 two instances clearly demonstrated the continuing importance of ritual to Britain and the British people. On July 1 the handover of Hong Kong to China was full of ceremony, such as formally lowering the British flag and exchanging gifts. The aftermath of the death of Princess Diana also showed a great interest in ceremony and symbolism - one thinks in particular of the public outcry when the royal standard was not lowered - here eventually the Queen succumbed to public pressure and changed the protocol.

[94] Matthew Paris records that the future Edward I wept when Henry III left for Gascony in August 1253. Although at first glance one might think that he cried through sadness at the parting, it may be that he cried though happiness at being able to take over the duchy. On this see Matthew Paris, *Matthaei Parisiensis, Monachi Sancti Albani, Chronica Majora*, ed. H. R. Luard, 7 vols. (Rolls Series, 1872-83) vol. 5 p. 383; F. M. Powicke, *Henry III and the Lord Edward. The Community of the Realm in the Thirteenth century* 2 vols. (Oxford, 1947) vol. 1, p. 231; Michael Prestwich, *Edward I* (London, 1988) p. 9.

[95] *Yvain*, p. 295.

[96] *Yvain*, p. 362.

Whether Chrétien's opinion is correct or not it does warn us that in his writing love plays a larger role than it did in his own world. But what role did it play in other vernacular sources?

The fragments of Thomas' *Tristan* reveal a strong concern with emotion. The First Turin Fragment shows how all four main characters are tormented: King Mark knows his wife, Queen Yseut, loves another; Queen Yseut is married to Mark but loves Tristan; Tristan loves Queen Yseut but is married to Yseut of the White Hands; and Yseut of the White Hands has a husband who refuses to have sex with her.[97] Such characterisation would not seem out of place in modern novels or soap operas. The narrative tension and emotional drive is maintained until the very end: the poem closes with Yseut of the White Hands successfully exacting revenge on the lovers for Tristan dies of poison in the belief that Queen Yseut has failed to come to cure him and Queen Yseut, shortly afterwards, dies of grief when she arrives too late and sees his corpse.[98] Thomas may be unusual in his depth of characterisation, but it remains that at least one contemporary saw that family intrigue and emotional needs could serve to drive a narrative onwards. Moreover, this text clearly shows people acting through emotional needs and in ways similar to how one might expect people to behave today. This in turn lends weight to the idea that people in the twelfth century had emotions, needs and motives very similar to ourselves eight hundred years later. Institutions and technology may have changed but human character and psychology have not.

Vernacular texts regularly describe characters having emotions and very often these appear in an exaggerated form. This may have been because writers had not yet developed more subtle ways of conveying psychological states. This means that although we can use the evidence to show what situations caused which emotions we cannot trust the scale on which these emotions were exhibited.

Sometimes expressions of emotion seem to be signs of genuine affection. A father might carry his child and embrace her.[99] When Énide is reunited with her (female) cousin they kiss and embrace.[100] When Érec obtains the Joy of the Court he, Énide, Guivret, King Evrain, Maboagrain and his wife all kiss and embrace each other through happiness.[101] When Érec and Énide leave the court of Evrain, Érec hugs the barons and Énide kisses and hugs her cousin.[102] Érec and Énide also embrace Énide's parents when they come for their crowning ceremony.[103] Yvain kisses the eyes of Lunete when he discovers how she has trapped her

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[97] Thomas, Ll. 991-1091.
[98] Thomas, Ll. 3042 (Tristan's death), 3121 (Yseut's death).
[99] *Perceval*, p. 448.
[100] *Érec et Énide*, p. 113.
[101] *Érec et Énide*, p. 115.
[102] *Érec et Énide*, p. 115.
[103] *Érec et Énide*, p. 118.

mistress and his wife into accepting him back.[104] When Perceval returns to Arthur's court he embraces the maiden who laughed when he was there originally.[105] These signs of affection seem to have been inspired by true emotion, but at other times ritual and political symbolism were involved.

Ritualised gestures can often be seen. Embracing, for example, could be part of a political ritual. Although Sigar believes Haveloc to be Gunter's heir because when asleep he breathes fire[106] he requires a public confirmation. When this is done (Haveloc blows a horn that only the heir of Gunter would be able to do) Sigar immediately embraces him.[107] After this Sigar is able to summon his *homes* to do *felte*, and Sigar himself promises to keep *fai*.[108] In this episode the embrace seems to have had more of a political connotation than an emotional one. The embrace was allowed as part of the public proof of Haveloc's identity and paved the way for closer formal bonding to take place.

Sometimes emotion and ritual seem to have been combined. When Érec and Énide leave her home and kindred for Arthur's court emotions are expressed by several people: the local count kisses them both and commends them to God; Énide's parents kiss them both; and Énide and her parents shed tears. Two different explanations can be applied to this behaviour. Firstly, the kissing could be through genuine affection - especially on the part of the parents. However, the kiss could also be seen as a symbol of the bond between them. In this case the kiss has a political significance as well as an emotional one. Since the count is not described as crying it may be that his kiss was more politically inspired than that of Énide's parents.[109] These ideas can be applied elsewhere.[110] A similar interpretation can be given to a real-world incident. When Henry the Young King met Philip count of Flanders they embraced:

> 'It was quite right that they had this mutual affection
> Since they were cousins [*cosin*] and good friends
>
> [*boen*
> *ami*].'[111]

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[104] *Yvain*, p. 378.

[105] *Perceval*, p. 437.

[106] Gaimar, Ll. 624-42; declaration of Sigar's support, Ll. 667, 669.

[107] Gaimar, Ll. 696-720. Friends also demonstrate their affection by hugging when they meet. When Érec reveals his identity to Gawain they immediately embrace each other: *Érec et Énide*, p. 88. Similarly, when Gawain is reunited with Lancelot they embrace and kiss each other: *Lancelot*, p. 290. When Yvain and Gawain recognise each other after their duel they embrace: *Yvain*, p. 374, and again, p. 375.

[108] Gaimar, Ll. 727-30.

[109] *Érec et Énide*, p. 55.

[110] Arthur's court also weeps at Érec's departure: *Érec et Énide*, p. 89. When Bisclavret returns to human form (he is a werewolf) 'the king ran forward to embrace him, and kissed him many times': Marie, *Bisclavret*, Ll. 300-301.

[111] *HGM*, Ll. 2459-60.

Here it is unclear whether the embrace stemmed from genuine emotion or whether it was because of political etiquette.

Kisses could also be used as a greeting. Here ritual and emotion would have been combined. It was an expression of feeling but also a demonstration - to the couple and to any observers - of their relationship. This is also seen - though in a more overtly political setting - in the way the pope kisses William upon his return to Rome having defeated Corsolt.[112] Here the kiss serves not only as a greeting but also as a demonstration of gratitude and a confirmation of their relationship.

Sometimes a kiss is a direct symbol. The honour of the white stag - traditionally given to the most beautiful woman - is bestowed by the king in the form of a kiss.[113] Similarly, when Érec and Guivret state that they will be friends and kiss and embrace the exchange probably had more of a ritual significance than an emotional one.[114] When Gornemant of Gohort knights Perceval he not only girds on his right spur and sword but also kisses him.[115] After Louis asks William to safeguard his lands and fiefs (terres et... fiez)[116] they kiss.[117] Here the kiss is used to demonstrate their trust (Charlemagne has instructed Louis to trust the loyalty of William)[118] and seal the agreement. Later Louis and William again exchange a kiss. It is worth considering this in more detail. Louis is in need of William's support. An abbot tells the king to kneel and kiss William's feet; he does this, and in the dark of the church William cannot see who it is; when William realises it is his king he immediately apologises, lifts Louis to his feet and embraces him.[119] Later William embraces him again and kisses him four times on the face.[120] This suggests that kisses could be exchanged between near-equals (king and his regent) whereas kneeling was a gesture of inferiority unbefitting a

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[112] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1151-53. When Érec returns to his father's kingdom with his bride and sees his father 'both dismounted and kissed and greeted each other.' Only afterwards did the father turn to Énide: 'he embraced and kissed them both, not knowing which of them pleased him more': *Érec et Énide*, p. 66. When Lancelot returns to Bademagu's court he is greeted by the king with a kiss: *Lancelot*, p. 262. These kisses seem to have been a mixture of genuine emotion and political sentiment. When Érec and Énide return to Arthur's court with Guivret they are met by members of Arthur's household. These two groups immediately 'greeted and kissed one another': *Érec et Énide*, p. 116. Similarly, when they are brought before the king and queen Arthur kisses all three of them and Guinevere embraces Érec and Énide: *Érec et Énide*, p. 116. In such circumstances it is difficult to assess whether the displays of affection stem from genuine emotion or ritual. Arthur's kiss may have only been a gesture of welcome. Kissing as a greeting is also seen when Alis welcomes Cligés back to Greece after his trip to Britain: *Cligés*, p. 185. Laudine uses a hug to welcome Arthur to her town: *Yvain*, p. 325. When a maid kisses and embraces Perceval after he has defeated Anguingueron we cannot be certain whether this is through thanks, affection or ritual: *Perceval*, p. 410. Women might welcome each other to their home by leading them by the hand and kissing their eyes and lips: *Perceval*, p. 445.
[113] *Érec et Énide*, pp. 59-60.
[114] *Érec et Énide*, p. 85.
[115] *Perceval*, pp. 401-2 (kiss p. 402).
[116] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 221.
[117] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 239.
[118] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 209-213.
[119] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1722-46.
[120] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1766-67.

king. This interpretation has important consequences for how we view the ceremony of homage, discussed hereafter.

The kiss is also used in peace rituals. When William of Orange makes peace with Richard of Rouen (following mediation by barons) the reconciliation is given expression through the leaders kissing and embracing each other before many knights.[121] This peace agreement did not last, however, because the desire to avenge his son's death was too great for Richard.[122] Similar ceremonies are known to have occurred in the real world. According to one source, John feared meeting his brother King Richard and fell at his feet when he came into his presence, but Richard lifted him up and kissed him.[123] When John de Sauqueville and John of Earley refute two people's claims that they were '*leials* hommes' to William Marshal, the accused say to the Marshal

> 'Do not be furious with us.
>
> Kiss us, then we shall be happy
>
> That we shall not be reproached our deeds.'[124]

These rituals may have grown out of observing emotionally-driven activity. When Mark is reconciled to Yseut, for instance, 'he embraced her and kissed her a hundred times.'[125] Here we see the same activity being used for a reconciliation between husband and wife. It may be that the political ritual grew out of observing non-political behaviour.

The holding of hands also shows a close bond. Chrétien remarks that the queen loves Énide and brings her into Arthur's presence holding her by the hand.[126] Later in the poem Érec and Énide hold the hands of the maidens who have healed Érec's wounds. These examples suggest emotion was involved. Other instances, however, suggest the same actions may have been performed as political ceremonies. When Arthur wants to be courteous to Cligés he leads him into dinner holding his hand.[127] Similarly, when Richard I met with the French king for talks he went hand-in-hand (*main a main*) with Reginald count of Boulogne.[128] Shortly after we are told that Richard held the hands of both Reginald and Baldwin count of Flanders.[129] This action demonstrates that the two people were (or wanted to appear to be) friends. It is also a display of unity. This means that holding hands could have a political meaning as well as being an expression of emotion. For example, when Walter of

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[121] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1972-76.
[122] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 2057-166.
[123] *HGM*, Ll. 10376-412.
[124] *HGM*, Ll. 4008-10.
[125] Béroul, p. 57.
[126] *Érec et Énide*, p. 58.
[127] *Cligés*, p. 184.
[128] *HGM*, L. 10712.
[129] *HGM*, L. 10719. We are also told that the two counts loved (*amérent*) Richard I: L. 10741.

Toulouse warns William of a courtier plotting against him they walk back into court hand-in-hand (*tot main a main en montent le planchié*).[130]

People also cry. Again these seem to be for reasons which might cause people today to cry.[131] It is not only relatives and lovers who cry when someone has a mortal illness. When William Marshal gave instructions on how he wished to be buried his biographer claims that not only his son but also all the knights present, the young retainers, servants and all the household wept.[132] Although this may be an exaggeration it still shows what could have been possible and the type of emotions that would have been present at such an occasion.

Grief is regularly expressed in the *Chanson de Roland*.[133] Often this is in an exaggerated form. For example, when Charles reaches Rencesvals and sees the dead:

> 'He tugs at his beard like a man beset with grief;
>
> His brave knights shed tears.
>
> Twenty thousand fall to the ground in a faint.'[134]

In such literature sorrow often causes people to faint. This is particularly noticeable in the *Chanson de Roland* but is seen elsewhere.[135] The motif passed into vernacular histories for the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* describes how, on the death of a brother,

> 'His [William Marshal's] face showed the signs of deep
>
> grief,
>
> And he very nearly fainted.
>
> He could not be blamed for that,

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[130] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 721.

[131] When Énide learns that her husband's reputation is falling because of the amount of time he spends with her she cries: *Érec et Énide*, pp. 67-68. When Lancelot decides to cross the Sword Bridge the two brothers who have been accompanying him cry because they can no longer follow him: *Lancelot*, p. 245. When a maiden is forcibly kissed and has her ring stolen from her she cries: *Perceval*, pp. 390-91. When another maiden is struck so hard that she falls to the ground she cries: *Perceval*, p. 394. A woman cried when her lover dies: *Perceval*, p. 423. Yseut cries when she thinks Tristan might be captured or killed: Béroul, p. 103. Kissing, hugging and crying are all combined when Érec leaves his father's lands to regain his reputation. Here the strength of emotion is so great that people faint: *Érec et Énide*, p. 71. When Perceval leaves his mother she embraces and kisses him and then cries: *Perceval*, pp. 387-88. Following the death of William Rufus the people near him wail, pull their hair, faint, wring their hands and cry: Gaimar, Ll. 6354-68.

[132] *HGM*, Ll. 18261-68. Everyone later wept again: Ll. 18372-76.

[133] Charles cries because he believes Roland is in danger: *Chanson de Roland*, L. 825. Roland grieves when Count Samson dies: *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 1580-81. When Anseis dies 'The Franks say "Baron, how sad that you were here!"': *Chanson de Roland*, L. 1604. And Archbishop Turpin says to a pagan 'You have slain this man and brought sorrow to my heart': *Chanson de Roland*, L. 1609. When Roland sees that the Franks are lamenting 'so great is his grief that he almost bursts': *Chanson de Roland*, L. 1631. Turpin also says of the Franks of Charles 'will shed tears of sorrow and pity for us' *Chanson de Roland*, L. 1749. When Oliver dies his companion Roland grieves:'Roland the brave weeps for him and mourns / Never will you hear greater grief on earth': *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 2022-23.

[134] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 2414-16.

[135] When Oliver dies Roland faints: *Chanson de Roland*, L. 2031, 2220, 2270. When Charles see Roland's corpse he faints: *Chanson de Roland*, L. 2880, 2891. Fenice faints when she sees her lover Cligés wounded: *Cligés*, pp. 172-73. When some Greeks thought that their companions were dead they weep and faint: *Cligés*,

Since it was a very sorry sight to see.'[136]

In literature some people even die of grief.[137] None of these expressions of grief suggest political rituals.

Gifts regularly occur in contemporary literature and could take on a ritual significance.[138] Gifts bind together the people involved. The recipient benefited from largesse while the giver gained prestige and influence. The giver not only demonstrated his power and wealth but also showed - to everyone - his generosity. To the giver, then, gift-giving was a way of emphasising authority and attracting more followers in addition to binding the recipient to him. The receiver was also bound to acknowledge the bond between them and to see himself or herself as below the giver. These are probably the reasons why Tristan refuses to accept any gifts from Mark after the king has accepted the return of Yseut but refused to allow Tristan to remain in his court.[139] Gifts also served as positive propaganda.[140]

But symbols could be misread. In Béroul's *Tristan* misunderstanding symbolic imagery has important consequences. When Mark discovers the lovers asleep in the forest he believes their love to be platonic as their bodies are not touching; so he forgives them. To show that he has seen them he replaces Yseut's ring with the one on his finger, shades her face with his glove, and exchanges Tristan's sword for his own.[141] But the lovers misread these symbols and flee the forest fearing the king's anger.[142]

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p. 148. Alis likewise faints when he is told Fenice will die: *Cligés*, p. 193. His barons faint when they see her placed in her tomb: *Cligés*, p. 198.

[136] *HGM*, Ll. 10058-61.

[137] When Cligés escapes from Alis we are told that Alis dies of grief: *Cligés*, p. 205. The Moorish king Marsile dies of grief when he hears of the death of the emir who fought against Charles: *Chanson de Roland*, L. 3646. Aude, Oliver's sister, dies of grief when she hears that her fiancé Roland has died: *Chanson de Roland*, L. 3721

[138] When Érec returns to his father's land with his new bride he 'received many presents that day from knights and burghers... all tried to serve him': *Érec et Énide*, p. 66. King Evrain likewise gave Érec gifts: *Érec et Énide*, p. 107. After the crowning of Érec Arthur also distributed gifts: *Érec et Énide*, p. 122. When Alexander becomes a knight Chrétien records that the queen loved him - though not in the way Soredamors did! - and she gives him a precious shirt: *Cligés*, p. 137. When Alexander receives a precious cup from Arthur he passes it on to Gawain (whom he has already called friend and companion): *Cligés*, p. 128. Chrétien remarks that Gawain was reluctant to receive this gift but does not explain why: *Cligés*, p. 150. The Fisher King receives a precious sword as a gift from a niece and immediately passes it on to Perceval: *Perceval*, p. 420. When Tristan and Yseut part she gives him her ring and he gives her his dog: Béroul, pp. 107-8. After this 'each kissed the other to signify possession of the gifts': Béroul, p. 108. In the real world such counter-gifts (from beneficiary to doner) are uncommon but do occur: *The Charters of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester* records counter-gifts in the form of horses (nos. 43, 55, 176, 245), two greyhounds called Lym and Libehar (no. 271) and money (nos. 86, 176, 312 and possibly 176). Counter-gifts may have been used to aid memory: G. Duby, 'Memories Without Historians', *Love and Marriage in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1994) p. 176.

[139] Béroul, p. 112.

[140] Arthur's generosity to Alexander after the capture of the traitors would serve as an incentive for heroism to all his followers: *Cligés*, p. 140. More obvious is Arthur's offer of a precious cup to whoever captured the rebel castle: *Cligés*, p. 141. In such instances gifts had less to do with symbolism than motivation.

[141] Béroul, pp. 92-93.

[142] Béroul, pp. 94-95.

The vernacular sources depict people responding to love, joy and fear in ways similar to our own. Although many of their expressions seem extreme this can be put down to literary style, an emphasis on the dramatic and ritual. It would be unwise to conclude that people in the twelfth century were more emotional than people today. But it is clear that they did have emotions similar to our own - they cried, lusted and loved; they experienced joy, sadness, shame, fear and a whole host of other emotions; and in the minds of poets these emotions affected the behaviour of individuals. It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that, like us, people in the Middle Ages were influenced by their emotions. This is important as it means that people in the Middle Ages had the same psychology as we do today. This suggests that modern social sciences can be used as a guide to understanding past behaviour.

2

FAMILY

Before discussing the role of the family in terms of twelfth-century socio-political groups it is worthwhile first to make some definitions. In this study 'lineage' will be used to describe ancestors - parents, grandparents, great grandparents, and so on into the mists of time. 'Family' will be used to describe those relatives who live in the same house; essentially this is the modern nuclear family. 'Kindred' and 'relatives' will be used to describe the group of relatives as a whole; that is, those people who considered themselves bound to one another through blood. 'Household' will refer to those who live in the same house, regardless of whether they are relatives or not.

Kinship systems build upon the natural, biological family.[143] The biological family consists of parents and children. But it is the additions to this basic unit that give a kinship system its socio-cultural character.[144] We will therefore examine the structure and extent of the kinship system in twelfth-century England and the strength of these ties. This means that we must assess how close people had to be connected by blood before they were considered relatives and then evaluate how strong these feelings were.

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[143] Here a word of caution is needed as Weber claimed that only the mother-child relationship was 'natural' - as based on biology - and that the father-child, husband-wife and sibling relationships were unstable and tenuous: Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, p. 357. The basic unit is the mother and offspring as in many animals the male is dispensable after procreation. Only in more complex lifestyles do males become important, such as for providing meat and protection. See Robin Fox, 'The conditions of sexual evolution' in Philippe Ariès and André Béjin, eds., *Western Sexuality. Practice and Precept in Past and Present Times*, trans. Anthony Forster (Oxford, 1985) pp. 2-3.
[144] Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, p. 50.

i

TYPES OF RELATIVE:

FEELINGS FOR THE DEAD

Lineage is referred to with some regularity in the sources and can describe descendants as well as ancestors[145] and also living people.[146] However, the most common expression of lineage is seen in the description of someone as the son of another.[147] Lineage - and inheritance - clearly formed the starting point of any political career.[148] Ties of tenure and blood were passed down from one generation to another, although relations based on blood would have become weaker the more distant the connection became. These formed the foundation on which further power structures could be built.

Duby has modelled family relationships. He shows that the memory of Lambert de Waterlos for his ancestors stretched back as far as his paternal grandfather's uncle a century before.[149] Regarding horizontal relatives, Lambert knew only as far as his first cousins, and then only the 'noteworthy' ones. More distant cousins were known only if they were illustrious such as abbots. Throughout men take precedence over women. Indeed, Lambert only remembered women if they added to the patrimony. Lambert d'Ardres' *Historia comitum Ghisnensium* records more distant family members, detailing eight generations.[150] Again males are predominant, but of more importance seems to be how the family acquired property. From this Duby concludes that 'in the higher aristocracy... the feeling of kinship bears every appearance of attaching itself to a house, to a castle'.[151]

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[145] This is seen in the way William Marshal says before a battle that his supporters will win glory not only for themselves but also for their *lignages*: *HGM*, L. 16298.

[146] For example, when Argentille decides that she and Cuheran should go into exile her first thought is that they should go to her husband's *linage*; this probably means his parents: Gaimar, L. 306.

[147] For example, Érec *et* Énide, pp. 56, 58 (several), 64 (twice), 120-21, *Yvain*, p. 307, 317, 322, 340, 373, *Perceval*, p. 439, *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 1613-14, 1905.

[148] Althoff, pp. 67-68.

[149] This paragraph is based on Duby's work presented in *The Chivalrous Society*. The texts he used were *Monumenta Germaniae Historica scriptores*, xvi, pp. 511-12 and *Monumenta Germaniae Historica scriptores*, xxiv, p. 143. The *Annales Cameracenses* of Lambert de Waterlos dates from 1152 x 1170 and Lambert d'Ardres' *Historia comitum Ghisnensium* from the late twelfth century.

[150] Lambert d'Ardres was concerned with a more illustrious family and had access not only to memories but also family documents and inscriptions. This meant that he was able to give more details.

[151] Duby, *The Chivalrous Society*, pp. 143-46, quotation p. 146.

How reliable are Duby's models for the role played by the blood tie in determining the action of individuals? Crouch, citing as examples the families of Mandeville, Percy and Warenne who retained their names through an heiress, agrees with Duby that during the eleventh and twelfth centuries families were concerned less with maternal or paternal descent than with superior nobility: contemporaries stressed whichever lineage was the most illustrious.[152] However, Crouch questions Duby's contrast between horizontal views of the family and vertical ones saying that these views of family structure are not incompatible. Contemporary Welsh society, for instance, combined the notion of shared property with a household dominated by a single member with a consciousness of descent through the ages.[153] Moreover, whether one emphasises vertical or horizontal familial structures it remains that cousins shared blood through their common grandparents.[154]

But there is a further problem with transferring Duby's theories to an analysis of contemporary loyalty. This is whether descent and inheritance patterns are a reliable guide to family relationships and the strength of family loyalty. While patterns of descent and inheritance show feelings towards ancestors the sentiments revealed are between the living and the dead. It does not necessarily follow that the attitudes expressed in such writing corresponded to the feelings that existed between the individuals when living. To give an example, that a son remembered his father after he passed away does not mean he obeyed him during his lifetime.[155] Moreover, it is worth bearing in mind that Duby's models are derived from very few detailed sources, and it is possible that the sample population he chose - the families recorded by Lambert de Waterlos and Lambert of Ardres - is not representative of the wider population. Thus while such models may serve as a guide to family relationships one should retain a healthy scepticism when drawing any conclusions from such work. Moreover, as Duby himself conceded, it is often difficult to separate familial and friendship ties. The cohesion of a household, for instance, despite containing brothers, nephews and cousins, may have been based on friendship and fostered through group identity and comradeship.[156]

Vernacular literature shows that lineage gave people an identity. When strangers meet they often seek to quickly find out the lineage of the other person. When Arthur wants to find out who a stranger in his court is he first asks 'Where are you from?' Then, 'Who is

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[152] Crouch, *Image of Aristocracy*, p. 10.

[153] Crouch, *Image of Aristocracy*, pp. 10-11.

[154] Holt, 'Feudal society and the family in early medieval England: I. The revolution of 1066', p. 202.

[155] The danger of using inheritance patterns to examine levels of affection can be seen in a recent study of behaviour in modern America. The study showed a wide discrepancy between bequests - that is, last testaments - and transfers of money between living parents and their children. Wills generally divide estates equally between children; but during the lifetime of the parents gifts are unequal, with the more needy children getting more. See 'Of death and taxes', *The Economist* (February 28th 1998) p. 101. If, using these findings, we were to look only at bequests we might conclude that affection was shared equally. But if we looked only at transfers we might conclude the opposite. This begs us to be cautious when applying the same methodology to the Middle Ages.

your father?' And only thirdly, 'What is your name?'[157] People could be proud of their lineage[158] and a lineage could give one power.[159] This helps explain why people sought to defend their lineage and exact revenge on people who dirtied the name of their relatives.[160] This strongly suggests that lineage was important for nobility.[161] Yet lineage was not the only factor giving identity for horizontal relationships also probably mattered. Territory also counted for when William wants to know the identity of a man who has escaped from a Moslem prison he asks for his name and the land (*terre*) where he comes from.[162]

But it should be remembered that identity and nobility are different from loyalty. Although lineage may provide much of an identity it does not follow that ancestry determined the socio-political relationships of individuals. A person could act against the traditions of his house and was open to other influences. Moreover, the influence of ancestors on individuals may have declined the more that generations separated them.[163] However, this is not to say that considerations of the policies and loyalties of their ancestors did not play a leading part in their own policies for some people at some times.

Although ancestry played a major part in creating an individual's identity, the impact of lineage on the policies of individuals is open to question. While some families show strong continuity through generations others do not. This is not to say that lineage did not have important political consequences beyond providing land, for a family connection could be

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[156] Duby, *France*, p. 60. The nature and importance of friendship ties are discussed below.

[157] *Cligés*, p. 127. Elsewhere people who want to know the identity of someone ask for his lineage: Fenice and Arthur, upon seeing Cligés for the first time, want to know his lineage: *Cligés*, pp. 158, 184. Érec also introduces himself as the son of King Lac when he reveals his name, such as to the knight in the episode of the Joy of the Court: *Érec et Énide*, p. 111. When Perceval tells his mother that he has seen knights she tells him his true identity - that he is of a high lineage on both her and his father's side: *Perceval*, p. 386. In *Eliduc* a woman is anxious because she has fallen in love with a man and she did not know whether he was of a high family (*haute gent*): Marie, *Eliduc*, L. 389. Thierry speaks in favour of executing Ganelon for betraying Roland saying, 'By virtue of my ancestors [*anceisurs*] I must make this case': *Chanson de Roland*, L. 3826. Gaimar describes those Saxons who occupied England with Cerdic as Hengist's *linage*: Gaimar, L. 16.

[158] A count was keen to express the high lineage of his niece: *Érec et Énide*, p. 53. When Érec wishes to challenge for the sparrowhawk he tries to impress his host (so that he can use his daughter to win the sparrowhawk) by citing his lineage: 'I am the son of a rich and powerful king: my father is named King Lac; the Bretons call me Érec. I am of the court of King Arthur and have been with him for three years.' This has the desired effect as the vavasour exclaims 'Now I love and esteem you even more': *Érec et Énide*, p. 45. Gawain thought lineage was important when describing people for before the hunt for the white stag he remarks there 'are easily five hundred damsels of high lineage here [at Arthur's court]': *Érec et Énide*, p. 37.

[159] We are told that an old vavasour had power through his 'lands and lineage': *Perceval*, p. 441.

[160] When Agravain the Haughty learns that his brother, Gawain, has been accused of treason he warns him not to disgrace their lineage (this not only shows that brothers were concerned about their lineage and that lineage was important but also shows how siblings could quarrel): *Perceval*, p. 439. A similar sentiment is displayed by Roland when he refuses to summon help by blowing his horn as it would disgrace the French in general and his kinsmen in particular: *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 1063-64, 1076, 1090.

[161] The role of identity in providing nobility is seen in *Érec et Énide*, p. 118.

[162] *La Prise de Orange*, L. 165.

[163] Although children of the Clare family were generous to the foundations of their grandfathers, their patronage declined in later generations: Emma Cownie, 'Religious patronage and lordship: the debate on the honour in post-Conquest England', a paper delivered at the Oxford Prosopography Conference, 31 March, 1995.

very important when trying to consolidate a lordship.[164] What it does mean is that lineage alone is not the whole story.

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[164] This was true for the honour of Breteuil in the first half of the twelfth century: Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, pp. 102-14. This is mirrored in contemporary literature: Ecgbryht was acceptable to the men of Essex not only because he was opposed to Mercia but also because his *parenz* had formerly ruled them: Gaimar, Ll. 2267-80, especially, L. 2274. One of the means by which ties could be passed on to the next generation is revealed by Milsom: fathers could give land to their sons who then held it from the lord: S. F. C. Milsom, *The Legal Framework of English Feudalism. The Maitland Lectures Given in 1972* (Cambridge, 1976) p. 146 n. 2. Milsom's sources for the period covered by this thesis are Stenton, *First Century*, p. 281 n. 41; *Three Rolls of the King's Court in the reign of Richard the First, 1194-95*, ed. F. W. Maitland, Pipe Roll Society, vol. 14 (1891) pp. 25-6; *Rotuli Curiae Regis*, ed. F. Palgrave, vol. 2, p. 134; *Curia Regis Rolls of the Reigns of Richard I and John Preserved in the Public Record Office*, vols. 1-3 (London, 1922-26) vol. 2 pp. 213-14, vol. 3 pp. 240-41. In this last case, for example, dating from 1204, a younger son called Robert who had been given land by his father, had done homage to the lord Hugh, and now does the service for that land.

ii

TYPES OF RELATIVE:

FEELINGS FOR THE LIVING

We will concentrate on the extent that relatives felt emotional ties to each other. This is an important question as it will allow us to see whether co-operation between relatives can be put down to their familial relationship or whether it must be put down to some other factor, such as shared political interests, perhaps caused by the geographical position of their lands or because they shared the same lord.

It will be argued that only close relatives (essentially the modern nuclear family) felt strong emotional ties.[165] These people not only had the closest blood tie but also usually resided in the same household until the children had grown up. Again as today, tensions are apparent between sons and their parents at the age when young men desire freedom but lack financial independence. In contemporary literature uncles, nephews and, to a lesser extent, first cousins also express feelings for each other and seem to have played a part in determining policy and creating links with other groups. More distant relatives, however, are seldom mentioned. This strongly suggests that although there was a strong level of emotional attachment to close relatives these feelings rapidly decreased beyond the immediate family.[166] This view is in marked contrast to some earlier writers.[167] If this argument is accepted it means that we need look no further than the immediate family when looking for family connections to explain collective behaviour.

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[165] A note of caution should be given here for, according to Burke, 'nuclear family' means not 'parents and their children' but a family where all the children leave on marriage: Peter Burke, *History and Social Theory* (Cambridge, 1992) p. 53.

[166] When Odo of Châteauroux went on crusade he mentioned leaving his 'country, possessions, house, children and wife', suggesting these were the relatives he would miss most: cited by Jonathon Riley-Smith, 'Crusading as an act of love', *History* 65 (1980) p. 180. Bernier feels anger when he sees his mother murdered by his companion Raoul: *Raoul de Cambrai*, Ll. 1328-38. The poet of the *Chanson de Roland* also believed that men held affection for their parents, wives and other kinsmen. He says of the Franks in the doomed rear-guard: 'Never again will they see their mothers or their wives': *Chanson de Roland*, L. 1402. The poet adds: 'They will not see their father's and kinsmen again': *Chanson de Roland*, L. 1421.

[167] Some earlier writers have argued that emotional bonds within the nuclear family were not strong but that those to the whole kindred group were. See, for example, Gurevich, p. 306. This is part of the 'Schmid thesis', that around the year 1000 there was a shift in the organisation of the family from horizontal to vertical: Schmid, 'The structure of the nobility in the earlier middle ages', in Timothy Reuter, ed., *The Medieval Nobility: Studies on the ruling classes of France and Germany from the sixth to the twelfth century* (Amsterdam, 1978) pp. 136-99. This view is now being challenged. See for example, Bouchard, 'Family structure and family consciousness among the aristocracy in the ninth to eleventh centuries', pp. 639-58.

This type of family structure may have come into force in the second half of the eleventh century. According to Holt the family after 1066 was perceived as parents and their children whereas before the family consisted of a wider group in which the head was effectively the leader of a clan.[168] But without Hastings and the replacement of one aristocratic group by another it seems that the same development would have occurred for England was already moving towards these patterns.[169] As such the Conquest simply served as a catalyst for change.[170] Vernacular sources support this view for they provide information as to who lived with whom. For instance, in the house of the poor vavasour at the start of Érec et Énide live a father, mother and a daughter.[171] Essentially this is the nuclear family of our own time. This view is backed up by the findings of John Moor, Stephen White and Constance Bouchard who have used different sources to research into the family.[172] Within this unit levels of affection may have been high.

Close relatives felt affection for each other. Although this seems an obvious statement it is nonetheless worth making. It was considered normal for a person to visit their relatives (parent) and friends (ami), implying they wanted to be together.[173] Alis loved his nephew Cligés.[174] King Arthur believes that sisters should love each other.[175] Arthur is keen to differentiate the respectable love between family members from adulterous love when he advises Mark and Yseut.[176] When, as a child and a hostage, William Marshal met a page from his mother's chamber he asked about (and therefore showed concern for) his mother, brothers and sisters;[177] the same people were over-joyed when William was returned to them;[178] and the same people cried when, some years later, William left their home to go to Tancarville in Normandy - and this is said to be 'natural' (nature).[179] When someone died other family members were upset:

> 'Each one lamented his personal loss, for they found the
> riverbank covered with the dead and injured bodies of
> their relatives and friends. Each one gave vent to his own

[168] Holt, 'Feudal society and the family in early medieval England: I. The revolution of 1066', p. 199.
[169] Holt, 'Feudal society and the family in early medieval England: I. The revolution of 1066', p. 202.
[170] Holt, 'Feudal society and the family in early medieval England: II. Notions of patrimony', p. 213.
[171] Érec et Énide, p.45.
[172] John S. Moore, 'The Anglo-Norman family: size and structure', ANS, 14 (1992) 153-96; Stephen D. White, Custom, Kinship, and Gifts to Saints. The Laudatio Parentum in Western France, 1050-1150 (Chapel Hill and london, 1988); Bouchard, 'Family structure and family consciousness', pp. 640, 645-47. In general White is very cautious about using his sources to assess the normal size and structure of households and whether 'the family' was cognatic (i.e. bilateral) or agnatic (i.e. patrilineal): p. 125.
[173] Yonec, L. 40, says a woman could not leave a tower to see family or friend because her jealous husband kept her alone.
[174] Cligés, p. 171.
[175] Yvain, p. 375.
[176] Béroul, p. 141.
[177] HGM, Ll. 633-34.
[178] HGM, Ll. 704-705.
[179] HGM, Ll. 756-59.

loss, which was heavy and bitter: here the son wept for the
father, while there the father bewailed his son; this man
swooned over his cousin, while that one fainted for his
nephew. Thus father, brothers, and relatives moaned on
all sides.'[180]

Similarly, before William Marshal went on a pilgrimage he took leave of

'His friends [*amis*],

His sisters, his immediate family [*lingnage*],

And all his other kinsmen [*parantage*],

For that was only right and proper.'[181]

Later in his life William claimed that his army fought Louis 'for our loved ones [*nos amanz*] /
and for our women and for our children'.[182] But can we be more specific? To which relatives
were people most attached?

At the heart of the family was the married couple.[183] Let us start with them. The
bonds between husband and wife were very strong.[184] A good example of the married couple
is Érec and Énide. Énide often fears for the safety of Érec and when he is wounded she is
most concerned.[185] She also fears losing him for when he temporarily leaves her she feels
great sorrow because she fears he has left her for good;[186] consequently, when he returns she is
delighted.[187] Érec also loves his wife - despite the hardship he made her endure.[188] Having
made their escape:

'Érec embraced and kissed and comforted his wife as he
bore her away; in his arms he held her tightly against his
heart, and said: "My sweet love, I have tested you in every
way. Don't be dismayed anymore, for now I love you
more than I ever did, and I am once more certain and
convinced that you love me completely. Now I want to be
henceforth just as I was before, entirely at your

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[180] *Cligés*, p. 148.

[181] *HGM*, Ll. 7260-63.

[182] *HGM*, Ll. 16143-44

[183] But it should be remembered that marriage is a social institution rather than a sexual one and as such can
take on different aspects in different cultures: Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, p. 357.

[184] One knight tells how he loved his wife and would do anything for her. This went to the extent of agreeing
to stay in one place for as long as it took for someone to come and defeat him in combat: *Érec et Énide*, p.
111. Even more extreme was Soredamors: when her husband died she died of grief: *Cligés*, p. 154.

[185] *Érec et Énide*, pp. 88, 93, 98.

[186] *Érec et Énide*, p. 93.

[187] *Érec et Énide*, p. 93.

command...." Now Énide suffered no more as her lord embraced and kissed her and reassured her of his love.'[189]

Again, after Érec has been cured of his wounds towards the end of the poem they are once again kissing, cuddling, and doing other things that the poet refuses to tell us![190]

'Love' is the bond between couples such as Érec and Énide,[191] Énide's cousin with Maboagrain,[192] and Tristan and Yseut.[193] The effects of sexual love are also seen. When Soredamors falls for Alexander Chrétien says:

> 'Frequently she grew pale and often broke out into a sweat; in spite of herself, she had love. Only with great difficulty could she avoid looking at Alexander.... Love has heated a bath that greatly burns and scalds her. One moment she likes it, the next it hurts; one moment she wants it, and the next she refuses.'[194]

It is left to Guinevere to persuade them to declare their love for each other, and here she says that marriage is the true home of love.[195] Later Cligés and Fenice have the same fears concerning expressing their love for each other.[196] Lancelot meets a girl along the way who offers him lodgings on condition that he sleeps with her.[197] He agrees to this condition but, when the time comes, refuses to have sex. Lancelot does this because he loves Guinevere.[198]

Lovers often exchange kisses. When Érec and Énide leave her home 'he could not keep from kissing her.'[199] And later, on their wedding night, 'kissing was their first game. The love between the two of them made the maiden more bold: she was not afraid of anything; she endured all, whatever the cost. Before she arose again, she had lost the name of maiden; in the morning she was a new lady.'[200] Clearly here kissing was a prelude to something more.... When they had gone to Érec's lands they continued to kiss and cuddle.[201]

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[188] When he regains consciousness and hears Énide shouting at the count who forcibly married her he quickly draws his sword - 'Wrath and the love he bore for his wife made him bold' - and he kills the count: *Érec et Énide*, p. 96.

[189] *Érec et Énide*, p. 97.

[190] *Érec et Énide*, p. 101.

[191] *Érec et Énide*, p. 108.

[192] *Érec et Énide*, p. 114.

[193] For example, Béroul, p. 109, 110.

[194] *Cligés*, p. 128. On the following page Soredamors debates with herself over whether she does and should love Alexander. On p. 130 Alexander is shown facing the same dilemma.

[195] *Cligés*, p. 150.

[196] *Cligés*, pp. 169, 175-78.

[197] *Lancelot*, p. 219.

[198] *Lancelot*, p. 222.

[199] *Érec et Énide*, p. 56.

[200] *Érec et Énide*, p. 63.

[201] *Érec et Énide*, p. 67.

Again, once they are reconciled (following Érec's slaying of her second husband) they kiss and cuddle a lot.[202]

This love explains why couples show fear and anxiety for each other. When Érec fights a knight:

> 'Énide, who was watching them, nearly went mad with
> distress. Anyone who saw her in such a sorrowful state,
> wringing her hands, tearing her hair, with tears falling
> from her eyes, would have recognised a loyal lady.'[203]

Similarly, a lady Érec discovers in the woods whose lover has been captured by two giants also expresses grief: she

> 'was tearing at her hair and pulling at her clothes and her
> tender rosy face. Érec saw her and marvelled and begged
> her to tell him why she was weeping and crying so
> bitterly. The maiden wept and sighed.'[204]

When Énide sees Érec collapse from his wounds her anguish takes on a similar form:

> 'she ran towards him making no attempt to hide her grief.
> She cried aloud and wrung her hands; upon her breast no
> portion of her clothes remained unrent; she began to tear
> her hair and to rend her tender face'

- and then she wishes for death and collapses in a faint.[205] Tears were also shed when a wife expected to be separated from her husband.[206] Such actions, even if exaggerated, strongly suggest that couples were bound together with strong emotions.

The relationship between Érec and Énide can be said to be one of romantic love and companionate marriage. Their love for each other is clear from the passages cited above. Their marriage to each other would appear to be companionate, too, for they appear to be of

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[202] *Érec et Énide*, p. 97. Cligés and Fenice likewise long to kiss each other: *Cligés*, p. 185. When Cligés rescues her from her tomb he immediately embraces and kisses her: *Cligés*, p. 198. Having defeated Clamedeu Perceval and Blancheflor kiss and embrace: *Perceval*, p. 413. Although their relationship perhaps starts through circumstance by this stage they are lovers. Lovers might also kiss an object symbolising their lover. Thus Alexander kisses the shirt that Soredamors had helped make: *Cligés*, p. 142.

[203] *Érec et Énide*, p. 84.

[204] *Érec et Énide*, p. 90.

[205] *Érec et Énide*, p. 93. Other examples of such actions can be found. When people thought Fenice was dying they cry, rage and wring their hands: *Cligés*, p. 194. When she 'dies' they cry and women beat their breasts: *Cligés*, p. 198. When one knight is killed his wife and her people weep and almost kill themselves through grief: *Yvain*, p. 307. The widow of this knight ripped her clothing: *Yvain*, p. 311. A lady who thought her lover was dying 'thrust her fingers in her tresses to pull out her hair': *Perceval*, p. 461.

[206] *Érec et Énide*, p. 113.

the same age and are said to be very similar.[207] Anthony Giddens has written that in modern societies romantic love 'provides for a long-term life trajectory, oriented to an anticipated yet malleable future [i.e. a loving marriage]; and it creates a "shared history" that helps separate out the marital relationship from other aspects of family organisation and give it a special primacy.'[208] The same may have been true in the twelfth century as contemporary literature promotes the ideal of romantic love.

Marital relationships in the real world are hard to assess for the twelfth century. The number of bastards fathered by both Henry I and his grandson Henry II suggests that extra-marital sex was not uncommon, at least for the most powerful males. By the thirteenth century attitudes may have changed as Henry III, Louis IX and Edward I appear to have been faithful to their wives.[209] Edward I in particular seems to have had a great love for his wife, Eleanor of Castile, for on her death he spent almost £2,200 constructing three tombs and twelve crosses for her.[210] However, if twelfth-century marriages were not filled with love comparable to that between Érec and Énide it remains that such love was the ideal; and in this case there would have been considerable tension and longing within couples as the reality did not live up to the ideal.

The ties that bound a parent to a child seem to have been very strong. Although when serving as witnesses of transactions children were occasionally beaten[211] this should be seen as evidence not of parental neglect or indifference but of the importance attached to the memory of witnesses. In the thirteenth century there are clear historical examples of parental affection. Prestwich depicts Eleanor of Provence, wife of Henry III, as longing to see her son in her old age, and she also showed concern for the health of her grandson.[212] In the next generation Edward I may have been personally involved in the preparations for the birth of his own children and gave gifts to them and their children.[213] But evidence for the twelfth century is harder to come by. Although historical sources are bare contemporary literature again allows us to examine the strength of the bond. These make it clear that in general parents had strong affectual ties to their children. For example, one father proudly declared 'When I have my daughter near me, I would not give a marble for the whole world: she is my delight, she is my diversion, she is my solace and my comfort, she is my wealth and my treasure. I love

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[207] *Érec et Énide*, p. 56. This passage is also discussed in the chapter Types of Friend: Emotional Friendship.
[208] Anthony Giddens, *The transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies* (Oxford, 1992) p. 45. Felicity Riddy used this passage for the same purpose in discussing Middle English poetry at the Gentry and Family seminar at Keele University on 1 November, 1997.
[209] Prestwich, *Edward I*, pp. 131-32.
[210] Prestwich, *Edward I*, p. 125.
[211] *Recueil des Actes des Ducs de Normandie de 911 a 1066*, ed. Marie Fauroux (Caen, 1961), nos. 10, 89.
[212] Prestwich, *Edward I*, pp. 122-23.
[213] Prestwich, *Edward I*, pp. 128-29, 131. This did not stop Edward from arguing with his children. At the end of his life, for instance, he is shown physically assaulting his son Edward of Caernarfon: Prestwich, *Edward I*, p. 127.

nothing else as much as her.'[214] The author of the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* says that John Marshal and his wife were right to grieve over the death of their sons[215] and claims that Henry II was upset on the death of his son, Henry the Young King, although he tried to hide his emotion.[216] Even if these incidents are fictitious the poet believed that parents would feel grief when their children died.

The devotion expected of a father to a son is shown in the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*. At the siege of Newbury Stephen demanded John Marshal's son, William, as hostage to ensure John kept to an agreement.[217] When John broke this agreement Stephen was advised to hang the hostage. John's reply was stark:

> 'But he said that he did not care
> About this child, since he still had
> The anvils and hammers
> To produce even finer ones'[218]

To Stephen this reply must have come as quite a shock! But John's gamble paid off for Stephen backed down and refused to kill the child. Although this passage could be used to argue for fatherly indifference to the fate of a son what it really shows is that Stephen expected John to try to save his son. Perhaps John was cold-hearted to his son, but it remains that contemporaries expected him to care. It is the exception that proves the rule.

William Marshal himself seems to have loved his children. The poet declares that William loved his son as only a father can love a son[219] and William shows concern for his son Richard when King John wished to take Richard with him on campaign to Poitou for William objects saying he is too young.[220] Even if this story is fictional, it remains that the poet (if not the Marshal) thought it worthwhile to repeat it, meaning that a concern for one's offspring was an ideal to aspire to. The poet goes on to sing the praises of William's five sons and four daughters,[221] implying that these relatives had affection for each other. We are also told that William 'dearly loved [*molt l'ama*]' his first daughter, Matilda.[222] The details entered into by

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[214] *Érec et Énide*, p. 43. Many other instances are available. One couple found pleasure in listening to their only daughter read a romance: *Yvain*, p. 362. Alexander loved both his wife and his infant son: *Cligés*, p. 152. Another father was happy that he could embrace and carry his young daughter: *Perceval*, p. 448. Parents living in Cornwall were concerned when Morholt came to take away their children: Béroul, p. 66. Marie de France records that a son (Yonec) was loved: *Yonec*, Ll. 459-60. Milun is joyous when he is reunited with his long-lost son: *Milun*, Ll. 404-502. The two, unaware of the other's identity, had been fighting. This is a familiar motif dating back at least as far as the *Hildebrandeslied*.
[215] *HGM*, Ll. 114-16.
[216] *HGM*, Ll. 7044-62, 7152-55.
[217] *HGM*, Ll. 478-90.
[218] *HGM*, Ll. 513-16.
[219] *HGM*, Ll. 18331-32.
[220] *HGM*, Ll. 14708-26.
[221] *HGM*, Ll. 14860-914 (the sons), 14915-56 (the daughters). Also Ll. 14957-5012 (all his children).
[222] *HGM*, L. 14923.

the poet (over three hundred lines) to describe the Marshal's children strongly suggest that he cared for them.

Towards the end of his life, when he was ill, William Marshal called for his son and his men (*genz*).[223] Although the Marshal's death-scene may be highly inaccurate as a portrayal of reality, as a picture of the ideal it shows who should have been present. During his illness it was arranged that, through taking shifts, three knights would always be with him and that his son the young Marshal would spend every night with him.[224] Those usually present during this illness are his sons, his daughters, his wife, his household - particularly John of Earley and Henry fitz Gerold - and various churchmen.[225] When he knows he is dying William calls for his son, wife and knights - they are all dear to him.[226] This suggests that William's strongest ties were to his closest relatives and household knights.

Perhaps the most loving mother belongs to Perceval. She can, indeed, be seen as the archetypal over-protective parent. Her desire to protect Perceval stems from having her two older sons killed.[227] She claims that her husband died of grief when he learned that his two eldest sons had been killed in combat, making her loss even greater.[228] She has been so protective that Perceval does not know what a knight is (he thinks maybe an angel of God), nor what a lance, shield or hauberk are for;[229] nor does he know what a church or chapel are.[230] When he is late coming home she is upset, but this melancholy turns to joy when he arrives.[231] While he was away she was frightened for his safety.[232] When he desires to go to the court of King Arthur to become a knight she tries to detain him then kisses him goodbye.[233] When he leaves her she faints.[234] Later Perceval learns that she has died of grief and he is told that it was a sin for him to allow it.[235] Clearly Perceval's mother loved her son dearly.

Adults might love children not connected to them by blood, too. If the *Histoire* is to be believed, King Stephen twice saved the life of the young William Marshal because of his childish comments.[236] We are told that Stephen's actions were done

'With great goodness and kindness,

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[223] *HGM*, L. 17898.
[224] *HGM*, Ll. 18273-314.
[225] *HGM*, Ll. 18119-978.
[226] *HGM*, Ll. 18831-33.
[227] *Perceval*, p. 387.
[228] *Perceval*, p. 387.
[229] *Perceval*, pp. 383-84.
[230] *Perceval*, p. 388.
[231] *Perceval*, p. 385.
[232] *Perceval*, p. 386.
[233] *Perceval*, p. 387.
[234] *Perceval*, p. 388.
[235] *Perceval*, pp. 425, 459.
[236] *HGM*, Ll. 509-38 (refusal to hang William after the child asked for the javelin of the earl of Arundel), 539-60 (refusal to catapult William because of William's childish remarks).

For his heart was full of these qualities'.[237]

Later William and Stephen are depicted playing 'knights' - a game played with flowers;[238] during this game Stephen twice calls William 'friend' (*amis*).[239] From these episodes Stephen emerges as a very kind-hearted man with a strong affection for children. It is unlikely that he was alone in having such feelings. This passage therefore implies that people in the Middle Ages had a strong affection not only for their own offspring but for all children.

Parental love could cause political problems as their primary loyalty was sometimes to their children rather than to their superior. Richard of Rouen, for instance, was willing to break a peace agreement with William of Orange to avenge the death of his son.[240] Another lord felt grief as the giant Harpin of the Mountain had killed two of his sons, threatened to kill the other four, and demanded that their sister be handed over to him.[241]

There was also a strong sense of attachment between son and father. The poem *Renaut de Montauban* claims: 'Both in good times and in bad, one must love [*amer*] one's father.'[242] This is seen when Érec learns of his father's death, for he was very upset but tried to conceal his grief as this was not befitting a king.[243] Sons are also often seen accompanying their fathers.[244] This is reflected in charter attestations. The bond to the father may have been strengthened by symbolism as other authority figures - both political superiors and God - are described as 'fathers'.

Adult offspring also held love for their parents. When Énide is reunited with her parents at the end of the poem she is filled with joy.[245] Perceval is likewise deeply attached to his mother.[246] One woman (Blancheflor) was angry with a man who had been present at her father's death.[247]

Siblings were supposed to love each other. Two brothers, Otrant and Harpin, loved each other greatly (*molt...amer*).[248] One lord speaks of the 'love and great fidelity' that should

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[237] *HGM*, Ll. 534-35.

[238] *HGM*, Ll. 595-618.

[239] *HGM*, Ll. 609, 613.

[240] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1972-76 (the agreement), 2057-2166 (breaking it).

[241] *Yvain*, p. 343.

[242] *Renaut de Montauban*, L. 3734.

[243] *Érec et Énide*, p. 117.

[244] When the king of Scotland came to Arthur's court for Érec and Énide's wedding he brought both sons with him: *Érec et Énide*, p. 61. Sir Garin went to court with his son Bertran: *Perceval*, p. 445.

[245] *Érec et Énide*, p. 118.

[246] Although Perceval leaves his mother against her will he wishes to return home to see her as soon as he has been knighted: *Perceval*, p. 402. After his battles at Beaurepaire he again remembers his mother and goes in search of her: *Perceval*, p. 417. However, Perceval's love for his mother should not be exaggerated: he has no intention of staying with his mother when he returns to her and plans to pack her off to a nunnery: *Perceval*, p. 417.

[247] *Perceval*, p. 409.

[248] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 1081.

exist between brother and sister'[249] and a queen says 'may God grant him to love her as a brother loves his sister.'[250] Siblings might also help each other[251] and this affection could lead to a yearning for revenge should a sibling be killed.[252] But not all siblings got on well together.[253] This reminds us that there are always exceptions to any generalisation.

In real life siblings may indeed have held strong affections for each other. When Guy, the son of Robert Guiscard, was (wrongly) told that his half-brother Bohemond must have died at the siege of Antioch he allegedly beat his breast, wrung his hands and called Bohemond 'my sweetest friend and lord [*dulcissime amice et domine*]'.[254] According to the Marshal's biographer, one of William Marshal's older brothers died of grief when another brother died.[255] In a similar vein, William Marshal remarks

'Never before did I feel such great sorrow

As I did for my dead brother.'[256]

Although these sentiments may well be exaggerated it is clear that the poet thought that within the Marshal family there were strong horizontal ties of affection.

This group of parents and their children seems to have been at the centre of the twelfth-century family. Marie de France says:

'At the height of his fame this noble knight returned to his

homeland to see his father [*pere*] and his lord [*seignur*],

his loving mother [*mere*] and his sister [*sorur*], who had

all longed for his return.'[257]

It was these people whom Marie believed a man would want to see most when he returned home.

More distant relatives are mentioned far less frequently. Grandparents are seldom mentioned and only occasionally do we hear of three generations being alive at the same time.[258] We must assume either that grandparents lived away from their children, that people usually died before the birth of their grandchildren, or that old people were not the stuff of adventure. The last of these seems the most convincing.

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[249] *Perceval*, p. 451.
[250] *Perceval*, p. 491.
[251] When Guivret is caring for Érec's wounds he takes him to where his sisters live and they tend Érec for him: *Érec et Énide*, pp. 100-101. One lord believed that Gawain would help him if he knew of his predicament as he was married to Gawain's sister: *Yvain*, p. 344.
[252] One man hated the person who killed his brother: *Perceval*, p. 409.
[253] Three brothers fight together: *Yvain*, p. 350.
[254] *Gesta Francorum*, pp. 63-65, quote p. 64.
[255] *HGM*, L. 113. This may be an exaggeration but it leaves a clear impression of the grief felt.
[256] *HGM*, Ll. 10038-39.

The emotional bonds that bound an uncle to a niece seem to have been less strong than those that bound parents to their daughter. This is seen in the way Énide's uncle kisses her farewell but did not cry whereas her parents did both.[259] But clearly they did have feelings. One niece has affection and admiration for her uncle even though they had not met in a long time[260] while another uncle, a prior, supplies her with the only food she has apart from what her servants can catch.[261]

The bond between uncle and nephew was strong. The relationship between a nephew and maternal uncle has been studied for the twelfth-century society by Georges Duby. It is worthwhile to note that Duby's ideas are very similar to those of anthropologists working in the developing world today.[262] Radcliffe-Brown suggested that in a patrilineal society the father represents authority whereas the maternal uncle, seen as a 'male mother', is treated with familiarity but that in a matrilineal society the roles are reversed.[263] Lévi-Strauss developed this idea to form his concept of 'the unit of kingship': the married couple, their child, and the mother's brother. He claims that within this structure each relationship can be one of either familiarity or authority. However, within each generation there must always be one of each type: the woman must always have a relationship of familiarity with either her brother or her husband and one of formality with the other; and the son must have a familiar relationship with either his father or uncle but not both.[264] This model matches that supplied by Duby for the twelfth century for Duby sees the relationship between father and son as one of tension but that between uncle and nephew as one of affection. Whilst this may be seen as corroboration - that the theories of anthropologists support the historian's observations - it may also raise a few doubts. One should question whether this correlation is a happy coincidence or whether Duby's analysis rests heavily on the ideas of Lévi-Strauss. It may be, after all, that Duby sought to find evidence that supported the theory, and in so doing only found evidence that supported his ideas. As we will see, there is evidence that questions this model of kinship.

To begin with, this model of kinship is an oversimplification - as Lévi-Strauss himself was aware. The system of basic attitudes, in fact, comprises at least four terms: mutuality (affection, tenderness, spontaneity); reciprocity (an attitude resulting from the reciprocal exchange of prestations and counterprestations); rights (the attitude of the creditor);

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[257] Marie, *Guigemar*, Ll. 69-73.

[258] One queen, for instance, talks to her granddaughter: *Perceval*, p. 479.

[259] *Érec et Énide*, p. 55.

[260] *Perceval*, p. 405.

[261] *Perceval*, p. 405.

[262] A useful summary of studies from the nineteenth century onwards is found in Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, pp. 39-41.

[263] A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, 'The Mother's Brother in South Africa', *South African Journal of Science* 21 (1924).

[264] This model was developed by studying tribes in Melanesia, Polynesia, New Guinea and the Caucasus: Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, pp. 41-46.

and obligations (the attitude of the debtor).[265] It is the combination of these four terms that we should examine. We examine the issue of mutuality in this chapter; the other three are seen here and in the discussion of the Functions of the Family.

Nephews, uncles and cousins seem to have co-operated. William Marshal served as a squire in Tancarville for eight years.[266] The chamberlain who was looking after him during this time describes William as 'my nephew and my friend.'[267] After this apprenticeship with one uncle William passed into the care of his maternal uncle, Patrick earl of Salisbury, and we are told that he went because of this blood relationship.[268] When Patrick dies in battle the poet depicts William as so full of grief that he attacks his slayer before being fully equipped, resulting in his own capture.[269]

The avunculate relationship is perhaps the relationship most discussed in the vernacular sources. Quite a strong level of emotion seems to have been involved.[270] This affection could lead to trust and support.[271] Perhaps the most famous uncle-nephew relationship in contemporary literature is that between Arthur and Gawain. A high level of trust existed between them for Arthur often instructs Gawain to perform special duties (such as checking out a stranger)[272] and Gawain often gives counsel.[273] In this relationship it is difficult to be certain why the two men are so close. Several explanations are possible. Was it because of the family bond, the tie of lordship, personal friendship, or the special talents of Gawain? Probably it was a mixture, though the tie of kinship seems to have been the most important. This is seen by the way Arthur regularly refers to Gawain as 'my nephew' or 'dear

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[265] Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, p. 49. These same attitudes can be seen in the relationships between superiors and followers, as seen below.
[266] *HGM*, L. 773.
[267] *HGM*, L. 793.
[268] *HGM*, Ll. 1559-64.
[269] *HGM*, Ll. 1653-1710; grief is Ll. 1652-59.
[270] It was King Evrain, for instance, who dubbed his nephew a knight: *Érec et Énide*, p. 111. Similarly, the King of Galloway is said to have cherished Énide because Érec was his nephew: *Érec et Énide*, p. 121. When a nephew was killed his uncle 'swore to God and His saints that he would find no joy or good fortune again in life as long as he knew his nephew's slayer was alive. Then he added that whoever brought him back this man's head would bring him great comfort and be counted among his friends' - clearly he loved his nephew dearly: *Cligés*, p. 164. The death of his nephew is also seen as strengthening the duke's determination to fight Cligés: *Cligés*, p. 173. Here it seems that the family connection was the cause of a feud. Alis was sorrowful when he believed Cligés was dead: *Cligés*, p. 165. He was also distressed when he saw him get injured: *Cligés*, p. 172. Perceval believes he should love his uncle: *Perceval*, p. 460. Charles cries when he believes his nephew Roland to be in danger: *Chanson de Roland*, L. 825. A Moor grieves at the death of his nephew: *Chanson de Roland*, L. 1219. Charles believes that the most important Frank to die at Rencesvals was his nephew for as soon as he gets there he cries out 'where are you, fair nephew?': *Chanson de Roland*, L. 2402, at L. 2859 (also Charles' arrival at Rencesvals) Charles is first concerned with his nephew. Later Charles asks God to allow him 'to gain revenge for ... [his] nephew, Roland': *Chanson de Roland*, L. 3109.
[271] After the death of his father Cligés was looked after by his uncle: *Cligés*, pp. 155-75. Similarly, Chrétien remarks that Alis 'trusted his nephew [Cligés] in all things': *Cligés*, p. 163. When Cligés returns from Britain his uncle Alis is willing to turn everything over to him except the crown: *Cligés*, p. 186.
[272] *Érec et Énide*, p. 87
[273] *Érec et Énide*, p. 87.

nephew'.[274] By stressing the blood-tie Arthur reveals that he saw this as the strongest bond between them.

Nephews are also important in the Orange Cycle. In the *La Prise d'Orange* it is stated that William loves two of his nephews (Guielin and Bertrand) very much (*amer tant*).[275] In *Le Couronnement de Louis* Bertrand warns William that the regent Arneis of Orleans is plotting betrayal.[276] In general they accompany William in his exploits, such as travelling to Rome.[277] When William returns to Rome after slaying Corsolt his three nephews are there to greet him[278] - it is a family reunion. Family unity is again stressed by the poet in the battle against Galafré: he concentrates on the activities of William and his nephews.[279] Later it appears that the other leaders of William's force are his nephews.[280] William also asks Bertrand for advice, though this time he does not take it.[281]

But there may have been a difference in the level of affection felt by uncle and nephew. Alis refers to Cligés as 'nephew' even though he is also Cligés' superior.[282] This suggests that for Alis family bonds were more fundamental than that between lord and follower. Cligés, on the other hand, refers to Alis as 'my lord',[283] stressing the bond of lordship. This difference is seen elsewhere. Alis calls Cligés 'dear nephew' while Cligés calls him 'good sir.'[284] Arthur also often refers to Gawain as 'nephew'[285] whereas Gawain tends to refer to Arthur as 'lord'.[286] It is also seen in part in the *Chanson de Roland*.[287] This difference suggests that whereas the uncle stressed the family bond the nephew stressed the bond of lordship. This could mean there was a difference in the level of familial affection between the two people (the uncle was more attached to the nephew); but it also could be that inferiors had to address superiors as 'lord'.

This contrast is also seen in Béroul's *Tristan*. Mark refers to Tristan as 'nephew'[288] whereas Tristan uses both king[289] and uncle.[290] Tristan shows his position well when he says

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[274] For example, *Érec et Énide*, p. 87 (before giving him a special instruction); *Cligés*, p. 183; *Perceval*, p. 431, 435, 437.
[275] *La Prise d'Orange*, L. 84.
[276] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 115-18.
[277] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 273, 356.
[278] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1154-88.
[279] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1214-49.
[280] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1640-65. But he is also shown giving orders to Sehier de Plessis - *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 1666-73.
[281] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 2669-95.
[282] *Cligés*, p. 171.
[283] *Cligés*, p. 171.
[284] *Cligés*, p. 174.
[285] For example, *Cligés*, p. 183, *Lancelot*, p. 210.
[286] *Cligés*, p. 183, *Lancelot*, 210.
[287] Charles also calls Roland 'nephew': *Chanson de Roland*, L. 784.
[288] For example, Béroul, pp. 53, 55, 58, 59 (twice), 102, 117, 119.
[289] Béroul, pp. 50, 51 (twice), 99 (three times), 102, 109.
[290] Béroul, pp. 50, 52, 96, 97, 98, 99 (twice).

of Mark 'I should serve him with honour as my uncle and my lord.'[291] However, Tristan stresses the blood relationship when he seeks to persuade Mark not to believe any slander about himself and the queen, showing that he thought that this was the tie that would most likely alter Mark's opinion.[292] Although he felt bound by both ties Tristan felt that he had more leverage with Mark if he stressed the familial bond rather than the superior-follower bond. King Mark held the same view for when Tristan delivers the letter of reconciliation to Mark in the middle of the night the king awakes and calls out three times 'For God's sake, fair nephew, wait for your uncle!'[293] Such evidence strongly suggests that the relationship between uncle and nephew carried more emotional weight than that between lord and follower. In turn, this suggests that closer relatives had emotional bonds that were considerably stronger than lord-follower bonds. But this is not to say that people would always join their relatives against a superior for, as we shall see, many factors in addition to affection were involved in such decisions.

The Orange Cycle also shows uncles and nephews co-operating, but here they seem to do so as equals. Although William is perhaps more valiant, he is an equal with his nephews and both halves use the family connection. Thus William calls Bertrand 'nephew'[294] and Bertrand calls William 'uncle'.[295] It appears, therefore, that, as equals, the family bond was stressed whereas between unequals the inferior had to stress the bond of lordship and show his inferiority.

Cousins appear to have had less affection for each other than uncles and nephews. Nevertheless they still communicated even when the distances involved were great.[296] When cousins are reunited they show great affection and happiness,[297] suggesting there was an emotional bond. This is supported in the way Yvain tells Calogrenant that as they are first cousins they should love each other.[298] But the fact that cousins lived far away from each other suggests that although people thought they should be close to their cousins they were often separated by geography. This lack of proximity would mean that cousins had less emotional attachment to each other than they did to closer relatives.[299]

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[291] Béroul, p. 98.

[292] Béroul, pp. 59, 64.

[293] Béroul, p. 102.

[294] *La Prise d'Orange*, Ll. 10, 54; *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 32, 796, 1012. The poet also uses 'nephews' to describe William's nephews: for example, *La Prise d'Orange*, L. 84.

[295] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 39, 416, 794, 805.

[296] Guivret, for instance, has expensive clothes sent to him by a cousin in Scotland: *Érec et Énide*, p. 101.

[297] *Érec et Énide*, p. 113. Here details of the relationship are explained in order to show that they really are cousins. Afterwards she calls Énide 'cousin' in order to stress their new-found blood relationship: *Érec et Énide*, p. 114.

[298] *Yvain*, p. 302.

[299] The role proximity plays in affectual relationships is discussed in the chapter Types of Friend: Emotional Friendship.

Yet more distant ties may have been felt. When Cligés escapes to Britain we are reminded that Arthur was his great-uncle.[300] This may help explain why Arthur was willing to invade Greece to restore Cligés' inheritance.[301] But Arthur may be an atypical case. Since he was the king - and an ideal king at that - people are likely to have remembered their connection to him more readily than if he was a man of no importance. This means that Arthur may be the exception that proves the rule: relatives beyond first cousins are generally not considered.

Despite the lack of strong emotions between relatives beyond the immediate family, marriage could still be used as the basis of co-operation and trust. A wife, for example, was supposed to love the family of her husband[302] but would have retained affection for her father, brothers and, to a lesser extent, nephews. In this way marriage could be used as a political tool to join two kin groups together.

These are the relatives that occur in the vernacular texts. It seems likely that in doing so the sources reflect contemporary social reality. This suggests that the twelfth-century aristocratic family was very similar to the nuclear family of our own day. At the heart of the family stood the married couple. With them were their children. These relatives held a deep affection for each other. Uncles also loved their nephews and nieces, and first cousins felt affection for each other, but the attachment was less. Beyond this small group affection quickly diminished. More distant relatives are seldom remembered and rarely influenced political decisions. This concurs well with recent findings by other historians. Judith Green, for instance, has argued that loyalty in Stephen's reign was based not on family ties but on regional interest, that only the immediate family mattered.[303]

These considerations are important for an understanding of socio-political relationships. When members of a kin group follow the same policy it is difficult to see whether this was through a feeling of familial solidarity or through political expediency (as they are likely to share many common interests they are likely to have followed similar courses of action even if they had no affection for their relatives). Only now can we begin to see how blood relationships mattered. We have seen which family members held affections for which. The importance in this field of ties between men (fathers and sons, uncles and nephews, and brothers) is obvious. But emotional ties involving women were also important.

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[300] *Cligés*, p. 204.
[301] *Cligés*, p. 204.
[302] During the tryst under the tree Yseut tells Tristan - and the listening Mark - that her mother had loved the family of her husband and that she thought this was right: Béroul, p. 49. She also tells Mark that she loves Tristan only because he is from Mark's family: 'You are my lord, sire, and everyone knows he is your nephew; because of you I have loved him much, sire': Béroul, p. 56.
[303] Judith Green, 'Kinship and political allegiance in south-west England during the civil war of Stephen's reign', a paper delivered at the Oxford Prosopography Conference, March 1995.

Even if we assume (wrongly) that political power was held exclusively by men, relationships involving women are important for the functioning of politics as, through marriage, they united different male groups. A wife, for instance, linked her husband's family with her own family (her parents and her siblings, as well as her siblings' marriage partners).[304] The mother-daughter relationship is also important as, through marriage, they connected several families. Marriage therefore had to be carefully planned as it created links not only with the husband and wife but with all their relatives.[305] This realisation meant marriages could have a political dimension.

Political marriages are seen in these sources. Here we see that the father often arranged the marriage of his offspring. William Marshal, for example, arranged with Earl Roger Bigot that his daughter should marry his son Hugh.[306] In *Cligés* the emperor of Germany seems to have used his daughter as a political tool by offering her hand in marriage first to the duke of Saxony and then to the emperor of Greece.[307] This also explains why marriage could be used as a reward. King Gualfier, for instance, offers his daughter to William of Orange as a reward for setting him free.[308]

This is not too deny that women could benefit through marriage. One reason for a woman to marry was to secure her lands.[309] One maid (Lunete) tells her widowed lady (Laudine of Landuc) that she must marry so that she has someone who will defend her land.[310] The lady admits that this maid is a 'loyal friend'[311] and eventually takes a new husband who has proved his worth in battle.[312] Before she consents to the marriage she shows that her main concern is defence by asking the suitor (Yvain) whether he will defend her spring.[313] As her seneschal makes clear, she needs a husband because 'a woman does not know how to bear a shield nor strike with a lance'.[314] The lady of Norison seeks Yvain's help in a war against

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[304] Anthropologists write how in many societies women are exchanged in marriage and pass from one male group to another: Lévi-Strauss, *The Scope of Anthropology*, trans. Sherry Ortner Paul and Robert A. Paul (London, 1967) pp. 32-39; Lévis-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, pp. 46, 60, 61, 83, 296-97; Bette S. Denich, 'Sex and Power in the Balkans' in Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, *Woman, Culture and Society* (Stanford, 1974) p. 246. However, this model is not without its detractors and refiners. Ortner has argued that the family threatens social cohesion by creating ties of biology through stressing the link between parent and child: Sherry B. Ortner, 'Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture', in Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, *Woman, Culture and Society* (Stanford, 1974) pp. 78-79.
[305] This is seen, for instance, in the way William de Briouze went to Ireland to stay with his son-in-law Walter de Lacy when he was banished by King John: *HGM*, Ll. 14137-232.
[306] *HGM*, Ll. 13336-48.
[307] *Cligés*, pp. 155-59.
[308] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 1352-77.
[309] Some of the people locked up in a magical castle were widows who had been wrongfully disinherited after the death of their husbands: *Perceval*, p. 473.
[310] *Yvain*, pp. 314-15.
[311] *Yvain*, p. 316.
[312] *Yvain*, p. 322.
[313] *Yvain*, p. 320.
[314] *Yvain*, p. 321.

Count Alier who has invaded her lands.[315] This shows that widows - and possibly all female landowners - could benefit from the protection marriage could bring.

Marriage could also be used to settle conflicts. The conflict between John Marshal and Patrick earl of Salisbury was ended through John leaving his first wife and marrying Sybil, Patrick's sister. The *Histoire* records that

> 'He [John] was not unwilling to do this,
>
> In order to dispel the enmity between them.
>
> Subsequently there was love and harmony between them,
>
> Lasting throughout their lives.'[316]

The notion of the 'bad marriage' (*mal mariée*) is a recurrent theme in the lais of Marie de France. *Yonec* shows a marriage without love, the crisis in *Lanval* is caused by a transgressed vow, and in *Laüstic* love leads to the death of the nightingale that symbolises the idyllic love of the couple. *Yonec*, *Chevrefoil* and *Laüstic* all show Marie's approval for adulterous relationships when the wife is unhappy whilst *Guigemar* shows that adulterous love, if heart-felt, need not lead to death. Such poems suggest that the concept of romantic love was seen as being an important ingredient for a successful and rewarding marriage.

Although marriages may have been arranged and created for strategic reasons this does not mean that the couple had no affection for each other. There can be an element of romantic love even within strategic marriages. Marriage for political ends does not preclude affection, nor does it mean that the couple could not grow to love each other. Emotions could still have been strong between people who married for political reasons.

We have seen that relatives felt affection for each other and that this affection existed between members of the nuclear family but then soon petered out. Where such feelings were strong, blood ties could challenge patriarchal authority.[317] This is further addressed in our discussion on the functions of the family.

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[315] *Yvain*, p. 332.
[316] *HGM*, Ll. 374-77.
[317] Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, p. 365.

iii

TYPES OF RELATIVE: ARTIFICIAL KINSHIP

The importance of the family is also seen in the creation of artificial kinships. By describing close friends in terms of kin - such as 'brother' - writers recognised that the family tie was supposed to be (though not necessarily was) the closest, surest and most natural tie.[318]

Followers are sometimes termed 'kinsmen'. In the Chanson de Roland:

> 'The emperor calls upon his kinsmen:
> "Tell me, barons, in God's name, if I shall have your
> aid."'[319]

Although some of the barons may indeed have been Charlemagne's kinsmen it is doubtful whether all were. Let us look at the types of artificial kinsmen in more detail.

Firstly, there is the artificial father. Kay describes the man who showed him friendship and cared for him when he was wounded as a 'loving father' and the man who sought to prevent his recovery as 'a wicked stepfather'.[320] Here someone who gives aid is seen as taking on the role of a father. In addition, this passage highlights the differences between how a father and a stepfather was believed to behave. This difference is also seen in the *Chanson de Roland* where Roland reveals that his arch-rival Ganelon is his stepfather.[321]

Godfathers are also mentioned. After taking Galafré prisoner in battle[322] William stands at his baptism as his godfather.[323] This ceremony not only welcomed the convert into the Christian community but also reaffirmed William's authority over him: he stood as a father, a position of authority and benevolence. However, this should not be pushed too far. In medieval society it was considered as the prerogative of a superior to stand as the godfather to a tenant's child. Becoming a godfather created horizontal as well as vertical links. Having stood as godfather to Ælfthryth's son, King Eadgar sees Ælfthryth as his *cumere* and *seur*.[324]

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[318] Althoff likewise noted that ideas of family structure influenced the structure of friendships and followings. However, in the earlier medieval period the forms artificial kinship took (such as the great importance of standing as godparent at a baptism) were sometimes different: Althoff: p. 212.

[319] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3556-57.

[320] *Lancelot*, p. 257.

[321] Despite Ganelon having laid a trap for them Roland will not let Oliver say a bad thing about him as he is his stepfather: *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 1024-27.

[322] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1230-61.

[323] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 1287.

[324] Gaimar, Ll. 3781, 3796 (*cumere*), 3741 (*seur*). *Cumere* gives the modern French *commère*, still used to describe the relationship between godparent and parent; *seur* is sister.

By using such words, particularly *seur*, Eadgar recognises that he now has a special and closer relationship to her.

References to artificial sons are rare. Governal calls Tristan 'my son' when he spots Yseut with the lepers.[325] He has great familiarity with Tristan as he had once been his tutor.

Artificial nieces are equally rare. But when an abbess decides to care for an abandoned child she says she will bring her up as her niece.[326]

Artificial brothers are more common. Here several different meanings can be distinguished. One could call someone 'brother' when one wanted to appeal to their emotions. Often this is when one wants information[327] - it is manipulation through emotion - but it is also used to show courtesy and generosity.[328] Roland and Oliver are described as being 'brothers' four times in the *Chanson de Roland*.[329] This occurs only when they are about to die: until then (and sometimes afterwards) they are 'companions'. This would suggest that although the tie of companionship was great (see below) that of 'brotherhood' was even closer.

'Brother' is also often used to address a rustic. This can be seen in the way the young Perceval is often described as 'brother'[330] but it is not restricted to him. In Béroul's *Tristan* Mark calls a leper (actually Tristan in disguise) 'brother'.[331] It is also seen in *La Prise de Orange*[332] and *Le Charroi de Nîmes*.[333]

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[325] Béroul, p. 74.

[326] *Le Fresne*, L. 224.

[327] Yvain calls the abusive porter in the town of Dire Adventure 'good brother' when he wants to get information out of him: *Yvain*, p. 360. Gawain also calls a squire 'brother' when he wishes to tell him a secret: *Perceval*, p. 492.

[328] The Fisher King calls Perceval 'brother' when they first meet by the river: *Perceval*, p. 418. The Fisher King again calls him 'brother' when he gives him a precious sword as a gift: *Perceval*, p. 420. A holy hermit calls Perceval 'brother' when he learns his name: *Perceval*, p. 459. When a huge knight advises Gawain not to take a palfrey he calls him 'good brother': *Perceval*, p. 464.

[329] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 1376, 1395, 1456, 1866.

[330] The knight whom Perceval first meets calls him 'good brother' after they have been speaking for a while and when he still wants to know where the knights with the three maidens were: *Perceval*, p. 385. Having ignored Perceval through being lost in thought, Arthur apologises by calling him 'dear brother' and later 'friend' twice: *Perceval*, p. 393. This conversation is later recalled by Arthur when he talks to Gawain: *Perceval*, p. 431. A gentlemen, Gornemant of Gohort, who teaches Perceval about knighthood, first calls him 'dear brother' three times and 'friend' once: *Perceval*, p. 398. While he trains him, however, he calls Perceval 'friend': *Perceval*, pp. 399 (twice), 400 (four times). Once he has knighted Perceval, however, Gornemant calls him 'dear brother' again: *Perceval*, p. 402. It may be that here Gornemant is stressing their equality as knights; but it may also be because Perceval has just betrayed his peasant upbringing again by referring to his mother's advice.

[331] Béroul, p. 132.

[332] When William addresses a man who has just escaped from a Moslem prison he says 'friend, good brother' (*amis, beau frere*): *La Prise de Orange*, L. 157.

[333] King Otrant addresses a merchant (actually William in disguise) first as 'good friend merchant' (*beau amis marcheant*): *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 1121, 1124, 1135. Later he uses 'brother' (*frere*): *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 1138, 1155, 1186, 1217. This progression implies that brothers were closer than friends. In contrast, the merchant addresses the king as 'sir', 'baron' and 'good sir': *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 1122, 1136, 11231 (*sire*), 1145 (*baron*), 1162 (*beau sire*).

The idea of brotherhood is also seen in political agreements. According to Gaimar, when Cnut offered to divide up the land with Eadmund he said:

> 'And let us be brothers [*freres*] in truth.
> I will swear to you, you swear to me,
> To keep this brotherhood [*fraternite*],
> As if we were born of one mother,
> As if we were brothers [*frere*],
> Of one father [*pere*] and one mother [*mere*].'[334]

Here we clearly see the creation of an artificial brotherhood with the concept being used to give form to a peace treaty. Stress is placed on relating it to the wider family structure by mentioning that they should henceforth act as if they were 'of one father and one mother'. It is also worth noting that Cnut saw that the relationship would be entered into by mutual oaths.

The existence of artificial kinships further reveals the strength of the family as a social and emotional unit. When people wished to demonstrate the strength of a relationship they likened it to the family structure. We can also see that (ideal) fathers were seen as protective, generous and benevolent whereas brothers were seen as equals with a strong emotional attachment. This is also seen in the way priests are (still) termed 'father' and monks 'brother'.

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[334] Gaimar, Ll. 4339-44.

iv

FUNCTIONS OF THE FAMILY

One role of the kindred group was to aid other members. Such help ranged from doing domestic chores to giving political and military aid. It could also include helping relatives acquire positions of power.[335] Fulfilling this function against the claims of friendship or vertical ties associated with superior-follower relationships would show that blood ties were stronger than these other ties. On the other hand, if relatives fought against each other we might conclude that ties of blood were weak in comparison with other ties. Although the evidence is inconclusive as to which tie was the strongest, this very uncertainty makes it clear that blood alone was not sufficient to ensure loyalty.

Yet many sources show relatives acting together in a variety of scenarios.[336] Familial solidarity is seen clearly in the *Chanson de Roland*. Charles believed that he could encourage the motivation of his troops by concentrating their attention on avenging fallen kinsmen. In a speech before a battle he says:

'Avenge your sons, your brothers and your heirs,

Who died the other day at Rencesvals.'[337]

When Ganelon is accused of treason it is to his kinsmen that he turns for help.[338] His kinsman Pinabel argues in court for his innocence[339] and finally Thierry and Pinabel duel to see which of them is right.[340] Pinabel is keen to express his family loyalty for he declares: 'I

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[335] Althoff sees this as the prime value of relatives in the early Middle Ages: Althoff, p. 79.

[336] In *Garin le Loheren* it is claimed that 'wealth comes from relatives (*parenz*) and friends (*amis*)': *Garin le Loheren*, L. 10172, cited by Kay, p. 200. Charles dreams that a group of bears say, 'We must come to the help of our kinsman': *Chanson de Roland*, L. 2562. The poor vavasour at the start of *Érec et Énide* claims that 'the lord of this town himself would have clothed her [his daughter] handsomely and granted her every wish, for she is his niece': *Érec et Énide*, p. 43. Similarly, a little later the count asks another niece to give the cousin some good clothes and when Érec refuses to allow this she gives a palfrey instead: *Érec et Énide*, p. 54. Offspring might also help in household chores, boys looking after horses, girls taking armour off a guest: *Lancelot*, p. 239. When Agravain the Haughty hears that his brother, Gawain, has been accused of treason he offers to fight in his place: *Perceval*, p. 439. Tiebaut of Tintagel summons his cousins to help win a tournament: *Perceval*, L. 4888. Yseut believes that relatives would usually aid one another for she seeks Arthur's aid in proving her innocence only as she has 'no relative in this land who would make war or who would rebel on account of... [her] distress': Béroul, p. 120. The *Enfances Vivien* records that 'begetters have a right to protection and rescue from their offspring': *Enfances Vivien*, Ll. 332-33. When William decides to try to conquer Spain he first looks for support from his nephews Guielin and Bertrand: *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 594-634.

[337] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3411-12.

[338] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3780-87.

[339] He is able to get the support of all but one of the barons at the council: *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3793-806.

[340] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3841-930.

want to support all my kinsmen.'[341] Pinabel risks his life for his kinsman, and dies because of it. But it is not only Pinabel who dies: thirty of his kinsmen are executed too![342]

The Beaumont family of the mid-twelfth century is a good example of relatives working together. In the early years of King Stephen the whole clan rose to power.[343] But the greatest level of co-operation (and probably also affection) can be seen in the activities of the Beaumont twins, Robert earl of Leicester and Waleran count of Meulan. Charter evidence suggests that during the civil war of Stephen's reign the two remained in touch as Robert appears in four of Waleran's charters. The most important of these is a writ addressed from Waleran to Robert of 1136 x 1141 showing that Robert was actually involved in the government of Waleran's possessions in England.[344] In addition, Henry of Huntingdon shows Robert acting in the interests of his twin by destroying the king's siege works at Worcester in 1145 x 1146.[345] It is worth noting that Davis considers the twins' relationship as being one of 'alliance'.[346] In this instance, therefore, a family relationship seems to have been used as a base upon which to build a solid political relationship.[347]

Marriage could serve as the basis of co-operation. The wives of Earl Richard and O'Brien king of Limerick were sisters, and *kar* (meaning 'therefore', 'hence', 'consequently', 'accordingly', 'for') they formed an alliance to attack MacDonnchadh king of Ossory.[348] The use of the word *kar* is revealing as it shows that the marriage was seen as the reason for the co-operation. It should be noted that this was not simply a marriage alliance as Richard and O'Brien did not marry into one another's families but were only connected because their wives were sisters: the two male lines were connected by a third. This passage is important

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[341] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 3907.

[342] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3958-59.

[343] Under Henry I the family had been powerful - Robert was earl of Leicester, Waleran was count of Meulan, their step-father was earl of Surrey until 1147 and their first cousin Roger de Beaumont was earl of Warwick - but under Stephen their power increased further. By Easter 1136 Stephen had granted to Waleran all the castles in the Risle valley and had betrothed his own infant daughter to the earl of Leicester. And before the outbreak of the civil war in 1139 Beaumonts held the earldoms of Leicester, Worcester, Warwick and Bedford, while men with links to the twins held the earldoms of Pembroke, Surrey and Northampton. On this see Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, pp. 38-45.

[344] *The Coucher Book of Selby*, ed. J. T. Fowler, 2 vols. (Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 10-13, 1891-93) vol. 2, no. 1157. When their father, Count Robert I of Meulan, died on 5th June 1118 it seems that he had made provision that his two sons should share his lands equally, Waleran taking the Norman lands and Robert the English ones, with minor exceptions: *Regesta* 2, no. 843. This is discussed in more detail by Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, pp. 3-13. A letter of Waleran to William de Beauchamp also shows him operating through his brother: H. W. C. Davis, 'Some documents of the Anarchy', in H. W. C. Davis, ed., *Essays in History Presented to Reginald Lane Poole* (Oxford, 1927) p. 170-71; this is discussed Edmund King, 'Waleran, count of Meulan, earl of Worcester (1104-1166)' in *Tradition and Change. Essays in honour of Marjorie Chibnall presented by her friends on the occasion of her seventieth birthday*, ed. Diana Greenway, Christopher Holdsworth and Jane Sayers (Cambridge, 1985) p. 173 n. 46.

[345] Henry of Huntingdon, pp. 83-83.

[346] Davis, *KS*, p. 113.

[347] The method of relatives joining different sides in a civil war may have been repeated by William Marshal and his son William after Magna Carta: Sidney Painter, *William Marshal. Knight-errant, Baron and Regent of England* (Baltimore, 1933) pp. 186-87. This view is challenged by Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 67.

[348] *Dermot*, Ll. 2035-46, *kar* L. 2041.

because it shows how individuals could be connected by marriage; but it is of greater importance because it shows that contemporaries thought in these terms. Marriage also played a role in crusade recruitment.[349] But marriage could also be a cause of conflict as there are instances of lengthy legal suits over lands acquired through marriage or split between heiresses.[350]

Duby has argued that when a woman married she left one family group for another, and that her offspring therefore belonged only to the father's family. Matrimonial alliances were nevertheless important as wives could bring status or wealth (particularly if she was an heiress) and because the brothers of a wife would help protect her sons.[351] Duby also concludes that marriage was particularly important through the connections it created between the children and their maternal uncles as it meant that nephews could benefit through the patronage of their maternal uncles.[352] But not all marriages may have *created* a political alliance for they could strengthen and formalise existing political relationships.[353]

Nephews and uncles are regularly seen aiding each other.[354] However, sometimes this relationship backfired. After the death of her parents Argentille is brought up by her maternal uncle Edelsi. That this happened shows their relationship to be close. However, Edelsi then mismarried [*mesmariat*] his niece to a boy [*garcon*] in order to lower her status, and he is therefore labelled as a 'felon king' [*felons reis*].[355] This incident may raise doubts about Duby's analysis of the avunculate. Yet it should be remembered that Gaimar was either writing about much earlier days or was making it up - either way it is unlikely to be entirely reliable - but even so it does suggest that some people had doubts over how a maternal uncle really felt towards his niece.

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[349] For example, Simon de Montfort may have been inspired by his connection with Guy de Montfort who had married Helvis d'Ibelin in 1204. Other family ties were also important. The *Gesta Francorum* explicitly states that Godfrey de Bouillon duke of Lower Lorraine was accompanied on the First Crusade by his younger brother Baldwin: *Gesta Francoram*, pp. 2, 6, 11, 24. At other times familial ties were present but are not explicitly recorded in this source: for example, Richard count of Salerno accompanied his cousin Bohemond son of Robert Guiscard: *Gesta Francorum*, p. 5. Saer de Quincy earl of Winchester went on the fifth crusade with his sons Robert and Roger. Indeed, the lack of family connections may explain why so few people from England went on crusade in the thirteenth century compared with from France. On kinship and crusade recruitment see Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade*, particularly pp. 100, 107-8.
[350] Holt, *The Northerners*, pp. 68-69.
[351] Duby, *The Chivalrous Society*, p. 136-42. Duby was using the *Annales Cameracenses* of Lambert de Waterlos of 1152 x 1170. See also Bloch, *Feudal Society*, p. 137.
[352] Duby, *France*, p. 63.
[353] Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 69.
[354] The nephews of William of Orange regularly help their uncle. For example, journeying to Rome: *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 356, 273. In battle: *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1640-65. One uncle sought to sustain his niece during a war by sending her food: *Perceval*, p. 405. This man was also a cleric, a prior. A niece sends the Fisher King an excellent sword: *Perceval*, p. 420. This idea is also seen in the early (and probably largely fictional) part of Gaimar's history. He records that the nephews (*nevoz*) continued to fight against the English: Gaimar, Ll. 35-36. The count of Lusignan claimed that William Marshal bore him ill-will because he had killed William's uncle: *HGM*, Ll. 6455-58.
[355] Gaimar, Ll. 41-104.

Aiding family members could take the form of revenge.[356] Revenge could motivate a cousin,[357] daughter,[358] or brother.[359] Marriage could also provide the basis for revenge for a woman might continue to hate the person who slew her lover long after the event.[360] Exacting revenge for one's relatives obviously blends into the concept of vendetta, a prolonged blood feud. But the function of taking revenge was not restricted to the family. When Tristan contemplates not sleeping with his wife on their honeymoon he is aware that not doing so would incur the wrath of not only her but also of 'her family, and all others'.[361]

Relatives might also serve as surety. Lanval found it difficult to find surety (*plegges*) when the king accused him as he had 'no relation or friend [*N'i aveit parent ne ami*]' in the king's household[362] - suggesting these groups usually would have stood as surety. The thirty kinsmen executed with Ganelon had given themselves up as hostages to Charles to serve as surety (*pleges*) during Pinabel's duel with Thierry.[363]

Relatives also serve as advisors. Wives are quite often recorded as giving their consent in charters, and this may reflect their importance.[364] Other relatives might also have given counsel.[365] To be able to offer genuine advice one has to be able to say things that might not please the hearer, and here relatives may have been in a better situation than other people. Gawain, for example, is able to rebuke his uncle, the king, when he tells him he was foolish to allow Kay to escort Guinevere.[366] Family members also serve as messengers.[367] We return to these topics in the chapter Decision Making.

In the twelfth century relatives served several useful functions. These included giving counsel, standing as surety and giving domestic and military aid. These are the same

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[356] Sometimes the type of relative is not specified. For example, William claims that after he killed Arneïs he was hated by the dead man's *riche lignage*: *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 175. Otrant says that would harm William as William had killed many of his *riche parenté*: *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 1222. Gaimar records that the Danes hated the British because Arthur had killed their *parenz*: Gaimar, L. 38.

[357] Yvain believed that he should try to avenge the shame his first cousin Calogrenant suffered by being defeated by the knight (Esclados the Red) guarding the secret spring: *Yvain*, p. 302.

[358] A daughter would want to kill someone who was present at her father's death: *Perceval*, pp. 409, 453.

[359] A brother would want to kill the murderer of his brother: *Perceval*, p. 409.

[360] *Perceval*, p. 490.

[361] Thomas, L. 552 (*ses parenz, des altres tuiz*).

[362] Marie, *Lanval*, L. 399.

[363] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 3846-47 (given as *pleges*), 3950 (described as hostages), 3958 (executed).

[364] For example, *The Charters of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester* nos. 14 (concerning lands of her first husband), 53-54 (concerning probable inheritance), 334-35 and 388 (concerning marriage portion) 102 (a death-bed gift), 185 (acting as a petitioner or counsellor), 37, 41, 84, 99, 193 (recorded as a witness), 199, 260, 352, 414 (for the wives of followers involved in grants of their husbands). This is far more common than recording the consent of the heir: nos. 133 (at a death-bed), 119-20 (one gift but two charters) and 122 (grants by mother as a widow), 143, 319, 324 (grants by followers with their heirs' consent). On this see Hudson, 'Diplomatic and legal aspects of the charters', p. 171.

[365] After Beorn defied King Osbryht he took *conseil* (counsel) with his *linage*: Gaimar, Ll. 2689. They went on to help him drive out the king and make Ælla king: Gaimar, Ll. 2689-2702. Bertrand is found counselling his uncle William against the regent Arneis of Orleans: *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 115-18.

[366] *Lancelot*, p. 210.

functions as Althoff identifies for the Early Middle Ages.[368] But there were also less obvious uses of the family for, as we have seen, the family influenced the structure of both friendships and followings.[369]

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[367] The duke of Saxony, for instance, sends his young nephew to the emperor's court as a messenger: *Cligés*, p. 157. Greoreas sends his nephew to follow Gawain and kill him: *Perceval*, p. 470.

[368] Althoff, p. 78. Althoff adds that in feuds, followers and friends helped more than relatives: p. 79.

[369] See also Althoff, p. 212.

V

PROBLEMS WITH THE FAMILY

Although blood-ties are normally a force in favour of unity, if a family member feels aggrieved at their treatment that bond can be broken. Once broken the positive force of a family bond can be transformed into an equally powerful destructive one. The antipathy that can exist between close relatives has few equals in its intensity. This is true today and probably was eight hundred years ago. This is why, as Holt observed, historians use 'the family' to explain both rebellion and unusual solidarity.[370] By looking at such conflict we can begin to see how emotion and domestic life may have influenced politics. Domestic tensions and sexual intrigue may indeed have influenced the course of political events: John Gillingham has gone so far as to draw comparisons between high politics in the twelfth century and the high-powered families found in American TV soaps of the 1980s such as *Dallas* and *Dynasty*.[371]

Genetics teaches us that competition between parents and their offspring is commonplace[372] and inter-generational conflict was certainly possible. We will see that couples could have problems, that sons might conflict with their fathers when they reached the age of maturity and that siblings might quarrel over an inheritance. But despite such problems it seems that close relatives in general held great affection for each other.

Husbands and wives sometimes exhibit tension. The clearest case of marital disunity is perhaps that of Érec and Énide when Érec seeks to regain his lost reputation. One of the main arguments here is that Énide should not warn Érec.[373] This was a problem for the couple as Énide was fearful for her husband in case harm should befall him.[374] Despite problems Énide remains faithful to her husband.[375] When she reveals that their host had planned to kill

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[370] Holt, 'Feudal society and the family in early medieval England: I. The revolution of 1066', pp. 193-94.

[371] John Gillingham, *Richard Couer de Lion. Kingship, Chivalry and War in the Twelfth Century* (London and Rio Grande, 1994) p. x.

[372] Geneticists have also questioned the strength of emotional ties: 'There is a natural tendency to assume that the bonds between mother and child are driven by mutual devotion. However, to the cold eye of the biologist the transaction between generations is also based on conflict. There are many opportunities for mother and child to exploit each other. It is in the child's interest to gain as much attention as possible from its mother. The mother's concern is to provide as little as will allow her offspring to survive. If she is too generous to one child, the next may suffer': Steve Jones, *The Language of the Genes. Biology, History and Evolutionary Future* (London, 1993) p. 114.

[373] *Érec et Énide*, pp. 71-72, 81

[374] For example, *Érec et Énide*, p. 83.

[375] When a count falls in love with her and asks her to marry him - even claiming that 'since I deign to court you with my love, you must not reject me' - she remains faithful to Érec and replies: 'Sir, your efforts are wasted, that cannot be. Ah! Better that I were not yet born, or burned in a fire of thorns so that my ashes

him, Érec has clear proof of his wife's loyalty to him.[376] Later, Énide is forcibly married to a count but she has little love for him for she still loves Érec.[377] Such tension is also seen in *Yvain*: Yvain's marriage collapses through prolonged separation and neglect as well as because Yvain broke his oath.[378] Sometimes extra-marital affairs occur in the literature. The most famous of these are the love affairs between Lancelot and Guinevere and Tristan and Yseult.[379] For such affairs to occur there must have been problems within the married couple.

Duby described the relationship between father and son, at least among the aristocracy, as one of tension. The span between generations meant that when the eldest son came of age and took up arms his father would still be able to hold the patrimony. Because of this the son would often leave the family home for a few years but on return would still lack independence. This lack of financial independence could provoke tension, particularly if the son requested a share of the parent's property.[380] Sarah Kay has developed this further, arguing that fathers and sons were both allies and rivals.[381] Many examples of sons quarrelling with their fathers are found in contemporary vernacular literature[382] but *Lancelot* discusses the issue in the most depth.

The first quarrel occurs when a father refuses to allow his son to fight Lancelot for possession of the woman Lancelot is escorting. Whereas the son has confidence in his ability the father is more cautious.[383] In this instance the generation gap led to violence as the father sought to control his son. We may be seeing here the problem faced by parents, used to being able to control their offspring, when their children are young adults and wish to make their

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might be scattered, than that I should in any way be false towards my lord, or wickedly contemplate disloyalty or treason!': *Érec et Énide*, p. 78.

[376] *Érec et Énide*, p. 80.

[377] *Érec et Énide*, p. 95.

[378] Gawain warns Yvain of the dangers of spending too much time with his wife: *Yvain*, p. 326. Yvain promises his wife that he will not be away from her for longer than a year: *Yvain*, p. 327. When this is broken she will no longer have anything to do with him: *Yvain*, p. 329 onwards. Her messenger tells him 'Yvain, my lady no longer cares for you, and through me she orders that you never again approach her and keep her ring any longer': *Yvain*, p. 330.

[379] Lancelot journeys as fast as possible to the court of King Bademagu to rescue Guinevere from the clutches of Meleagant: *Lancelot*, pp. 210-55. At one point Lancelot forces apart the bars in a window, cutting himself in the process, in order to be with his love at a secret tryst: *Lancelot*, p. 264.

[380] Duby, *The Chivalrous Society*, 'Youth in aristocratic society', especially p. 116.

[381] Kay, pp. 92-103. Her argument is drawn from Freudian psychology rather than an appreciation of the historical context in which the poems were produced.

[382] When Érec learns that his reputation has declined because of all the attention he has devoted to his wife he decides to embark on fresh adventure. His father, the king, is against this arguing that: 'A king's son must not travel alone.' But Érec refuses his father's advice and asks only that his father look after those people he will leave behind: *Érec et Énide*, p. 70. In *Aye d'Avignon* Aulori and Guichart ally with Garnier against their own fathers Amauguin and Sanson. This sparks the comment 'for this reason people say, better a nephew come than a son': *Aye de Avignon*, L. 2676, cited by Kay, p. 189. Such tensions make the poem *Aspremont* similarly declare: 'The man is a fool who trusts too much in his child': *Aspremont*, L. 5634; cited Kay, p. 79.

[383] When the son refuses to accept his father's decision the father orders his men to seize his son: *Lancelot*, p. 229. The conflict is finally resolved by them agreeing to follow Lancelot for two days to see what sort of knight he is: *Lancelot*, p. 230. The son concedes that his father was right only when they learn that Lancelot has lifted the heavy stone slab from the huge marble tomb: *Lancelot*, p. 232.

own decisions. We also see that Chrétien thought older people would be more cautious and less hot-headed.

The second father-son quarrel in *Lancelot* is between King Bademagu and Meleagant. The two are opposites: King Bademagu is 'most scrupulous and keen in every matter of honour and right and who esteemed and practised loyalty above all other virtues' while Meleagant 'strove constantly to do the opposite, since disloyalty pleased him, and he never tired of baseness, treason, and felony.'[384] With such differences of character the two are perhaps bound to quarrel. When they see Lancelot cross the Sword Bridge[385] Bademagu instructs his son to go and make peace with him and hand over Guinevere but Meleagant refuses.[386] When they are still at odds Bademagu offers assistance and counsel to Lancelot - so he places hospitality above the tie of kinship.[387] Later Bademagu (perhaps acting as much as king as father) again goes to Meleagant saying 'reconcile yourself with this knight without a fight'[388] but again Meleagant refuses and calls his father a fool.[389] After Lancelot and Meleagant fight, a truce is finally brought by the king: Lancelot will take Guinevere but only on the condition that he will fight Meleagant again in a year's time; if Meleagant wins this duel he would take Guinevere back.[390] Once again we see the tension taking the form of a son refusing to listen to the counsel of his wiser and more cautious father. Later still Bademagu again chastises his son, this time for bragging that he had turned up for the appointed duel against Lancelot but his opponent had not.[391] From a different point of view, however, it could be seen that the problem is not so much the 'impetuous youth' as the father who refuses to acknowledge his son's 'success'. This is seen in Meleagant's angry reply: 'Are you dreaming or deluded to say that I am crazy to have told you of my triumph? I thought I'd come to you as to my lord, as to my father, but that doesn't seem to be the case, and I feel you've treated me more odiously than I deserve.'[392] There are two sides to every story.

Examples of sons quarrelling with their fathers can also be gleaned from the real world. Matthew Paris, for example, depicts Henry III complaining of family ingratitude in an argument with the future Edward I.[393] To a large extent the lifestyle of the Young King before his rebellion in 1173 fits into the pattern outlined by Duby. The Young King was knighted shortly before his coronation in 1170 but he was far from settled. Certainly the Young King

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[384] *Lancelot*, p. 246.
[385] *Lancelot*, p. 246
[386] Bademagu then tells his son he is an obstinate fool: *Lancelot*, p. 247.
[387] *Lancelot*, p. 248.
[388] *Lancelot*, p. 249.
[389] *Lancelot*, p. 250.
[390] *Lancelot*, p. 255. We return to the issue of dispute settlement in the chapter Decision Making and Conflict Resolution.
[391] *Lancelot*, pp. 284-85.
[392] *Lancelot*, p. 285.
[393] Matthew Paris, *Chron. Maj*, vol. 5, pp. 538-59.

seems to have been in that period of life between childhood dependence and adult independence, and his relationship with his father was clearly one of tension. Howden reports that the Young King 'could not even converse with him [his father] on any subject in a peaceable manner' while the biographer of William Marshal says that:

> 'Many an offensive and bitter word
> [Were] exchanged by father and son.'[394]

The root-cause of these quarrels seems to have been a desire for financial independence and general freedom on the part of the youth and a lack of trust - perhaps justified - on the part of the parent. In particular Henry II thought his eldest son was careless with his money: the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréschal* records that the Young King

> 'travelled far and wide, he spent lavishly,
> for he was aiming at those heights
> which a king, and a son of a king, should rise to, if he
> wishes to attain such high eminence. When he had
> scarcely any money left,
> he informed his father to this effect,
> and, when his father heard of this, he
> thought to himself that his son was far too lavish.'[395]

The young Henry felt aggrieved that he had not yet been trusted with the government of any lands while the father considered that he had wasted what money he had been given, and so deserved not to be given any more.

Such tension between father and son was not unique to the two Henrys. The eldest son of William Marshal fought against his father and in the first half of the thirteenth century the emperor Frederick II saw his son and designated heir turn against him in a quest for autonomy and power.[396] But although such instances support Duby's theory of tension between father and son there is insufficient evidence at present to conduct any kind of quantitative analysis. All that we can conclude is that, in certain families, tension existed between father and son. Moreover, if such tensions were common they are likely to have been short-lived: once the son matured or the father surrendered to him a share of the patrimony it seems likely that the situation would have been eased. Moreover, there is also evidence that for the father blood-ties to his sons were strongly felt. This is seen in a letter preserved by Howden in which King William of Sicily sympathises with Henry II saying that the rebellion

[394] *Chronica Rogeri de Hovedon*, ed. W. Stubbs, 4 vols. (R. S., 1868-71) vol. 2, p. 46; *HGM*, Ll. 2011-12.
[395] *HGM*, Ll. 1967-74.
[396] On the division between William Marshal and his son, *HGM*, L. 15884; On the relationship between Frederick II and Henry (VII) see for example Alfred Haverkamp, *Medieval Germany 1056-1273*, trans. Helga Braun and Richard Mortimer (Oxford, 1992) pp. 248-58.

of the Young King was 'violating the law of nature' and breaking both 'filial obedience' and 'natural affection.'[397] Thus although Duby's theories of youthful rebellion may help in individual cases, it does not provide a complete answer to the question of family unity between generations.

'Youths' are also referred to in the texts and the usage conforms to Duby's ideas on aristocratic youth.[398] Sometimes the word 'bachelor' is used in the same context.[399] Duby is also supported when he says that often youths served under their uncle or cousin.[400] Friendship among youths is discussed in the later section on Friendship.

Sibling rivalry also existed. Brothers could show mutual hostility and fight on opposite sides. For example, although in 1152 Robert of Dreux count of Perche aided his brother Louis VII of France, in the same struggle Geoffrey (d. 1158 aged 24) sided with Louis against his brother Henry (the future Henry II of England).[401] Similarly, in literature Alis seizes the throne of Greece and holds it against his elder brother.[402] The two brothers who accompany Lancelot to the Stone Passage also have a minor quarrel: when Lancelot gains access through the passage the eldest tells his brother to go home and tell their father, but the youngest refuses.[403]

Sisters likewise quarrel. Young daughters, for example, might fight and bully each other.[404] When the lord of Blackthorn dies his two daughters argue over the inheritance. The eldest claims she should inherit all but the younger believes she should have a share.[405] They agree to decide the issue through champions duelling.[406] Arthur takes the side of the younger sister but cannot enforce his view.[407] Only after the battle has been fought to a draw can

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[397] Howden, *Chronica*, p. 48.

[398] Thus when Alexander leaves his father's land of Greece to go to Britain to earn fame and become a knight he is often described as being 'young': *Cligés*, pp. 124, 125 (twice), 126 (four times), 127. When Perceval begins his adventures (he is a knight but does not yet know how to behave as a knight) he is termed a 'youth': for example, *Perceval*, p. 398 (twice). Here it may be in slight mockery: Perceval's speech still betrays his peasant upbringing even though he is now dressed as a knight. But even after he is knighted Chrétien still calls him 'youth' and 'young man': *Perceval*, pp. 402, 408 (four times), 409, 413, 414, 418, 419 (twice), 420, 421, 423 (twice), 425, 430.

[399] For example, before William of Orange acquires land (*terre*) he is a *bachelers*: *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1352-77. Earl Richard is a *bachelor* without woman or wife (*femme, mullier*) until he marries Dermot's daughter: *Dermot*, Ll. 346-47. Bertrand describes himself as a *bachelor*: *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 40.

[400] When Gawain prepares to duel Meleagant he gets three men to arm him. These are termed both 'young men' and 'youths' as well as 'squires', but Chrétien also points out that they are either nephews or cousins of Gawain: *Lancelot*, p. 290.

[401] Gillingham, *Richard Coeur de Lion*, p. 22.

[402] *Cligés*, pp. 152-54.

[403] *Lancelot*, p. 235.

[404] *Perceval*, p. 448.

[405] *Yvain*, pp. 353-54.

[406] *Yvain*, p. 354.

[407] *Yvain*, pp. 354-55, 369, 375.

Arthur step in and affect a reconciliation: Arthur decides that the younger sister will hold a share of the inheritance from her older sister.[408]

Breaking a betrothal also brought hostility. This not only ruined the basis of an alliance but also served as a personal affront to the family of the would-be spouse. When the emperor of Germany breaks his agreement to marry his daughter to the duke of Saxony by promising her to the emperor of Greece, for instance, the Saxon duke took this as a pretext for war.[409] The lord of the town of Dire Adventure is similarly deeply offended when Yvain refuses to marry his daughter after defeating the demon brothers.[410]

A father's control of marriage could cause a division between him and his daughter. Fenice, for instance, was first betrothed to the duke of Saxony and then to the Greek emperor because of her father's political interests.[411] She regrets her predicament: 'The emperor is marrying me, which makes me sad and angry, for the one I love is the nephew of the man I must wed.'[412]

Emotion runs high among family members. The blood bond was often augmented by proximity and the expectation of mutual service. For these reasons tensions were bound to arise and they are reflected in the literature. While family relationships were clearly important, the role played by the family in determining the loyalty of an individual is difficult to gauge. Duby's models of family structure and relationships may provide a useful guide to the role of the family but they cannot provide a sure picture. In particular we have seen that although close relatives had strong bonds of affection those further afield had much less. In certain instances, such as the Beaumont twins, family ties played a positive role but at others it was divisive and some families appear split.[413] These tensions seem to have been particularly common among the aristocracy at the point when a son craved independence but lacked the where-with-all to settle on his own lordship. But while one can put forward examples of family unity and disunity, at present there is insufficient evidence to come to any reliable generalisations. What is clear is that relatives felt an obligation to help; many of those who did not help are likely to have felt a measure of guilt, regret or remorse.

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[408] *Yvain*, p. 375.
[409] *Cligés*, p. 157.
[410] *Yvain*, p. 366.
[411] *Cligés*, pp. 155-59.
[412] *Cligés*, p. 161.
[413] In the conflict following Magna Carta this can be seen in the families of Marshal, Percy and Vieuxpont: Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 67.

3

FOLLOWERS AND SUPERIORS

This section examines vertical links between aristocrats. This means we will be concerned with questions of loyalty, obedience, influence and authority.[414] These are central issues in medieval history, touching on political structures, social norms and the nature of government. It will be seen that informal structures of power such as love and fear were at least as important as the formal structures created by homage and fealty.

In the twelfth century loyalty was a concept that shaped the socio-political structure for it was at the heart of the military culture that helped define the aristocracy. To a large extent it was this *mentalité* that moulded the political world. The issue of loyalty is seen in oaths of faithfulness, in obedience, and in the concept of service for reward. These were formal expressions of fidelity that attempted to create order and certainty in a turbulent political world, and to an extent they succeeded. But it will be argued here that alone they were insufficient to secure loyalty and determine behaviour.

By the term 'follower' I mean one who accepts (or should accept) the leadership of another. I have deliberately chosen this term for its neutrality. Although 'subordinate' is a near-synonym it is less useful than 'follower' as it implies a measure of formal hierarchy. The importance of this difference is seen when one considers that it would be misleading to say that a member of an affinity was a subordinate of the lord but quite accurate to say that he was a follower. For the purposes of definition it does not matter whether the (supposed) obedience stems from empathy, inspiration or persuasion.[415]

We will first differentiate between different types of follower and examine how each type of follower was bound to his superior. Here we will be interested in both formal and informal structures of power. It will be seen that there is little evidence of a 'feudal system'. On the contrary, there were different types of follower and different ways of securing support, only some of which involved land. After this we will turn to examining the functions of followers and superiors. It will be seen that followers and superiors shared many duties and responsibilities, such as giving military aid. This means that to an extent they fulfilled the

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[414] It is worth noting that Weber saw 'domination' as the opposite side of 'obedience': one person dominates, the other obeys. See Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 3, p. 946.

[415] These are the three basic means of ensuring obedience without resorting to coercion: Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 3, p. 946.

same functions. We will finally turn our attention to the problems created when one side felt aggrieved and wished to break a vertical bond.

Our first concern must be with terminology. As we have seen in our analysis of the family, several terms were available to medieval writers, whether they wrote in French or Latin. One must be careful when using literary sources as evidence for what particular terms mean as poets might have sacrificed accuracy and consistency for style. This may explain why we have the followers of Earl Richard described as 'baruns vassals', 'knights, barons and household troops [*meyné*]' and 'liege barons' all within a few lines.[416] Often, also, writers use very vague terms that do not reveal the composition of the force.[417] But despite such problems categorisation is both necessary and possible.

Several types of follower are readily apparent. When Dermot returns to Ireland he seeks help by writing

> 'To earls, barons, knights,
>
> Squires, sergeants, mercenaries,
>
> Horsemen and foot soldiers'[418]

Although this list could be used as the basis for an investigation we will not do so for it is my contention that the main difference between followers was not their title but the method of their recruitment and the conditions of their service.[419] We will therefore examine followers through the categories of 'household follower', 'tenant' and 'neighbour'. These categories have the advantage of being distinctive and therefore lend themselves more readily to analysis.

This division is seen in contemporary literature. In *Érec et Énide* Chrétien de Troyes shows an awareness of different types of follower. Having defeated an opponent Érec demands to know his name and station. Guivret replies

> 'I am king of this land. My liegemen (*home lige*) are
>
> Irish; everyone of them pays me tribute... I am rich and
>
> powerful, for in this land in all directions every baron
>
> whose land borders mine obeys my command and does
>
> exactly as I wish. All my neighbours (*veisin*) fear me... I

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[416] *Dermot*, Ll. 2922, 2925, 2945.

[417] For example, to defeat Louis William Marshal assembled 'the good loyal men [*les boen[e]s genz leials*]': *HGM*, L. 15762.

[418] *Dermot*, Ll. 427-29.

[419] Here again we should be careful. 'Conditions' seems to be a more accurate description for what we observe than 'terms' for the latter implies precise and stipulated expectations of both lord and follower. As will be seen, the conditions of service do not seem to have been so exact.

should very much like to be your confident and friend
(*amis*) from this time forward.'[420]

Here Chrétien differentiates between two types of follower. The first are his 'liegemen' who pay tribute, the second his baronial 'neighbours' who obey his commands. This suggests a distinction between followers bound by oath and a wider, looser affinity. In addition we should note that he wanted Érec as a 'friend'; as will be seen, this may have been an offer to create a formal relationship of mutual support. A similar categorisation of supporters is found in Gaimar: Æthelwulf assembles 'his friends, / and his men, and his forces [*ses amis, / e ses homes, e son efforz*]'.[421] As we will see, vernacular poetry also differentiates between household retainers and enfeoffed followers.

Concepts of 'men' and 'friendship' passed from this political context into a social one. Lovers, for instance, might describe themselves as bound by such agreements, as when King Equitan declares to his love:

'My dearest lady [*dame*], I surrender myself to you:

Do not regard me as your king [*rei*],

But as your man and your lover / friend [*vostre humme e*

vostre ami]'[422]

Before we examine our main categories of follower in detail we should note that other terms were used to describe follower-groups. These include the baronage, the host and peers. These terms do not seem to have been based on a specific method of recruitment or conditions of service but instead are vague terms meaning 'a group of military followers'. But it is nevertheless worth looking at the meaning of these words.

'Baronage' occurs regularly in the William of Orange cycle of poems. William's men are often described as his *barnage*,[423] as are all the soldiers of Rome.[424] In this usage the word may mean 'the followers of a baron' or simply 'manpower'. In William's case members of 'the baronage' are clearly not tenants-in-chief but lesser men, what historians have termed 'rear-vassals', the followers of that lord. If we accept that terms should be used in the way contemporaries used them this has important repercussions for we should stop using the term 'the baronage' to refer to the aristocracy in general or to mean 'nobles with land' and instead use it to refer to the followers of a particular lord. But this is not the end of the matter. When Henry II journeys to Ireland he is said to be with 'his barons', *sa baronie*.[425] This would seem

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[420] *Érec et Énide*, Ll. 3868-81.
[421] Gaimar, Ll. 2950-51.
[422] Marie, *Equitan*, Ll. 169-71.
[423] For example, *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 267, 384, 404, 1760.
[424] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 423, 436, 482.
[425] *Dermot*, L. 2680.

to include tenants-in-chief. We must therefore conclude that the term can refer to the followers of anyone, including the followers of a king. We can take our analysis of the baronage further than this and note that 'barons' might be given fiefs (fievez).[426] This means that 'baron' cannot be restricted to landless followers such as household knights, although the term may still include them. It seems reasonable to conclude, therefore, that 'baron' should be translated as 'follower' or 'martial follower'.

The host, ost, is also mentioned.[427] It occurs regularly in vernacular texts - Gaimar alone uses it forty nine times![428] All these references can be successfully translated as 'army' or 'military force'. This is consistent with what we find in other contemporary sources. Chrétien, for example, describes how when Arthur is in Brittany he is told that the regent Count Angrés has assembled a host (ost) to challenge him;[429] we are informed that this host consisted of his tenants and friends.[430] In the Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal the forces of the French king are termed 'grant ost' and 'grant gent'.[431] In this case it is possible for the terms to be used as reinforcing synonyms - both mean 'armed force' - but they may also refer to different things. This is repeated in Latin sources. The Gesta Francorum, for example, sometimes describes the followers of a particular lord as 'his host' (suam hostem) but also uses 'his men' (sua gente) and his knights (suis militibus).[432]

Groups of followers are also sometimes described as peers (pares and compares in Latin, pers in Old French). Here the stress is on equality.[433] Yet despite this stress peers do not have to have a power base of similar scale. This is seen in the way Louis tells William he will give him the land (terre) of one of his pers when one becomes available: at that moment William is landless, his peers are not.[434] Peers were able to exert considerable influence on each other. William says that he stayed at Louis' court after defeating Corsolt only because if

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[426] Le Charroi de Nîmes, L. 36.
[427] This should be connected to the Latin exercitus from which it is derived.
[428] Gaimar, Ll. 1428, 1480, 2348, 2362, 2794, 2796, 2844, 2853, 2942, 2957, 2967, 3017, 3075, 3084, 3243, 3254, 3260, 3275, 3283, 3398, 3401, 3403, 3435, 3437, 3491, 3512, 3534, 4171, 4177, 4228, 4229, 4244, 4277, 4748, 5048, 5077, 5128, 5177, 5256, 5413, 5483, 5714, 5715, 5785, 5904, 5916, 6149, 6158, 6180.
[429] Cligés, p. 135.
[430] Cligés, L. 1061: 'De sa terre et de ses amis'.
[431] HGM, L. 12045.
[432] Gesta Francorum, p. 9 (sua gente, for Bohemond's force), p. 24 (suis militibus, referring to Tancred's followers), p. 33 (suam hostem, again for Bohemond's followers).
[433] This is seen in 1121 x 48 when Abbot Anselm of Bury granted land as a knight's fee to be held 'well, peaceably, honourably, and freely, as do his pares, namely, the knights of the abbey': Feudal Documents Relating To The Abbey of Bury St Edmunds ed. D. C. Douglas (London, 1932) no. 122, discussed pp. cxlvi-cxlvii. Similarly, Walter de Bolbec granted land to Ramsey abbey 1133 x 60 on condition that Walter would hold Walton of the abbot by performing 'the service of two knights in all services as do his compares': Cartularium Monasterii de Rameseia, ed. William Henry Hart and Ponsonby A. Lyons, 3 vols. (Rolls Series, 1884-93) vol. 1 no. 91, pp. 153-54. This meaning is also seen in the Leges Henrici Primi, 33.1. Although relationships between followers and superior were 'vertical' this did not prevent 'horizontal' ties between followers from developing: Althoff, p. 134.
[434] Le Charroi de Nîmes, Ll. 76-77.

he had not his *per* would have mocked him.[435] This is - quite literally - peer pressure. We will return to these issues later.

We have seen that baronage, host and peers are used to describe groups of military followers. The general nature of these terms is in contrast to the specific usage of household retainer, enfeoffed follower and neighbour.

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[435] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 94-95.

i

TYPES OF FOLLOWER:

HOUSEHOLD FOLLOWERS

One group of followers that emerges from the sources with clarity are the household (*meisun* in Old French) followers. These are people who do not hold enough land to support themselves (if, indeed, they hold any at all) and so contrast with those holding land.[436] They were retained in the household of their lord, giving their services in exchange for sustenance, shelter and, presumably, pay. The essential requirement to be the member of a household is common residence.[437] As we shall see, this shared living would have played an important function in binding members closer together. This is why Weber described the household as 'the fundamental basis of loyalty and authority'.[438] A household can be seen as an organisation that is characterised as a closed social relationship in which order is maintained by specific individuals.[439] This means there was a leader. But the relationship between household followers themselves is equally relevant to our purpose. Such followers would have had both a communal social relationship (a feeling of belonging together) and an associative one (an alignment of common interests involving rational agreement).[440] The combination of these two very different forces produced considerable group cohesion and helps explain the reputation of household troops for loyalty and tenacity.

It is first worth considering the composition of household forces. Historians commonly use the phrase 'household knights' to refer to these groups but this could be misleading for a household might include men-at-arms as well as knights.[441] This again shows that we must be careful with our use of language.

Contemporary literature emphasises the loyalty of household followers. *Le Charroi de Nîmes* describes how when William refuses to accept Louis' offer of marriage to an heiress because there is a young son who should inherit he is thanked by the household knights of the

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[436] This is seen when Meleagant first comes to Arthur's court: he claims to hold 'knights, ladies and maidens from your land [*terre*] and household [*meison*]': *Lancelot*, pp. 207-8.
[437] Following Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, p. 359.
[438] Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, p. 359.
[439] Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, p. 48.
[440] Weber describes other associative and communal social relationships existing within a military unit, a school class and a workshop or office: Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, pp. 40-43.
[441] *Le Charroi de Nîmes* records that there were: 'Two thousand men-at-arms [*homes a armes*] / Of the household [*mesnie*] of William Strongarm': *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 1048-49.

young heir (*li chevalier qui apartienant a l'enfant*):[442] the landless knights remain loyal to the heir of their former lord. Gaimar likewise sees household retainers as loyal for he says that after Cyneheard murdered their king the household followers refused to support him despite Cyneheard offering to make them richer if they did so.[443] He also says that King Eadgar took a knight as a *conseiler*, Gaimar explaining 'he held him very dear [*mult...cher*], he had brought him up'. This explanation stresses the value of communal living and shared experience in developing a sense of affection. Equally revealing is that Eadgar calls this knight 'brother'.[444] One woman even trusts her household followers enough to get them to pretend to rape her to test whether Lancelot would try to rescue her![445] Such stories demonstrate that contemporaries believed the relationship between a lord and household followers to be very close. Indeed, the household troops of King Arthur are sometimes described as his 'companions'.[446] As will be seen, the term 'companion' is reserved for trusted followers and friends.

The loyalty of landless and landed knights are contrasted in *Le Fresne*. A lord of Dol loves Le Fresne and brings her to his castle. Here it is said that 'all his men [*humme*] and servants' honoured and cherished her.[447] Soon after, however, we are told that the enfeoffed knights (*chevalier fiufé*) threatened to rebel if he failed to provide an heir (*heir*)[448] from a noble woman (*gentil femme*) instead of from his mistress. The attitude of the household knights (and servants and squires) was very different. These followers did not want to lose Le Fresne:

> '*Li chevalier de la meisun*
>
> *E li vadlet e li garçun*
>
> *Merveillus dol pur li feseient*
>
> *De ceo ke perdre la deveient.*'[449]

Marie shows that enfeoffed knights saw begetting a legitimate heir as very important. Without a legitimate heir there would be chaos on the death of the lord, a chaos that could threaten their own territories. Whereas the love and loyalty of the enfeoffed knights was compromised by concern for their own lands the household knights, servants and squires remained steadfast in their devotion to their lord and his lover. This story therefore shows that contemporaries believed there was a difference in the level of loyalty of landed and household knights. This is

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[442] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 376-79.

[443] Gaimar, Ll. 1887-89.

[444] Gaimar, Ll. 3633-37; 3634 (*conseiler*), 3635 (*mult cher*), 3637 (*frere*).

[445] *Lancelot*, pp. 220-222.

[446] When Arthur sets off to the spring, for instance, he is accompanied by 'his companions, for everyone in his household was in that troop of horseman': *Yvain*, p. 322.

[447] Marie, *Le Fresne*, Ll. 309-12.

[448] Marie, *Le Fresne*, Ll. 314-27.

[449] Marie, *Le Fresne*, Ll. 255-58.

important as it means historians should distinguish between them when examining behaviour in the real world.

This is not to say that all household retainers were always selflessly loyal. Even in literature there were limits to the devotion of household retainers. For instance, no one in the household of Laudine of Landuc is prepared to guard her spring.[450] Household followers may have been generally more loyal than their enfeoffed counterparts, but their service still had its limits.

Evidence of the loyalty of household retainers is rarer outside literature but not impossible to find. The author of the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* claims that Henry the Young King placed his greatest trust in his chamberlain, Raoul fitz Godfrey.[451] In the same source, when William Marshal's sons are released by King John they are placed into the custody of William's household retainer, John of Earley, who goes on to send one of them to another of William's household followers, Thomas of Sandford.[452]

Given the greater trust one could place on them it is not surprising to find lords retaining large numbers of household followers. Chrétien portrays King Arthur as eager to keep knights in his household.[453] This may be because the number of retainers was a reflection of power. This is seen in Béroul's *Tristan*[454] and may explain why twelfth-century kings maintained large numbers of household followers.[455]

Knights might also want to be members of a household. When the love potion wears off, for instance, Tristan desires to be allowed to remain in Mark's household.[456] This suggests that belonging to a household had its benefits. There were several advantages. Firstly, one could expect faithful service to be rewarded. Secondly, one became a member of

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[450] *Yvain*, p. 315, 377.

[451] *HGM*, Ll. 6527-32. Although Raoul may have held land it is likely that his connection with Henry stemmed more from his position within his household.

[452] *HGM*, Ll. 14555-78.

[453] When there are only five hundred people in his household Arthur is very concerned: 'the king had never before in any season been so alone, and he was greatly distressed that he did not have more people at his court': *Érec et Énide*, p. 115. Similarly, Arthur is downcast when his comrades leave him to go to their own castles after a victory over King Ryon of the Isles: *Perceval*, p. 391. Arthur's emotional state may have been because the lack of people in his household implied he was losing support.

[454] King Mark is attended by many people at his formal reconciliation with Yseut: Béroul, p.109. The fullness of the court shows Mark to be a successful king at this point. This also explains why Arthur is happy to accept new-comers into his household. When Yder is given to the queen as a prisoner by Érec, Arthur requests that he be freed on condition that he remain in his household, and this is done: *Érec et Énide*, Ll. 1225-38. When Perceval sends Anguingueron to the court of King Arthur he retains him as a member of his household and counsel: *Perceval*, p. 415. Clamedeu is likewise retained in the household: *Perceval*, p. 417. By accepting these people into his household Arthur strengthened his position and demonstrated his power.

[455] See in particular J. O. Prestwich, 'The Military Household of the Norman Kings', *EHR*, 96 (1981) 1-35; reprinted in Strickland, Matthew, ed., *Anglo-Norman Warfare. Studies in late Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman Military Organization and Warfare* (Woodbridge, 1992) 93-127; J. O. Prestwich, 'War and Finance in the Anglo-Norman State', *TRHS* 5th series, 4 (1954) 19-43; reprinted in Strickland, ed., *Anglo-Norman Warfare*, 59-83.

a group and therefore had a social life. Finally one might be able to influence the lord through becoming close to him. There were thus financial, social and political reasons why one might wish to join a household.

Members of a household would have communicated on a regular basis and could consist of long-term acquaintances. Through sharing the same lord and a limited physical space, as well as through eating, training and working together, members of a household would have formed a tightly knit society, possibly even an inward looking community. Almost certainly there would be a strong sense of identity and belonging. But such groups are prone to occasional but deeply felt divisions. Petty jealousies and rivalries may at times have boiled over to outright hostility. At such times the ideal of the unified household would have been ripped apart. Just as with a modern family, close proximity for an extended period would have created strong emotional ties but also flash-points of confrontation and sometimes lingering tension.

Some of these conditions are explicitly portrayed in the Tristan stories. Yseut tells Mark he has a 'gossiping household' because they made him believe that the affection between herself and Tristan to be scandalous.[457] Such communication between members of a household implies regular informal contact and a shared social life. The passage also suggests that a household might influence their lord for Mark acts on the rumour. Arthur's household knights are also able to express their opinions, such as when Kay seeks to challenge Meleagant.[458]

Indeed, members of a household would regularly interact with their lord. They would usually know where the lord was[459] and would accompany him to his lord's court.[460] Similarly, the royal household was present with the king even when his other followers were absent.[461] The Marshal's household followers, for example, were usually present during his final illness.[462] This lifestyle would have given household followers excellent opportunities to

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[456] Béroul, p. 98.

[457] Béroul, p. 57.

[458] *Lancelot*, p. 209.

[459] This is implied in *Bisclavret*, L. 30.

[460] King Ban of Ganieret brings two hundred in his household with him to Arthur's court for Érec's wedding to Énide: *Érec et Énide*, p. 61. Érec likewise maintains household knights at Arthur's court: *Érec et Énide*, p. 60. When Érec leaves after his wedding 'his entire household mounted: there were easily seven score in the company: *Érec et Énide*, p. 65. Yvain also brought his own household with him to Arthur's court: *Yvain*, p. 304. When William angrily leaves Louis' court his *mesnie* follow him, showing that they had come to court with him: *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 115-20.

[461] Marie, *Lanval*, L. 394.

[462] *HGM*, Ll. 18119-978. Although this may be idealised - a household retainer was a major source for the poet - it remains that contemporaries would have thought this to be possible (if not likely) and, perhaps, it shows the ideal of the relationship.

influence their lord. It also meant that lords and ladies would have wished to set a good example to their household.[463]

Living in close proximity[464] and regular contact ensured that a lord and his household retainers would have become very familiar with each other. As will be shown later in our discussion on 'emotional friendship', proximity and familiarity are two of the key factors in generating friendship. It therefore seems likely that household retainers would often have been friends, and friends not only with each other but also with their lord. This friendship may further explain why household followers were more loyal to a lord than enfeoffed ones. In addition, through regularly training together household retainers may have been more disciplined and cohesive in combat. Moreover, the desire to impress friends is seen today as a major incentive to valour and heroism.[465] Not only were household troops more devoted than enfeoffed ones, they may also have been more courageous and effective on the battlefield.

Household followers are often portrayed as more loyal than enfeoffed ones. Although this view may be a misrepresentation, reasons can be given for such behaviour. Living within the same household ensured regular social contact and would have developed a sense of shared identity and mutual reliance. These emotions would have created informal horizontal ties and increased the effectiveness of household troops on the battlefield. Shared residence would also have increased social contact with the lord, and this may explain why they were (supposedly) more loyal. In such ways the social environment would have had a direct and important effect on political behaviour.

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[463] Duby, 'The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century', p. 162.

[464] Tristan and Perinis, for instance, sleep in the same room as king Mark and Queen Yseut: Béroul, p. 63. Although this may be an exaggeration it is likely that people did share rooms.

[465] John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (London, 1976) and Hugh McManners, *The Scars of War* (London, 1993).

ii

TYPES OF FOLLOWER:

ENFEOFFED FOLLOWERS

The second type of follower that can be identified is the enfeoffed follower. These are people who held land and thus had a limited power-base of their own. Such land could have been held on the condition that military service was performed but this would often have been commuted to a cash payment.[466] This topic has close connections with feudalism and the feudal model and it is worth reviewing recent historiography in this field.

Considerable research has been done on this issue. The feudal model sees political society and loyalty as organised along lines of tenure. This view reached its zenith in the models provided by Bloch and Ganshof.[467] Such exemplars allowed Weber to describe a pure-type of fief-based feudalism (*Lehensfeudalismus*) that never existed.[468]

But the feudal model has been under attack for many years. Criticism has come from three directions. Historians such as Prestwich have argued that the reality of medieval military obligation was very different from that envisaged in the feudal model.[469] In particular he pointed out the importance of household followers - a group that falls beyond the scope of a model based on tenure. This approach is now being advanced by historians such as Crouch who believe that service was rendered for a variety of rewards, only one of which was land.[470]

Secondly, the term has been attacked for being too broad and lacking definition. Long ago Weber dismissed its use as 'entirely too vague'[471] and historians are coming to share

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[466] Other conditions probably also applied to landholding. That these terms may have been at times a bone of contention between follower and lord is seen in Magna Carta's restrictions on levying aids: Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 35.

[467] March Bloch, *Feudal Society*, trans. L. A. Manyon, 2nd edn (London, 1962) pp. 145-238; F. L. Ganshof, *Feudalism*, trans. Philip Grierson, 3rd edn (London, 1964), in particular pp. 65-155.

[468] He admits this never existed: Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, pp. 255-59. He contrasts this with prebendal feudalism (the existence of money fiefs) which he thought operated in the Near East, China and India: *ibid.*, pp. 259-62. These ideal-types could be used as a check-list to anyone wanting to describe the political and territorial structure of twelfth-century England.

[469] See in particular Prestwich, 'The Military Household of the Norman Kings'; Prestwich, 'War and Finance in the Anglo-Norman State'.

[470] This is discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

[471] Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, p. 262; the English edition was published in 1968.

this view. Perhaps the most telling point is that historians have used 'feudal' to refer to at least ten different phenomena, some of which are mutually exclusive.[472]

Finally, Brown and Reynolds have led the way in attacking the concept itself.[473] They see 'feudal' as a term created by lawyers in the Late Middle Ages that was then developed by historians of the Enlightenment into the concept of 'feudalism'. They argue that this construct has hampered research by restricting the analysis and description of medieval social and political relationships. Given this three-pronged attack it seems wise to abandon the concept of feudalism. This thesis therefore avoids the words 'feudal' and 'feudalism' apart from when discussing historiographical models.

This rejection of the feudal model means it is necessary to re-appraise the importance of ties of tenure. Enfeoffed followers can still be seen as the foundation of aristocratic power. This has led one commentator to declare that 'the honorial baron was the source of the power of the great magnate.... The solidarity between the honorial baron and his lord was the measure of the magnate's strength.'[474] But whilst tenants might be the foundation of an aristocrat's power and a measure of his strength it does not mean that they were the only one. Following from this, analysis of only tenures does not give a reliable guide to the power of an aristocrat.[475]

A study of terms is required to reveal the thought-patterns of contemporaries. Only by re-examining their phrases can we free ourselves from preconceptions and - hopefully - construct a better model. Although some conclusions support long-held views, others do not.

The language of vernacular sources strongly suggest that tenure involved service. A lord tells his knights, 'You are all my men (*home*) and owe me love and faith (*amor et foi*). By whatever you hold from me, respect my order and my wish.'[476] This lord thus expresses loyalty in terms of tenure and describes his tenants as his 'men'. This sentiment is repeated in the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*:

'The king summoned an *ost*

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[472] John O Ward, 'Feudalism: interpretative category or framework of life in the Medieval West?', *Feudalism: Comparative Studies*, eds. E. Leach, S. N. Mucherjee and J. O. Ward, *Sydney Studies in Society and Culture*, 2 (1984).

[473] E. A. R. Brown, 'The tyranny of a construct: feudalism and historians of medieval Europe', *American Historical Review* 17 (1974) 1063-88; Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*. See also Crouch, 'A Norman *conventio*'; Crouch, 'Debate: Bastard Feudalism Revised'; Crouch, 'From Stenton to McFarlane'; and Crouch, 'The Myth of Feudalism'.

[474] Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, p. 131.

[475] Other factors such as the possession of castles and liberties also played a role: Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 20.

[476] *Lancelot*, Ll. 1784-87. In the modern English translation (p. 229) this is given the very different rendering of 'You are all my liegemen and owe me esteem and loyalty.' The dangers of such translations are discussed below.

> Consisting of all those who were tenants
>
> And who thereby owed him *servise*.'[477]

It also is mirrored in the *Song of Dermot*. Henry II gave Meath to Hugh de Lacy:

> 'For [*pur*] fifty knights
>
> That the *baron* should let him have
>
> In *servise* when he needed'[478]

These passages suggest that the service would have been performed rather than commuted to a cash payment. But even if the service was commuted it remains that the idea of military service formed the basis of the exchange. We return to the nature of service in the chapter 'Securing Followers: Homage and Oaths'.

Horizontal links would also have existed among the tenants of a lord. In the winter of 1135-36, for instance, the tenants of Pontefract worked together in the assassination of their new lord, William Maltravers, probably because he acted not as a Lacy heir but as a land speculator.[479] This reaction further explains the efforts of Beaumonts to be accepted as the legitimate heirs when they acquired the honour of Breteuil in Normandy.[480]

Tenure was a means of securing support but was not the only way of binding followers. Enfeoffed followers were important but their importance was not over-riding. Indeed, the strength of the tie of tenure may have been diminishing. As the chain of tenants lengthened and people became the tenant of more than one lord the threat of dispossession became less powerful and the bond to the lord less effective.[481] Within a few generations of the Norman Conquest the availability of land for patronage dried up and the honour became, in effect, fossilised and rigid.[482] This means that while the feudal model has some merits it is deficient (and increasingly inadequate) as a description of medieval socio-political relations. A more complete model will be described in the conclusion of this thesis. None of this is to say that land was no longer important.[483] What it means is that the *way* land gave people power changed.

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[477] *HGM*, Ll. 13091-94.

[478] *Dermot*, Ll. 2730-32.

[479] Richard of Hexham, *De Gestis Regis Stephani et de Bello Standardi*, ed. R. Howlett, in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, vol. 3 (Rolls Series, 1886) p. 140. For this analysis see W. E. Wightman, *The Lacy Family in England and Normandy 1066-1194* (Oxford, 1966) pp. 68-73.

[480] On this acquisition see Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, pp. 102-14.

[481] Miller, p. 81; Holt, *The Northerners*, pp. 36, 44; Crouch, 'Stenton to McFarlane', p. 184.

[482] Crouch, 'Stenton to McFarlane', p. 198. See also Crouch, 'Debate: bastard feudalism revised', p. 167.

[483] In the later twelfth century Chrétien could still assert that land gave people power: *Perceval*, p. 441.

iii

TYPES OF FOLLOWER:

NEIGHBOURS AND AFFINITIES

The final type of follower that can be identified through examining the conditions of service is the member of an affinity. By 'affinity' I mean a group of people who act together but are not bound by blood, tenure or domesticity.[484] In the vernacular sources such people are generally termed 'neighbours' and 'friends'. However, one should not see these people as necessarily being 'neighbours' in the sense of living in close proximity[485] for allies and supporters could be found who lived far away. Nor should we necessarily see them as friends in an emotive sense. Rather, we should see these terms as referring to people who should (or did) act in a 'neighbourly' or 'friendly' fashion to someone with more power. This means they supported him.

The notion of affinities was first advanced by historians of the Late Middle Ages but it has recently been suggested that similar structures existed as early as the twelfth century. The notion of affinities is bound up with the concept of bastard feudalism. This phrase was coined in 1885 as a term of abuse, describing a corruption of feudalism itself,[486] but has recently been defined as 'the set of relationships with their social inferiors that provided the English aristocracy with the manpower they required. Among the various carrots and sticks that bound men together, periodic payment with money features prominently, whereas grants of land from greater to lesser aristocrats are relatively unimportant.'[487] This means that elements of bastard feudalism can be seen stretching possibly from the time King Alfred, and certainly from the twelfth century, to the civil war and Glorious Revolution of the seventeenth, if not beyond.[488]

Modern discussions of bastard feudalism start with the work of McFarlane in the 1940s. McFarlane saw bastard feudalism appearing in the fourteenth century with the replacement of the tenurial bond by wages. He thus saw the defining characteristic of bastard

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[484] This is similar to how the term is used by Michael Hicks, *Bastard Feudalism* (London, 1995) pp. 104-8.
[485] This common understanding is followed by Weber who describes neighbourhood as 'every permanent or ephemeral community of interest that derives from physical proximity': Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, p. 361. It is from this definition that we must understand his statement that 'the neighbourhood is the natural basis of the local community': *ibid.*, p. 363.
[486] J. Fortescue, *Governance of England*, ed. C. Plummer (Oxford, 1885), cited by Hicks, p. 12. On the historiography of bastard feudalism see Hicks, pp. 12-42.
[487] Hicks, p. 1.
[488] Hicks, pp. 2-4.

feudalism as a specific means of securing military service.[489] However, a decade ago Coss argued that bastard feudalism developed in the period of 1180-1230 as an aristocratic reaction to growing royal power that was brought about through Angevin legal reforms. As such the defining characteristic of bastard feudalism was the attempt to limit the spread of royal justice and to maintain aristocratic power.[490] This view gained support from Carpenter who added that 'the competition for good service and good lordship must have worked to break up the honour as a self-sufficient unit almost from its inception' as lords would have tried to recruit support from able people whether or not they came from within the inherited honour.[491] Crouch has gone further than this and shown that there are similarities between the affinities of the fourteenth century and the retinues of the twelfth and suggested that the notion of bastard feudalism can be applied to this earlier period.[492] In so doing Crouch builds on the foundations laid by Chibnall and Prestwich who argued that the contracted knight was an important figure in armies from at least the early twelfth century.[493] This stress on the methods of military recruitment is a return to McFarlane's view of the essentials of bastard feudalism. It is worthwhile to note that these differing views concern the essential characteristics of bastard feudalism rather than when changes in the real world actually occurred - they are arguments of definition rather than of substance. Since the concept of bastard feudalism is a construct of later centuries rather than a term coming from the period itself, such altercations suggest that the term, like 'feudalism' before it, may be coming to the end of its lifetime of usefulness.

We will now examine whether these concepts were perceived by writers in the twelfth century. We should first note that 'men' and 'friends' are differentiated in the sources. Gaimar, for example, records that when Penda, Cwichelm and Cynegils made war on Eadwine they did so with their *homes* and *amis*.[494] This shows that 'men' and 'friends' would fight for a superior and probably implies that they were different types of supporter (although the words could have been used as reinforcing synonyms). We will see in our discussion of the ways in which followers were secured that 'men' were secured by performing homage and swearing faithfulness whereas 'friends' were not.

The meaning of the word 'neighbour' is difficult to ascertain. Sometimes it seem to imply only close geographical proximity. Gaimar, for instance, records that c. 779 everyone

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[489] K. B. McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays*, ed. G. L. Harriss (London, 1981). McFarlane's key work was done in 1944-45.

[490] P. R. Coss, 'Bastard feudalism revised', *Past and Present* 125 (1989) 27-64; and P. R. Coss, 'Debate: bastard feudalism revised: reply', *Past and Present* 131 (1991) 190-203.

[491] D. A. Carpenter, 'Debate: bastard feudalism revised: comment', *Past and Present* 127 (1991) 177-89; quote p. 189.

[492] Crouch, 'Debate: bastard feudalism revised', especially pp. 168-70.

[493] Chibnall, 'Mercenaries and the *familia regis*', pp. 15-23; Prestwich, 'The military household of the Norman kings', pp. 1-35.

sought to take his neighbour's (veisin) land [495] Similarly, he describes how Æthelred's amis advised him to secure support from the Normans by marrying Emma so that he would be able to subdue his enemis and veisins.[496] In this passage veisins is best understood as meaning 'neighbours' in a geographical rather than political way, although it does mean that Æthelred sought to dominate them. The same is probably true when we hear that King O'Rourke is the veysin of King Melaghlin:[497] although they unite against Hugh de lacy it is unlikely that the pair had formed an affinity. Such co-operation can be seen as 'neighbourly' behaviour. A similar interpretation should be given to a passage in Perceval in which 'neighbours' are said to be helping each other when a vavasour calls the mayor and councilmen to help capture Gawain.[498] This shows that neighbours could work together but does not show that the mayor and councilmen were members of an affinity.

But sometimes it is clear that the relationship between 'neighbours' was based on intimidation and force. In describing the dispute between John Marshal and Patrick earl of Salisbury the Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal says Patrick was

'a very powerful neighbour [veisin],

And the Marshal turned out to be the loser'.[499]

This passage shows a relationship between neighbours being based on power but there is no hint of an affinity. Instead the relationship between the two men is based on threat and military force.

Other examples are more suggestive of a political relationship. The three barons who threaten to make war on Mark should he not banish Tristan threaten 'we shall make our neighbours [voisins] leave the court.'[500] This statement implies a vertical relationship based on power: the three barons were capable of making their neighbours follow them into rebellion. This suggests that the poet was aware that loyalty could be based on regional influence rather than tenure.

When we turn to the real world we must be cautious. It is quite reasonable for neighbours to co-operate and one does not need to see the existence of an affinity when neighbours do so. To be confident that an affinity existed we need evidence of the links between the people, and ideally we need to see their connection with the dominant lord.

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[494] Gaimar, L. 1223.
[495] Gaimar, L. 2022.
[496] Gaimar, Ll. 4122 (amis), 4130 (enemis), 4132 (veisins).
[497] Dermot, L. 3249.
[498] Perceval, p. 453.
[499] HGM, L. 368-69
[500] Béroul, L. 623 (p. 61 of translation).

These ties need to be examined. Although charters are sometimes addressed to 'neighbours' we cannot be certain whether this style was simply a diplomatic development or whether the 'neighbours' were a formally defined group.[501] We first need to see who was connected to whom and then investigate the nature of these links. For the twelfth century we can sometimes discover the relative importance of vertical (lord-follower) and horizontal (near-equals) links.[502] Although we cannot define the boundaries of networks with certainty we can show some of the links and guess at the role of 'brokers' who linked other individuals and networks without having much territorial power. Where sources are more plentiful additional questions can be asked, such as how interconnected the individuals within a network were and the extent to which the network was 'effective' (did all people in the entire network affect each other or were there limits?), but for the twelfth century answers to these questions will be patchy at best.[503]

These associations must be found not in charters of enfeoffment but in agreements showing power structures not based on tenure.[504] We can see such connections in the mid-twelfth century. Roger of Hereford in particular appears to have used agreements to define relationships based on regional power. This is seen in the way he entered into pacts with lesser aristocrats. Whereas most of the agreements of Robert of Gloucester, Miles of Gloucester, William of Gloucester and Robert of Leicester were with other earls[505] only half of Roger's were of this sort.[506] Instead, Roger made agreements with lesser men. His agreement

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[501] One charter, recorded in Anglo-Norman French by 1204 but possibly written originally in Latin, is addressed 'to French and to English and to our neighbours' ('a Franceis et a Engleis et as veisins'): Michael Gervers and Brian Merrilees, 'A twelfth-century Hospitaller charter in Anglo-Norman', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 6 (1978-81) pp. 131-35, text p. 131.

[502] A table showing formal links between magnates for the civil war of Stephen's reign has been provided in the appendix. A full diagram of the networks would involve adding all the links of tenure to lesser landholders and the ties of household followers.

[503] These issues are raised by Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community', pp. 366, 374.

[504] The evidence used in the following discussion of the affinities of Roger of Hereford, Ranulf of Chester, Richard fitz Gilbert de Clare and Robert of Gloucester is taken from Meddings, pp. 64-69. With the increased availability of sources for the Late Middle Ages a more detailed analysis of networks can be made. See Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community', pp. 369-74. Her analysis of brokers could be augmented using statistics. She describes how brokers can be identified (a broker is a direct associate of the lord who has links to people who do not have a direct link to the lord) and then says how in her study the direct associates with the strongest links to the lord were the ones who were connected to the most people without a direct link to the lord, but that there is only a weak correlation. The strength of this correlation can be given a statistical value (that is, a correlation coefficient) and plotted as a scatter diagram (number of links with the lord against number of links to people without a direct connection to the lord). This would allow comparisons to be made with other networks on an empirical, reliable and objective basis. But such analysis can only be done where evidence is plentiful: where evidence is scanty, such as for the twelfth century, such statistics may be grossly misleading.

[505] Robert of Gloucester had agreements in England with the earls of Hereford (1141 x 1143) and Chester (1141 x 1145) and possibly with Ralph Luvel (1138) and William fitz John (1138). The only agreement entered into by Miles earl of Hereford was with his former lord, the earl of Gloucester (1141 x 1143). Similarly, Robert of Leicester made agreements with the earls of Gloucester (1147 x 1148), Hereford (by 1147 x 1149), three with Chester (1145 x 1147, 1148 x 1149 and 1149 x 1153), Warwick (by 1153), and possibly Northampton (1149 x 1153) and Meulan (1141 x 1145).

[506] Roger had agreements with the earls Leicester (by 1147 x 1149) and Gloucester (1147 x 1149) only.

with William de Briouze of Buellt and Radnor (1148 x 1155)[507] and his possible agreement with William de Beauchamp of Worcester (1148 x 1150) may reveal an attempt to build up an affinity. Robert fitz Harold of Ewyas also appears to have been a member of this affinity or that of the earl of Gloucester.[508] A further way of detecting the members of an affinity may be by examining the people who stand as *obsides* in an agreement but who are not tenants of the magnate concerned. In this way one may add Baderon lord of Monmouth, Elias Giffard and Walter of Clifford to the members of this affinity.[509] Other members seem to have been Robert de Candos, Richard de Cormeilles and his brother Alexander and Oliver de Merlimont.[510] Roger also seems to have included Walter de Pinkney in his list of supporters as in 1147 he secured his release from Matilda even though Walter was a supporter of Stephen.[511]

Roger was not alone in creating such groups. Ranulf of Chester's agreements with Eustace fitz John (1144 x 1145) and (with less plausibility) Robert Marmion (1144 x 1146) show Ranulf binding these lesser men to his entourage. Eustace, indeed, was a fine catch for he was already a baron of some standing in the north, and the charter reflects this: Eustace is made hereditary constable (that is, chief minister in this earldom) and 'supreme counsellor'.[512] Furthermore, when Stephen demanded hostages from Ranulf in 1146 one of those given was a nephew, Gilbert fitz Richard de Clare, implying that Gilbert was a supporter of Ranulf. This may mean that Gilbert was a member of the earl of Chester's affinity, although of course their relationship was based on blood. A recent study of the activities of Ranulf in Lincolnshire has cast further light on the earl's attempts to develop an affinity in this region. Together with his half-brother, William of Roumare, Ranulf was able to bind much of the local and regional aristocracy to his will. These people included not only Eustace fitz John but also William count of Aumale, Roger de Mowbray, Hugh Wake, Gilbert of Gant, Herbert fitz Adelard (Gilbert's constable), Richard Scrope, Peter of Goxhill, Ralph fitz Hamon, Simon fitz William lord of Bullington, Simon's son Philip of Kyme, Ralph de la Haye, Hugh Bardulf, William of

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[507] This may have been directed against Gilbert de Lacy, a dispossessed local rival in Herefordshire: Crouch, 'Stenton to McFarlane', p. 196. This looks more likely when one remembers that one of the clauses of Roger's agreement with the earl of Gloucester was to disinherit Gilbert.

[508] Previously trusted by Stephen to take care of the March, in 1139 he defected with Miles - Roger's father - to the Angevins and by 1143 was serving as constable to Earl Roger. See Crouch, 'The march and the Welsh kings', p. 280 n. 67.

[509] As Crouch, 'Bonds of lordship', p. 314.

[510] Crouch, 'Bastard feudalism revised', pp. 173-74.

[511] Crouch has similarly seen the Meulan-Neubourg *conventio* (1141 x 1142) as showing Waleran of Meulan adding Robert du Neubourg to his affinity in Normandy: Crouch, 'Bonds of lordship' pp. 314-15. Waleran also appears to have links with the lords of La Londe, Ferrières-st-Hilaire and Orbec (*ibid.* and also Crouch, *Beaumont Twins* pp. 35-36) while Robert de Torigni (p. 142, and Crouch, *Beaumont Twins* p. 52) describes Waleran as having 'surpassed all the magnates of Normandy in castles, revenues and *affines.*' The use of the word *affines* here might be particularly illuminative for it could be translated as 'members of an affinity'. On the continuation of contracts and other issues of 'bastard feudalism' after 1155 see Crouch, 'Bonds of lordship' pp. 314-20.

[512] On the unusual standing of the constable in the earldom of Cheshire, see D. B. Crouch, 'The administration of the Norman earldom', *The Earldom of Chester and its Charters. A Tribute to Geoffrey Barraclough*, ed. A. T. Thacker, Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society, 71 (Chester, 1991) pp. 74-76.

Coleville, Geoffrey Malebisse, Walter of Amunderville, Gilbert of Neville and Robert of Stafford.[513] A grant of land in 1143 x 1144 to Henry de Lacy lord of Pontefract and Clitheroe, a supporter of Stephen, may show Ranulf creating an affinity in east Lancashire as well.[514] These men were bound to Ranulf through enfeoffment, marriage and the expectation of further reward mixed with a fear of the consequences should they oppose Ranulf. Given Ranulf's attempts to construct an affinity in Lincolnshire, Lancashire and Yorkshire it may be that his alliances with Gwynedd (by 1141) and Powys (by 1149) may have served offensive as well as defensive purposes.[515]

Roger and Ranulf and were not alone in using agreements to establish and give structure to affinities. Richard fitz Gilbert de Clare 'had all his *affines* leagued with him by compact and likewise bound by giving hostages' in Wales as early as 1136.[516]

There is also strong evidence that Robert earl of Gloucester had an affinity by the outbreak of the civil war that included his brother John lord of Sudeley, Miles of Gloucester and William fitz Alan;[517] this may mean that there is more to the description of Robert's followers as *coadiutoribus* than just a general term for Stephen's opponents.[518] One can perhaps also see the presence of an affinity in the way Robert's son, Philip, was 'responsible' for the protection of Roger de Berkeley in 1146.[519] In the early years of Henry II an affinity also existed under Philip's brother and Robert's heir, William earl of Gloucester.[520]

The career of Roger de Berkeley sheds considerable light on contemporary loyalty. Davis suggests that Roger's loyalty to the Angevin cause was brought into question by the defection of Philip to Stephen following Stephen's victory at Faringdon in 1145 because he was the uncle of Philip's wife, and that it was this that provoked the brother of Roger of

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[513] Paul Dalton, 'Aiming at the impossible: Ranulf II earl of Chester and Lincolnshire in the reign of King Stephen', *The Earldom of Chester and its Charters. A Tribute to Geoffrey Barraclough*, ed. A. T. Thacker, Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society, 71, Chester 1991, 109-34. In general Dalton used *The Charters of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester, c. 1071-1237*, ed. G. Barraclough, Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 126, 1988, *Charters of the Honour of Mowbray, 1107-1191*, ed. D. E. Greenway, London 1972 and *Regesta* 3.

[514] *The Charters of the Earls of Chester*, no. 69; and Judith Green, 'Earl Ranulf II and Lancashire', *The Earldom of Chester and its Charters. A Tribute to Geoffrey Barraclough*, ed. A. T. Thacker, Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society, 71 (Chester, 1991) pp. 97-108.

[515] For Ranulf's relations with the Welsh see Crouch, 'The March and the Welsh kings', p. 278-79.

[516] *GS*, p. 17. See also Crouch, 'Bonds of lordship', pp. 309-10.

[517] Crouch, 'The March and the Welsh kings', p. 280. John had previously been tied to the entourage of the earl of Worcester, Waleran of Meulan, but when Earl Robert went over to the Angevins he felt that his lordship of Sudeley, in Gloucestershire, was threatened more by Robert's base at Tewkesbury (eight miles away) than by Worcester (twenty miles away): Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, p. 47. William fitz Alan , who held Shrewsbury in 1138, had married a niece of Earl Robert and followed him into rebellion (*GS* ch. 42, p. 91).

[518] *GS*, ch. 73, p. 146.

[519] *GS*, ch. 98, p. 190.

[520] A letter of Nicholas bishop of Llandaff to Theobald archbishop of Canterbury of 1156 describes how there were 'these men and others, men [*hominibus*] of the earl of Gloucester and of other sort, who avoid the truth fearing the earl's ill will [*maliuolentiam*]': *Llandaff Episcopal Acta, 1140-1287*, ed. D. Crouch, South Wales Record Society vol. 5 (1988) no. 14; cited Crouch, 'Stenton to McFarlane', pp. 194-95.

Hereford, Walter, to capture him.[521] This argument further supports the idea that Roger was in the affinity of Philip as contemporaries believed Roger would follow Philip into changing his allegiance. This is particularly interesting as Roger was also tied to Walter 'by friendship and a compact to keep the peace.'[522] This means that the ties of affinity were seen by contemporaries as stronger than the combination of friendship, pact and common allegiance. In other words, loyalty was based primarily on the ties that held an affinity together rather than by any other factors.

The result of all these agreements is one of great complexity with eleven magnates being involved in more than one agreement.[523] Furthermore, where a magnate is bound by two (or more) agreements of alliance (as opposed to those that only established peace) he may have used his influence over the one in order to help the other. Thus the earl of Gloucester perhaps used his influence over the Welsh of Glamorgan to help protect the Welsh interests of the earls of Hereford after 1139, and Roger of Hereford was perhaps only able to aid William de Beauchamp during the troubles of 1150-1151 in Worcester because he had already made peace with Morgan ab Owain.

Affinities can therefore be seen operating in the middle of the twelfth century under Roger of Hereford, Ranulf of Chester, Richard fitz Gilbert de Clare and Robert of Gloucester and his two sons. Coss and Hicks have argued that in the twelfth century aristocrats who attracted followers through non-tenurial means were 'necessarily aberrant',[524] but this list suggests that such practices were not so unusual. However, it is uncertain for how long such affinities continued once peace had been secured. In the early years of his reign Henry II was unable - or unwilling - to move against powerful magnates.[525] For example, Henry's attempt to neutralise Roger of Hereford in 1155 was aborted, Reginald earl of Cornwall remained unchallenged until 1176, and the earldom of Leicester was not weakened until the death of Earl Robert II in 1168.[526] But whether affinities continued to operate in this period is less clear.

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[521] Davis, *KS*, p. 92.

[522] *GS*, ch. 97, p. 191.

[523] These are Robert of Leicester (10, one being ecclesiastical and three with the earl of Chester), Ranulf of Chester (8, three being with the earl of Leicester), Robert of Gloucester (8, plus two ecclesiastical and before Stephen's reign and a further four being with the Welsh in 1136), Roger of Hereford (4), Waleran of Meulan (4, one being ecclesiastical and another being in Normandy), William of Gloucester (2), Simon earl of Northampton (2), William de Beauchamp (2), William Peverel of Nottingham (2), Robert earl of Derby (2) and Roger earl of Warwick (2, one being before the outbreak of the civil war).

[524] Coss, 'Debate: bastard feudalism revised: reply', pp. 200-1; Hicks, p. 105.

[525] Crouch has already asserted 'in Henry I's and Stephen's reigns there were areas of England where the local power of the king was as insignificant as compared to magnate power as was the local influence of the duke of Normandy': D. B. Crouch, 'The foundation of Leicester Abbey and other problems', *Midland History* 12 (1987) p. 7. The inability of Henry II to curb magnate power in the early years of his reign in areas such as Hereford, Leicester and Cornwall suggests that this weakness lasted into the first decades of the new reign.

[526] Crouch, 'Stenton to McFarlane', pp. 196-97.

There is some evidence of affinities existing in the later twelfth century. William Marshal was able to attract minor aristocrats in south west England, particularly Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, such as the Berkeleys, Earleys and Musards, in addition to local knights. William's power base was his inherited lands but his influence extended well beyond.[527] The followers of William Marshal may be a special case but it remains that he attracted men through offering a variety of rewards: they were not just bound to him through tenure. Moreover, in the late twelfth century major tenants of lesser aristocrats such as the Clares and Montforts were acquiring interests and estates outside (but near) their ancestral lands, showing that they served other masters as well.[528] Given this increasing weight of evidence it seems that from the accession of Stephen (if not before) aristocrats were using means other than tenure to attract, maintain and formalise support.

Affinities also seem to have been operating in the struggles surrounding Magna Carta. All but three men in Herefordshire seem to have followed Giles de Briouze (Braose) bishop of Hereford into rebellion. The three who did not were part of another faction under Reginald de Briouze.[529] The strength of these bonds is also seen in the way only those tenants of William de Mowbray who were not connected to people loyal to the king through blood or service followed him into rebellion: other ties were more important than tenure.[530]

In the middle of the thirteenth century another affinity can be seen gathered round the person of Simon de Montfort.[531] It is worth looking at the structure and activity of this group in detail as it shows how extreme loyalty could be generated through the combination of tenure, local ties (which would include friendship), blood and charismatic leadership. Although this group brought together people from different lordships most were drawn from Leicestershire. Some of these men, such as Thomas of Astley and Ralph Basset of Sapcote (both tied to Simon for over twenty-five years), were bound to Simon through tenure but the majority were not - they were his neighbours. The inner circle was small - twelve individuals of which only six to eight would have been active at any one time.[532] But it was a powerful group as several members were minor aristocrats rather than knights. The cohesion of this group rested not only on shared service but also ties of neighbourhood and family and they were bound to Simon less through generosity (Simon was too poor to be generous) than by his charisma: ancestral ties, the natural allegiance of men to a local lord, the attraction of serving

[527] Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 62-64, 157-68; Crouch, 'Debate: bastard feudalism revised', 172-73.
[528] Crouch, 'Stenton to McFarlane', pp. 199-200. For the Clare family see also Mortimer, 'Land and Service', pp. 194-95.
[529] Holt, *The Northerners*, pp. 35-36. Holt used the *Rotuli litterarum clausarum in turri Londinensi asservati*, ed. T. Duffus Hardy, 2 vols. (Record Commission, 1833-34).
[530] Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 43.
[531] For this see Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, pp. 59-74.

someone married to the king's sister, his outstanding military leadership, and his glamorous international lifestyle. These pulls help explain why most were loyal to the bitter end. Of the twelve in his inner circle, eight were alive and active 1258-65. All except the young invalid Arnold de Bois were loyal to the end with Thomas of Astley, Hugh Despenser and Peter de Montfort dying at Evesham and Nicholas de Segrave being captured there. But the loyalty shown by this group may have been unique, or at least unusual.

The composition and actions of these affinities suggests a world of contracted loyalty and temporary allegiance in which authority and obedience was based not only on tenure but on a variety of ties. This is the type of political organisation that historians have termed 'bastard feudalism'. In such a world loyalty was secured not by oaths or promises of land but a combination of various formal and informal factors.

To a large extent affinities were held together by power for a magnate wielded power through his ability to induce fear and love in his neighbours. As we have seen in our discussion of household and enfeoffed followers, power was based on the domination of a discrete territory - demesne lands and tenured followers.[533] But power extended beyond these boundaries into a wider and undefined area. Within this area a lord might assert influence and possibly a limited degree of control.[534] But the control exercised by the aristocrat over his affinity would usually have been less than that which he wielded over his tenants and household retainers for it would have been harder for him to remove them - household retainers could be dismissed, tenants, sometimes, deseised.[535]

We have seen such power structures both in contemporary literature and in the real world of the civil war of the mid-twelfth century. But this is not to say that *all* lesser

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[532] These were Richard de Havering, Ralph Basset of Sapcote, Thomas of Astley, Thomas Menill, Peter de Montfort, John de la Haye, Stephen of Segrave, Arnold du Bois (father), Arnold du Bois (son), Hugh Despenser, Gilbert of Segrave and Nicholas of Segrave: Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, p. 68.

[533] The power of Robert II earl of Leicester over Leicestershire, for example, rested not on his position as earl but on possessing much of the land: Crouch, 'The foundation of Leicester Abbey', p. 6. On the efforts of the earls of Leicester to gain control over the urban and suburban estate in Leicester from the late eleventh century through to the early thirteenth see D. B. Crouch, 'Earls and bishops in twelfth-century Leicestershire', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 37 (1993) pp. 9-20.

[534] This level of influence is in marked contrast to the domination a lord exerted over his household. This difference was noted by Weber who described how social action between neighbours (meaning people living in close proximity) 'is always less intensive and more discontinuous than the social action of the household, and the circle of participants far more unstable': Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, p. 361.

[535] The difference in the level of control between tenured followers and members of an affinity exercised by an aristocrat may be seen in the language of a charter by Ranulf II earl of Chester of 1138 x 47. It says 'I entreat [precor] my neighbours, and instruct [precipio] my men by the faith they owe me' to maintain, protect and defend the canons of Calke priory: *Charters of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester*, no. 45. Similarly, a charter of William III earl of Warenne of 1138 x 47 for Nostell priory has William entreating [precor] his friends [amicos] and instructing [precipio] his ministers [ministris] to keep safe the alms he had granted to the priory: *Early Yorkshire Charters*, ed. W. Farrar and C. J. Clay, 12 vols. (Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, 1914-65) vol. 8, p. 83. These are cited in Crouch, 'Stenton to McFarlane', p. 195. However, one must be careful in using such examples as evidence of a difference in levels of control wielded by an

aristocrats were dominated by magnates. Some are likely to have been independent and others may have been able to choose which magnate they attached themselves to.[536]

Competition from another magnate could neutralise any attempts to extend influence. Through the disruption caused by competing claimants to the thrown, John Marshal was able to extend his influence in the northern Wiltshire Downs from his castles at Marlborough and Ludgershall and pressed new claims and built a new castle. But he was challenged by Patrick earl of Salisbury and forced to come to an agreement.[537] John had tried to extend his power through fear. He failed because a neighbour was too powerful.

Gaimar also shows fear to have been an important force binding 'neighbours' together. When he praises Rufus at the end of his work he shows that, for him at least, neighbours were controlled by fear and that this fear was induced by power. We are told that Rufus was feared by his neighbours, *ses vaisins*, and that all *ses veisins* were subject to him through his great nobleness (*noblece grant*) and because the French barons feared him like a lion.[538] We are also informed that Walter Tirel told the king that none of his *vaisin* dared to oppose him because of his power.[539] Clearly for Gaimar it was fear that prevented the neighbours of Rufus from breaking the peace.

From such examples it can be seen that an affinity could rest on fear.[540] However, it is uncertain whether members of an affinity were bound to the dominant lord by formal as well as informal ties. Did members of an affinity swear an oath to their leader? Was a ceremony ever involved? At times it is possible to see the existence of a verbal contract lying behind the physical structure. This is seen in Gaimar's description of King Eadgar as a powerful king:

> 'All his neighbours [*veisins*] were attached to him.
> By fair love and by (en)treaty [*Par bel amur e par*
>
> *supplei*],
> He bound them all to him'[541]

It is clear that Eadgar was attached to his neighbours - but in what way? Our understanding rests on our reading of the phrase *Par bel amur e par supplei*. Is it describing a formal or an informal structure? We will see elsewhere (in 'Securing Followers: Love and Fear' and

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aristocrat for the terms may have as much to do with tradition, charter diplomatic and the language of friendship (being courteous to friends) as it does with contemporary political reality.

[536] Some knights, for example, seem to have made their own decision to oppose John in the early thirteenth century rather being forced to that decision by more powerful aristocrats: Miller, p. 79.

[537] Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 9-18.

[538] Gaimar, Ll. 6201 (*ses vaisins*), 5970 (*ses veisins*), 5969 (*noblece grant*), 5966 (feared like a lion).

[539] Gaimar, Ll. 6253-92.

[540] This is also asserted by Crouch, 'Stenton to McFarlane', p. 196.

[541] Gaimar, Ll. 3580-82; '(en)' has been added to preserve the ambiguity of the original.

'Friendship') that 'love' could refer to both an informal emotional bond and to the affection that should be present within formal relationships. '*Supplei*' is equally problematic. It could be translated as 'entreaty', 'plea', 'beseech', 'suppliant' or 'implore'. Whichever meaning we adopt means that Eadgar had asked his neighbours to follow him - but it is unclear whether the neighbours themselves would have been bound by another verbal gesture. However, *par* can mean 'by' or 'for'. If the latter is the correct meaning then the phrase would mean 'for fair love and for supplication', which does not contain a verbal component. It is possible to see in this wording the offer and acceptance of a verbal contract, but we cannot be sure. We can only conclude that Gaimar used 'neighbours' to describe a vertical relationship, that Eadgar may have asked them to follow him, and bear in mind that this relationship may have had a formal element.

It may be that *veisins* describes members of an affinity and not just 'those with adjacent lands'[542] and that they were sometimes bound by formal as well as informal ties. Such a conclusion bridges the gap between ideas of affinity and formal friendship. It may be that people, termed *veisins*, were bound into an affinity of a lord by oaths of formal friendship. We will return to this issue in our discussion of formal friendship.

However, the extent to which affinities were organised by formal bonds is unclear. Although there is ample evidence to show that some people were tied to a particular lord through a formal bond that did not rest on land it is by no means certain that all such relationships involved such formal bonds. Indeed, it is improbable that they did not. Beyond the edges of a lordship - and here I mean lordship based on all formal bonds, not just tenure - it is likely that the influence of a lord was still felt even though he had no direct authority. Here people might act on occasion with a lord who was regionally dominant, but such people should not necessarily be termed followers: 'allies' is perhaps the best description. Contemporaries, however, may have simply used the words 'friend' and 'neighbour'. For example, Ernold collected his men (*gent*) and his friends (*amis*) to form a host (*ost*) to counter a Danish invasion.[543] Here we do not know whether there was any formal tie between Ernold and his *amis* but it is clear that he had some influence over them and that they would fight with him against a common enemy.

The concept of 'neighbours', affinities and regional power is closely connected with that of community.[544] In historiography the idea of the medieval county community stretches

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[542] This is a different view of neighbourhood from that of Crouch who sees it as a region without specific boundaries but which is spatially more restrictive than a county: Crouch, 'Stenton to McFarlane', p. 194.

[543] Gaimar, Ll. 5412 (*gent, amis*), 5413 (*ost*).

[544] In modern historiography 'neighbourhood' often seems to refer to 'community'. For example, P. R. Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality: A Study in English Society, c. 1180-1280* (Cambridge, 1991) p. 8.

back at least a century.[545] But whereas old ideas of community emphasised a community's organic unity and harmony modern notions realise that communities have internal hierarchies and that within the group relationships are negotiated and renegotiated to suit the self-interests of the participants.[546] Moreover, the county community cannot be seen as an independent unit as (in the thirteenth century at least) even modest knights seem to have been involved in more than one county.[547] But nevertheless people can be seen acting as a shire in negotiations with the central government.[548] This suggests regional groups pursuing their self-interest.

Holt has described such groups operating in the north of England[549] in the early thirteenth century. The leaders of this group were seen by contemporaries as being Eustace de Vesci, Richard de Percy, Robert de Ros, William de Mowbray, Gilbert de Gant and Roger de Montbegon,[550] but the group included many lesser men too.[551] Within this area there were few who remained loyal to the king,[552] suggesting peer pressure may have influenced some. In many ways the rebels were 'typical aristocrats'.[553] What distinguished them was that they had been excluded from royal favour.[554] Within this region tenure, blood and long-term association resulted in collective action. Holt summarises this interplay of ties around 1215:

'tenure was still a powerful bond... [but] the tenurial tie was not the only social determinant of political action. Sometimes its strength must have resulted from the compactness of a particular barony, from the fact that it was reinforced by complex bonds of association and common interest... created by families living together for

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[545] The medieval county was seen as an organised body of people in 1898: Pollock and Maitland, vol. 1 p. 534. The concepts of the 'county community' put forward by historians of the seventeenth century can be transcribed to the Middle Ages: J. R. Maddicott, 'The County Community and the making of Public Opinion in Fourteenth Century England', *TRHS* 5ᵗʰ series, 28 (1978) 22-45; Maddicott, 'Magna Carta and the Local Community', pp. 25-65.

[546] Maryanne Kowaleski, 'Introduction', *Journal of British Studies* 33 (1994) pp. 338-39. A critique of the term 'community' and its usefulness for medieval history is found in Christine Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community in Medieval England', *Journal of British Studies* 33 (1994) pp. 341-44; Crouch, 'Stenton to McFarlane', pp. 187-93.

[547] Crouch, 'Stenton to McFarlane', pp. 191-92.

[548] Maddicott, 'Magna Carta and the local Community', pp. 36-37, 46-47, 61-65. For Yorkshire in 1130 see, J. C. Holt, 'The Prehistory of Parliament', in *The English Parliament in the Middle Ages*, ed. R. G. Davies and J. H. Denton (Manchester, 1981) pp. 24-26; and Crouch, 'Stenton to McFarlane', p. 192.

[549] Although the term 'Northerner' has been used as a description of all the rebels it remains that most did come from the area between Lincolnshire and the Mersey, excluding Cheshire and Staffordshire but including Nottinghamshire and perhaps Derbyshire. The geographical heart of the rebellion was the lowlands bordering the North Yorkshire moors - Malton, Thirsk, Skelton, Danby, Rosedale, Whitby and Helmsley: Holt, *The Northerners*, pp. 8-16, 31-32.

[550] Holt, *The Northerners*, pp. 16, 22-27. Some of these held land from each other and from other lords: Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 42.

[551] Holt, *The Northerners*, pp. 27-30.

[552] Holt, *The Northerners*, pp. 31-32.

[553] Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 33.

[554] Holt, *The Northerners*, pp. 33-34 (leading rebels), 49 (knights).

> generations.... Sometimes these ties of neighbourhood
> worked against and even over-rode the tenurial bond.'[555]

Lloyd has argued that this closely-knit regional society in the north continued under Henry III.[556] In the first half of the thirteenth century other areas also seem to have organised themselves, at least at times, on a regional basis.[557] Indeed, as early as the start of Stephen's reign London may have organised itself into a commune.[558]

Ideas of community are also connected with the 'rise of the gentry'.[559] By the mid-thirteenth century the gentry (meaning knights and substantial freeholders) of the counties were strong enough to feature prominently in the Reform Movement.[560] Yet the evolution of this power can be traced back to before the Norman Conquest. It is seen, for instance, in knights answering questions put by the king's eyre justices, on promoting knights to the king's court, and in bargaining with the crown for local privileges.[561] But although by 1215 shire communities were conscious of being a group and were gaining ground politically they still did not have a collective voice nor representation in the centre of government.[562]

Whilst the lesser aristocracy of a region might as a group hold more land than a single magnate, the magnate held significantly more land than any single family of the lesser aristocracy. This meant that for a magnate to wield regional power he had to dominate only *some* lesser families.[563] By careful patronage a magnate could thus dominate a region.

Several types of follower can be seen in the sources. These are household knights, enfeoffed men and neighbours. Household retainers lived in close proximity to their lord and

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[555] Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 36; this view is repeated p. 49. He was aware that this matched the concepts termed 'bastard feudalism': Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 60. Before this group became active politically it had become accustomed to co-operating and trusting each other through pledging to guarantee re-payments of debt: Holt, *The Northerners*, pp. 72-78.

[556] Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade*, pp. 108-10. Lloyd also sees regional groups operating during the thirteenth century in the Welsh Marches and in East Anglia, but within these groups most men shared a common background of courtly connections: Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade*, p. 125-26. Regional groups can also be seen in the battle formation at Tunis in 1170: troops were organised on regional lines and headed by the lord who was dominant in that area: Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade*, p. 117.

[557] In the 1220s Cornwall, Devon and Somerset paid for the right to have a local sheriff, one who would be constrained by the social ties of neighbourhood: Maddicott, 'Magna Carta and the Local Community', pp. 29, 40-41. In the early years of Henry III local people were also working together as a community to disafforest land afforested by Richard I and John: Maddicott, 'Magna Carta and the Local Community', p. 37. Once Henry III attained adulthood his policies to augment royal power provoked discontent in local and regional communities: cancelling privileges (mostly in the South West), forcing conformity in peace-keeping (mostly affecting the North and West), re-afforesting and fiscal enhancement: Maddicott, 'Magna Carta and the Local Community', pp. 43-44.

[558] See Round, *Geoffrey de Mandeville*, pp. 247-49; however, the agreement may not be genuine.

[559] Holt dismisses the concept of 'the rise of the gentry' saying 'gentry were always rising; it is their habit': Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 60.

[560] Maddicott, 'Magna Carta and the Local Community', particularly pp. 25, 48, 55.

[561] Maddicott, 'Magna Carta and the Local Community', p. 25.

[562] Maddicott, 'Magna Carta and the Local Community', p. 28. On the enhancement of the county community under the Angevins see also Miller, pp. 80-82.

were seen as being the most loyal. Enfeoffed men had a direct link to their lord through joint land ownership. Control over land made these men not only more powerful than household knights but also less trustworthy as their loyalty was more readily challenged by personal interest. Beyond these two groups was the wider and less defined group of 'neighbours'. These were people without any direct tenurial or blood link to a lord but who nevertheless in general obeyed his commands. Historians call such groups 'affinities'. It is possible that such people were bound to their leader by formal as well as informal ties. We will later consider how these three types of follower were bound to their lord.

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[563] A similar argument was has been put forward for noble families dominating the gentry in the fifteenth century: Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community', p. 360.

iv

TYPES OF SUPERIOR:

LORDSHIP AND LIEGE LORDSHIP

We can differentiate between two types of superior, the lord (*dominus*) and the liege lord (*ligius dominus*). This situation occurred as soon as a follower attracted followers of their own. Many of these people would have been bound by oaths. This led to a complex network of ties and affiliations. Historians have long been aware of this process and termed it sub-infeudation. This idea gave rise to the notion of the 'feudal pyramid'.[564]

As a model of the political structure this concept has been challenged and modified but it is still of some merit. Its value as an historical tool is threefold: it is simple and readily understood; as a description of tenurial patterns it is roughly adequate; and it may be used as a point of comparison for more detailed models. But it has weaknesses. Firstly, it ignores the possibility of a person swearing oaths of loyalty to more than one superior. Secondly, and more damning, it does not take account of associations not based on tenure. As we have seen, three types of follower existed in twelfth-century England, and only one of these was bound by tenure. The first of these problems can be overcome with relative ease: in addition to vertical connections we should add horizontal ones and show that people could hold land from more than one superior. Once this is done the 'feudal pyramid' can be used as a description of tenure. It then remains to say only that the tenurial structure was only a contributing factor to both the political and social structures. This is reflected in the *Leges Henrici Primi* for it does not see tenure as defining a person. Instead it states that

> 'The difference between persons lies in their status
> [*conditione*] and their sex [*sexu*], and arises also from their
> vocation [*professionem*] and rank [*ordinem*] and the
> maintaining of their standing before the law.'[565]

The possibility of having two lords inevitably led to considerable soul-searching over claims to obedience and loyalty. In peacetime multiple lordship may have caused few

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[564] The idea of a 'pyramid' structure is first recorded in Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond*, p. 170. This was a development of the earlier notion of a hierarchy of social groups expressed, for example, in H. W. C. Davis, *England Under the Normans and Angevins, 1066-1272* (London, 1905) p. 186; R. Allen Brown, *The Normans and The Norman Conquest* (London, 1969) pp. 5, 23. On this and other models see Crouch, 'From Stenton to McFarlane', pp. 179-200.

[565] *Leges Henrici Primi*, ed. and trans. L. J. Downer (Oxford, 1972) 9.8.

difficulties[566] but in times of crisis it could create serious problems. How were such claims resolved? One solution may have been to settle the dispute in the county court. This is what, in a writ of 1108, Henry I decreed two men of different lords should do if they quarrelled.[567]

Another solution was trying to serve both lords. In the mid-twelfth century, for example, William Burdet held land from the earls of Leicester and Northampton as well as from the crown and seems to have tried to serve both earls.[568] Henry of Blois bishop of Winchester seems to have sought a similar compromise. Here we can provide details for his solution is recorded in two contemporary chronicles. As a prominent cleric Henry would have been sworn to Stephen, his brother, but following the king's capture at Lincoln on the 2nd February 1141 he entered into an agreement with the empress. The *Gesta Stephani* speaks in only vague terms of a *pacis et amicitiae foedus* and a *pacis et concordiae foedus* but William of Malmesbury supplies more detailed evidence. He records that Matilda swore that she would consult Henry in all important matters, particularly as regards the church, and that in return he promised her *fidelitas*. In this case *fidelitas* seems to refer to a specific and formal contract as William of Malmesbury is later able to give specific terms of the agreement, revealing that Henry had given faith (*fides*) that he would not aid his brother in any way except by sending him twenty knights.[569] This shows that Bishop Henry had contracted to serve two lords (or at least a lord and a lady!).

A more comprehensive solution was the concept of liege lordship. According to the *Leges Henrici Primi* if someone was the tenant (*teneat*) of several lords (*dominos*) he was supposed to reside and owe more obedience (*magis obnoxius*) to his *ligius*.[570] However, this liege lord need not have been the king.[571] Under this concept, at least according to *Glanvill* and Bracton, the tenant was to serve his liege lord in person and send representatives to serve his secondary lord.[572] In theory, while one might owe loyalty to several lords, one retained only one liege-lord. As we have seen, Henry bishop of Winchester sought to serve both Matilda and Stephen, but the difference in how the service was to be performed may show

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[566] Difficulties still arose. In 1202, for example, a Lincolnshire court heard a complaint by Alexander de Pointon that two of his men had stood as surety for Simon's claim against him. The men, Richard and Abraham, said that they owed *fidelitatem* to Alexander saving their *homagio* to Simon. See *CRR 2*, p. 124.

[567] *Regesta* 2, no. 892.

[568] Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, pp. 127-31.

[569] *GS*, ch. 59, p. 119; *HN*, ch. 491, pp. 50-51 and ch. 502, p. 63.

[570] *Leges Henrici Primi*, 43.6. This sentiment is repeated at *Glanvill*, ix 1 and Bracton, f. 79b. This suggests a continuity of ideas from the middle of the reign of Henry I to the mid-thirteenth century.

[571] Pollock and Maitland, vol. 1 pp. 298-300. They cite two examples. The first is a charter of Henry I stating that the tenants should do liege homage to their immediate lord, Miles of Gloucester, saving the faith due to the king: '*hominagium ligium in mea salva fidelitate sicut domino suo*': J. H. Round, *Ancient Charters, Royal and Private Prior to A. D. 1200* Pipe Roll Society vol. 10 (London, 1888) p. 8; it is reprinted at *Regesta* 2, no. 1280. In the other charter William Bloet enfeoffs a tenant '*pro suo homagio et ligeantia, salva fide Regis*': Madox, no. 298.

familiarity with the concept of liege lordship for he was to send only twenty knights to Stephen. The concept is also seen during the First Crusade when Raymond of St-Gilles agrees to accept arbitration in his dispute with Bohemond over the possession of Antioch, saving his faith to the emperor (*salua fidelitate imperatoris*).[573] Such a development betrays a 'hierarchy of lordship' in which one could owe primary loyalty to one person and secondary loyalty to another. Such notions have clear connections with the concept of the feudal pyramid.

The idea of limiting the amount of service owed to a lord is repeated in other agreements of this time. The Meulan-Neubourg *conventio* of 1141 x 1142 refers to a hierarchy of lordship. In this agreement Robert de Neubourg swore to be Waleran's man, saving his *fidelitas* to the lord of Normandy.[574] Here it is again clear that Robert's principal loyalty was to a 'lord of Normandy'[575] and that his faith to Waleran was, in theory, of secondary importance.

More detailed is the final agreement between the earls of Chester and Leicester. In this agreement they swore faith to the other, saving the faith owed to their liege lord ('*salva fide ligii dominii sui*'). In other words, the earls accepted that the peace established between them could be broken by one of them being commanded to follow their *ligius dominus*. Here the two earls clearly placed liege-loyalty above the ties of their *conventio*, ties that included pledges of *fidelitas*. This suggests that the concept of liege-loyalty was a powerful force and that the king - and Duke Henry - was therefore not, as one commentator has put it, 'little more than a troublesome irrelevance'.[576] However, while the earls were unwilling to place their faith to each other above their faith to their liege lord, they were willing to limit the service they would do if called upon by their liege lord to fight each other as they promise to bring with them only twenty knights (*milites*). Thus although the concept of liege lordship placed loyalty to a liege ahead of loyalty to another lord it had limits.

The ability for an inferior to limit the terms under which service was owed is also seen in the 1141 charter of Matilda to William de Beauchamp.[577] Until this charter William had been a tenant of Waleran of Meulan but here he is told that his loyalty to Matilda must be placed above that to Waleran. Since the Latin is complex it is worth quoting the relevant sentence in full:

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[572] *Glanvill* claims that if a tenant's two lords should fight then he must fight in person for his chief lord 'saving the service to that other lord from the fee that is held of him': *Glanvill*, ix 1. Bracton similarly states that the tenant must stand with his liege lord and send representatives to his other lord: Bracton, f. 79b.

[573] *Gesta Francorum*, p. 76.

[574] The text reads '*Et pro hac conventione factus est homo meus contra omnes homines salua fidelitate domini Normannie*'. The full text is found in Crouch, 'Bonds of lordship', appendix, document 1.

[575] On the use of the vague term 'lord of Normandy', see Crouch, 'Bonds of lordship', pp. 311-12.

[576] Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, p. 84.

[577] *Regesta* 3, no. 68; Round, *Geoffrey de Mandeville*, p. 313; it is translated in *English Historical Documents*, vol. 2, 1042-1189, ed. D. C. Douglas and G. W. Greenaway (Oxford, 1981 edn.) pp. 436-37, no. 46.

'Et de hoc devenit ipse Willelmus meus ligius homo contra omnes mortales et nominatim contra Gualerann[um] comitem de Mellent et ita quod nec ipse comes Gualeran[us] nec aliquis alius de hiis predictis mecum finem faciet, quominus semper ipse Willelmus de me in capite teneat nisi ipse bona voluntate et gratuita concessione de predicto comite tenere voluerit.'[578]

This obtuse sentence reveals a very peculiar agreement between William de Beauchamp and the empress. The first part of the sentence reveals that William has sworn some form of faithfulness to Matilda, to be her liege-man, and in particularly to be loyal to her against the count of Meulan, his former immediate lord. This part of the agreement clearly places loyalty to a liege above loyalty to a lesser lord, and in addition reveals that William changed sides in the civil war before Waleran. But the second half of the sentence is highly interesting for the light it casts on the possible relationship between a man and his liege-lord. First it shows that William did not trust Matilda's future policy towards Waleran as he made this charter record that she had undertaken not to force him to accept Waleran as his lord should, at a future date, Waleran move from Stephen's camp to Matilda's. But the final phrase of the sentence foresees the possibility of Waleran not only changing sides in the civil war but also of patching up relations with William such that William would be willing to accept him as his immediate lord once more. These clauses are important for an understanding of the full implications and possibilities of the concept of liege-lordship as they reveal that, although the *ligia domina* was in the dominant position and could command the other contractor, the *homo* was able to secure specific rights and concessions that curtailed the freedom of the liege-lord as regards policy towards potential supporters, tenure of land, and the formal structure of lordships. In other words, in this agreement at least, it was the *homo* and not the *ligia domina* who called the shots and determined the terms of the agreement.

But one should not forget the specific context that gave rise to the agreement between Matilda and William de Beauchamp. The presence of civil war caused heightened uncertainty as regards the disposition of barons and allowed some of them to charge a high price for their allegiance *at the time they changed sides*. Although this argument may seem like a return to the sentiments of J. H. Round[579] against the arguments of Edmund King[580] there are important differences between the view presented here and that of Round. Round believed that barons

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[578] 'And for this William became my liege man against all mortals and by name against Waleran count of Meulan such that neither Waleran nor anyone else may make an end [i. e. reach an agreement] with me to prevent William holding from me in chief unless he [William] voluntarily and willingly agrees to hold it from the count [of Meulan]'.

[579] As most clearly expressed in *Geoffrey de Mandeville* (London, 1892).

[580] See in particular 'The anarchy of King Stephen's reign', *TRHS*, 5th series, vol. 34 (1984) 133-54; and 'King Stephen and the Anglo-Norman aristocracy', *History*, 59 (1974) 180-94.

were willing to swap sides regularly and, by offering their (temporary) allegiance to the highest bidder, were able to exact increasingly generous terms from the claimants to the throne. I would not go that far. To my knowledge William de Beauchamp changed sides only once as regards his allegiance to claimants of the throne, and this process was problematic through the political standing of Waleran. More importantly, the restrictive clauses were designed not to limit Matilda's freedom of action - if that was the result, it was not the intention - but to prevent William from having a lord foisted upon him whom he believed to be hostile. Furthermore, it is not clear whether aristocrats were able to maintain a favourably negotiated agreement. In the case of William de Beauchamp, for instance, he is later found as a tenant of Waleran once more: either Waleran and William had put aside their differences or Matilda had been able to break her promise not to make anyone a lord of William without his willing consent.

The concept of liege lordship seems to have survived into the later years of the twelfth century for vernacular literature makes reference to the concept.[581] The *Song of Dermot*, for example, records that when Earl Richard swore loyalty to Dermot he added that he must first ask King Henry II as Henry was the *seignur* of his landed honours (*terrien honur*).[582] This shows that when swearing loyalty to another one was supposed to first get the permission of the superior lord.

The existence of the concept did not mean that the immediate lord would be happy about its consequences. During the Young King's rebellion the steward of the Young King informs him that he (the steward, not the Young King) must support Henry II as he was his *hom*.[583] This could be seen as the steward following the idea of liege-lordship, but it does not prevent the Young King from calling this *traïson*.[584]

The concept of liege lordship can be seen operating in the twelfth century. This reveals a hierarchy of lordship based on tenure to the extent that it was recognised that a liege lord, usually the king, existed and commanded obedience above the loyalty due to other lords. However, it does not follow that there was a social hierarchy, nor that tenurial organisation defined the political structure. Moreover, it is unclear how commonly this concept was invoked and to what extent it had real force.

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[581] One should note, however, that these examples do not use the word 'liege'.
[582] Dermot, Ll., 358-59.
[583] *HGM*, L. 6475.
[584] *HGM*, L. 6463.

V

SECURING FOLLOWERS:

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL RESOURCES OF

AUTHORITY

A key part of understanding socio-political dynamics is understanding why followers were (or were not) loyal. An analysis of the psychological pressures exerted by authorities in the twelfth century helps our understanding of this in the Middle Ages. It will be shown that medieval rulers, compared with the leaders of today, held the forces that deliver obedience only in a reduced amount.

Events of the twentieth century have taught us that people follow orders even when they believe the commands to be wrong,[585] and this view is backed up by the findings of psychologists.[586] Four factors seem to contribute to this. The first is social norms: it is

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[585] Two examples will suffice: in the Nuremberg (Nürnberg) trials at the end of the Second World War Adolph Eichmann was convicted and executed for causing the deaths of many Jews. He claimed to be only following orders - indeed, he had argued within the SS for Jews to be allowed to emigrate and, for what it is worth, he had both a Jewish half-cousin and a Jewish mistress. On Eichmann see in particular the transcripts found in J. von Lang and C. Sibyll, eds., *Eichmann Interrogated*, trans. R. Manheim (New York, 1983) and the analysis in H. Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: a report on the banality of evil* (New York, 1963) who argued that many of the 'evil men' of the Third Reich were ordinary people placed in strange circumstances who followed orders. The second example comes from the Vietnam War. In 1969 a group of American soldiers killed a large number of unarmed villagers in what became known as the My Lai massacre. Like Eichmann they claimed to be following orders. For a sympathetic appraisal of the psychological causes of the massacre see McManners, *The Scars of War*, pp. 95, 115, 245, 247-9, 351-2; this former soldier and lecturer at Sandhurst argues that in large part it was caused by the training and specific, immediate environment of the massacre (such as recently losing many of their comrades).

[586] The most famous of these experiments tested how willing subjects would be to administer electric shocks of increasing intensity (15-450 volts, with clear labels such as 'extreme shock') to a 'learner' in a separate room who was supposedly taking part in a memory experiment. The only interference came from the experimentor who gave simple, unthreatening verbal prompts such as 'It is absolutely essential that you continue'. The results are alarming: not a single subject stopped prior to 300 volts (at which point the 'learner' kicked the wall) while 65% continued right up to 450 volts (at which the 'learner' played dead): almost two thirds had been willing to deliver a lethal electric shock to an innocent human being. If the reader is surprised at these results you are not alone: most people underestimate the levels of obedience Milgram was able to obtain - an example of the 'fundamental attribution error' which states that people consistently underestimate the role of situation forces in making an individual choose a course of action. On this see S. Milgram, 'Behavioural study of obedience', *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 67 (1963) 371-78 and S. Milgram, *Obedience to Authority: An experimental view* (New York, 1974). The situation constructed for this experiment has been criticised as being artificial: M. T. Orne and C. C. Holland, 'On the ecological validity of laboratory deceptions', *International Journal of Psychiatry*, 6 (1968) 282-93. Yet Milgram's experiment remains a chilling example of the power of authority over the individual. Another experiment was drawn from real-life and discovered that people obey authority even when the command breaks rules: 95% of nurses were willing to give unauthorised medicine they knew to be dangerously excessive when instructed to do so over the telephone by an unknown doctor. See C. K. Hoffling, E. Brotzman, S. Dalrymple,

difficult for people to go against the word of another or accuse them of being incompetent, immoral or wrong. A second reason is surveillance: the presence of someone watching helps ensure obedience.[587] A third is the existence of buffers: the closer the individual is connected to the victim the less likely the person is to obey.[588] Finally - and probably most importantly - people obey authority through ideological justification: an individual's acceptance of an ideology that legitimates the authority of the person in charge and justifies following their directives.[589] When these four factors are all present any individual is likely to obey the express orders of a superior.

Can these factors be seen operating in twelfth-century England? The social norms of the twelfth century were clearly different from our own. While loyal service to a superior may have been an ideal - as revealed in *Chanson* and Romance literature as well as more politically orientated documents such as the writings of Fulbert of Chartres[590] - this does not mean that it was a social norm. The many cases of insurrection by disgruntled aristocrats would have provided ample example of such behaviour, and as Asch demonstrated, just a single other 'rebel' dramatically increases the likelihood of an individual following his own course of action.[591] Indeed, one might go as far as to say that in *some* regions in *some* years aristocratic rebellion was a social norm. But one should be careful not to push this argument too far: the overwhelming majority of aristocrats in the Anglo-Norman world remained consistently loyal to the king. Even during the civil war of the mid-twelfth century most people seem to have changed sides very infrequently. Nevertheless, one can see that medieval kings held one of the key determining factors of obedience today only in a reduced form, and this may explain the apparent willingness of some individuals to rebel.

N. Graves and C. M. Pierce, 'An experimental study in nurse-physician relationships', *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, 143 (1966) 171-80.

[587] When Milgram tested this by issuing instructions by telephone instead of being in the same room obedience fell from 65% to 21%.

[588] Milgram found that obedience fell to 40% when the learner was placed in the same room as the subject and to 30% when the subject was made responsible for ensuring that the learner placed his hand on a shock plate, but that it soared to a full 93% when the subject was able to pass on some responsibility to another by only pulling a switch that enabled another person to deliver the shocks.

[589] This is seen in Eichmann accepting the primacy of the German state and American soldiers accepting that the national interest was threatened. Milgram used 'the importance of science' to justify the morality of the experiment and found that obedience declined to 48% when he removed this association by conducting the process in a shabby office instead of Yale University.

[590] Fulbert of Chartres, *Letters and Poems*, ed. and trans. F. Behrends (Oxford, 1976) no. 51 describes how a *fidelis* who has broken his solemn oath to give *consilium* (counsel) and *auxilium* (aid) deserves to be punished severely.

[591] S. E. Asch, 'Effects of group pressure upon modification and distortion of judgements', in E. E. Maccoby, T. M. Newcomb and E. L. Hartley (eds.), *Readings in Social Psychology* (New York, 1958). Although Asch was testing whether a subject would rebel against group conformity his findings seems applicable in this context too.

In past ages rulers seem to have been well aware of the importance of surveillance,[592] and medieval lords were no exception. The humble charter is one of our clearest sources for this. Every charter that includes a place-date is evidence for the itinerant lifestyle of medieval rulers. As they travelled around their lands rulers were not only able to levy taxation in each area but also to demonstrate their authority and directly observe the state of the kingdom and the attitude of their subjects. This observation heightens the importance of developments towards administrative kingship observed in the twelfth century as much of this included increasing the use of royal officials in the provinces, such as by the extension of royal justices who could (and probably did) inform the king of what was going on there.[593] But while the level of surveillance may have been increasing in the twelfth century as the sophistication of government increased, the level of actual direct observation would have remained low. Whilst in the royal court an aristocrat was indeed under surveillance and was unlikely to show open rebellion; but once he left that court, and especially once he had returned to his own lands, the aristocrat was largely free from such controls. Thus the inability of medieval kings to maintain a constant vigilance on all their subjects helps us understand why they so regularly faced armed rebellion, although governmental developments would have begun to counteract this deficiency.

The role of buffers in determining obedience in the Middle Ages is more difficult to assess. In large part this is because buffers are peculiar to specific orders. A buffer helps to ensure that an individual obeys a specific order, not that they obey the authority in general. A buffer is something that acts not between the figure of authority and the commanded individual but between that individual and the person they are supposed to influence. A simple instance would be in the ordering of a 'traitor' to be executed: an individual would be more likely to do this if he felt himself to be a cog in a larger machine, such as if he were just one of those given the task.

The question of legitimacy is a much larger subject. Weber saw three methods of legitimising authority. He classified these as traditional authority, charismatic authority and legal authority.[594] To an extent all these legitimations were used in the twelfth century. Firstly, there was a tradition of serving a lord. Although, as we shall see, superiors had obligations they shirked at their peril, there was nevertheless a cultural pressure to serve

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[592] One thinks of how Louis XIV of France drew his aristocrats away from the provinces where they could act with greater autonomy to Versailles so that they could be more readily observed and controlled. In Mongol China Kublai Khan similarly demanded those who submitted to him to attend his court as well as supply troops and tribute: Critchley, *Feudalism*, p. 99.

[593] See for example, on England and France C. Warren Hollister and J. W. Baldwin, 'The rise of administrative kingship: Henry I and Philip Augustus', *American Historical Review* vol. 83, no. 4 (1978) pp. 867-905.

honourably even in the face of poor or illiberal lordship. According to Weber, in its simplest form traditional authority rests on personal loyalty in which innovations can be legitimised only through claiming precedent.[595] This is clearly applicable to the twelfth century as one can note how lords were keen to claim to be following past practice when making innovations. New lords were also keen to show themselves as the legitimate successors of the previous lord by continuing to act as benefactors to the religious houses of the former lord.[596] When taken with employing administrative staff who were the personal instruments of the lord (as, for example, the 'new men' of Henry I), such an organisation can be described as patrimonial.[597] However, such staff were seldom without personal interest and often used their official powers and corresponding economic assets to their own advantage. Indeed, this lies at the very heart of the notion of sheriff farms.

Undoubtedly, too, lords, and kings in particular, had an element of charisma. Whether we see charisma as what Weber intended - the leader being recognised as having been 'called' by God[598] - or whether we see it as the modern, looser idea of personal magnetism, many medieval kings seemed to have possessed both as far as contemporaries were concerned. Church involvement in the crowning of new kings propagated the idea that the new ruler was supported by God (if not chosen by Him),[599] and piety, including benefactions, would have strengthened their claim to rule though and for God. This is revealed by the common reference to ruling 'by the grace of God' in charters and in their patronage of religious institutions.[600] This adds to the view that granting benefactions to religious houses in the Middle Ages was a highly political act.

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[594] Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, pp. 215-55. These are summarised in Max Weber, 'Politics as Vocation' in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, trans. and ed. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (London, 1948) pp. 78-79 (tradition), 79 (charisma and legal authority).

[595] Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, pp. 226-27.

[596] One instance of a tenant-in-chief using this method to claim legitimacy comes from the honor of Breteuil in the early twelfth century: Robert earl of Leicester continued to give donations to the local church of Lyre that had been founded by the former lord, William fitz Osbern, in order to emphasise legitimacy through continuity; see Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, pp. 102-114.

[597] Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, pp. 231-32. Weber draws a useful distinction here between patrimonial and patriarchal authority: although both rest on tradition, in a patriarchy an individual governs without any staff whereas in a patrimony the leader has an (embryonic) civil service: Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, pp. 231-32. The Oxford English Dictionary follows Weber's definition of 'patrimonial', adding that it is inherited from ancestors.

[598] Weber, 'Politics as Vocation', p. 79; Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, pp. 241-55. Weber defined charisma as 'a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities... and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a "leader"': Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, p. 241. As such 'charisma is a highly individual quality': Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 3, p. 1113. He gives as examples a shaman, Joseph Smith who founded the Mormons, Kurt Eisner who proclaimed Bavaria a republic in 1918, Napoleon, Cromwell, Nordic beserkers, Cuchulain, Achilles, St Francis, early Christian leaders and Robespierre: Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, pp. 242, 263, 267-69, vol. 3, p. 1112. To these we can now add Rasputin and, perhaps, Hitler.

[599] In this context it is worth noting that Empress Matilda apparently never claimed to be queen, possibly (perhaps probably) because she was never crowned in the right place (Westminster Abbey) by the right person (the archbishop).

[600] A useful summary of medieval royal propaganda is found in E. Mason, *Norman Kingship* (Bangor, 1991).

The case of King Stephen is instructive in this matter. The Oxford Charter of Liberties to the Church clearly stresses Stephen's legitimacy as coming from God: through being crowned by the archbishop of Canterbury in Westminster Abbey Stephen was God's chosen instrument.[601] But this claim of divine choice was not the only means of justification partisans of Stephen used - Baldwin de Redvers was willing to claim that on his death-bed Henry I had named Stephen as his successor. In response to these assertions Matilda claimed a hereditary right to rule: she was the rightful heir of the former king. To see that such moral dilemmas were important to contemporaries one has only to read the letter of Brian fitz Count to Henry of Blois in which he laments on the fickle nature of the church. That Stephen seemed to win these arguments might lie behind the reluctance of aristocrats to oppose him.[602] Yet he was opposed, and one of the reasons why Stephen suffered such hostility may be that he did not have an unchallengeable justification of his position. In other words, that Angevin partisans were able to question the legitimacy of his authority made it easier for other malcontents to abandon Stephen. These arguments show that a number of contemporary leaders believed ideology and justification were important aspects of rulership, that they served practical purposes as well as that of 'making the ruler feel better'.[603]

Another sign of royal charisma is their (supposed) ability to heal.[604] Weber, indeed, went so far as to claim that ceremonies binding a lord to a follower should 'be interpreted as a routinisation of a charismatic relationship'.[605]

Becoming involved in crusades can also be seen as a sign of charismatic leadership for it showed one to be supporting God's cause. Richard I, the only king of England to go on crusade, can be seen as living up to this idea. His military triumphs would have furthered this identification.[606] The same is true of William the Conqueror: Norman sources are keen to show divine favour, such as recording Harold's perjury, William being given a papal banner, and William's coronation. This is not to say, of course, that the authority of Richard or William rested entirely on the appearance of charisma, but it does help us to understand why contemporaries thought so highly of them. The success of (and attitude of near-contemporary writers to) William and Richard is in marked contrast to that of King John who failed to hold on to Normandy, quarrelled with the pope and was finally subdued by an aristocratic

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[601] Stubbs, pp. 143-44

[602] Edmund King, 'The anarchy of King Stephen's reign', 133-54 and 'King Stephen and the Anglo-Norman aristocracy', 180-94.

[603] Perhaps the dismissive attitude of many historians to the role of ideological and moral justificationary propaganda says as much about the cynical nature of our profession as it does about medieval society.

[604] See Marc Bloch, *Les Rois Thaumaturges: Étude sur le caractère surnaturel attribué à la puissance royale, particulièrement en France et en Angleterre* (Strasbourg, 1924).

[605] Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 3, p. 1070.

[606] Performing heroic deeds can be interpreted as evidence of possessing charisma: Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 3, p. 1114.

faction.[607] In the eyes of contemporaries it may be that John lacked charisma and that his ancestor and brother had it in abundance.

Finally, we turn to legal authority. Compared with modern standards medieval authority may appear unreliable, unstable and imprecise, lacking in rules and administration, and as 'unsystematic'. Yet the origins of such authority can be seen in this period. In England the Domesday Survey, pipe rolls and the emergence of the exchequer and chancery show movement towards a bureaucracy with a defined competence.[608] Moreover, the legal reforms of Henry I and Henry II did much to make the law and its machinery more systematic, extensive and precise. Nor should we forget that the ceremony of homage, and perhaps oaths of faithfulness, created a contract that established the formal authority of the superior.[609] Compared with the modern world, legal authority may have been weak in the twelfth century, but it was present, and it was improving.

Medieval kings of England claimed legitimacy through charisma, traditional authority and legal authority but they did so with differing amounts of success. It was these legitimisations, backed up by force, that ensured general consent to those with authority; few rebellions, if any, sought to replace a ruler without first undermining his or her legitimacy.[610] This consent transformed military power into authority.[611] Being seen as possessing legitimate authority gave a lord a right to command and gave his subjects an acknowledged obligation to obey.[612] These feelings would have increased the likelihood of people obeying his commands and helped ensure loyalty. Without such consent a lord would have had to rely on coercion, and coercion alone was sometimes insufficient.

But such notions of legitimacy do not add up to a state. A state can be defined as 'a human community that successfully claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical

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[607] The contrasting images of Richard and John are well-known to students of the period: Richard the successful military leader who did little to look after his kingdom, John the administrative reformer who met with military failure. For recent opinions of the two kings see John Gillingham, *Richard the Lionheart* (London, 1978); John Gillingham, *Richard Coeur de Lion. Kingship, Chivalry and War in the Twelfth Century* (London and Rio Grande, 1994); W. L. Warren, *King John*, 2nd edn. (London, 1978); Ralph V. Turner, *King John* (London, 1994).

[608] This has been the subject of many studies. See for example, Hollister and Baldwin, 'The Rise of Administrative Kingship'. This is not to deny important developments within the Anglo-Saxon period. Weber was aware of this movement towards bureaucratic government for he noted that the employment of officials in a centralised capacity such as the Anglo-Norman Exchequer was 'the beginning of bureaucratisation': Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 3, p. 1089.

[609] It is worth noting that Weber saw the relationship between a 'feudal lord' and a 'vassal' as a contract establishing an authority: Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, p. 213.

[610] In the twelfth century, for example, the struggles of Curthose and Clito against Henry I and of Matilda against Stephen involved campaigns of legitimacy - notably their blood-line - as well as campaigns of violence.

[611] On consent transforming power into authority see J. J. Schwarzmantel, *Structures of Power. An Introduction to Politics* (Brighton, 1987) p. 7.

[612] As argued by Dennis H. Wrong, *Power. Its Forms, Bases and Uses* (Oxford, 1979) p. 49.

force within a given territory.'[613] This, despite the efforts of rulers, did not exist in the twelfth century, as the frequency of aristocratic rebellion makes clear.

It should also be noted that revolt in the twelfth century does not seem to have been aimed at changing the political system, only at replacing the leader of that system. This means that political and social revolution were not the aims. There are several factors that would have contributed to this. Weber classified notions that supported the maintenance of a particular social (and therefore political) structure. He described how a social order could be seen as legitimate and acceptable through emotional surrender to the structure, a belief in the ethical validity of the order (in the Middle Ages the socio-political structure was thought to be ordained by God), a religious belief that salvation depended on maintaining the structure (opposing the structure meant opposing God's will), fear of disapproval from society, and fear of physical or psychological violence.[614] To varying degrees all these factors can be seen at work in twelfth-century England. The combination of all of them would have restricted the amount of opposition against the social, economic and political order and, to an extent, against anyone within that society. But, as with claims of legitimacy, although such notions would have limited opposition they did not prevent it.

It is clear that medieval lords lacked some of the means by which obedience is secured in the modern West. These factors include stronger social norms towards non-violence, surveillance and the legitimacy of authority. Although the situation for rulers may have been improving during the twelfth century as administrative government expanded and the political and legal structure became more centralised it was still less than the situation today. This helps explain why medieval rulers so often suffered from rebellion. In addition, it helps us to more fully understand the itinerant lifestyle of medieval kingship in that it helped to maintain surveillance and so reduced the chances of disobedience and rebellion.

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[613] Weber, 'Politics as Vocation', p. 78. A similar definition is provided in Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, p. 54.
[614] Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, pp. 33-34.

VI

SECURING FOLLOWERS:

LOVE AND FEAR

Weber believed that 'in reality, obedience is determined by highly robust motives of fear and hope - fear of the vengeance of magical powers or of the power-holder, hope for reward in this world or in the beyond - and beyond all this, by interests of the most varied source'.[615] From this it can be seen that Weber believed power-holders maintained obedience not only through legitimacy but also through material reward and social honour. He gives vassals and knights as two examples.[616]

This view can be summarised by saying that followers were bound to a leader by a mixture of love and fear.[617] These factors are seen in literary and historical texts. According to one source, for example, the earl of Chester said William Marshal should be regent to Henry III because he was 'so feared and yet so loved'.[618] Similarly, Chrétien tells us that Alexander 'was served and loved, and whoever did not serve him for love did so from fear.'[619] Indeed, Chrétien was aware of the value of fear:

> 'A servant who does not fear his master should not stay in
> his company or serve him. You fear your master only if
> you respect him; and unless you hold him dear you do not
> respect him, but rather seek to deceive him and steal his
> goods. A servant should tremble with fear when his
> master calls or summons him.'[620]

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[615] Weber, 'Politics as Vocation', p. 79.

[616] Weber, 'Politics as Vocation', p. 80.

[617] This is equally true for the modern world. One political analyst has stated 'there are two basic means by which state power is maintained: coercion and consent': Schwarzmantel, p. 5. The value of fear for uniting people was known to people in Antiquity. In describing the campaign of Coriolanus in 491 BC, Livy (d. AD 17) records that 'shared danger is the strongest of bonds; it will keep men united in spite of mutual dislike and suspicion': Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita*, ed. Robert Maxwell Ogilvie (London, 1974) book 2.39.

[618] *HGM*, L. 15526: '*E tant cremuz e tant amez*'.

[619] Cligés, p. 154.

[620] Cligés, p. 170. Although this passage describes the relationship of a lord to a servant it seems applicable to that of a lord and follower.

This view is similar to the way one is supposed to love and fear God.[621] It also has some parallels with the relationship between a married couple: Ælflæd tried hard to *servir* (serve) her husband Æthelred, and so he had *lama* (the love) for her.[622]

The importance of love and fear is perhaps seen in the way a succession is often followed by rebellion.[623] In the early months of a reign a ruler would not have had time to impart fear into his 'followers' or to have induced them to love him through patronage. Only after a lord had been in power for some time would such bonds become strong. It would take time to make people fear displeasure, and it would likewise take time to make them see the benefits of loyal service. Yet it should be remembered that bonds - or the lack of them - could pass from father to son.[624]

Both fear and love would have been strengthened by proximity. The presence of a lord would have heightened feelings of affection and solidarity whilst the display of authority and power would have strengthened any feelings of fear. This helps to explain why medieval rulers were itinerant.[625] Geographical isolation, on the other hand, when combined with poor communications, would have decreased the influence of the ruler as decisions would have had to be taken by people on the spot.[626]

A follower was supposed to love a superior. Gaimar says that King Æthelheard of Wessex was loved (*ame*) by his men (*gent*)[627] and that Cynewulf cherished and loved (*cheri e ame*) his household (*meisnee*).[628] Similarly, having been reproached by William, Louis admits that William has 'served with/through/for love [*servi par amor*].'[629] Such love could be a motive for political action, for according to Gaimar the followers of Godwine (who wanted the English crown) murdered the rightful heir, Alfred, 'for/through love' (*pur amor*) of their lord.[630]

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[621] For religious people loving God, Gaimar, Ll. 1409, 1514. Other Biblical parallels with medieval lordship include the depiction of Christ and disciples and Satan and the devils as lord and vassals, and placing one's hands together to pray and in the ceremony of homage: Critchley, *Feudalism*, p. 45.

[622] Gaimar, Ll. 2140-44.

[623] For example, upon his succession Louis is challenged by the son of Richard of Rouen: *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1378-1400. For the succession of Louis the Pious from Charlemagne see Althoff, pp. 157-59. This weakness is also seen at the level of the aristocracy and their tenants, as in the honour of Richmond in the struggles surrounding Magna Carta: Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 46.

[624] Charlemagne tells Louis that those 'who hated me will never love you [*Cil qui me het, bien sai ne t'aime mie*]': *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 170.

[625] This was noted by Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 3, p. 1042.

[626] Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 3, p. 1051.

[627] Gaimar, L. 1714.

[628] Gaimar, L. 1862 (*cheri e ami*), 1860 (*meisnee*).

[629] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 306.

[630] Gaimar, L. 4842.

In the *Chanson de Roland* Charles is loved by his followers.[631] Here we should remember that Charles is portrayed as the ideal ruler. Chrétien thought this affection to be mutual for in another speech Charles declares: 'Lord barons, I love you and trust in you.'[632] Love can be seen as the ideal condition in which service was given. This explains why when the barons at the trial of Ganelon favour abandoning the trial they say of Ganelon 'Let him serve him [Charles] in love and faith [*par amur e par feid*].'[633] They then tell Charles:

> 'To absolve Count Ganelon,
>
> Then let him serve you in faith and love [*par feid e par*
>
> *amor*]'.[634]

But Charles refuses. The same phrase is used again for during their duel to decide the fate of Ganelon Pinabel offers Thierry an agreement:

> 'Thierry, surrender;
>
> I shall become your *hom* in love and faith [*par amur*
>
> *e par feid*]'.[635]

This passage shows love being offered as part of an agreement, as though love was a political act. We shall return to this theme in our discussion of Formal Friendship. But here we should note that the common use of the expression 'in love and faith' may mean that the phrase had a wide currency and perhaps that it was part of a ritual though which one became the man of another and promised to serve him.

Serving though love would have ensured peaceful and happy co-operation and sometimes this ideal may have been achieved. Gaimar claims it existed in the household of William Rufus for he tells us that Rufus held his private household (*priue meisne*) dear and equipped them well.[636] But perhaps the best known example of followers loving a lord is the household of William Marshal.[637]

While such conditions may sometimes have existed it is likely that many relationships were often tense. A follower might serve and obey a lord without loving him, just as today an employee might remain at work without liking his employer. Moreover, affection could be feigned: *Renaut de Montauban* records that 'sometimes one kisses a hand

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[631] When he makes a speech at Rencesvals we are told that his followers 'reply with love and tenderness': *Chanson de Roland*, L. 2440.
[632] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 3406.
[633] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 3801.
[634] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3809-10.
[635] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3892-93.
[636] Gaimar, Ll. 5841-48.
[637] Crouch, *William Marshal*.

which one would prefer to slice off.'[638] This means that whilst mutual love between a lord and his follower may have been an ideal it was perhaps rare in practice.

A lack of love was equated with a lack of support. The *History of William Marshal* claims those hostile to John Marshal 'had no love [*l'amoent*] for him'.[639] To the same effect, the French are said to have no love (*ne l'amoent*) for King John.[640] Again, Ceolwulf of Mercia was forced to flee because he was not loved.[641]

How might such 'love' be achieved? Homage, oaths and land-grants created a moral obligation to serve one's immediate lord, but there were other reasons why a follower might choose to do so. Tenants and household followers had charters addressed to them by their lord, attended his court and served as counsellors. These political acts would have focused the attention of the honorial baronage on their lord.[642] But the main way of securing love was patronage, and largesse was a key aristocratic virtue.[643] Rewards - and the prospect of future rewards - would have induced followers to love their lord. Likewise, denying patronage and favour could provoke dissent.[644] The granting of a reward would also have created fear - fear of losing the reward.

The value of rewards for securing loyalty was certainly known by contemporaries. The promotion of lesser men to positions of power by Henry I may have been a realisation of this.[645] When hearing that John Marshal gave his followers equipment and gifts we are told

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[638] *Renaut de Montauban*, L. 6568.

[639] *HGM*, L. 36.

[640] *HGM*, L. 12555.

[641] Gaimar, L. 2244 (*nert pas ame*).

[642] Stenton, *The First Century*, pp. 87-96. This model was supported by Milsom who saw the relationship between lord and man as crucial, with disputes settled in the lord's court in the presence of his men and decisions based on custom rather than rule. However, as Hyams has pointed out, there are problems with Milsom's reliance on the seignorial model. In particular, that witnesses had to be used to secure grants against a higher lord, tenants and relatives diminishes the perceived unity of the honorial court (but does not destroy its centrality): Paul R. Hyams, 'Review of *The Legal Framework of English Feudalism* by S. F. C. Milsom', *EHR*, 93 (1978) pp. 858, 860. Milsom's model has also been criticised for its failure to consider the political element of legal cases, in particular the relative power of the disputants: John Hudson, 'Milsom's Legal Structure: Interpreting Twelfth-Century Law', *The Legal History Review*, 49 (1991) p. 52. Although such criticism is well-founded one should not forget that Milsom was building a model, and any model must sacrifice detail for clarity: the trick is judging how much detail is required. For attendance at the shire court see *Monasticon Anglicanum*, ed. J. Caley et al, 7 vols. in 8 (1817-30) vol. 6, p. 345; H. Cam, 'An East Anglian Shire Moot', *EHR* 39 (1924) p. 569.

[643] William of Poitiers emphasises that William secured the loyalty of his followers by offering rewards: Teunis, pp. 202-3. On largesse see also Althoff, p. 159; Duby, 'The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century', p. 161.

[644] This is a possible explanation for the opposition of the Northerners against John: Holt, *The Northerners*, pp. 33-34.

[645] On the exercise of patronage by Henry I see in particular R. W. Southern, 'The place of Henry I in English history', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 48 (1962) pp. 127-69, reprinted in *Medieval Humanism and Other Studies* (Oxford, 1970) pp. 206-33; and Stephanie Mooers, 'Patronage in the Pipe Roll of 1130', *Speculum* 59 (1984) 282-307. Henry I was not alone in promoting lesser men to positions of power. At roughly the same time the German Henry IV promoted to high office Swabians of low descent, and so caused a backlash from the established princes: Althoff, p. 179, citing Lampert van Hersfeld and Bruno's book on the Saxon War. King John may have tried to follow a similar policy for in Magna Carta he was forced to remove

that he 'knew well how to entice and hold on to valiant knights'.[646] His son also rewarded those who joined him,[647] and those who plotted against William Marshal knew that he used gifts to make good friends (*boens amis*).[648] At the siege of Newbury King Stephen offered a reward to the first people inside in an attempt to persuade them not to resist.[649]

The use of rewards is also seen in the *Song of Roland*. Before a battle against Charles, Baligant offers his son Malprammis land as a reward should he be successful.[650] Later the emir goes on to offer rewards to his men:

> 'Strike, pagans, you came for no other purpose!
>
> I shall give you noble and beautiful wives,
>
> And I shall give you fiefs and honours and lands.'[651]

Charles also knew he had to reward his followers for faithful service. In a speech before battle he says:

> 'Lord barons, I love you and I trust in you;
>
> You have fought so many battles for me,
>
> Conquered so many kingdoms and removed many kings.
>
> I am fully aware that I owe you a reward,
>
> Paid by my own person, in lands and wealth.'[652]

These were the rewards a lord might offer to secure support. Without offering such rewards a superior would be unable to maintain support.[653] These rewards, however, go beyond the notion of love and fear for they create formal links between people. These formal links are the subject of the next chapter.

The role of largesse is also seen in the writing of Chrétien de Troyes. This is particularly clear in *Cligés*. When Count Angrés rebels against Arthur he attracts his

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foreigners from office. The reform movement against Henry III was likewise aimed against 'aliens': Maddicott, 'Magna Carta and the Local Community', p. 55-57. The policy was also used outside medieval Europe. An emperor of Ethiopia is reported to have said that the only men he could trust were those he had created and brought up from the dust. The same policy is also seen in the use of officials and the 'black army' by Matthias Hunyadi of Hungary, in the use of Jews by James I of Aragon in the thirteenth century, and in China Wang Wu of Chou accused the last of the Shang of honouring the lowly by giving them office. For these examples see Critchley, *Feudalism*, pp. 116-17.

[646] *HGM*, Ll. 52-58.

[647] *HGM*, Ll. 1895-1900.

[648] *HGM*, Ll. 5238-39.

[649] *HGM*, Ll. 434-36.

[650] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3201-13.

[651] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3397-99.

[652] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3406-10.

[653] Opposition to King John, for example, can be seen as arising through a gulf between those who were 'in' (his *familiares*) and benefited from patronage and those who were 'out' and suffered his *malevolentia*: Miller, p. 78; Holt, *The Northerners*, particularly pp. 33-34.

followers through promises and gifts.[654] Arthur likewise practised largesse. When Alexander performs a daring raid and captures four prisoners he is rewarded with five hundred knights and a thousand foot-soldiers and is promised the best kingdom in Wales for when the war ends, to be held until he inherits his father's lands.[655] This not only rewarded Alexander but also served to demonstrate to others what courageous, loyal followers could expect. Shortly afterwards Arthur again recognises the importance of incentives as he offers a fine cup to whoever takes a castle.[656] Alis also uses incentives in his attempt to track down Cligés and Fenice: 'Whoever brings the two of them back captive will be dearer to me than any man alive.'[657]

But there may have been a different expectation of reward between the different types of follower. King Arthur draws such a distinction: whereas a foot-soldier [sergenz] would receive a cup a knight [chevalier] would have the cup and 'whatever reward he might request if it is to be found in this world.'[658]

Trying to make followers love you would have been a major concern for any leader. This could be achieved through fair treatment - a mixture of generosity and strictness. Many sources refer to the importance of generosity and portray largesse as a virtue. Rewards for loyal service would have been gratefully accepted and the prospect of rewards would have influenced a follower in the direction of obedience. Seen in this light the relationship between lord and follower in the twelfth century has close parallels with that between employer and employee in the late twentieth century. This should not be surprising: both relationships give a reward (money, land or gifts) in exchange for labour (service or work). But it is likely that this was only one side of the coin. Discipline, too, is likely to have played a role. This element of fear and respect is to where we now turn.

While it may be a negative interpretation of people's actions, fear seems to have played an important role in determining the actions of individuals. Power brings with it not only the ability to shed patronage but also the threat of unresistable violence. A great magnate, for instance, might have the ability to crush a lesser man both politically and militarily.[659] Such a threat would be most real when there was no superior power for the inferior party to invoke - such as a king with effective authority. But although this factor is most readily seen during periods of turmoil it would have retained some potency even in the

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[654] Cligés, p. 137. This helps explain why he looted London: Cligés, p. 137.
[655] Cligés, p. 140.
[656] Cligés, p. 141.
[657] Cligés, p. 204.
[658] Cligés, p. 141. 'sergenz', L. 1543, 'chevalier', L. 1545.
[659] The activity of the earls of Leicester against the bishops of Lincoln over several generations warns us against seeing aristocrats as pursuing power through crude force alone as the struggle took the from of a

most peaceful periods. A lesser man could always find himself denied the fruits of patronage or suddenly find the magnate's court judging him with disfavour.

Fear is seen as important in contemporary literature. Charlemagne tells his son that he must appear strong to his followers or risk losing them.[660] Fear (dute) of the English made 3,000 men swap to Dermot's side and later more Irish come over to him through fear of the English.[661] We are also told that his enemies fear him.[662] When Tristan asks to be allowed to prove his innocence and to return to Mark's court one person advises Mark: 'King, retain him, men will fear you the more.'[663] Here we see that prestige was based on being able to retain followers. Scandal within the royal house, as today, could weaken the position of the prince. This is seen in the way Béroul tells us that after Yseut's ambiguous oath had quashed the rumours 'King Mark held Cornwall in peace and was feared by everyone far and near.'[664] Such evidence shows that poets were well aware of political realities and saw fear as an important means of maintaining authority.

The importance of fear for ensuring loyalty is also clearly seen in non-literary sources, particularly in the agreements of Stephen's reign. These agreements were based on political reality and betray the machinery of lordship at its crudest level. They gave formal expression to networks of followers that were founded on political and military domination.[665] Such an analysis shows affinities to have rested on territorial power and regional influence. Where an agreement is mentioned in connection with an affinity it is not as the creating force but as a definition of its form: the agreement lent structure to an informal arrangement created through power. Power was the crucial factor. The root of this power was the territorial might of the magnate. Whilst direct control was possible only over one's demesne holdings, effective control would have existed over all but the greatest of tenants. Further afield the influence of a great magnate would still have been felt.

A growing wealth of evidence points to many political ties being based not on tenure but on lordship in a broader sense. Further evidence of this is the way Miles of Gloucester drew his neighbours into rebellion in 1139 by a display of strength.[666] Indeed one may suggest that the existence of so many agreements defining future relations, even those based around enfeoffments, does much to show that in the turbulent period of the civil war several magnates had realised that the political arena need not be organised around tenure but could

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protracted legal dispute with only occassional armed disseisin: Crouch, 'Earls and bishops', pp. 9-20, particularly p. 19.

[660] Le Couronnement de Louis, Ll. 186-203.

[661] Dermot, Ll. 545, 830, 835.

[662] Dermot, Ll. 962, 965.

[663] Béroul, p. 111.

[664] Béroul, p. 143.

[665] See the chapter on 'Types of Follower: Neighbours and Affinities', above, pp. 85-88.

equally function on the identification of mutual interest, that loyalty could be based on domination and be given expression by contract.[667] Contracts may also have been used in crusade recruitment in the twelfth century, but evidence only survives from the thirteenth.[668]

The agreements, largely made without reference to the king, show the reality that lay behind magnate influence. They show magnates entering into both alliances and peace agreements with each other. This may have been because the royal power was unable to enforce peace and settle disagreements. But it is uncertain whether we can transfer the behaviour of the great magnates to lesser lords. The nature of twelfth-century evidence is such that it tends to hide the activities of all but the most powerful. We are therefore left to doubt whether the policies and structures of the élite were repeated further down the political hierarchy.

Love and fear are informal ties because they are not created through formal actions or ceremonies. This means that they are not usually expressed in charters and legal records which record only formal structures of power. This makes love and fear hard to detect and often impossible to measure. But this does not mean that they were not important. Indeed, they are likely to have been present in all relationships and can be seen as the major determinants of aristocratic loyalty.[669]

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[666] *GS*, ch. 42, p. 90. Sadly the phrase '*affines*' is not used here.

[667] The importance of regional power is also drawn out by Crouch, 'Earls and bishops' and King, 'Mountsorrel', in determining magnate policy.

[668] For example, the core of the English crusading force of 1270-72 consisted of a group of important lords and their followers connected to Edward through a systematic use of contracts. These contracts were primarily a means not of recruitment but of organisation: Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade*, p. 123, 135-38.

[669] This is why Christopher Holdsworth asserts that after 1066 (if not before) loyalty was held through the (implied) threat of force and the prospect of reward: Holdsworth, pp. 70-71.

vii

SECURING FOLLOWERS:

HOMAGE AND OATHS

So far we have examined informal structures of power. A healthy mixture of fear and love would have ensured the loyalty of followers but would not have provided a stable or systematic structure. Formal pledges were added to these informal bonds to give the structure clearer definition and to reinforce existing ties. In this light homage and oaths appear to be similar to the modern legal notion of contract.[670] They were also used to create an environment in which informal ties could develop. The main value of formal ties, however, may have been that each side then knew what was roughly expected of them.

Historians have traditionally termed these formal ties 'homage' and 'fealty', and the condition arising from them has been called 'vassalage'. Homage and an oath to be faithful has been seen to create a formal relationship through which a lord could seek to exercise direct control over a man. But it is worthwhile questioning whether contemporaries used these terms in the same way as we do today. This section examines the words and phrases used in contemporary documents to refer to formal arrangements. This leads to a greater understanding of what homage, fealty, faith and vassal meant to contemporaries. We will return again to the subject of formal ties in our discussion of political friendship.

We will look first at the term 'vassal'. Historians often refer to the concept of vassalage - 'X was the vassal of Y' being the most obvious usage. But what does the term mean? In modern English it implies a formal, legally defined relationship between two individuals. Is this true of the medieval usage? While it is perhaps true that the act of homage brought with it a legal connotation at this time the word used by contemporaries to describe the resulting relationship is not *vassus* but *homo* - the performance of homage created not a 'vassal' but a 'man'. This is apparent in both Latin and French sources. Before we look at its use, however, we should note that 'vassal' is used very infrequently in the sources.[671]

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[670] This observation is not new: an early example is found in Sir Henry Sumner Maine, *Ancient Law. Its connection with the early History of Society and its Relation to Modern Ideas*, cheap edn. (London, 1905) p. 324; the work was first published in 1861. It is also found in Pollock and Maitland, vol. 1 pp. 301, 306. J. C. Smith, *The Law of Contract*, 2ⁿᵈ edn (London, 1993) provides a useful introduction to modern notions of contract.

[671] This was noted a century ago by Pollock and Maitland, vol. 1 p. 297. They noted, for instance, that the word *vassalus* occurs only once in *Glanvill*, at ix 1. The *Libri Feudorum* uses *clientulus* to describe what historians have termed 'vassal' and 'sub-vassal': Critchley, *Feudalism*, pp. 102-3.

In the *Song of Dermot vassus / vassals* describes any follower. For example, Miles de Cogan has sixty archers and a hundred men at arms that are later described as two hundred *vassals*, while those who strike well are said to be *barun vassals*.[672] Similarly, we are originally told that Earl Richard has forty fighting men, a hundred men-at-arms and sixty archers and later that he has two hundred *vassals*.[673] In such cases 'vassal' is a general term for 'follower'. Far from being a specific type of aristocratic follower it is clear that to at least one contemporary 'vassal' could refer to archers and men-at-arms. In the same text *vassals* and *baruns* are used as synonyms, both referring to fighting men.[674] We have already seen that 'baron' describes manpower or military supporters.[675]

But we can be more precise. It seems that *vassus* means 'good follower'.[676] This is particularly clear in the *Chanson de Roland*. In this poem 'vassal' describes an individual distinguished by his loyalty, devotion, courage, prowess, or some other ideal.[677] This explains how a lay aristocrat and an archbishop can be described as *vassals* when they are used as messengers.[678] Elsewhere its use is ironic - indeed, as we shall see when we look at friendship as courtesy, it becomes almost a term of abuse.

What *vassus* does not mean is a specific political, legal or military bond between two people. When a poet wishes to describe someone as being a formal subordinate of another he uses the word 'man'. A legally bound subordinate is the 'man' - not 'vassal' - of the superior. Only a good follower (who might be a 'man') is a 'vassal'.

This important distinction has been lost through casual use of the word 'vassal'. In the twelfth century 'vassal' meant 'follower' and had overtones of 'good follower'. This is why archers, men-at-arms and aristocrats are termed vassals. The word does not refer to a specific type of bond or to a specific type of follower. The modern usage of 'vassal', by contrast, conjures up notions of a legally defined relationship with fixed terms and limits of service. Such confusion is unhelpful if we are to understand the past on its own terms. 'Vassal' should be used to describe what contemporaries used *vassus* to mean - an ideal follower. By using 'vassal' instead of 'man' historians have implied that a relationship had a legal definition when it may not have had one at the time.

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[672] *Dermot*, Ll. 1887-88, 1902, 1929. Arithmetic does not seem to have been a strong point of the poet.

[673] *Dermot*, Ll. 1893-96, 1906. Sometimes he got the sums right.

[674] *Dermot*, Ll. 2392, 2395 (*vassals*), 2394 (*baruns*).

[675] See the introduction to the section on Superiors and Followers.

[676] This is in marked contrast to its etymological roots: the Latin *vassus* comes from the Celtic *gwas*, meaning 'boy', which suggests that originally vassals were fairly minor people: Critchley, *Feudalism*, p. 104.

[677] For example, Ll. 231, 352, 775, 1857.

[678] *Dermot*, L. 1838-46. Elsewhere in this text it is less clear, such as L. 1615 (Dermot and Richard together have 4,000 *vassals*).

Having examined the meaning of the term 'vassal' we are now ready to examine the concepts of homage and fealty. According to traditional historiography, the political structure of the twelfth century was based, in theory, on the swearing of oaths to keep *fidelitas* and the performance of *homagium* (homage). These were essentially personal ties for they were sworn by one individual to another individual rather than to an institution such as the Crown. It was from this viewpoint that Maitland claimed the Middle Ages witnessed 'a state of society in which the main social bond [was] the relation between lord and man.'[679]

In the traditional model the oath to keep *fidelitas* was an agreement binding two people equally. It was supposed to guarantee the loyalty of one man to another. This oath has been termed fealty. As will be seen, however, it seems more reasonable to translate *fidelitas* not as fealty but as faithfulness.

Homagium, by contrast, has been seen as the subjection of one man to another in which the more powerful person became the *dominus* (lord) of the other, and the lesser participant became his *homo* (man). Bloch described the process by which *fidelitas* and homage were performed: the hopeful man, perhaps kneeling, would place his hands in his lord's and the man would declare himself the *homo* of the other; they would then kiss, symbolising peace and friendship; the man then promised the lord faithful service.[680] Whereas swearing to keep *fidelitas* was a verbal oath the ceremony of *homagium* was a physical ceremony.

Both acts were solemn, formal occasions. They created bonds between lord and man which bound each participant equally: each were to provide the other with service and counsel. For the *homo* this meant a right - if not a duty - to advise the *dominus* in matters of policy and to fight for him in times of war.[681] Similarly, the *dominus* was to 'counsel' - probably in practice to order and compel - his *homo* to do things but was equally bound to reward him through patronage, and if necessary to defend him by physical means. Such an arrangement meant that, in some situations, a *homo* could legitimately rebel. This was the theoretical structure of political society in England during the twelfth century according to traditional historiography.

But there are problems with this model. For instance, we do not know whether Bloch's ceremony occurred for *all* homage relationships, nor whether it was restricted to the

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[679] F. W. Maitland, *Constitutional History of England* (Cambridge, 1946) p. 143.
[680] Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, pp. 145-46. This has been widely accepted, for example, Duby, *France in the Middle Ages*, p. 68; Althoff, p. 185. Pollock and Maitland noted that the ceremony of homage was much the same throughout Europe: Pollock and Maitland, vol. 1 p. 297.
[681] This was followed by Althoff, p. 136.

homage ceremony *only*.[682] Indeed, the extent to which contracts - not just *fidelitas* - were prevalent in medieval society is unclear. Nor do we know whether contracts were organised on an individual or collective basis.[683] As society was made up from a multitude of different people, each interacting with each other, there is a possibility that between each type of person - tenant, household knight, ruler and so on - a different kind of bond existed. Different kinds of contracted loyalty therefore need to be studied.[684]

Many historians have also believed that, at some point, a union occurred between 'fief' (meaning land held through tenure rather than absolutely) and 'vassal' (meaning someone giving military service). According to Ganshof and Althoff this process happened in the eighth century while Duby has placed it as late as the eleventh.[685] Such views see a firm link existing in medieval society between holding land and loyalty in which the latter was based on the former - you were, or at least ought to be, loyal to the person who gave you land.[686] But the extent to which homage was connected to land holding is uncertain. Although closely linked, one could hold land without performing homage and do homage without holding land.[687] Such problems cast doubt on the idea of a society organised according to tenure. This has led Susan Reynolds to conclude that the relationships between ruler and ruled were not 'seen in terms of a land nexus' but varied according to each person.[688]

When reading modern accounts of the socio-political structure of the medieval West it is striking how few sources have been used. Much of our impression of the ideals of medieval loyalty is derived from a surviving letter of Fulbert of Chartres, written c. 1020, to Count William of Aquitaine. According to Fulbert a *fidelis* - he does not use *vassus* - was not to injure his lord, betray his secrets or fortresses, prevent the execution of his justice or cause him to lose possessions. In addition to these negative restrictions a *fidelis* was to provide his lord with counsel (*consilium*) and aid (*auxilium*). In return for these services a lord was supposed to act in a similar fashion to his *fidelis*.[689] But the punishment for transgressions by *fidelis* and lord differed: while the *fidelis* had sworn a solemn oath and so deserved to be punished severely the lord had only given his word and was therefore to be only reprimanded.

[682] Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*, p. 29.
[683] *Ibid.*, pp. 29-31.
[684] *Ibid.*, p. 31, 33.
[685] Ganshof, *Feudalism*, p. 19; Althoff, pp. 150, 154; Duby's views are summarised in *France in the Middle Ages*, pp. 67-69, 77-79.
[686] Pollock and Maitland supported this view by saying that the word for fief comes from the Latin *fidelitas* (that is 'faith' - they translate it as 'fealty') being corrupted to *feodelitas* and even *feoditas*: Pollock and Maitland, vol. 1 p. 298. This similarity is also seen in French texts in which *fie* refers to tenure and *fei* refers to faith.
[687] Hudson, *Land, Law and Lordship*, pp. 16-21.
[688] Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*, p. 46.
[689] Fulbert of Chartres, no. 51. This source has recently been discussed by Duby, *France in the Middle Ages*, pp. 78-79, and Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*, p. 20. The reciprocal view of Fulbert is supported, for example, by Milsom, p. 39. Fulbert was used in the *Libri Feudorum* which has shaped many of our ideas on 'feudalism': Critchley, *Feudalism*, p. 31.

But to what extent is this view of the bond of *fidelitas* applicable to twelfth-century England? This text is a century early, comes from France, and was written by a cleric for a count. As such it may not provide a reliable guide.

Yet it is echoed in the *Leges Henrici Primi*. According to this text a man should aid his lord when attacked and obey him in all things lawful. In return a lord should aid and counsel his man.[690]

One might first ask why people continued to use formal relationships even when they did not work - if they always worked no one would ever rebel. Despite their problems they must have had their uses. Certainly contemporaries believed that the concept of *fidelitas* had political force. This is seen, for instance, in the way kings sought to ensure that all the leading men in the kingdom performed homage to them and pledged their faith. In 1086, for example, William the Conqueror brought all the great men to Salisbury and made them pledge their loyalty to him.[691] Similarly, the 1166 *Cartae Baronum* seems in part to be an attempt to ensure that all tenants did homage to the king.[692] Unless the kings thought they would achieve some practical purpose by this it is unlikely that they would have gone to such trouble.

So what was the value of formal relationships? Firstly, they made an incoherent and confusing network of informal relationships more clear and systematic. Although the resulting network of ties may still seem confusing the political structure is nevertheless clearer than it would have been without such formal ties. Formal ties also gave legitimacy. When a formal relationship was entered into both parties knew what to expect; although the specific rights and duties may have been unclear the general expectations were clear. One should also not dismiss out of hand the power of formal ties. Although we have ample evidence that in many instances formal ties were not sufficient to ensure loyalty it remains probable that most people were loyal to their sworn lord most of the time.

There is a danger of imposing our ideas of the past onto the sources. One must be very careful not to do this when translating, and this is particularly true regarding concepts such as homage, fealty and vassalage. '*Est des treis reis fustes vos visitez*' - 'And the three kings who visited you' - for example, has been given the misleading translation of 'Then came the three kings who wished homage to pay.'[693] Here the translation implies a particular ceremony (if not 'feudalism' itself) where no such concept appears in the original text. Similarly, a passage in *Yvain* showing how one sister could hold land from another refers only to 'woman' and 'lady' in the original (*fame* for the tenant, *dame* for the superior) whereas in

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[690] *Leges Henrici Primi*, 82.3-6.
[691] *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, trans. G. N. Garmonsway (London, 1955) s.a. 1086.
[692] Stenton, *The First Century*, pp. 14, 137 n. 5.
[693] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 729.

the translations we hear of 'vassal-woman' and 'liege-lady' in the English and 'femme lige' in the modern French.[694] We find the same problem in the *Song of Roland*. Here *hom* is translated as 'vassal' instead of 'man'[695] and *mes fedeilz* also as 'vassal' instead of 'my faithful'.[696] Again, an English translation claims that on their wedding night Érec and Énide 'paid homage to each other'[697] whereas the original text says 'they rightfully give to each member' (*Lor droit randent a chascun manbre*).[698] Such translations give a misleading representation of political organisation by adding to the original.[699]

Such criticisms may seem harsh - and historians are greatly indebted to the work of translators - but they are nonetheless valid. The willingness of translators to use the word 'homage' has lead to a misrepresentation of the frequency of the expression. This is important as homage is crucial to the concept of the 'feudal system'. We should be more cautious. Such reasoning suggests that the structure of medieval political society was more varied and complex than earlier writers have believed.

Homage has, of course, received considerable attention from historians. It has been seen as *the* political bond and is closely bound to the abstraction of feudalism. It is worth examining the concept of homage in detail. Several questions will guide us. Firstly, what was the nature of homage? Secondly, what did the ceremony involve? Thirdly, under what circumstances might homage be given? Finally, how does it relate to other concepts such as vassalage, fealty, tenure and formal friendship? The duties each party had will be treated in the later sections on the functions of followers and superiors.

The word 'homage' is etymologically linked to 'man'.[700] This is clearly seen when one considers its origins in Old French. In twelfth-century French the word used is *ommage* / *homage* / *humage* (modern French '*hommage*'). From this it passed into late Latin as *hominaticum*. It is clear that the word stems from the Latin *homo*, meaning 'man'. The ending '-age' is a standard termination of abstract subjects in French and English; in this case it indicates function, condition and rank. This means that, etymologically, by performing

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[694] *Yvain*, Ll. 6441-45, with the modern French translation on p. 494. The English translation is found on p. 375.

[695] For example, *Chanson de Roland* Ll. 39, 86.

[696] *Chanson de Roland* L. 84.

[697] *Érec et Énide*, p. 63.

[698] *Érec et Énide*, L. 2050. Here the modern French text is reliable: p. 51.

[699] Another example of a translation giving a misleading impression is Gaimar, L. 1978 (*fei* trans. as homage). Lancelot similarly offers 'homage' to his lover when he duels with Meleagant in both English and modern French translations but only service and loyalty (*servie e loiee*) in the original: *Lancelot*, p. 253 (English), p. 599 (French), L. 3748 (original). Again, in an English translation we hear that Bruiant of the Isles 'made a gift of them [two exquisite chairs] in homage to king Arthur' whereas the Old French text says they were a gift (*don*) in *seisine*: *Érec et Énide*, p. 119 (English), Ll. 6721-24 (original French).

[700] This analysis is taken from the *OED*.

homage one became a man. This is demonstrated in the way one source says that King John did *homage* to the French king and became his *hom*.[701]

The ceremony described by Bloch is confirmed in Latin and vernacular texts. Bracton, for example, records that the tenant puts his hands between the hands of his lord.[702] In *Lancelot* Meleagant, angry with his father, says 'perhaps you want me to kneel before him with hands joined, and become his man [*hom*] and hold my lands from him?'[703] In the *Chanson de Roland* Ganelon advises Charles:

> 'When King Marsile sends you word
> That with his hands clasped in yours he will become your
> > *hom*
> And hold all Spain from you as a gift.'[704]

After Ganelon has completed his embassy and returned to Charles he says of King Marsile that:

> 'With his hands clasped in yours he will be your
> *comandét*;
> From you he will hold the kingdom of Spain.'[705]

These texts show the act made one person the *hom* of another and that it could involve tenure. The ceremony is also mimicked in *Yvain*. When Yvain rescues the lion from the dragon:

> 'it stood up upon its hind paws, bowed its head, joined its
> forepaws and extended them towards Yvain, in an act of
> total submission. Then it knelt down and its whole face
> was bathed in tears of humility. My lord Yvain clearly
> recognised that the lion was thanking him and submitting
> to him because, in slaying the dragon, he had delivered it
> from death'.[706]

This passage also gives an indication of the symbolic meaning of the act: the kneeling figure submits to Yvain in humility. The bond created is thus a vertical one in terms of formal structure - one person is superior to another. But as we will see, the reality of the situation in

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[701] *HGM*, Ll. 11948 (*homage*), 11949 (*hom*).

[702] Bracton, f. 80.

[703] *Lancelot*, Ll. 3230-32. Here again the passage has been given a misleading translation: in the modern French we hear Meleagant asking whether he should become his 'vassal' through rendering 'homage': '*Vous voulez sans doute qu'au garde-à-vous et mains jointes je devienne son vassal et lui rende hommage de ma terre?*' (p. 586); and in the English we hear Meleagant say 'Perhaps you want me to kneel before him with hands joined, and become his liegeman and hold my lands from him?' (p. 247).

[704] *Chanson de Roland* Ll. 222-24.

[705] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 696-97. Note that the person will become not the 'man' of the other but his *comandét*.

[706] *Yvain*, p. 337.

terms of power was sometimes different.[707] It is also possible to see the homage ceremony, like that of knighthood, as an initiation ceremony.[708]

Such ceremonies would probably have usually occurred in front of witnesses and sometimes a lord took homage from (all?) his men on a particular day.[709] Witnesses were there to ensure that a contract was maintained, and sometimes their presence is made explicit in the sources.[710] The public nature of these ceremonies would have helped ensure that both sides kept to the agreement. That contemporaries believed this is seen in the way Raymond Le Gros is satisfied when he hears the king of Ossory pledge publicly that he will not betray him.[711] Witnesses were also used when a peace agreement was arranged.[712] Sometimes in agreements witnesses are divided into those supporting each party of the agreement.[713]

We now turn to assess how homage relates to other medieval political concepts. Homage is closely related to notions of lordship and service. This is seen in a passage from

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[707] On the agreements between the earls of Chester and Leicester see Edmund King, 'Mountsorrel and its region in King Stephen's reign', *The Huntingdon Quarterly*, 44 (1980-81) 1-10. In these agreements Robert of Leicester is the dominant political and military force but agrees to become the man of Ranulf of Chester.

[708] Many kinds of men's associations have initiation ceremonies, for example the *futuwwa* groups of the medieval Near East, the *oyabun-kobun* groups of Japan and, with little doubt, many in the modern West: Critchley, *Feudalism*, pp. 39, 105, 113.

[709] For example, c. 1175 Roger of Powys testified that William fitz Alan granted Wroxeter church to Haughmond Abbey on the same day that William received homage from his men: *The Cartulary of Haughmond Abbey*, ed. Una Rees (Cardiff, 1985) no. 1371, p. 244.

[710] *Leges Henrici Primi*, 42.2 says why witnesses should be present. Homage could indeed be performed in front of witnesses, as in Lincolnshire in 1202: *The Earliest Lincolnshire Assize Rolls, 1202-1209*, ed. D. M. Stenton, Lincoln Record Society, vol. 22 (1926) no. 248. Sometimes it was in court: *CRR*, vol. 1, p. 34; *Three Rolls of the King's Court in the Reign of King Richard I, 1194-1195*, ed. F. W. Maitland, Pipe Roll Society, vol. 14 (1891) 25-26. In an assembly c. 1175-80 Geoffrey Marmion granted land that had previously been given him by Robert Marmion son of Milisent to his brother William Marmion in return for homage: *The Boarstall Cartulary*, ed. H. E. Salter (Oxford, 1930) no. 21, cited by Stenton, *First Century*, p. 163 n. 1. In June 1155 at Bridgnorth, and in the presence of a multitude of barons and knights (*baronum et militum*) and Henry II, William fitz Alan gave the church of Wroxeter to his abbey of Haughmond: Stenton, *First Century*, p. 163 n. 1; this was supported c. 1175 by Roger of Powys: see the previous note. In an agreement (*pactionem*) probably dating to the last years of Stephen's reign, Peter of Goxhill did homage to Roger of Benniworth and in return Roger gave Peter seisin of half the fee in question. This transaction took place at Bolingbroke in the presence of their lord William of Roumare earl of Lincoln with one guarantor on each side, plus witnesses: Stenton, *First Century*, pp. 47-51. The use of witnesses is recorded in vernacular accounts also. We are told, for instance, that when Dermot became the *liges home* of Henry II and recognised him as his *sire e seignur* he did so in front of Henry's barons and earls: *Dermot*, Ll. 286 (*liges home*), 290 (*sire e seignur*), 291 (*baruns e cuntur*); Earl Richard similarly gave Thomas Le Fleming land 'in the presence of his baronage (*barné*)': *Dermot*, L. 3113; Hugh de Lacy likewise gave lands to William de Musset 'in the presence of his *baruns* and vavassours (*vassaurs*)': *Dermot*, L. 3161.

[711] *Dermot*, Ll. 3400-11. That witnesses were present to prove the transaction occurred is also seen in the way (in the eleventh century at least) children who witnessed *acta* were sometimes hurt to aid their future memory: at Le Clos Blanc in 996 x 1007 boys were whipped before the feasting company: *Recueil des Actes des Ducs de Normandie*, no. 10; in 1035 the son of the donor and two of his noble friends had their ears beaten 'in the cause of memory': *Recueil des Actes des Ducs de Normandie*, no. 89. On these see also Brown, 'Some observations on Norman and Anglo-Norman charters', p. 156.

[712] *Leges Henrici Primi*, 70.11: 'A person who makes a *pacem* with anyone... shall conclude it clearly with witnesses [*testibus*]'.

[713] *The Charters of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester* records three such instances: nos. 10 (Ranulf I earl of Chester in 1121 x 25 made a grant to the abbey of St Evroul which split the witnesses between the earl and the monks), 70 (on 15 September ?1144 Ranulf of Chester and his brother William earl of Lincoln divided the witnesses between them), 180 (when Hugh earl of Chester restored a fee to Humphrey de Bohun in 1165 x 70 they split the witnesses between them).

Érec et Énide. When a knight is freed from captivity by Érec he says 'Noble knight, you are my rightful lord [*sire droituriers*]; I wish to make you my lord [*seignor*], and it is right that I do so, for you have saved my life.... My lord, I wish to pay you homage [*homage*]: I shall go with you ever more and serve [*servirai*] you as my lord [*seignor*].'[714] Érec refuses this, however, calls him 'friend' twice and says that he does not wish his service.[715] In this passage we see the ideas of homage, service and lordship being linked together. The person performing homage accepts the other person as his lord (*sire, seignor*) and says he is willing to serve him.

As we have seen, the word 'homage' has its roots in the Old French for 'man'. But these concepts were connected in political reality as well as by their linguistic roots. The act of homage made one person the man (*hom*) and the other the lord (*sire*).[716] The polar nature of these terms is seen in the *Chanson de Roland* when Ganelon tells Roland 'You are not my *hom* and I am not your *sire*.'[717] It is also seen in the *Song of Dermot*: when Dermot becomes the *liges home* of Henry II he acknowledges him as his *sire e seignur*.[718] Given this connection it may be wrong to say that someone was the lord of another *unless* they were bound together by an act of homage. Where a vertical relationship existed between two people but it is unclear whether they were connected by homage it may be better to use neutral terms such as 'superior', 'leader' and 'follower' rather than the terms 'lord' and 'man'. By so doing we would reduce the risk of imposing our own preconceptions on the realities of the Middle Ages.

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[714] *Érec et Énide*, Ll. 4483-96. Here *seignor* has been given the translation 'liege' (p. 92) but it simply means 'lord'

[715] *Érec et Énide*, Ll. 4500-24.

[716] When the contracting parties were female 'woman' and 'dame' or 'lady' are the terms used. This is seen when Arthur ends a quarrel between two sisters over who should hold their inheritance for he tells the eldest 'let her be your woman [*fame*] and hold it from you; love [*amez*] her as your woman [*fame*] and let her love you as her lady [*dame*] and as her blood-related sister [*seror germainne*]': *Yvain*, Ll. 6441-45. Here a woman is clearly shown to hold land from a superior and the terms used to describe the two women suggests this arrangement involved homage. This is an important observation as *Glanvill* claims that although women might receive homage they could not perform homage: *Glanvill*, ix 1-2. By the time of Bracton it was thought that women could do homage: Bracton, f. 78b. We should also note that this episode shows homage being used to bring a peaceful settlement to a dispute. This use of homage is also seen in the real world of twelfth-century politics, as in some peace settlements among aristocrats in Stephen's reign. On homage being used in Anglo-French relations see Klaus van Eickels, '*Homagium* and *Amicitia*: rituals of peace and their significance in the Anglo-French negotiations of the twelfth century', *Francia* 24/1 (1997) 133-40. This function of homage is discussed below in the chapters Decision Making and Conflict Resolution. Within England an assize could be ended by agreement with the defendant taking the plaintiff's homage: Milsom, p. 18, n. 1.

[717] *Chanson de Roland* L. 297.

[718] *Dermot*, Ll. 286 (*liges home*), 290 (*sire e seignur*). If the identification of homage resulting in 'men' is correct it means we can begin to investigate the structure of medieval forces. For example, it makes Tancred seem even bolder when he volunteered to guard a castle the crusaders had built to help besiege Antioch with only his *hominibus*: *Gesta Francorum*, p. 43.

In what circumstances was homage used? Charters referring to homage are reasonably common[719] and explicit claims by a lord for homage are rare but not unknown.[720] Homage would always (perhaps usually) have involved land.[721] For example, when Henry II journeyed to Ireland Earl Richard surrendered Waterford to him and did homage to his lord,[722] receiving back Leinster but not Waterford. This link may also lie behind the way that, during his conquest of Normandy at the start of the thirteenth century, the king of France said that all those who did *homage* to him before a fixed date would continue to hold land (*terre*) from him.[723] Homage could also be used to secure a tenancy.[724] Often charters granting land record the amount of service due from that land[725] and sometimes homage could be transferred from

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[719] For example, a charter, probably from John's reign, describing itself as a *convencionis* between the abbot and convent of Dore on one side and the men of Ormadan on the other concerning lands in Wendor records that the men of Ormadan did homage, faithfulness and peace to the abbot: '*Et tunc dicti homines inter manus Abbatis de dora homagium fecerunt, fidelitatem et pacem eidem se servare jurantes*': Madox, no. 153. The *Facsimiles of Early Chester Charters*, ed. Geoffrey Barraclough (The Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 1957) records several explicit references to homage. In 1172 x 1178 Richard of More exchanged land with John constable of Chester '*pro meo homagio et servicio*' (no. 2). c. 1170 x 1180 Humphrey lord of Bunbury granted Robert son of Baldwin one bovate in Bunbury for a rent of six barbed arrows and '*pro humagio et servitio suo*' (no. 4(1)). Roger de Lacy constable of Chester granted half of Nether Peover to Osbern of Wethale in 1194 x 1211 '*pro humagio suo et servicio*' (no. 8(2)). The same phrase is used again by Richard Aston granting land to Adam Dutton c.1190 x 99 (no. 15), Thomas de Burgh to Adam fitz Reginald 1211 x 1225 (no. 19) and Peter the clerk of the earl of Chester to Thomas of Croxton c. 1205 x 15 (no. 20). Another common expression that may imply homage is '*in feodo et hereditate*': *Facsimiles of Early Chester Charters*, nos. 5(2), 6, 8(1), 16(1), 16(2) and 17(2).

[720] Milsom, p. 26. A lord might want a man's homage not because of the services he would then owe but because he already had extensive lands of influence elsewhere: Hudson, 'Milsom's legal structure', p. 60, citing the *Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon*, ed. J. Stevenson, 2 vols. (London, 1858) vol. 2, pp. 43, 132.

[721] *Glanvill* claimed that holdings in dower, *maritagium* and alms did not require homage: ix 2. As noted above, this is observed by Hudson. In the mid-thirteenth century Bracton recorded that homage was done for tenements held by knight's service, by serjeanty, sometimes but not necessarily by socage, but never by villeinage. This means that it was not only aristocrats who did homage by the time Bracton was writing. An example of homage being performed during the reign of Henry II in return for a grant of land is Robert Brito doing homage (*homagium*) to William de Goldingeham for the fief of Chigwell before the barons of the Exchequer (Madox, no. 291). Elyas de Bentune similarly granted a manor to David Werre of Bristol in exchange for *homagium* (Madox, no. 296; Madox dates it to the reign of Henry II). In the early thirteenth century William fitz Robert de Stretonâ granted land in Stretonâ to Thomas de Dichefordiâ for all services saving those to the Lord King and with homage being performed in his court at Stretonâ: '*pro omni servicio mihi pertinenti, salvo servicio de Domini Regis.... Et fecit mihi homagium in Curia meâ de Stratonâ*' (Madox, no. 311). We should also note here that services were reserved to the king. This seems to refer to a concept of liege homage, discussed above.

[722] *Dermot*, L. 2620: '*Homage fist a sun seignur*'.

[723] *HGM*, Ll. 12869-71.

[724] Courts in Norfolk in 1198 and in Leicestershire in 1200 heard how a younger brother proved he held the land and not the supposed heir, his elder brother, because it was given him by their father for homage (*pro homagio*): *CCR*, vol. 1, 45, 66-67 (Norfolk) 143 (Leicestershire): see Milsom, p. 138 n. 4; other instances are provided at p. 138 n. 5. In these instances homage was used to secure land rights against an older relative. Homage could also be used to secure the rights of a son: a father could step aside and allow his heir to do homage to the lord. This practice was frequently used at the end of the period covered by this thesis: see Milsom, p. 146 n. 2.

[725] Concerning *The Charters of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester* Hudson notes that, where appropriate, two-thirds of Ranulf II's charters to laymen state the amount of service due (knights service for nos. 35, 40, 66-67, 70-71; other service for nos. 55, 72, 86, 111) and that after 1153 almost all grants to laymen record service: Hudson, 'Diplomatic and legal aspects of the charters', pp. 168-69.

one lord to another along with the land.[726] But it is uncertain whether homage was always connected with tenure - could homage be performed without creating a link of tenure?[727]

According to *Glanvill*, homage to anyone but the *principe* necessarily involved land. This means he believed that not all homage should be concerned with land tenure. But what *Glanvill* describes may not be applicable for the whole of the twelfth century.[728]

There may also have been restrictions on whom one could do homage to. This seems to lie behind the passage in the *Histoire* when William Marshal refuses to do homage (*humage*) to Richard I because he has already done homage to his brother John - and Richard accepts this.[729] Here the Marshal seems to be saying that he could not do homage to more than one person.

Relationships could be passed on to the next generation through inheritance.[730] This is, of course, what historians would expect. This meant that ties could continue through several generations. The Escotot family, for instance, served the Lacy family for over five generations through two centuries and in three countries (Normandy, England and Ireland).[731] The strong commitment to a single aristocratic dynasty could cause problems for someone who received a new lordship. When Robert earl of Leicester married the heiress of Breteuil in 1121 he took over an area with strong traditions of service to the family of William fitz Osbern, a former lord. In both 1103 and 1119-20 violence erupted in Breteuil as part of 'a long-running struggle by the barons of Breteuil to retain the lordship of the male descendants of Osbern the steward and to eject the outsiders continually imposed on them by royal authority.'[732] Robert was able to secure the acceptance of the tenants ('honorial barons' in the language of Stenton) by careful patronage of their families and by donations to the local church of Lyre that had been founded by William fitz Osbern. By such means it was possible for a new lord to slip into the shoes of a former lord and so tap into the traditions of loyalty that existed among the tenants of an honour.

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[726] For example, c. 1210 Thomas Mauduit granted the homage of Henry fitz Sweyn and half the virgate Henry held plus one acre to Shrewsbury Abbey: *The Cartulary of Shrewsbury Abbey*, ed. U. Rees, 2 vols. (Aberystwyth, 1975) vol. 1, no. 13, p. 16.

[727] Milsom believed homage to be connected with tenure but that performing homage was a condition precedent to tenure; Milsom, p. 26. *Glanvill* records that homage was precedent to demanding services, relief or wardship: ix, 1, 6.

[728] *Glanvill*, ix, 1-2; it is discussed by Hudson, *Land, Law and Lordship*, p. 16.

[729] *HGM*, L. 10316.

[730] Examples from literature include Gaimar, L. 3496 (when Æthelflæd queen of Mercia died her brother Eadward inherited her lands as a *fie*) and Gaimar, L. 1978 (the Northumbrians tendered *fei* to Æthelred on the death of his father).

[731] Robert Bartlett, 'Colonial aristocracies of the High Middle Ages', in Robert Bartlett and Angus Mackay, eds., *Medieval Frontier Societies* (Oxford, 1989; 1992 edn.) pp. 38-41.

[732] On the honour of Breteuil see Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, pp. 102-114, quotation p. 107.

But continuity of tenure is different to continual loyalty. Continuity of tenure is simply evidence of not suffering confiscation. A tenant could be 'disloyal' (at least occasionally) and not forfeit his lands if his lord was forgiving, if the lord was impotent to enforce it, or if the tenant was too useful through his political standing. While a tenant was loyal to his lord in theory it does not necessarily follow that he was in practice. We cannot therefore use evidence of long tenure as evidence for continual loyalty.

It is by no means certain that in the twelfth century the conditions of service implied by the act of homage were fixed and without regional variation. Susan Reynolds has argued that such legal precision did not come until the fourteenth century.[733] While the ceremony itself may not have changed it is possible that what contemporaries thought it meant did change. In other words, how the ceremony was used may have changed. Such changes can be seen in the way the kings of France and England used the ceremony of homage in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[734]

Although it appears that the ceremony of homage created a vertical link it does not necessarily follow that the person giving the land was more powerful than the other.[735] The three agreements between Ranulf earl of Chester and Robert earl of Leicester show this clearly. In 1145 x 1147 Ranulf surrendered control of Charley and the surrounding area to Robert. This created a tenurial relationship between the two earls but it would be wrong to say that by this grant Robert placed himself in a subordinate position to Ranulf as it seems that he had forced Ranulf into this territorial concession.[736] As in the 1141 charter of Empress Matilda to William de Beauchamp[737] it seems that here it was the tenant who determined the nature of the grant. The same is true for the 1148 x 1149 grant of the castle of Mountsorrel to Robert by Ranulf.[738] Only in their final agreement do we begin to see a clear picture of the real relationship between the two earls for here each earl pledged faith to the other in a

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[733] Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*.

[734] Van Eickels, pp. 133-40.

[735] This is noted by Hudson, 'Milsom's legal structure', p. 64. Hudson shows how the 1166 *Cartae Baronum* records lords who granted much of their land to a single tenant (*Red Book*, vol. 1, 219, 229), that powerful tenants included William de Beauchamp (*Red Book* vol. 1, 269, 278, 287, 300, 302, and for his tenancy in chief, 299-300) and Aubrey de Vere (*Red Book*, vol. 1, 217, 226, 298, 352, 355, and for his tenancy in chief, 218), that tenants might hold of several lords, such as William de Bosco who may have been more powerful than some of his lords, such as Geoffrey de Valognes (*Red Book*, vol. 1, 203, 217, 291, 360, 362, 395, 397), and finally that a lord might find it hard to discipline a tenant, as seen in the problems faced by the earl of Warwick (*Red Book*, vol. 1, 326-27).

[736] In 1129 Charley and the surrounding area, close to the earl of Leicester's demesne lands, were confiscated by Henry I from the earl of Chester and subsequently regranted to Earl Robert: *Regesta* 2, no. 1607. By the mid-1140s Ranulf was again in control of these lands, as seen by his 1145 x 1147 grant that surrendered them to Robert. On these agreements and their context see in particular King, 'Mountsorrel', 1-10.

[737] *Regesta* 3, no. 68; Round, p. 313; translated in *EHD*, pp. 436-37, no. 46.

[738] *The Charters earls of Chester*, no. 89, pp. 102-103; also Stenton, *First Century*, pp. 285-86. Edmund King ('Mountsorrel' pp. 1-10) claims that the first two charters of Ranulf to Robert were not new grants but charters confirming what Robert had already seized by force.

reciprocal manner: they were equals.[739] By such methods Earl Ranulf was able to save face. That homage did not necessarily involve a vertical power relationship is also implied by the Marshal-Salisbury agreement. John Marshal and Patrick earl of Salisbury had formerly been at war with each other but by this agreement they ended their hostilities. In their agreement John became Patrick's man but retained his possessions and married Patrick's sister, Sybil. This meant that although he became his man, John would be treated as an equal through his marriage to Sybil,[740] and indeed the biography of their son reveals he carried on his activities in northern Wiltshire and Berkshire as before. Thus whilst homage created a relationship that was vertical in theory it was open to adaptation; at times, the tenant could have been in the dominant position.

Such 'inverted relationships' were probably unusual. The examples we have come from a period of turmoil that was unusual for England in the High Middle Ages and it may be that such peculiarities were limited to the civil war of Stephen's reign. Yet the circumstances of these agreements, whilst unusual, do show that well-known formal relationships could be adapted to meet particular political needs.

The concept of homage is also closely related to that of faith and lordship. The *History of William Marshal*, for example, claims that Baldwin count of Flanders and Reginald count of Boulogne became the *homes* of Richard I in 'good faith' (*bone fei*).[741] This passage could simply mean that they honestly intended to serve Richard as his men, but it may imply that there was a link between *fei* and becoming a 'man', that promising 'good faith' was part of the ritual that established that condition. At other times a clear link is made between faith, homage and lordship for, also according to the Marshal's biographer, Geoffrey de Lusignan had never been inclined to accept another's lordship (*seignorage*) or do *fei* or *homage*.[742] Here the ideas of lordship, faith and homage are combined into a single concept.

This link is also seen in Bracton. Indeed, he gives a rare glimpse of the words used in the ceremonies. With hands placed in those of his lord the tenant says:

> 'I become your man [*homo*] of the tenement [*tenemento*]
> that I hold of you, and I will bear you faith [*fidem*] in life
> and limb and earthly honour (or, as some say, of body and
> chattels and earthly honour), and faith to you shall bear

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[739] *The charters of the earls of Chester*, pp. 123-26; Stenton, *The First Century*, pp. 286-88 and trans. pp. 250-53.

[740] *HGM*, Ll. 368-77; it is discussed in Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 14-16.

[741] *HGM*, Ll. 10688-98.

[742] *HGM*, Ll. 1625-26.

against all folk (some add, who can live or die), saving the

faith [*fide*] that I owe to our lord the king.'[743]

Such phrasing, and the posture adopted by the bodies of lord and man, shows the contract of homage to be vertical in nature. Bracton then goes on to record an (or perhaps *the*) oath of faithfulness: the tenant stands up, places his hand on the gospels and says:

'Hear this my lord: I will bear faith [*fidem*] to you of life

and member, goods, chattels and earthly worship, so help

me God and these holy gospels of God.'[744]

The brevity of this oath is matched by other oaths of loyalty[745] and is still echoed in court ceremonial to this day.[746] It is perhaps important to note that in this oath of faithfulness, in contrast to that used when performing homage, there is no clause saving faith due to the king. Pollock and Maitland say 'doubtless it was added',[747] but it may not have been. If the oath of faithfulness was mutual (binding the contractors equally) and was considered to be subordinate to homage there would be no need for such a clause. This would suggest that whereas the contract of homage was vertical in nature (there was a lord and a man), the contract of faithfulness was horizontal (meaning that it treated each contractor equally). This view may gain some support from Pollock and Maitland themselves who note that the oath of faithfulness omits the phrase 'I become your man' and believe this to be significant.[748]

However, the distinction between vertical and horizontal bonds must not be over stressed. This is given an explicit statement by Bracton: 'such is the connection by homage between lord and tenant that the lord owes as much to the tenant as the tenant to the lord, saving only reverence.[749] It is also seen in the way William Marshal instructs his closest advisors to counsel him 'by the faith I owe you [*par la fei que ge vos dei*]' - and not, as one

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[743] Bracton, ch. 80.

[744] Bracton, ch. 80. It is worth noting that this is quite different to the oath of loyalty used in the Carolingian Empire to supplement commendation as recorded in the *Captularia Regum Francorum*, 1, no. 34, p. 102 which ran '*fidelis sum, sicult homo per drictum debet esse domino suo*'; cited Althoff, p. 139.

[745] The Rajput oath of allegiance was 'I am your child; my head and sword are yours; my service is at your command'. The traditional relationship between Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda and Burundi was commenced with the statement 'I ask you for milk. Make me rich. Always think of me. Be my father. I shall be your child'. For these see Critchley, *Feudalism*, pp. 50, 108. The familial imagery in both these oaths reminds us of the way kind superiors are called 'father' in twelfth-century literature.

[746] For example, the oath taken by Charles when he was invested as Prince of Wales has close similarities with the oath recorded by Bracton.

[747] Pollock and Maitland, vol. 1 p. 298. Homage taken with a saving clause is found at *Curia Regis Rolls of the Reigns of Richard I and John Preserved in the Public Record Office*, vols. 2 (London, 1922) pp. 37, 221; *Rolls of the Justices in Eyre for Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and [Shropshire], 1221-1223*, ed. D. M. Stenton, Seldon Society, vol. 59, p. 1468. On these see Milsom, p. 174.

[748] Pollock and Maitland, vol. 1 p. 298.

[749] Bracton, f. 78b.

might expect, 'by the faith you owe me'.[750] This reflects the reciprocity that we have seen stressed in Fulbert's writing.[751]

It is uncertain how Bracton's views on homage and faithfulness relate to twelfth-century practice. It should not be forgotten that Bracton was writing considerably later than the period we are investigating. Pollock and Maitland, for instance, believed that 'the law of homage... of the thirteenth century is but a pale reflection of moral sentiments which still are strong but have been stronger.'[752] This would mean that in the twelfth century homage had less definition (it was a sentiment rather than a law) but a stronger moral force.

However, the phrases recorded by Bracton have echoes in twelfth-century sources. The *Leges Henrici Primi*, for example, say that every man owes faith to his lord of life and limb and earthly worship.[753] Among the earliest reference to this phrase is Dudo of St-Quentin's description of the ceremony formalising the relationship between the French king and Rollo (s.a. 911).[754] It is also used in the mid-twelfth century by Robert of Torigni[755] and in a letter of Henry II to Louis VII in 1158[756] and is seen again in the 1177 and 1180 treaties between Henry II and the kings of France.[757] It appears again in 1272 when Edward I did homage to the French king on his way back from the Holy Land. It is also worth noting that the same phrasing was used by the Normans in southern Italy.[758]

But it is uncertain whether this phrasing was the only oath used by contemporaries. When, shortly after the death of King John, William Marshal met the (not yet crowned) Henry III he declared: 'I will serve you in good faith [*Ge vos serrei en bone fei*]'.[759] This seems to refer to an oath of loyalty but it is unclear whether the poet is referring to a specific oath (such as the modern term 'fealty' implies) or to another type of oath. Either way the passage is interesting for the light it sheds on vernacular expressions of loyalty oaths. It may be that

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[750] *HGM*, L. 15634.

[751] It is still possible to see the relationship between lord and follower as one of mutuality: Althoff, pp. 136, 144.

[752] Pollock and Maitland, p. 297.

[753] *Leges Henrici Primi*, 55.3

[754] Dudo of St-Quentin, *De moribus et actis primorum Normanorum ducum*, ed., Jules Laïr (*Mémoires de la Société des antiquairies de Normandie* 3.3, Caen, 1865) p. 169. Much of the evidence found in this paragraph is taken from van Eickels, pp. 135-36.

[755] *The Gesta Normannorum Ducum of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis and Robert of Torigni*, ed., Elisabeth van Houts (Oxford Medieval Texts), 2 vols. (Oxford, 1992, 1995), vol. 2, p. 286.

[756] *Recueil des Actes de Henri II*, ed. Léopold Delisle (Paris, 1920), vol. 1, no. 88, p. 195.

[757] *Recueil des Actes de Henri II*, vol. 2, no. 506; Howden, *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, ed. Stubbs (Rolls Series, London, 1867) pp. 191-93; Howden, *Chronica*, ed. Stubbs (Roll Series, London, 1868-71) pp. 144-46; Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica*, ed. Stubbs (Rolls Series, London, 1879) pp. 272-74; Gerald of Wales, *De Institutione Principum*, ed. George F. Warner (Rolls Series, London, 1891) pp. 166-69; Ralph of Diceto, *Ymagines Historiarum*, ed. Stubbs 2 vols. (Roll Series, London, 1876) vol. 1, p. 421 f. For 1180 treaty see *Recueil des Actes de Philippe Auguste*, ed. Henri-Francois Delaborde (Paris, 1916) vol. 1, no. 7, pp. 8-10.

[758] A charter of 1099 shows Richard II of Capua swearing to the abbot of Montecassino with 'life and limb' (*vitam aut membra*): G. A. Loud, 'Five unpublished charters of the Norman Princes of Capua', *Benedictina*, 27 (1980) p. 173.

William's oath may have been different to the way we are told that the new king took *homaiges* from the earl of Chester and others.[760]

Indeed, we may have evidence that other types of formal, vertical relationships existed. When Dermot recruits Earl Richard through offering his daughter in marriage Richard says 'I here swear loyalty to you [*Ici t'afie lelment*]'. This is an oath of loyalty without reference to homage or faithfulness (let alone fealty).[761] Similar uncertainty surrounds the remark that when Érec gives some castles to his wife's family he 'had both knights and burghers engage by oath and swear that they would hold them as dear as their rightful lords.'[762] Such references are vague but are useful as oaths of loyalty are described only rarely. But oaths occur in many different contexts. It is therefore plausible - but perhaps not likely - that there were several different types of loyalty oath. But this should not be pushed too far. Without more detailed study we cannot be certain that there were other types of oaths and ceremonies that formalised vertical relationships.

We now turn more exclusively to the notion of faithfulness and the concept of fealty. While historians have been willing to translate *fidelitas* as 'fealty' it remains that we do not fully comprehend what this word implied. It is crucial to differentiate the word, the phenomenon, and the concept being studied to prevent imposing our own ideas onto the evidence and so creating an inaccurate picture of medieval society.[763] This means we must return to our sources and examine how these words are used.

Firstly we should note that the concept of faith was important. The *Leges Henrici Primi*, for example, sees a breach of *fide* to be, along with a *felonia*, the most serious charge a lord (*dominus*) could levy.[764]

However, chroniclers are often ambiguous on the meaning of *fidelitas* and *fides*. It is unclear, for instance, whether Orderic Vitalis was talking about a specific type of oath or a general sense of faithfulness when he describes the relationships of Richer of Laigle with Henry I and Louis VI.[765] Similar uncertainty surrounds the oath taken by many of the leaders

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[759] *HGM*, L. 15278.

[760] *HGM*, L. 15470.

[761] *Dermot*, L. 354.

[762] *Érec et Énide*, p. 60.

[763] Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*, pp. 3-12; the argument is implicit throughout the work.

[764] *Leges Henrici Primi*, 53.4. In this text 'felony' seems to refer to specific crimes that result in forfeiture (so homicide and theft is not a felony). In later texts 'felony' comes to describe any general crime. See Pollock and Maitland, vol. 1, pp. 303-5. Milsom notes that in the earliest rolls 'felony' is still used more widely than its criminal sense - it refers to the denial of a lord's proprietary rights: Milsom, p. 28. In Benoit rebels against William the Conqueror are described as *felon* and *deslei*: *Chronique des ducs de Normandie par Benoit*, ed. C. Fahlin (Uppsala, 1951) Ll. 34677-81, 34945-56. On this see H. B. Teunis, 'Benoit of St Maure and William the Conqueror's *Amor*', *ANS* 12 (1989) p. 200.

[765] In 1118 Richer, fearing to lose his inheritance, seems to have made an agreement with Louis such that the French king placed sixty knights at Laigle and Amaury IV de Montfort placed fifty more. The threat to

of the First Crusade to the Byzantine emperor, although here there may be a distinction between *fides* and *fidelitas*.[766]

Few twelfth-century vernacular texts use the word 'fealty'. Instead, they use 'faith' to refer to oaths and political relationships. Gaimar, however, uses both 'faith' and 'fealty', and it is worthwhile looking at his usage more clearly.

Gaimar distinguishes 'fealty' (*felte, fealte, feeltez*) and 'faith' (*fei*). He uses 'fealty' four times,[767] 'faith' eight times[768] and 'faithful' three times.[769] 'Fealty' is used in what in less rigorous days may have been termed a 'feudal context': when a new-found heir is found the *homes* do *felte* to him; when this heir is victorious all swear *felte* to him; when a household retainer is granted a woman in marriage by the king he swears *fealte*; and when Rufus honours Hugh earl of Chester, Hugh puts himself in *feeltez*. All these are connected with lordship, and all fit with the standard ideas of historians regarding when fealty should be given. Moreover, all four refer to oaths being given to kings - Haveloc twice (although not yet a king he is the heir of King Gunther), Eadgar and Rufus. This may be significant. It is also reminiscent of the difference between *fides* and *fidelitas* seen in the oaths taken by the leaders of the First Crusade.

In contrast with this highly specific usage Gaimar uses 'faith' in several different ways. Sometimes it refers to a general sense of loyalty, such as when he says that one should

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security that this placement of foreign troops raised was sufficient for Henry to grant Richer his lands, at which point Richer tried to break his agreement with Louis. According to Orderic, Richer now informed Louis 'I recently made a *pactum* with you which I am unable to keep. For my lord the king of England has restored to me all that I asked, therefore *iustum* [justice] requires that I preserve my *fides* to him in all things'. In this passage it is unclear whether *fides* is used to describe a general condition of 'good faith' or a specific one similar to the modern concept of fealty. This ambiguity reminds us to be cautious. For these events see Orderic, vi, pp. 196-99.

[766] The *Gesta Francorum* records that Bohemond wanted to keep *fide* with the emperor (p. 10), that the leading men of Constantinople wanted the Latin leaders to swear *fidelitas* to the emperor (p. 11) and that Bohemond took an oath of *fidelitas* to the emperor and that in return the emperor promised him *fide* (p. 12). This may suggest a distinction between *fidelitas* and *fides* with *fidelitas* referring to a specific oath, ceremony or condition and *fides* being a more general and less demanding condition. The possibility of other relationships existing is seen in the action of Raymond of Saint-Gilles: he was asked (and refused) to do *hominium* and swear *fiduciam* but did swear to protect the life and honour (*uitam et honorem*) of Alexius (p. 13); the oath is later described as a *iusiurandum*, p. 75. The oath Raymond swears uses part of the phrase recorded by Bracton (and which is found in some twelfth-century charters), suggesting that it was similar in meaning and content to the usual oath of faithfulness, but he has refused to swear *fiduciam* (which seems to mean 'faithfulness') and to do homage. That these oaths carried moral authority is seen not only in Raymond's refusal to swear what was asked but also, and more forcefully, in the way Tancred and Richard of Salerno refused to take any oath (*iusiurandum*) and instead crossed the Hellespont in secret (p. 13). Later Tatikios, the representative of the emperor, 'swore faithfully' (*fideliter iurabo*) to fetch the crusaders supplies: *Gesta Francorum*, p. 35. The same author describes the relationship between Karbuqa, commander of the Persian army, and Shems-ed-Daula who held the citadel of Antioch as one involving faith and homage: Shems-ed-Daula promised to do homage (*hominium*) and hold the city in faithfulness (*fidelitate*) for Karbuqa but he refused and instead entrusted it to his own follower who would hold it in faithfulness (*fidelitatem*): *Gesta Francorum*, pp. 50-51.

[767] Gaimar, Ll. 728, 753 (*felte*), 3719 (*fealte*), 6028 (*feeltez*).

[768] Gaimar, Ll. 56, 730, 1978, 3722, 4355, 5008, 5024, 5200.

[769] Gaimar, Ll. 3134 (*feail*), 5551 (*fedeel*), 6029 (*feeil*).

not trust the *fei* of a man who has already betrayed.[770] Similarly, hostages might be used to ensure that someone kept *fei*.[771] Again, although this is more suspect as it could refer to an oath, Adelbrit and Edelsie are said to be companions through (or by) *fei*.[772]

However, at other times *fei* refers not to the idea of loyalty but to an oath of loyalty. Here we must distinguish between two uses. The first use of *fei* as an oath is in the context of agreements. Cnut, for example, pledges his *fei* to Eadmund in an agreement, and Harold Hardrada and Tostig pledge *fei* when they form an alliance.[773] Although these uses clearly refer to oaths of loyalty they treat each party as an equal - so it is not connected with lordship. It is therefore very different to the way Gaimar uses 'fealty'. Later we will see that agreements also use the words 'love', 'friendship' and 'brotherhood' in particular ways. This is discussed in the chapters on Formal Friendship and Conflict Resolution.

Gaimar's second use of *fei* in the context of oaths is very similar to the way he uses 'fealty'. Sigar, for example, promises (to keep) *fei* with Haveloc and the Northumbrians tender *fei* to Æthelred on the death of his father.[774] In these instances *fei* describes a vertical relationship. It is possible that here *fei* is a synonym for 'fealty', but this need not be so. For Gaimar uses 'fealty' in a very specific context whereas this use of *fei*, although referring to an oath of loyalty, is less specific. We can only conclude that although *fei* could refer to oaths of loyalty they may have been different from the oath of fealty. This is important and encourages us to be cautious. Both *fei* and *felte* could refer to oaths of loyalty, but they may refer to different oaths.

Gaimar also uses the word 'faithful'. This is clearly used to mean 'loyal' or 'those who were loyal'. Thus, Alfred takes counsel with his *feail*, Hereward has *fedeel* men in his company, and when Hugh earl of Chester places himself in *feeltez* to Rufus he swears to be *feeil* to him.[775] This use is clearly tied to the use of *fei* to mean 'loyalty'.

As with Gaimar, 'fealty' is used in the specific context of tenure-based loyalty in the *Song of Dermot*. We are told that Earl Richard, for example,

> 'Made it known to the king
> That he would become his man [*home*];
> He would hold [*tendra*] Leinster from him.'[776]

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[770] Gaimar, L. 3722.
[771] Gaimar, Ll. 5008, 5024.
[772] Gaimar, L. 56.
[773] Gaimar, Ll. 4355, 5200.
[774] Gaimar, Ll. 730, 1978
[775] Gaimar, Ll. 3134, 5551, 6029.
[776] *Dermot*, Ll. 1833-36.

He then sent two *vassals* to the king of Connaught instructing them to inform him

> 'That I shall be willing to do him fealty [*feuté*];
>
> I shall hold [*tendrai*] Leinster from him.'[777]

This is a very specific use of the word *feuté* and here one can see the convergence of the three ideas of fealty, man and tenure. From this passage it appears that doing fealty would make Richard the man of the king of Connaught and mean that he would hold Leinster from him. This means that the author uses *feuté* to include the act of homage, for as we have seen it was the act of homage that made someone a 'man'. Both Gaimar and the author of the *Song of Dermot* rarely use 'fealty' and only in the highly specific context of tenure being given by a king. This is in marked contrast to the way 'faith' is used. This suggests that 'fealty' was only given to a king.

The *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* also shows the link between homage, fealty and allegiance. We are told that William Marshal did *hommage* to the French king but King John is told by Ralph d'Ardene that William had done

> '*Homage*
>
> *E feelté & alïence*'[778]

This provokes John to claim that William had acted against his interests by doing '*Feelté, ligance & homage*'.[779] This suggests that the poet thought there was little or no difference in saying that William did homage and saying that he gave homage, fealty and allegiance. This implies that giving fealty and allegiance were part of the ceremony of homage. In turn, this confirms the view of Bracton, writing half a century later, that the ritual of homage included a specific oath of faithfulness (perhaps *the* oath of fealty), as shown above.

The notion of 'faith' meaning loyalty occurs regularly in the sources. An abbot tells Louis that William once pledged him his faith saying 'Here is William who himself pledged you faith.'[780] Those who fought alongside Henry II against the rebels of Poitou are said to have kept 'good faith' (*bone fei*).[781] According to his biography, William Marshal served (*servi*) John in the crisis of c.1215 'in good faith [*en bone fei*]' and is described as 'loyal' (*leals*).[782] Those loyal to Henry III in his first troubled year are also said to have 'loved him in good faith [*l'amoent en bone fei*]'[783] and to be fighting '*en bone fei*'.[784] Before giving a

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[777] *Dermot*, Ll. 1841-42.

[778] *HGM*, Ll. 13036-37.

[779] *HGM*, L. 13062.

[780] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 1721: '*Vei la Guillelme qui sa fei vos plevi.*'

[781] *HGM*, L. 1589.

[782] *HGM*, Ll. 15127 (*servi, en bone fei*), 15134 (*leals*).

[783] *HGM*, L. 15764.

[784] *HGM*, L. 17024.

request to John of Earley, William Marshal, almost at the end of his life, appealed to both affection and the formal bond between them saying

> 'In the name of your love [*amez*] for me
> And by the faith (*fei*) that you owe me'.[785]

'Faith' is also used in other contexts. In the field of religion, for example, the hermit Ogrin declares 'By my faith and my religion'.[786] It can also describe the relationship of trust between lovers and within a marriage. When Tristan contemplates sleeping with his wife on their honeymoon, for example, he realises that he must either betray her or his true love: the poet uses *fei* to refer to both relationships.[787]

But faithfulness is not the only oath recorded in the sources. In 1175 x 1176, for instance, Roger de Mowbray and his sons Nigel and Robert swore to defend the tenure of the monks of Fountains Abbey 'against all men and against all women'.[788] In literature oaths of loyalty are also given in non-political contexts, such as knights swearing to serve ladies. Such oaths were carefully formulated. In *Lancelot*, for example, Gawain swears 'I pledge my word that if it should please you I will put all my might into your service', whereas Lancelot 'did not say that he pledged her all his might, but rather swore... to do anything she might wish without hesitation or fear and to be entirely at her command in everything.'[789] This is a fine distinction, but one that Chrétien thought worth making. Moreover, this passage clearly shows that different phrases could be used in formulating a loyalty oath (at least in the imagination of Chrétien). A further type of oath that occurs in the writing of Chrétien can be called 'the rash boon'. This is where one person promises to agree to something without yet knowing what it is.[790] Several other types of oath are likewise recorded.[791] The existence of

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[785] *HGM*, Ll. 18245-46.

[786] Béroul's *Tristan*, p. 100.

[787] Thomas, Ll. 475, 488, 489, 509, 537, 605, 611.

[788] *Mowbray*, no. 120, pp. 90-91.

[789] *Lancelot*, p. 215.

[790] The most famous of these is perhaps Arthur's boon to Kay shortly after Kay announced his defiance. Arthur promises him anything and Kay chooses the right to defend the queen against Meleagant. Although Arthur, Guinevere and their household are against this they have no choice but to let Kay do this: *Lancelot*, p. 209. This shows that Arthur felt bound to honour any oath he had taken. This implies that the moral obligation to fulfil an oath was high. Other examples are easily found: the vavasour's pledge to Érec: *Érec et Énide*, Ll. 631-38; Arthur similarly promises some ladies a boon before he knows what it is - it is that the queen should attend a tournament: *Lancelot*, p. 273; Laudine of Landuc gives a rash boon to her maid Lunete by saying that she will do her best to reconcile the Knight with the Lion to his love if he will agree to guard the spring: *Yvain*, p. 377; only later does Laudine learn that the Knight with the Lion is her husband Yvain; she takes this oath placing her right hand on a relic: *Yvain*, p. 378; finally, Gawain promises his host something without knowing what he has sworn himself to: *Perceval*, p. 474.

[791] When Énide pretends to help the count murder her husband she asks him to pledge to her that he will always cherish her. The count replies: 'Here: I pledge you my faith, my lady, loyally as a count, that I will do all you wish. Have no fear on this account; you will not want for anything': *Érec et Énide*, p. 79. Yvain swears an oath to his wife that he will not be away from her for more than a year: *Yvain*, p. 327. When this is broken her messenger calls him 'that liar, that deceiver, that unfaithful cheat.... He pretended to be a true lover, but was a cheat, a seducer, and a thief': *Yvain*, p. 329. After the ugly woman comes to Arthur's court many knights swear oaths to go on adventures: Gawain promises to try to free a maiden; Girflet son of Do

so many oaths for so many different things suggests that oaths were common in the twelfth century and were used to meet many different needs. This again supports the contention that more than one type of loyalty oath may have been used.

Oaths were also used to secure treaties. When Alexander and Alis settle their dispute they seal their agreement by exchanging oaths.[792] However, this oath is broken by Alis when he marries Fenice and people were powerless to stop him from breaking the oath to his dead brother;[793] but they do rebuke him.[794] Count Alier swears to Yvain, after being defeated, that he will surrender himself to the lady of Norison.[795] Alier then assures the lady

> 'of his faith with promises, oaths, and pledges. He gave
> her his pledge and swore that he would hold peace with
> her from that day forth, that he would make good all
> losses she could prove, and would restore as new the
> houses that he had razed to the ground'.[796]

The king of the Isle of Maidens buys his freedom by swearing an oath that he would send the two demons thirty maidens every year until a knight should vanquish them.[797] After Perceval has defeated him Clamedeu swears not only to go to the court of King Arthur but also to release everyone in his dungeons, to come to the relief of Biaurepaire should it be attacked again, and never to trouble Blancheflor again.[798] Another knight swears an oath when he surrenders to Gawain.[799] This use of oath-swearing is also seen in the peace treaties found during the civil war of the mid-twelfth century.

Oaths were also used before trials by combat. When Lancelot agrees to fight Meleagant to prove that Kay never slept with Guinevere he tells King Bademagu:

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says he will go to the Proud Castle; Perceval swears to travel every day, crossing any obstacle or fighting any knight in his way, until he finds who is served from the Grail; as many as fifty knights swear before one another to undertake whatever battle or adventure they learn about: *Perceval*, p. 439. Arthur swears three oaths (on the souls of his parents and son) that he shall go to the secret spring Calogrenant tells of: *Yvain*, p. 303. He also swears not to spend two consecutive nights in any one place until he has found the Red Knight (Perceval) who keeps sending defeated knights to him: *Perceval*, p. 432. Other oaths given in the literary sources have a more direct bearing on our perception of politics in the twelfth century. In Béroul's *Tristan*, for instance, plotters swear to keep their agreement to murder Tristan: Béroul, p. 145. During tournaments pledges were taken from the defeated: *Érec et Énide*, p. 64. In one tournament we are told that they were supposed to be fulfilled within one year: *Cligés*, p. 181. The knight guarding the ford promises Lancelot that he will not run away if he releases him: *Lancelot*, pp. 217-18. They then duel, and after Lancelot is victorious the other begs for mercy and swears that he will become his prisoner wherever and whenever Lancelot summons him: *Lancelot*, p. 219.
[792] *Cligés*, p. 154.
[793] *Cligés*, p. 161.
[794] For example by John, *Cligés*, p. 203.
[795] *Yvain*, p. 336.
[796] *Yvain*, p. 336.
[797] *Yvain*, p. 361.
[798] *Perceval*, p. 414.
[799] *Perceval*, p. 484.

> 'My lord king, I am knowledgeable in trials, laws, suits, and verdicts. When a man's word is doubted, an oath is required before the battle begins.'[800]

Meleagant replies:

> 'I'm fully prepared to swear my oath. Bring forth the holy relics'.[801]

After donning their armour they take their oaths. Meleagant declares:

> 'As God and the saints are my witnesses, the seneschal Kay slept this night with the queen in her bed and took his full pleasure with her.'[802]

Lancelot replies:

> 'And I swear that you lie, and I further swear that he never slept with her or touched her. And if it please God, may he show his righteousness by taking vengeance on whichever of us has lied.'[803]

Here we clearly see the important role played by relics in taking oaths and deciding justice.

Oaths could be used to control single combats. When Cligés and the duke of Saxony agree to duel, for example, they make an 'accord' under 'oath and pledge' that their supporters will not intervene.[804]

The use of oaths to control duels brings us onto the subject of oaths taken as part of legal proceedings. People swear to tell the truth.[805] In these circumstances they often refer to faith saying; for example, 'sire, upon the *fei* I owe you'.[806]

Oaths also occur in the specific context of surety. Yseut asks Arthur to stand as surety when she takes her oath. Her messenger tells Arthur 'you would then be her surety, and you would never fail to be her protection in that matter.'[807] After Yseut has taken her ambiguous oath Arthur confirms his position:

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[800] *Lancelot*, p. 268.
[801] *Lancelot*, p. 268.
[802] *Lancelot*, p. 268.
[803] *Lancelot*, p. 268.
[804] *Cligés*, p. 172.
[805] *Perceval*, p. 486.
[806] *HGM*, L. 12264.
[807] Béroul, p. 124.

'I am your surety. As long as I am alive and healthy, you

will never again find that anyone says anything that is not

to your honour.'[808]

Surety is also seen in the *Song of Roland*. When Pinabel and Thierry duel to see whether Ganelon should be executed Charles demands pledges (*pleges*) from both of them.[809] Pinabel provides thirty kinsmen (*parenz*) who pledge loyalty (*leial*)[810] and Thierry provides hostages (*hostage*).[811] These men were at risk for following Thierry's victory the Franks say:

'It is right for Ganelon to be hanged

And his kinsmen who upheld his suit.'[812]

The poet adds: 'A traitor kills himself and his fellows.'[813]

Oaths could also be taken to bind existing followers even closer. In many cases it is likely that the people swearing such oaths had already sworn faithfulness to that person. In such cases we must accept that either people could repeat oaths or that there were several different types of loyalty oath. For example, when Arthur is faced with rebellion he makes all his barons take an oath that they would turn over the traitor to the king and that if they did not then they would not be worthy of holding land from him.[814] Here Arthur clearly exacts an oath in addition to their original oath of service. Alexander made his companions swear to obey him even if they thought his judgement was wrong.[815] Chrétien also says that a nurse - already in her service - swore to be faithful to Fenice.[816] Clearly Chrétien saw no problem in making people swear multiple oaths to the same person. This confirms Althoff's views that formal friendship could be used to reinforce existing ties.[817]

We have seen that people made oaths for many different reasons, but what made people keep their oaths? One aspect seems to have been the fear of losing their lord's favour if they should break faith. This is seen in the way Alexander threatens his companions that if any of them should break their oath to obey him he says he would 'never again cherish him in my heart.'[818]

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[808] Béroul, p. 143.
[809] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3846-52.
[810] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 3847.
[811] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 3852.
[812] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3932-33.
[813] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 3959.
[814] *Cligés*, p. 136.
[815] *Cligés*, p. 145.
[816] *Cligés*, p. 161.
[817] This is discussed in more detail in the chapter Formal Friendship.
[818] *Cligés*, p. 145.

A second factor was fear of being rebuked for it afterwards. Although Alis found it easy to break his oath to his brother he was thereafter reminded that he had done so. Gaimar also tells us that

'A man who betrays [*traist*] has no law [*lei*],

Nor should anyone trust in his faith [*fei*]'[819]

It should be remembered the King Stephen is often criticised for breaking promises, such as to Ranulf of Chester, as it demonstrated that he could not be trusted.

Fear of vengeance may also have played a role. When Arthur heard that Alis had broken his oath he assembled an army and prepared to make war on him so that Cligés could secure his inheritance.[820] Clearly Arthur was willing to make war on an oath-breaker who harmed the heir of one of his former followers.

Sometimes, but not always, a third party is recorded in pledges of faith. This person, often termed a *fideiussor*, tends to have power over the promisor (such as through being a sheriff or a bishop).[821] These people seem to fulfil a similar role to *obsides* in the agreements of Stephen's reign: they are there to ensure that the party kept to the agreement.

There was also fear of divine retribution. This would be particularly so if the oath had been sworn on relics,[822] by the Church,[823] by a saint,[824] by faith,[825] or on the souls of close relatives.[826] This religious element is also seen in the way oaths were taken with the right hand.[827] At the start of *Perceval* Chrétien discusses the right and left hand:

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[819] Gaimar, Ll. 3721-22.

[820] *Cligés*, p. 204.

[821] Pollock and Maitland, vol. 2, p. 192. The examples they cite are from p. 191 n. 3. All are from the Rievaulx Cartulary (*Cartularium Abbathiae de Rievalle Ordinis Cisterciensis Fundatae Anno MCXXXII*, Surtees Society, vol. 83, Durham, 1889): pp. 33-4, no 57 (summarised and dated to 1154 in *Mowbray Charters*, no. 236); no. 65 (*Mowbray Charters*, no. 252, gives a full text and dates it 1163-69); no. 66 (*Mowbray Charters*, no. 243 gives a summary with full witness list and dates it 1154-57; it also found in *Early Yorkshire Charters*, ix, no. 125); p. 159, no. 215 cites the York clerics as *testem* but not as *fideiussorum*; pp. 168-69, no. 229 (*Mowbray Charters*, no. 237 gives a summary and the witnesses and dates it to 1154; also found in *Early Yorkshire Charters*, ix, no. 153). All these examples come from Rievaulx and date to the reign of Henry II and as such may give a misleading impression of how common the use of *fideiussorem* were.

[822] As *Lancelot*, p. 268, *Yvain*, p. 378, *Perceval*, p. 457, Béroul's *Tristan*, p. 141, *Chanson de Roland*, L. 606.

[823] As *Lancelot*, p. 275.

[824] As *Perceval*, p. 432.

[825] Charters sometimes pawn the swearor's salvation. For example, the Rievaulc Cartulary, p. 164 no. 229.

[826] As *Yvain*, p. 303.

[827] When Tancred prevented William the Carpenter and Peter the Hermit from fleeing they give him a pledge and an oath: '*dextram et fidem*' - literally 'right hand and faith': *Gesta Francorum*, p. 33. It is also seen in vernacular texts, such as a maid promising to Yvain: *Yvain*, p. 319; Yvain offering to promise to return to the lord of the town of Dire Adventure and marry his daughter: *Yvain*, p. 367; and Laudine promising to try to reconcile the love of the Knight with the Lion to him: *Yvain*, p. 378. The right hand was also used to seal bargains - a handshake - in Roman antiquity: Pollock and Maitland, vol. 2 pp. 188-89. On hand-shaking see also Holdsworth, p. 79.

'Why does the Gospel state: "Hide your good deeds from
your left hand"? The left, according to tradition, stands
for vainglory, which is derived from false hypocrisy. And
what does the right stand for? Charity, which does not
boast of its good deeds, but hides them, so that He whose
name is God and Charity knows them.'[828]

This clearly shows a connection between oath-taking and religious faith. This connection
would have strengthened the claim of morality to keep oaths.

Perhaps the best guarantee of ensuring that someone kept an oath, however, was the
exacting of hostages.[829] We are told that Miles held hostages of King *Gilmoholmock* to ensure
he supported Earl Richard loyally (*lealment*).[830] When the Danes gave Mercia to Ceolwulf
they made him give *ostages* to ensure that he served (*seruira*) them faithfully (*fealment*).[831]
Similarly, after Alfred defeated the Danes he not only made them swear (*iurerent*) not to
desert him but also took good hostages (*bon ostages*) from them.[832] Following Dermot's
victory his enemies likewise offer him *ostages*, to do *homages* and *feuté*, and to accept him as
their *naturel seignur*.[833]

Hostages are frequently mentioned in relation to contemporary political agreements
(and as such are discussed later in the chapter on Conflict Resolution) but they also occur as a
means of ensuring the loyalty of enfeoffed followers. The men of Essex, for example, had to
send *ostages* to Ecgbryht so that they might keep their fiefs (*fie*).[834] Giving hostages might
also inspire trust. When the English wish to give the crown to Eadward (brother of the
murdered Alfred) they gave him *ostages* first so that he would trust them.[835]

The idea of using hostages to guarantee homage and faith is given a clear expression
in Gaimar. Although Eadward has accused Godwine of murder one Dane suggests that they
could still be friends (*amis*).[836] Leofric of Northampton then suggests how they could be
reconciled:

'That the king may have all their *homages*

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[828] *Perceval*, p. 381.

[829] This practice is not restricted to the European Middle Ages. During the Tokugawa shogunate of Japan
(1603-1868) hostages were exacted when lords (*daimyo*) were away from court: Critchley, *Feudalism*, p. 87.

[830] *Dermot*, Ll. 2288, 2293, 2295. These hostages are returned when the king 'pledged his faith and swore'
('*sa fei plevie e juré*'- *Dermot*, L. 2314) to be neutral in the battle until it was clear who was winning, at
which point he could join that side.

[831] Gaimar, Ll. 3063-64.

[832] Gaimar, Ll. 3201-17; 3205 (*iurerent*), 3204 (*bon ostages*).

[833] *Dermot*, Ll. 503 (*ostages*), 504 (*homages, feuté*), 507 (*naturel seignur*).

[834] Gaimar, Ll. 2272 (*ostages*), 2271 (*fie*).

[835] Gaimar, L. 4854.

[836] Gaimar, L. 4950.

> Let them bring *ostages* to keep *fei*'[837]

This is agreed. At the ceremony:

> 'The king received all their *homages*;
>
> He took *ostages* for keeping *fei*.
>
> He took the arms, the gold and the silver.
>
> He kissed [*beisat*] then as a sign of agreement
>
> [*acordement*]'[838]

This passage also shows how the ceremony of homage could be used to end a conflict. Since Eadward still distrusts Godwine he demands hostages to ensure that Godwine keeps faith. The agreement thus took the form of homage, with the imagery being reinforced by a kiss, but is supported by the pragmatic step of taking hostages. According to Gaimar this ceremony produced lasting results as he goes on to say that afterwards Godwine served (*serui*) Eadward so well that they became good friends (*bon ami*), that Eadward married Godwine's daughter, and that he made Godwine's sons earls.[839]

King John also used hostages to ensure good faith. After William Marshal offered loyalty to the French king, John began to distrust him. When William became sufficiently isolated at court John asked the aristocrats to pass judgement on William. When this was refused John demanded his eldest son as hostage (*ostaige*). Later he demanded - and got - another of William's sons as hostage.[840] William himself may not have been above stooping to such tactics for John of Earley advised him to take *ostaiges* from his *barons* to guarantee their support when he travelled from Ireland to England.[841] After defeating Meilier, the followers of William Marshal did indeed take Meilier's son Henry as *ostaige* as well as the sons and brothers of other opponents.[842]

However, King John's use of hostages was subtle. He used hostages to secure the loyalty of people when they were excluded from court but when he wanted those people he had secured through hostages to do a deed he released the hostages.[843] When he did this the *Histoire* claims:

> 'Many then said: "He speaks wisely,

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[837] Gaimar, Ll. 5007-8. 'Them' refers to sixty of Godwine's followers and family, including himself.

[838] Gaimar, Ll. 5023-26.

[839] Gaimar, Ll. 5027 (*serui*), 5028 (*bon ami*), 5029-34 (marriage and making earls).

[840] *HGM*, Ll. 12989 (William does homage), 13027-90, 13103-59 (John distrusting William), 13193-214 (only Henry fitz Gerold and John of Earley remain with William at court), 13103-256 (barons refusing to pass judgement), 13263-76 (first son as hostage), 13362-419 (second son).

[841] *HGM*, Ll. 13515 (*ostaiges*), 13515 (*barons*).

[842] *HGM*, Ll. 13877, 13887.

[843] When John wanted William Marshal to fight Llywelyn he first released the hostages he took from him in Ireland (Ll. 14473-82). When he wanted William's advice about a threatened French invasion he released two of the Marshal's sons (Ll. 14512-32).

> Because the Marshal will be more willing to come
> And a more loyal friend [amis] for that".[844]

The release of these hostages shows the Marshal being returned to royal favour. The passage, if reliable, shows that John thought that William would be more loyal in war if he was not bound to him through hostages. If John was correct in this judgement it shows a severe limit to the value of taking hostages to ensure good faith. In this light it seems that hostages could help ensure a person did not work against you but could not get them to work with or for you.

Many types of oath are detailed in literature. Some of these reflect practices in the real world. In particular we should note that oaths were used to bind existing followers closer and to end or limit conflict. This may come as little surprise. However, what may be more surprising is the infrequency in which the words 'vassal', 'liege' and 'fealty' occur. These concepts have been seen by historians as forming the bedrock of medieval political society but the rarity with which contemporaries used such terms begs us to question and revise our ideas.

What view emerges of homage and oaths? Homage is the ceremony by which one person becomes the man or woman and the other person becomes the lord or lady. One should note that the term 'vassal' does not occur in this context. The word 'fealty' is used only infrequently. When it does occur, however, it in the context of tenants to the king. This is in marked contrast to the word 'faith' which is used in several ways. One of these is as a loyalty oath. Here the vagueness of the texts suggests that several oaths could be employed to secure loyalty. These oaths were enforced by moral codes, fear of vengeance and of being rebuked, and sometimes by the cynical (but often wise) step of taking hostages. Relationships between a lord and a follower may have been more fluid than historians have believed. More than one type of follower existed and it is possible that more than one type of formal bond was used to bind followers to a superior. This means that not all followers may have been bound to their superior through the performance of homage or the swearing of fealty. Although homage and oaths of faithfulness were important their importance was not all-encompassing.

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[844] *HGM*, Ll. 14530-32.

viii

FUNCTIONS OF FOLLOWERS

All followers were supposed to fulfil several functions. Although many of these have been well-discussed by historians it is worthwhile seeing how these roles are portrayed in literature. This will help us appreciate how contemporaries perceived the responsibilities of being a follower.

We can start with generalities. Brangain tells King Mark that she owes him allegiance, loyalty, truth and firm love.[845] Similarly, Tristan the Dwarf promises Tristan homage, faith and allegiance if he will help him.[846] But can we say what specific duties were involved?

One obligation of followers who held land was to answer the king's summons. Gaimar tells how Eadred called many *grant barnage* and *baron* of *halt parage* ('high rank') to Salisbury: the king summoned his barons.[847] A king's right to summon his followers is often seen in the works of Chrétien de Troyes.[848] This obligation is made more explicit when hear that King John argued that those who did not answer his summons would lose their land.[849] Similarly, Yseut advises Mark to summon all his followers and to 'state expressly that you will take away the inheritance of whoever is not there.'[850] This duty of attendance seems to have been connected with homage - and as we have seen homage is connected with landholding - for Eliduc is summoned by his lord because of the promises he had given when he performed homage (*l'umage*).[851] Although Eliduc had previously been banished by this

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[845] Thomas, Ll. 1624 (*lijance, lealté*), 1625 (*fiancë, ferm 'amur*).

[846] Thomas, L. 2241 (*Humage vus frai e liejance*).

[847] Gaimar, Ll. 3838-42.

[848] When Arthur agreed to hold Érec and Énide's wedding at his court he 'sent for kings, dukes, and counts, those who held land from him, declaring that none should be so bold as to be absent at Pentecost. None dared to stay behind or to fail to come quickly to court, once they had received the king's summons': *Érec et Énide*, p. 61. Because all his baronage turned up Arthur is very happy: *Érec et Énide*, p. 62. However, once the celebrations were over Arthur is unable to keep all his followers with him. Érec 'asked to take his leave, because he wanted to return home and take his wife with him. The king could not refuse this, but his wish was that he should have stayed': *Érec et Énide*, p. 65. Later Arthur is again powerless to stop Érec from leaving his court and admits 'There is something very wrong here, if you do not wish to stay' and ends up pleading with him to stay because of their friendship: *Érec et Énide*, p. 89. Here we see that refusing to stay at court was a sign of hostility. The ability of a king to summon his followers is also seen after the death of Érec's father for both Arthur and Érec summon their followers for the ceremony in which Érec is to be made king: *Érec et Énide*, p. 117. Many people, including Énide's parents who had been given land by Érec, answer these summons: *Érec et Énide*, p. 118. Again, when Count Angrés rebels Arthur summons all his barons and they make a group decision: *Cligés*, p. 136. The sons of a follower might be sent to the court of a superior: *Perceval*, p. 480.

[849] *HGM*, Ll. 13615-54.

[850] Béroul, pp. 120-21.

[851] Marie, *Eliduc*, Ll. 565-70.

lord[852] and now resided with another king[853] who offers a huge reward for him to stay[854] Eliduc still feels compelled to answer the summons:

> 'God, since my lord is in distress and has summoned me
> from such a distance, this time I shall go to his aid;
> nothing would keep me here. If you [the king he has been
> residing with] need my service, I shall willingly return to
> you with a great force of knights.'[855]

Such examples suggest a strong moral obligation for enfeoffed followers, and possibly other followers, to attend a summons, a moral obligation that was backed up by the threat of forfeiture.

A second obligation was to lend military assistance. William reminds Louis that when he was attacked Louis had cried: 'Bertrand, William, come to my aid [*Bertran, Guillelmes, ça venez, si m'aidiez*]!'[856] This shows that Louis thought these followers would aid him. When Arthur hears that Alis has tried to disinherit Cligés he summons his barons and then prepares to send an army to Greece.[857] Tiebaut of Tintagel summons his *barons* to help him win a tournament (that is, perform martial service),[858] but he also summons his *veisins*.[859] As we have seen, this word literally means 'neighbours'[860] but also describes what historians call an 'affinity'. Either way, Chrétien believed that Tiebault would have been able to bring many people with him who were neither his tenants nor his relatives. In other words, Tiebault was able to influence (if not command) people beyond his lands who were not his kin.

Service is often stressed in vernacular sources. *Girart de Vienne* asserts 'one should assist one's *seignor* in all things.'[861] *Le Charroi de Nîmes* sees Bertrand stress service and aid:

> 'You must not provoke your rightful lord [*droit seignor*]
> But, on the contrary, serve and honour him [*servir et
> hennorer*],
> Against all men [*Contre toz homes*] him protect and
> defend'[862]

[852] Marie, *Eliduc*, Ll. 29-60.
[853] Marie, *Eliduc*, Ll. 571-618.
[854] Marie, *Eliduc*, Ll. 625-32.
[855] Marie, *Eliduc*, Ll. 633-40.
[856] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 239.
[857] *Cligés*, p. 204.
[858] *Perceval*, L. 4887.
[859] *Perceval*, L. 4887.
[860] This is also how William Kibler translates it: *Perceval*, p. 441.
[861] *Girart de Vienne*, L. 3804.
[862] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 422-24. The phrase '*contre toz homes*' echoes the Latin phrase *contra omnes homines* that is found in some contemporary charters and agreements, such as the Meulan-Neubourg *conventio* of 1141 x 1142.

He goes on to say:

> 'You must not menace your rightful lord [*droit seignor*],
>
> But uphold and exalt him,
>
> Secure and aid him against all men [*Contre toz homes*
>
> > *secorre et aïdier*].'[863]

William is also keen to express his service to Louis.[864]

Faithful service is also a major theme in the *Chanson de Roland*. Count Gautier says: 'I am Roland's man (*hom*), I must not fail him.'[865] In a similar vein Roland declares:

> 'It is our duty to be here for our king:
>
> For his *seignor* a *hom* must suffer hardships
>
> And endure great heat and great cold;
>
> And he must lose both hair and hide.'[866]

This explains why the Franks say 'A curse on him who flees.'[867]

A follower was supposed to obey a superior even if the superior was incapable. This view is clearly expressed by William of Orange in the Orange Cycle (see below). Calin has argued that 'kingship symbolises authority, order, and peace. The individual monarch, in spite of his personal failings, must be honoured as the living incarnation of that principle'[868] and concludes 'the ultimate lesson of the *chanson de geste* is one of order and harmony, an all-inclusive peace going beyond individual, family and feudal honour to preach the ideal of universal submission to universal authority.'[869]

Refusal to do the will of a superior could be met with forfeiture. Faced with a rebellion by Count Angrés Arthur summons his barons. They agree that 'the traitor should be exiled and that it should be understood that he would be dragged forth from any castle or citadel in which he tried to save himself. Thus they all swore mighty oaths to the king that if they failed to turn over the traitor to him they would no longer be worthy to hold their lands from him.'[870]

[863] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 437-40.
[864] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 51-443.
[865] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 801.
[866] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 1009-12. This is almost repeated at Ll. 1117-19.
[867] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 1047.
[868] W. C. Calin, *The Old French Epic of Revolt*, p. 136; cited by Kay, p. 137, n. 56.
[869] Calin, p. 140; cited by Kay, p. 137-38, n. 56.
[870] *Cligés*, p. 136.

Followers also served as advisors. Sometimes this function is recorded in charters[871] and it would have been of major significance. It may also have been an ideal for lords to listen to advice.[872] Chrétien often provides examples of followers advising their lord[873] but it is also seen in other works.[874] The office of seneschal may have been associated with a particular right or duty of giving counsel. The seneschal Kay, for example, often expresses his opinion and advises Arthur.[875] The seneschal of Laudine was jealous of Lunete and accused her of treason as Laudine placed more trust in her maid than in him.[876] The office of marshal is also likely to have brought with it a right to advise the lord on military affairs. According to his biographer, for example, William Marshal gave Richard I advice on military matters.[877] This gave followers considerable power. Three barons at Mark's court had so much influence that Yseut feared for herself despite being formally reconciled to King Mark in a public ceremony.[878] Indeed, they are able to prevent Tristan's return to court.[879] But eventually Mark turns against them and has them banished and claims to have turned against them because he has followed their advice too much: 'If I do not disown them now and banish them from my land the villains will no longer believe in my power. They have tested me enough already and I have given into them too much.'[880] By this point Mark has realised that his authority has been reduced through relying too heavily on the advice of followers. This role of followers is discussed in more detail in the chapter Decision Making.

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[871] Hugh I earl of Chester in 1089 x 90 took the advice of his *baronibus* and in 1129 x 53 Ranulf II acted after consulting a body of his *baronibus*: *The Charters of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester*, nos. 2, 23. See Hudson, 'Diplomatic and legal aspects of the charters', p. 170.

[872] Nanna Damsholt, 'War, woman and love' in Brian Patrick McGuire, ed., *War and Peace in the Middle Ages* (Copenhagen, 1987) p. 60 (using the c. 1200 *Gesta Danorum* of Saxo).

[873] The supporters of Alis, for instance, first persuade him to make peace with his brother: *Cligés*, pp. 153-54. They then persuade him to take a wife: *Cligés*, p. 155. The old mentor of Clamedeu advises him on how to conduct the siege of Biaurepaire: *Perceval*, pp. 411, 412. After being defeated, Clamedeu's seneschal, Anguingueron, is retained in Arthur's household and council: *Perceval*, p. 415. Another old man advises Tiebault when he is besieged by Meliant. We are told that he was 'very wise and respected, powerful because of his lands and lineage': *Perceval*, p. 441. Guiganbresil advises his lord on how Gawain should be treated: *Perceval*, p. 455. A wise vavasour might advise a king: *Perceval*, p. 456. Followers could determine whether a widow should re-marry: before Laudine of Landuc, widow of Esclados the Red, marries Yvain she had to seek the consent of her barons and then that of her people: *Yvain*, pp. 318, 321. The people had previously counselled her to marry Esclados six years before: *Yvain*, p. 321.

[874] The followers of William, described as both 'gentle [= noble] knights' and his 'baronage', advise him to hang some traitorous clerics: *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1747 (gentle knights - *gentilz chevalier*), 1760 (baronage - *barnage*), 1747-60 (whole process). When Alfred is at Athelney he took *conseil* with *si feail* ('his faithful'): Gaimar, Ll. 3183 (*conseil*), 3134 (*si feail*). The three barons hostile to Tristan and Yseut claim 'it is right that a man should advise his lord': Béroul, p. 117. The seneschal Dinas believes giving advice to be very important. He tells an assembly of Mark's household 'I declare that anyone who gives his rightful lord bad advice can do no greater wrong': Béroul, p. 104.

[875] For example, *Yvain*, pp. 322-23 (criticising Yvain for not coming with Arthur to the spring of Landuc), *Perceval*, p. 435-37 (criticising Gawain).

[876] *Yvain*, pp. 340-41.

[877] *HGM*, Ll. 10636-54.

[878] Béroul, p. 110.

[879] Béroul, p. 112.

[880] Béroul, p. 115-18; quote p. 118.

Followers might also be used as messengers. King Marsile sends ten of his men to Charlemagne to negotiate a peace, offering money, land and fiefs [*teres e fiez*] as a reward.[881] Earl Richard uses an archbishop and Maurice de Prendergast as messengers.[882] The Young King is said to trust his chamberlain Raoul fitz Godefroi and use him as a messenger.[883] This function meant that followers could serve a useful function in dispute settlement and so is again discussed at greater length in the chapter Conflict Resolution.

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[881] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 62-76, French extract L. 76.

[882] *Dermot*, Ll. 1843-44, 1846.

[883] *HGM*, Ll. 6527-32 (trust), 6527-77 (used as messenger).

ix

FUNCTIONS OF SUPERIORS

As today, people in the Middle Ages expected their superiors to fulfil certain duties. This is seen in the way the biographer of William Marshal says that although King John did homage to the French king and became his man the French king behaved with 'neither homage nor lordship'.[884] In this context we will look both at the functions of lordship from the perspective of followers and at the ideals of lordship. It will be seen that the functions of superiors form the reverse side of the coin to the functions of followers: the two formed a single relationship with many shared functions.

A medieval king was not an absolute monarch. He was bound, for instance, by both tradition and what other people had witnessed. Ogrin tells Tristan 'The king [Mark] cannot gainsay that when he wanted to put you to death by burning because of the dwarf he would not hear your defence - both the barons and the people are witness.'[885] Ogrin again makes reference to the importance of public witnesses: 'If he [Mark] is willing to accept your defence in the presence of his barons and his people, you [Tristan] will offer to make your defence at his court. When your loyalty to him is re-affirmed let him take back his noble wife, if it is his wish and if his vassal's consent.'[886] This aspect is seen again in the way Mark receives Yseut back in a public ceremony that was well-publicised.[887] This importance further explains the tendency to take decisions in a group environment; this is discussed in the chapter Decision Making.

According to the *Chanson de Roland* a good lord aided his followers[888] and did not forsake them in battle.[889] This is why Oliver tells Roland to blow his horn as it will summon aid from Charles.[890] Gawain similarly claims that a lord owed faith to his followers.[891] Dermot asked Henry II to avenge (*venger*) him and in return became Henry's *liges home* and acknowledged him as his *sire e seignur*; but when Henry did nothing to help him Dermot sought other allies.[892] Just as a follower was expected to aid his superior, so a superior was expected to aid a follower. Such reciprocity seems to be at the heart of the relationship

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[884] *HGM*, '*Ne hommage ne seignorie*': L. 11952.
[885] Béroul, pp. 100-1.
[886] Béroul, p. 101.
[887] Béroul, p. 108.
[888] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 1254.
[889] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 536.
[890] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 1051-52, 1059-61.
[891] *Perceval*, p. 492.
[892] *Dermot*, Ll. 276 (*venger*), 286 (*liges home*), 290 (*sire e seignur*).

between followers and superiors. It also suggests that, to an extent, the distinction between 'followers' and 'superiors' might be artificial as they were supposed to do the same things.

In *Le Couronnement de Louis* Louis has authority but little power. Whereas power relies on force authority rests on virtue, based on the value system.[893] Authority is *right* rather than *might*. At the start of the poem Charlemagne instructs his son on what he should do as king.[894] During the course of the poem Louis repeatedly goes against these ideals and shows himself to be incompetent. For instance, he repeatedly relies on William to save him from rebels. At the end of the poem William asks his nephew Bertrand what he should do. Bertrand says:

> 'Let him be then.
>
> Let us leave him and France to the devil to tend
>
> This king is such a fool, with all your help
>
> Not a foot of his lands can he defend.'[895]

But William keeps to his promise to look after Louis and rescues him again.[896] Clearly William and Bertrand have different views on what they should do with a useless superior. But what should a superior do?

One function of a king was to defend the kingdom by leading the army. Charlemagne tells Louis he must be fierce against proud people who make war without just cause. These men must be defeated and killed because if the Franks ever saw him defeated they would say that they no longer had any need for such a king, and would therefore take all his lands.[897] Connected with this is the idea that when there was no king there was no peace. This is seen twice in *Perceval*: when Uther Pendragon dies the land is laid waste, the poor people suffer, and the nobles are impoverished and disinherited;[898] because the Fisher King is maimed 'ladies will lose their husbands, lands will be laid waste, and maidens will remain helpless as orphans; many a knight will die'.[899]

The duty of the king to defend his kingdom is reflected in the way a primary function of a lord was to defend the tenant in his possession. If this was not possible then the lord was to give the tenant a tenement of equal value. These obligations have been termed warranty.[900]

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[893] Dumont, *Homo Hierarchicus*, p. 43, cited by Kay, p. 117.
[894] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 65-179.
[895] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 2669-72.
[896] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 2673-95.
[897] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 186-203.
[898] *Perceval*, p. 386.
[899] *Perceval*, p. 438.
[900] Pollock and Maitland, vol. 1, p. 306.

Followers expected to be rewarded. When King Marsile flees to Saragossa the Moors accuse their god of not rewarding them:

> 'Why did you permit our king to be destroyed?
>
> Anyone who serves you well receives a poor reward.'[901]

Granting rewards encouraged followers to love their lord but without rewards followers might desert.

This attitude is reflected in the stress placed on largesse being a virtue. When Alexander plans to leave his father he is told:

> 'You must always show largesse, courtesy and good manners.... Dear son, believe me when I tell you that largesse is the queen and lady who brightens all virtues, and this is not difficult to prove. Where could one find a man who, no matter how powerful or rich, would not be reproached if he were miserly? What man has so many other good qualities - excepting only God's grace - that largesse would not increase his fame? Largesse alone makes one a worthy man, not high birth, courtesy, wisdom, gentility, riches, strength, chivalry, boldness, power, beauty, or any other gift. But just as the rose, when it buds fresh and new, is more beautiful than any other flower, so largesse, when it appears, surpasses all other virtues and causes the good qualities it finds in a worthy man who comports himself well to be increased five-hundred fold.'[902]

However, we may have to take such rhetoric with a pinch of salt. As the poet hoped to be rewarded for his services it was in his own interest to stress the importance of generosity.[903]

A lord was able to step in and end a fight. This role is often fulfilled in contemporary literature[904] and is reflected in the real world in the way lords sometimes imposed peace on

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[901] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 2583-84.

[902] *Cligés*, p. 125.

[903] Largesse is seen elsewhere. Gawain demonstrates his generosity by giving Lancelot a horse when they first meet: *Lancelot*, p. 211.

[904] When Gawain and Cligés fight each other King Arthur, when it is clear that they are equals, steps in to end the fight: *Cligés*, p. 183. King Bademagu repeatedly strives to make peace between Meleagant and Lancelot: *Lancelot*, pp. 247-48 (when Lancelot first arrives), 249-50 (after he has welcomed Lancelot), 250 (next morning), 251 (immediately before the fight) and 255 (after the fight). When they duel over whether Kay slept with Guinevere Bademagu again steps in to end the fight, with Guinevere's permission: *Lancelot*, p. 269. King Arthur seeks to reconcile two sisters who quarrel over their inheritance. After a duel between their champions has been fought to a draw he states that the youngest should hold a share from her sister. He tells

quarrelling followers.[905] In literature such disagreements are often settled by compromise.[906] Although peaceful settlements may reflect more of an ideal than the reality of dispute settlement in the twelfth century - especially when one looks at the struggles for the throne - the literature should not be dismissed as fanciful. Disputes were often settled by mutual compromise - as many agreements make clear. The conflict between John Marshal and Patrick earl of Salisbury, for example, was settled through compromise, symbolised by John marrying Patrick's sister.[907]

Serious problems could result if a lord failed to perform his duties. Following his wedding to Énide, Érec was so enraptured by love that he neglected his other duties. In the story this takes the form of his not going to tournaments any more but the idea could be extended to more practical concerns like dispensing justice. The result of this dereliction of duty was that Érec 'was so blamed by everyone, by knights and men-at-arms alike... [that he] was becoming recreant.'[908] Énide herself tells him the problem: 'Your renown has greatly declined. Previously everyone used to say that there was no better or more valiant knight known in all the world; your equal was nowhere to be found. Now everyone holds you up to ridicule, young and old, high and low; all call you recreant.... Now you must reconsider so you may put an end to this blame and regain your former glory.'[909] When Érec hears this he replies that she was right to tell him.[910]

This was a serious problem for Érec as his reputation was at stake. While the literature simply asserts that people are concerned for their reputation because prestige was an ideal we can go further and provide a pragmatic reason. A reputation for energy, determination, ruthlessness and intelligence would have helped ensure the loyalty of followers. If a potentially disloyal follower expects that rebellion would be crushed he is

the eldest: 'Let her be your woman and hold it from you; love her as your woman and let her love you as her lady and as her blood-related sister': *Yvain*, p. 375. Here we should note that the settlement is a compromise: the eldest sister remains the overlord of all the land while the younger sister holds part of the land from her sister. In addition we should note that the compromise was based around homage and tenure. All these aspects of conflict resolution are seen in the agreements of Stephen's reign. Arthur also appears in Béroul's *Tristan* as a peace-bringer. He tells Yseut's messenger 'I am coming to her to help to make peace': Béroul, p. 127. In doing so Arthur fulfilled an important duty. Arthur then says: 'She [Yseut] shall swear to the Heavenly King, holding her hand over the holy relics, that there was never love between her and your [Mark's] nephew which was in any way shameful, and that she has never loved anyone wrongfully': Béroul, p. 141. He then instructs Yseut: 'You must swear that Tristan never loved you wickedly or wrongfully, and only bore you the love he owed to his uncle and his wife': Béroul, p. 141. Yet Arthur is one of the people who falls for Yseut's cunning deception.

[905] A possible example is the Empress Matilda with Waleran of Meulan and William de Beauchamp.

[906] When Alis seizes the throne in the absence of Alexander the two brothers look set for a bloody civil war. But instead they settle their differences through negotiation and compromise: Alis will retain the title of emperor but Alexander will hold the reigns of power: *Cligés*, Ll. 2403-2560. Again, after Alis has been persuaded to break his oath to his brother by taking a wife (*Cligés*, L. 2623) future conflict between Alis and his nephew Cligés seems inevitable but it is avoided by Cligés serving his uncle.

[907] *HGM*, Ll. 370-77.

[908] *Érec et Énide*, p. 67.

[909] *Érec et Énide*, p. 68.

[910] *Érec et Énide*, p. 69.

unlikely to rebel; but if the lord is seen as weak then the chances of rebellion - and of successful rebellion - increase. Being seen as lazy was therefore a major problem for Érec as it could have serious political and military repercussions. Fear of being seen as weak may also explain why kings sought to make their court's so splendid.[911]

A superior was supposed to fulfil these functions. These functions have as much (if not more) to do with ideas of 'good lordship' than they do with any legal theory of lordship.[912] This led Milsom to declare 'lordship is not a right that can be claimed: it can only be exercised.... Lordship cannot exist unless it is acknowledged.'[913] Failure to do this could lead to desertion.

Aristocrats can be seen fulfilling many useful functions. Powerful families and individuals, then as now, can prevent crime, offer protection, aid welfare and supply a type of justice as well as provide leadership.[914] But lordship of this nature has its negative aspects. Patronage necessarily means that people are not treated equally - those denied patronage lose out - whilst protective relationships can be corrupt and can replace public authority and justice with private oppression and vengeance.[915] From a modern perspective infused with liberal concepts such as equality of opportunity and equality before the law, such patron-client relationships and patronage are sinister rather than desirable.[916] Good lordship may be better than anarchy, but it is not an attractive ideal.

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[911] We are told at the start of *Yvain* that Arthur 'held a court of truly royal splendour': *Yvain*, p. 295.

[912] This echoes Hyams' criticism that Milsom's view of twelfth-century lordship is too legalistic: Hyams, 'Review of *The Legal Framework*', pp. 135-36.

[913] Milsom, p. 44.

[914] In the nineteenth century industrialists such as Titus Salt at Salt Aire in Yorkshire and Robert Owen at New Lanark in Scotland and at New Harmony in Indiana acted as patrons to their workers by setting up projects such as company welfare schemes, schools, pensions, sick pay, cheap medical care, housing, libraries and parks. This tradition has continued to the present in the shape of entrepreneurial foundations such as Rowntree and Rockefeller. See also Critchley, *Feudalism*, pp. 125-26.

[915] The rise to power of 'oligarchs' such as Boris Berezovsky in modern Russia may be a case in point. These groups seem to combine industrial and financial wealth, often created through monopolies, with political aspirations backed up by extensive media interests and a willingness and ability to use force. They have, for example, been seen as playing a key role in the re-election of Boris Yeltsin as President in 1996. As such they are private powers seeking to influence public policy for their own advantage. The power structure of these groups is summarised in 'End of a road for Russia', *The Economist* (5th September, 1998) pp. 38-39.

[916] Indeed, paternalism has been used to justify slavery. The argument runs that slavery acquainted blacks with civilisation and God and that, materially, blacks were better off as slaves than they had been in Africa. On these arguments see Critchley, *Feudalism*, p. 126. This led Critchley to write that 'the patronage of the weak by the strong is considered to be a Bad Thing when the alternative is public or royal law and order, a Good Thing when contrasted, as by nineteenth century romantics, with the evil consequences of an excessive *laissez-faire* and egalitarian society': Critchley, *Feudalism*, p. 101, see also p. 120. Examples of these positive and negative elements include nineteenth-century Brazil (men with wealth and influence interceded on behalf of 'their' peasants and even defied a government that seemed incapable of enforcing justice) and the Scottish Highlands of the Early Modern period (within the context of feuding clans, lairds exacted obedience and gifts in return for providing justice, protection and leadership): Critchley, *Feudalism*, pp. 120-23.

X

PROBLEMS WITH FOLLOWERS: TREASON

While a follower was loyal to his lord in theory it does not necessarily follow that he was in practice. This and the following chapter examine what happened when the ties between a lord and follower broke down. The first chapter investigates what might happen when a follower broke the conditions of service, the second what happened when a lord failed in his duties. From the start we should note that attitudes as to how breaches of the lord-follower contract should be punished differed depending who made the breach. The *Leges Henrici Primi*, for example, states that the punishment of a man who killed his lord should be a cruel death whereas the punishment for a lord who killed his man should be a fine.[917]

There were many reasons in addition to moral virtue why a follower might obey a lord. In many cases the local lord would be the most dominant figure in the neighbourhood, and so a tenant following his lead might be doing so not because he was the man who 'gave' him land but because he was the most powerful neighbour. But where the dominant magnate was not the immediate lord problems would arise. In such situations it could be in the tenant's interest to follow not his rightful lord but the one who had the physical force to compel him to do things. In an alternative scenario, both a tenant and his immediate lord could be in the orbit of a more powerful magnate, and so both could be on the same side not because of any ideals of reciprocal service but because they were both under the sway of a more powerful aristocrat. Such examples show loyalty and disloyalty could be engineered through the presence of a dominant magnate.

The *Leges Henrici Primi* records that 'disloyalty', whether in the form of theft, treachery, desertion or failure to provide service, ought to be met with forfeiture. But the text goes on to say that should a lord confiscate the fief by which a man is his man he should lose his lordship over him.[918] This would have made a lord think twice before confiscating a tenant's land. *Glanvill* gives four similar reasons for forfeiture: acting to disinherit the lord, doing violence to the lord, withholding service, and encroaching on the lord's land.[919] Here

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[917] *Leges Henrici Primi*, 75.1, 75.3.

[918] *Leges Henrici Primi*, 43.3-4,7-8. It is reiterated 88.14: 'No one shall forfeit [*forisfaciat*] the *feudum* to the prejudice of his lawful heirs except as a consequence of *feloniam* or in the case of voluntary surrender'.

[919] *Glanvill*, ix, 1, 13. The process leading to forfeiture may have been very slow. According to Milsom the practice around 1200 was that a lord had to summon his tenant to his court on three separate court days, then order (again three times) that his tenant be distrained by chattels taken from his land, then take the tenement into his own hands until three more court days had passed (this is distrain by tenement), and only then could the tenant's rights to the tenement be forfeited: Milsom, p. 9. Although this may have been the 'due process' the reality may have been different, particularly in times of military conflict. Hudson has argued that

some - but not all? - acts of 'disloyalty' are given. But the texts have their problems. One such difficulty is common to all such legal works: although they are a guide they are not a case-study on the ideals of loyalty. The texts were written by professionals in an attempt to describe practice, and as such may provide only the viewpoint of one section of society. In addition, one cannot be certain whether the writers based their work on past practice, current practice or on a vision of ideal practice. In other words, it does not follow that people thought or acted in the manner described in these laws.

Because of these problems one is thrown back on other contemporary records: chronicles, charters and literature. Although still largely confined to clerical writers they offer a wider view of political action. As charters were produced through political requirement they provide a reliable picture of an instance of political reality. Chronicles, meanwhile, provide descriptions of political developments and provide a context in which to view the other sources. Literature can be used to flesh out a fuller picture so long as one remembers to stick to the framework provided by other sources.

Frequent reference is made to 'good faith'. Often this occurs in the phrase 'in good faith I tell you....'[920] Similarly, when William of Orange wishes to assure Louis that he will aid him he says 'by my faith [par ma fei].'[921] While this is not a reference to an oath of loyalty it does show the importance of the concept of faithfulness in this period. In addition we should note that people often say that someone is 'faithful'.[922] This explains why an enemy could be described as a 'base and faithless knight.'[923] Even a difficult path through a forest could be called 'treacherous'.[924]

Traitors are contrasted with rightful lords. Whereas William of Orange calls Acelin a 'traitor'[925] Louis is his 'rightful lord.'[926] To disgrace Acelin's father, Richard of Rouen, William cuts off his hair, explaining that this is what should happen to a traitor who would betray his rightful lord.[927]

Loyalty was seen as a virtue. Although the artisan John was not a noble it is worth citing the way he defended his actions to the emperor: 'a servant must not refuse to do

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Milsom's assertions of the due process of court procedure may be incorrect and are certainly unclear: Hudson, 'Milsom's legal structure', pp. 57-58. The writ of novel disseisin, again according to Milsom, was aimed at restoring the chattels of the tenement until the dispute could be heard. In this court the lord who had distrained his tenant would be the defendant. In this light the assize was not designed to replace seignorial jurisdiction but to provide sanction against its abuse: Milsom, p. 14.

[920] For example, Érec et Énide, p. 86.

[921] Le Couronnement de Louis, L. 224. It is also used in, for example, Perceval, pp. 410, 410, 437, 440.

[922] For example, Fenice on her nurse Thessala, Cligés, p. 188, Cligés on the artisan John, Cligés, p. 189-90.

[923] Lancelot, p. 242.

[924] Yvain, p. 297.

[925] Le Couronnement de Louis, L. 1919.

[926] Le Couronnement de Louis, L. 1944: 'A Loois son dreit seignor en vient' and L. 1986: 'dreit seignor'.

anything his lawful master bids.'[928] John goes on to declare 'I would have deserved to be burned or hanged had I betrayed my lord and refused to do his bidding.'[929] He was not alone in expressing such ideals. According to the Marshal's biographer, John of Earley told his lord, William Marshal:

> 'He is not a friend [*ami*]
>
> Who betrays his lord in his hour of need
>
> Wherever he happens to be, either near or far'[930]

This passage is important for two reasons. Firstly, it shows that a 'friend' should aid his lord, which means that friendship could exist in a vertical relationship. Secondly, it shows that a 'friend' is someone who gives aid. Both of these points will be returned to in the section on Friendship.

The importance of maintaining royal favour through being loyal is seen in two interrelated episodes within the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*. Both show how an aristocrat could quickly become powerless without royal support. The first concerns William Marshal himself: while the king was against him he was kept in the royal court while the king schemed against his Irish lands.[931] The second concerns William de Briouze: he is banished and so goes to stay in Ireland with his son-in-law Walter de Lacy.[932] Because William Marshal helped William do this King John demanded some of his followers to be held as hostages (*ostaiges*) as well as the castle of Dunamase - and John already held the Marshal's sons and English castles.[933]

But what happened when 'good faith' was broken? Several words are used to describe this situation. When the people of Ossory wish to betray (*traier*) Maurice de Prendergast they are called *fel* ('felons', that is 'treacherous renegades'), *traitres* (traitors) and *traître felun* (traitorous felons) and are said to commit treason, great treachery and great felony (*traïsun, grant trecherie* and *grant felunie*).[934] This use of several phrases to refer to the same thing serves to emphasise their 'badness'. This is seen in the way the execution of

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[927] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1967-76.

[928] *Cligés*, p. 202.

[929] *Cligés*, p. 203.

[930] *HGM*, Ll. 14384-86.

[931] *HGM*, Ll. 13029-937.

[932] *HGM*, Ll. 14137-232.

[933] *HGM*, LL. 14319-35; 14322 (*ostaiges*). John demanded Geoffrey fitz Robert, Jordan de Sauqueville, Thomas of Sandford, Robert of Earley and Walter Purcel. At least John of Earley and Walter Purcel agreed to become hostages (Ll. 14373-88) and are later referred to as *ostaige(s)*: Ll. 14375, 14393, 14431, 14470. They were released only when King John wished William Marshal to combat Llywelyn - but by then Geoffrey fitz Robert had died (Ll. 14447-86) and Thomas of Sandford had suffered hardship (Ll. 14456-58).

[934] *Dermot*, Ll. 1278 (*traier*), 1276 (*fel*), 1354 (*traitres*), 1314 (*traître felun*), 1283 (*traïsun*), 1327 (*grant trecherie*), 1320 (*grant felunie*).

O'Brien is justified because he was *fel* and a *traître*.[935] The death-scene of Richard I in the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* further clarifies how traitors were perceived for the man who fired the fatal arrow is described as

'A demon [*Satanas*], a *traîtres*,

A servant of the devil [*diable*]'[936]

Here the emotional weight of the label 'traitor' is demonic.

This attitude is repeated in the way God appears to be against traitors. Chrétien believed that when some traitors wished to make a surprise night raid God lit up the night to confound them.[937] In literature the Church sees treason as being a great sin: the pope tells William that if he defends Rome against the Saracens he can commit any sin and still go to Heaven; any sin, that is, except *traïson*.[938] *Renaut de Montauban* says that a man who fights his *segnor* loses God.[939]

It seems that any opponent could be labelled a 'felon'. For example, when earl Richard is opposed by the King of Odrone that king is called a *felun*.[940] But even if this is how poets used the term it may still have carried a sense of treachery or illegality. Indeed, there would have been little point in calling an enemy a 'felon' unless it had negative overtones. Opponents are also said to be of 'bad faith', 'false' and committing 'treason'. Meilier, for example, a man who attacks the land of William Marshal, is described as a man of bad faith (*male fei*) who is false (*faus*) and who commits *traïson*.[941]

Those who broke faith committed a sin and could expect swift justice. When William of Orange is informed by his nephew that the newly appointed regent, Arneis of Orleans, wants to commit 'great wrong and great sin [*grant tort et grant pechié*]' he immediately kills him.[942] This shows that William's justice was swift and merciless to those suspected of being traitors. His only comment is that Arneis, instead or working against Louis, should have loved him.[943]

The idea of treason occurs regularly. Often it is used in a non-political context. When Soredamors reluctantly falls in love with Alexander she blames her eyes for finding him

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[935] *Dermot*, Ll. 1268, 2171 (*fel*), 2170 (*traitre*).
[936] *HGM*, Ll. 11761-62.
[937] *Cligés*, Ll. 1694-1700.
[938] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 387-96.
[939] *Renaut de Montauban*, Ll. 284-85.
[940] *Dermot*, L. 1993.
[941] *HGM*, Ll. 13555, 13580, 13578.
[942] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 122-49, quotation L. 118.
[943] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 137.

attractive: 'She accuses her eyes of treason, saying "Eyes, you've betrayed me!"'[944] Alexander makes a similar accusation: "'I thought that there was only good in Love, but I've found him to be a great traitor."'[945] In similar vein, Guinevere tells Kay that if his tongue were hers she would accuse it of treason.[946] Meleagant is also called a 'traitor' for imprisoning Lancelot.[947] Eventually he gets his just deserts: Lancelot chops off his head![948]

But 'treason' could, of course, be used in political contexts. When Arthur's regent Count Angrés rebels in Arthur's absence, he is called a traitor,[949] as are his followers.[950] Those who wish to put Acelin, the son of Richard of Rouen, on the throne following Louis' coronation are likewise called traitors[951] while Richard is said to be *mals* (evil, bad).[952] Again, some clerics who plot to betray Louis for a fee are said to be planning *traïson*.[953] And when Acelin fights Louis, William calls him a 'traitorous thief'[954] and a 'traitor.'[955] When a woman demands that Lancelot give her the head of the knight he just defeated she calls the dead man a 'traitor'.[956] Gawain is called 'traitor' by people who believe he killed their lord.[957] In this instance Gawain is a 'traitor' despite not having sworn any loyalty oath to the man he supposedly killed.

Other examples can be seen as having both a political and a social context. To Alis Cligés is a traitor because he has slept with his wife.[958] When the pope suggests leaving William's new Roman lands in the hand of Galafré (an old enemy but now a Christian) William calls it *traïson*.[959] Béroul says that when the dwarf betrayed Yseut's and Tristan's love affair to Mark he committed treason.[960]

Ganelon, the main protagonist in the *Chanson de Roland*, is regularly described as having committed treason.[961] It is worth looking at his trial in detail. Charles accuses Ganelon

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[944] *Cligés*, p. 129.
[945] *Cligés*, p. 131.
[946] *Yvain*, p. 302.
[947] *Lancelot*, p. 271, 274, 283, 290, 291.
[948] *Lancelot*, p. 294. It was also treacherous to steal the horse from someone who had helped you: *Perceval*, p. 468.
[949] *Cligés*, pp. 136 (twice), 137, 138 (twice).
[950] *Cligés*, pp. 139, 143 (three times), 144 (twice).
[951] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1438, 1463, 1476, 1590, 1769.
[952] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 1574.
[953] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1751, 1775.
[954] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 1913: '*Traître lerre*'.
[955] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 1919.
[956] *Lancelot*, p. 242.
[957] *Perceval*, p. 453. This follows Guinganbresil's accusation that Gawain has committed treason by slaying Guinganbresil's lord without first issuing a challenge: *Perceval*, p. 439.
[958] *Cligés*, p. 204.
[959] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 1422.
[960] Béroul, p. 53.
[961] For example, *Chanson de Roland* L. 178.

of betraying and causing the death of twenty thousand Franks, including Roland, Oliver and the twelve peers, for money[962] but Ganelon defends his action claiming there was no treason:

> 'Roland wronged me in respect of gold and wealth;
>
> For which reason I sought his death and his woe.
>
> But I admit to no treason [traïsun] in this act.'[963]

He goes on to argue that Roland had sought his death, so his action was only fair:

> 'Roland his [Charles'] nephew conceived a hatred for me
>
> And nominated me for death and woe.
>
> I was a messenger to King Marsile;
>
> Through my wisdom I managed to escape.
>
> I challenged Roland the warrior
>
> And Oliver and all his companions;
>
> Charles heard it and his noble barons.
>
> I avenged myself, but there is no treason in it.'[964]

Here Ganelon appears to be defending himself by claiming that his action was part of a feud and therefore just. The poet may therefore be making a comment on the role feud should serve in society and whether it should be banned. That Ganelon is finally executed suggests that the poet was against feuding.

When Ganelon makes this defence all but Thierry accept this argument. Thierry then speaks:

> 'Whatever Roland may have done to Ganelon,
>
> The act of serving you [Charles] should have protected
>
> > > him.
>
> Ganelon is a traitor in that he betrayed him;
>
> He committed perjury against you and wronged you.
>
> For this I judge that he be hanged and put to death.'[965]

After Thierry has proved his case in a duel against Pinabel, Ganelon and thirty of his kinsmen are put to death.[966]

In the eyes of the king the punishment for traitors was death. We have seen this in the *Chanson de Roland* but it is also seen in the writing of both Chrétien and Béroul. When Alexander captures some followers of the traitor Angrés he delivers them to the queen and

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[962] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3750-56.
[963] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3758-60.
[964] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3771-78.
[965] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3827-31.

Chrétien says that 'he did not want the king to claim them, for he would have hanged them at once.'[967] Other supporters of Arthur thought that this was the right thing to do, 'for he [the king] would have had them burned or hanged.'[968] And the king was indeed angry with this and demanded they should be handed over to him.[969] Eventually the king got his way: after the king saw the queen privately she handed the traitors over to him.[970] Although he summoned a council of his followers to discuss what should be done their parameters of discussion were strictly limited for they were instructed to discuss what punishment the traitors should suffer, and the king had the final say. He decided 'that they would be quartered below the castle walls so that those within might witness it.'[971] This was clearly an attempt to deter other traitors. King Bademagu likewise believed that those who killed someone under his safe-conduct ought to be executed[972] but when he realises that they had not killed him and believed that they had acted in the king's interest he forgives them.[973] A woman accused of treason is also sentenced to death by being burnt or hanged.[974] In Béroul's work, when King Mark discovers that his wife has indeed been carrying out a scandalous love affair with his nephew he decides to have them killed.[975]

Not everyone, however, shared the same ideas as the king. When Alexander captures some traitors he tells them: 'The only one among you who deserves to die is the count here [the leader of the traitors].'[976] When Mark tells the people of Cornwall that he will execute Tristan and Yseut because of their affair they say: 'King, you would do them great wrong if they were not first brought to trial. Afterwards put them to death. Sire, mercy!'[977] Mark's seneschal felt the same way.[978] At other times, however, followers did think that traitors should be hanged.[979] The reason why rulers may have wanted to punish treason so severely may have been to deter others and prove their authority. This is suggested when a forester tells Mark that unless he exacts vengeance on the lovers he has 'beyond doubt lost ... [his] right to rule this land.'[980]

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[966] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3932-33.
[967] *Cligés*, Ll. 1345-49.
[968] *Cligés*, p. 139.
[969] *Cligés*, p. 139.
[970] *Cligés*, p. 140.
[971] *Cligés*, p. 140.
[972] *Lancelot*, p. 258.
[973] *Lancelot*, p. 262.
[974] *Yvain*, p. 340.
[975] Béroul, p. 67.
[976] *Cligés*, Ll. 2159-80.
[977] Béroul, p. 67.
[978] Béroul, pp. 71-72.
[979] For example the followers of William thought traitorous clerics should be hung: *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1747-60.
[980] Béroul, p. 90.

But this difference in attitude remains important. Although kings thought traitors deserved execution others did not. Whereas a king might feel that armed insurrection was necessarily treason and punishable by death, his subordinates (both loyal and disloyal ones) did not see things as so clear-cut. Followers had their doubts, and as a result they were more inclined to show mercy. Why might this be? We could, perhaps, put it down to some form of 'collective solidarity' on the part of followers. Perhaps they realised that the 'traitor' may have been driven into rebellion or unjustly accused by the king. Perhaps, also, they were more willing to take a high moral stand because they were less affected by the actions of a rebel than the king was as it was the king whom the rebel challenged. In the case of sub-tenants there is another possibility: if their immediate lord was the rebel they were left with an awkward decision: should they follow their immediate lord or should they follow the king?

A follower could seek to make amends after committing treason, but this was not easy. The love affair between Tristan and Yseut could be seen as an act of treason as Yseut was the wife of the king. When the love potion wears off the lovers decide to seek a reconciliation with King Mark.[981] Fearing a public meeting they first exchange letters with Mark.[982] They then arrange a public meeting in which Yseut could be returned:

> 'They [Tristan and Yseut] advanced far enough to exchange greetings with those who were coming towards them. The king came proudly forward, a bow-shot in front of his men; with him was Dinas of Dinan [seneschal of Mark and friend of the lovers]. Tristan was holding the queen's rein as he held her. He gave the queen a formal salutation: "King, I hereby restore to you the noble Yseut. No man ever made a better restitution. I see the men of your land here: in their hearing I want to request you to allow me to clear myself and make my defence in your court.... If I agree to this taking place in your court, then burn me in sulphur if I am found guilty! If I can come safe through the ordeal, let no one, long-haired or bald, [ever accuse us again]. Retain me in your service; otherwise I shall go to Lyoness." The king spoke to his nephew. Andret... said to him: "King, retain him, for men will fear you the more." The king's heart softened and he all but agreed to this.'[983]

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[981] Béroul, pp. 95-98.
[982] Béroul, pp. 98-107.
[983] Béroul, p. 111.

But the king then spoke with the three aristocrats hostile to the lovers:

> "'Sire," they said, "listen to us, we shall give you good
> advice. The queen was accused and she fled from your
> domain. If they are together again at court people will
> say, it seems to us, that you are consenting to their
> wickedness; there will be few who do not say this. Let
> Tristan stay away from your court. When a year has
> passed and you are sure Yseut is faithful to you, then send
> for Tristan to come. We give you this advice in good
> faith." The king replied: "Whatever anyone says, I shall
> always listen to your counsel.'"[984]

And so Tristan cannot return to Mark's court. When Mark offers him a gift - perhaps as a partial reconciliation - it is refused, Tristan telling him 'King of Cornwall, I will never take a farthing from you.'[985]

These actions show how difficult it was to arrange a peace settlement. The first step was exchanging letters. These created the parameters of discussion and declared a mutual interest in bringing peace. The two sides then met in front of witnesses. Despite a reconciliation between the king and queen the queen remained anxious because of the power of the three hostile aristocrats. These men are able to prevent Mark from retaining Tristan. It is likely that peace agreements in the real world, such as those between aristocrats in Stephen's reign, followed a similar procedure. We return to the question of how disputes were settled in the chapter Conflict Resolution.

But this is not the end of the story. When the three aristocrats ask Mark to make Yseut prove she never loved Tristan Mark is angry and decides to banish them.[986] Since the barons have strong castles they could revolt.[987] Mark claims that he has turned against the three aristocrats because he has followed their advice too much.[988] This sets the scene for the final deception of Mark by the two lovers. By now what began as a reconciliation between the king and his wife has led to the banishment of three of the leading men of the kingdom.

Late *Chanson de Geste* often depict a traitor within the court.[989] Often the traitor corrupts the relationship between a lord and his follower. In *Aiol*, for example, Makaire turns Louis against Elie de Saint-Gilles. But traitors also breakdown other relationships such as that

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[984] Béroul, p. 112.
[985] Béroul, p. 112.
[986] Béroul, p. 115-17.
[987] Béroul, p. 117.
[988] Béroul, p. 118.

between husband and wife (*Doon de la Roche*, *Macaire*, *Parise la duchesse*) or between companions (*Daurel et Beton*, *Orson de Beauvais*). Kay attempts to draw a distinction between traitors in romance texts and those in *Chanson de geste*. She argues that in the *chanson* traitors are court flatterers who turn the king against absent aristocrats whereas in romance the traitor is an outsider.[990] But this is over-stepping the mark - in *Cligés* (a romance), the enemies come from within.[991]

Kay goes on to suggest that the growing interest in enemies coming from within the court stems from political changes in the real world.[992] Under Philip Augustus lesser nobles and professional men found favour[993] and as a result more established aristocratic families lost out. This change therefore saw a struggle for ascendancy within the aristocracy. The poems can therefore be seen as responding to the question 'who should a lord trust?' Their answer is ambiguous: some members of the old aristocracy are 'heroes' while others are 'traitors'. John of Salisbury likewise depicts court life breeding trouble: 'it is a frequent occurrence that a court either receives or creates vicious men.'[994]

Kay also believes that the *chanson de geste* criticises courtliness.[995] As traitors are rich (they use wealth to bribe people) the poems have been seen as 'anti-bourgeoisie'. The problem here is that it assumes that aristocrats did not use money to pursue their ends - a notion that seems absurd, particularly given the importance accorded to non-enfeoffed followers. Nevertheless it is true that whereas villains use wealth to achieve their ends heroes rely on military prowess (such as Ganelon and Roland in the *Chanson de Roland*). Kay's general argument, however, is that the *chanson de geste* depict political society in chaos.[996] Of this there can be little doubt as treachery occurs regularly in these poems.

People are accused of treason and labelled as traitors for many different reasons. Indeed, these terms seem to be applied so generally that they may have lost any specific meaning. Essentially, any opponent of the king is a traitor. Once someone was labelled as a traitor it became easier for the king to gather support and execute him. Ganelon's failed attempt to defend his actions - by saying that he was prosecuting a family feud - suggests that ideas of what constituted treason were changing in this period. New ideas, derived from

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[989] These examples are taken from Kay, p. 179.

[990] Kay, pp. 179-82.

[991] Arthur is threatened by his former follower Count Angrés, Alexander and Cligés by Alexander's brother Alis.

[992] Kay, pp. 182-83.

[993] Baldwin, looking at the end of the twelfth century (*The Government of Philip Augustus*, pp. 101-36), shows a different world to the earlier twelfth century described by Dunbabin (*France in the Making*, p. 245); cited by Kay, p. 182, n. 31. In England the change can be placed earlier, to the reign of Henry I: see in particular Southern, 'The place of Henry I in English history'.

[994] John of Salisbury, *Policraticus* 3, vv. 3-4, 10, p. 90; cited by Kay, p. 186.

[995] Kay, pp. 183-85.

[996] Kay, pp. 175-99, with especial reference to *Aye d'Avignon* and *Garin le Loheren*.

Roman and Byzantine law, were beginning to creep into the political system and transform the way kings and their opponents were viewed. But if the position of the king was becoming more elevated the concept of just rebellion was also developing. The concept of rebellion is, however, a modern one; to the medieval mind it was defiance.

xi

PROBLEMS WITH SUPERIORS: DEFIANCE

Since contracts of faithfulness created obligations for both sides it created the possibility of a lord not fulfilling obligations to his man. This problem - how to deal with an unjust authority - has echoed down the centuries. In 1690, for example, John Locke claimed there to be a right of revolution should an authority became unjust.[997] But historians of the Early Modern period see this view as having a medieval precedent - a follower whose lord failed to keep his end of the bargain had a right to issue a 'defiance', thereby renouncing all obligations to the lord.[998] This view was popularised in the early nineteenth century by Sir Walter Scott in his novel *Quentin Durward*[999] and received historical approval at the end of the century by J. H. Round.[1000] But how and when the concept evolved remains uncertain. Although historians have often noted the possibility of justified desertion evidence for this actually happening is surprisingly scarce.

For Fulbert of Chartres the problem of bad lordship was to be met with censure, but to *Glanvill*, seeing things in the later twelfth century based on land holding, unlawful forfeiture or refusal to give aid when called for could be met with legitimate desertion.[1001] But desertion was a last resort. The *Leges Henrici Primi*, showing a viewpoint from the early twelfth century, claims 'a *homo* must suffer affront and injury from his *dominus* for thirty days in war and a year and a day in peace'.[1002] Moreover, defiance may have involved loss of the tenancy.[1003]

Several years ago John Gillingham suggested that the word 'defiance' first emerged in the writings of William of Malmesbury when he sought to justify Robert of Gloucester's turn of face.[1004] However, the term is used in the dispute between Guy de Lusignan and Hugh the Chiliarch. But whenever the term passed into usage in England, Anglo-Norman and Angevin vernacular sources show that the concept was well-established (in literary circles if not in reality) by the end of the century.

[997] John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Peter Laslett, 3rd edn. (Cambridge, 1988) p. 367.
[998] This view is expounded, for example, in Michael Landon, *The Triumph of the lawyers. Their Role in English Politics, 1678-1689* (Alabama, 1970) p. 243.
[999] In the chapter 'The Envoy'.
[1000] Round, *Geoffrey de Mandeville*, p. 28.
[1001] Fulbert of Chartres, *Letters and Poems*, no. 51; *Glanvill*, ix, 1.
[1002] *Leges Henrici Primi*, 43.9. Much of the *Leges Henrici Primi* concerns the settlement of disputes between lord and man. This suggests that this relationship was of concern to contemporaries.
[1003] Bracton records that for a man to accuse his lord in court he must first 'waive the tenement': Bracton, f. 81b, 141.
[1004] Gillingham, '1066 and the introduction of chivalry', pp. 48-49.

It is worth looking first at the dispute of the 1020s between Hugh the Chiliarch and Guy de Lusignan. The *Conventum inter Guillelmum Aquitanorum comes et Hugonem Chiliarchum* records the troubled relationship of Hugh the Chiliarch with his lord, the count of Aquitaine, over about six years.[1005] Within this time Hugh had requested the help of his lord to defend himself against his enemies and this had been refused, and so Hugh, after giving due warning, broke away from William. As Jane Martindale has stated, 'the reciprocal obligations described by Fulbert [of Chartres] ...[are] far removed from the shifty manoeuvres of both parties described in the *Conventum*',[1006] for here there is treachery, false promises and distrust. It is therefore a shame that some of the classic writers on the subject of lord and man, Bloch included, made no use of this document. The pattern of political behaviour and inter-personal relationships presented in the *Conventum* suggests a less defined 'system' in which the reality of political life was far removed from the ideal depicted by Fulbert and followed by many subsequent historians. But as with the writings of Bishop Fulbert, the *Conventum* is removed from twelfth-century England in time and space: one must search for contemporary evidence from England.

According to William of Malmesbury,[1007] writing in the turbulent reign of Stephen, there had traditionally been a method of legitimately breaking an oath of allegiance through the ceremony of *diffidatio* or 'defiance'. He records that in 1138 the barons of England 'were the more greedy in asking and he [King Stephen] the more lavish in giving because a rumour was flying all over England that Robert earl of Gloucester, who was in Normandy, was just on the point of siding with his sister, as soon as he had defied the king [*rege tantum modo ante diffidiato*]. Nor did the insubstantial rumour lack confirmation in fact, for immediately after Whitsuntide he sent representatives and abandoned friendship [*amicitia*] and faith [*fides*] with the king in the traditional way, also renouncing homage [*homagium*]'. Here we should note that William of Malmesbury is keen to stress that Robert renounced three formal relationships, that of friendship, faithfulness and homage.

William of Malmesbury provides five justifications for Robert's act. Firstly, that Stephen had unlawfully claimed the throne. Secondly, that Stephen had broken all the *fides* he had sworn him. Thirdly, that Robert himself had acted contrary to law [*leges*] in that he had given pledge [*sacramentum*] to his sister only to then give his hands to another while she still lived (a reference to the act of homage). Fourthly, he would live in disgrace [*ignominia*] for so long as he failed to keep his *sacramentum* to his sister. And finally, that he had received a

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[1005] A text is found in Jane Martindale, ed., '*Conventum inter Guillelmum Aquitanorum comes et Hugonem Chiliarchum*', *EHR*, 84 (1969) 528-48. A translation is also provided in Patrick J. Geary, ed., *Readings in Medieval History*, pp. 405-10. The source is further discussed by Georges Duby, *France*, pp. 69-77.

[1006] Martindale, ed., '*Conventum inter Guillelmum*', p. 529 n. 3. A lack of reciprocity in the lord-follower relationship is also seen in William of Jumièges: Teunis, p. 204.

[1007] *HN*, ch. 467.

papal bull instructing him to fulfil this *sacramentum*. For Malmesbury, these reasons justified Robert's turn of face. The truth of these statements, however, is open to question.[1008]

If Malmesbury's explanation for the formal renunciation of faith is inaccurate what motives can the historian deduce from the evidence? Patterson sees Robert's rebellion as being primarily caused by his loss of influence as a *familiares regis* to the Beaumont faction led by Waleran of Meulan. Malmesbury also ignores the influence of Angevin offers of numerous castles on Earl Robert.[1009] Patterson has also argued that Malmesbury falsely claims Robert served as a 'mole' in the court of Stephen 1136-38 as he initially supported Theobald's claim to the throne and then submitted to Stephen before Easter 1136, and that even as an Angevin supporter Robert was not unselfish.[1010]

The word *diffidatio* occurs in another source from the reign of Stephen, namely the final *conventio* between the earls of Chester and Leicester.[1011] Ranulf and Robert promised *fides* to each other then went on to detail clauses by which they agreed not to attack each other unless the aggressor 'defied' (*'defideravit'*) the other fifteen days before.[1012] This reciprocal agreement therefore acknowledges that it would be possible to end the agreement, that it was possible to legitimately break faith. It is possible chronologically that those responsible for the *conventio* had access to the work of William of Malmesbury and took the term from

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[1008] Patterson has pointed out that Stephen only confiscated Robert's property after his defiance and that the two were reconciled after Stephen's aborted attempt to seize the earl during the Normandy campaign of 1137, so these occurrences alone cannot have provoked his defiance: Robert B. Patterson, 'William of Malmesbury's Robert of Gloucester: a re-evaluation of the *Historia Novella*', *American Historical Review*, 70 (1965) p. 989.

[1009] For these arguments see Robert B. Patterson, 'William of Malmesbury's Robert of Gloucester', pp. 990-93.

[1010] Robert B. Patterson, 'William of Malmesbury's Robert of Gloucester' pp. 983-97; and 'Stephen's Shaftesbury Charter: another case against William of Malmesbury', *Speculum*, 43 (1968) 487-92. But William of Malmesbury has received some support, in particular from Leedom who argues that the *Historia Novella* is consistent with other chronicles and charters: Joe Leedom, 'William of Malmesbury and Robert of Gloucester Reconsidered', *Albion*, 6 (1974) 251-63. It is worth noting that both Patterson (William of Malmesbury', p. 992 n. 32) and Leedom (p. 261) say that the thirteenth century *Chronicon Thomas Wykes* (in Henry Luard, ed., *Annales Monastici*, vol. 4, Rolls Series, 1869, p. 22) records that Earl Robert was offered Bristol and Marlborough by the Angevins. The relevant sentence reads *'Evocavit imperatrix in adjutorium suum virum nominatissimum et potentem, ac militari strenuitate praeclarum, fratrem suum Robertum comitem Gloucestrensem, quem pater suus rex Henricus de non legitimo concubitu progenuerat, in quo sibi usque adeo complacebat, ut filiam unicam et haeredem cujusdam comitis Gloucestrensis conjugali sibi matrimonio copularet; castra quoque munitissima Bristolle et Marlebege et alias terras amplissimas assignaret.'* On my understanding, this means that Henry I assigned the castles of Bristol and Marlborough to Earl Robert, not that he was offered them by Geoffrey of Anjou.

[1011] *The Charters of the earls of Chester*, no. 110, pp. 123-26; Stenton, *First Century*, pp. 286-88, with a trans. pp. 250-53.

[1012] The earl of Leicester's binding clause for instance reads: *'Nec ligius dominus comitis Leecestrie nec aliquis alius potest forisfacere comiti Cestrie nec suis de castris ipsius comitis Leecestrie nec terra sua, et ita quod comes Leecestrie non potest aliquam causam vel propter aliquem casum impedire corpus comitis Cestrie, nisi eum defideravit quindecim dies ante'* - note that the spelling is not quite how William of Malmesbury or the modern historian spells the term.

him,[1013] but it is more likely that the charter scribe independently employed a word that had come into more general usage because of the circumstances of their time.

One further historical source sheds some light on the twelfth-century idea of legitimate defiance. In his account of the rebellions of 1173-1174 Jordan Fantosme, writing in French, gives substantial detail on how William king of Scotland came to support the Young King against Henry II. The first hint of a moral struggle is when, on the advice of Louis of France, Henry the Young King wrote to William promising him the land held by his ancestors with Carlisle and Westmoreland. This supposedly caused him great trouble at heart as he owed to both Henry II and his eldest son 'homage and service, true allegiance' ('*Humages e servises, ligances veraiement*').[1014] Fantosme then says that it would be 'wrong' for William to invade without first laying claim to his inheritance in the court of Henry II.[1015] William proceeded to call a full *parlement* to discuss what he should do. Here William stated:

> 'I wish to tell the father in Normandy by messengers
>
> To restore me a part of my inheritance,
>
> That is Northumberland, which he holds in his power;
>
> And if he wills not to do that, and refuses it to me
>
> > altogether,
>
> I owe him thenceforward neither faith nor friendship
>
> > [*ne fei ne druërie*].'[1016]

Here we see a threat to formally renounce faith and friendship, two of the three relationships Malmesbury describes Earl Robert renouncing. Messengers were then sent to Henry II saying that William would serve him with his army within a month without pay on condition that Northumberland be restored to him:

> 'And if in order to disinherit him you refuse to do it,
>
> I here return you his homage [*humage*]: I do not seek to
>
> > hide it from you.'[1017]

[1013] The defiance of Robert of Gloucester was in 1139 while the *conventio* is dated 1149 x 1153. As the *Historia Novella* dries up in 1142 it is probable that it was not made public until this year; the latest that William would have been writing is 1147 as his patron died on 31ˢᵗ October 1147 and in his prologue his dedication reads as though Robert was still alive (*HN*, p. 1). This means that there could have been at least two years between the completion of the *Historia Novella* and the drafting of the *conventio*, a period of time in which it is quite conceivable that the work of William of Malmesbury became known to one of the earls or their advisors. It is of course possible that William made parts of his work public at an earlier date in a kind of 'serialisation'.

[1014] Jordan Fantosme, *Chronique de la Guerre entre les Anglois et les Ecossois en 1173 et 1174*, in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ed. R. Howlett, vol. 3 (Rolls Series, 1886) Ll. 245-79, quotation L. 279.

[1015] *Ibid.*, Ll. 280-83.

[1016] *Ibid.*, Ll. 288-300, quotation Ll. 296-300.

[1017] *Ibid.*, Ll. 315-38, quotation Ll. 337-38.

This reference is to the third relationship Robert renounces in Malmesbury's text. These conditions were refused and William invaded. Here we have the idea of a legitimate war. According to Fantosme, it would be justified for King William to attack the person to whom he had performed homage only if he first laid claim to his inheritance, and if this was refused. Once this was done, in the mind of Fantosme at least, William was justified in waging war against Henry II.

Since historical sources describing defiance are scarce any information we can glean from literary sources is most welcome. Here the concept appears more frequently and is of particular value as we sometimes get the phrases used in the defiance. Often the word 'defy' is not used to break a formal relationship but simply to challenge someone. This is how Gaimar refers to the concept of defiance: once Sigar and Haveloc assembled an army they defied (*deffierent*) King Edulf;[1018] similarly, when Haveloc turned his attention to England he defied (*deffia, defie*) King Edelsi.[1019] In these cases it seems more a question of declaring hostility than in renouncing a formal political bond. It should be remembered that Gaimar was both an Anglo-Norman and a contemporary of William of Malmesbury. It is interesting that two writers, one in French and the other in Latin, use the word at roughly the same time and in the same broad geographical area.

Later in the twelfth century the concept is used by other poets, particularly Chrétien de Troyes. When neither Érec nor his opponent back down over claiming the sparrowhawk, for example, his opponent says 'Then I defy you immediately, for this cannot be disputed without a battle.'[1020] Similarly, when Érec is challenged by a robber knight 'he defied him'[1021] and when the Maboagrain in the Joy of the Court episode challenges Érec he says 'Be assured you'll get a fight, for I challenge and defy you.'[1022] In these instances there is no mention of 'homage' or 'service'.

When the household of the murdered Cynewulf refuse to accept the proposals of Cyneheard they state:

'We will not make peace,
We defy [*deffium*] you as a traitor [*felon*],

[1018] Gaimar, L. 739.
[1019] Gaimar, Ll. 762-763.
[1020] *Érec et Énide*, p. 47.
[1021] *Érec et Énide*, p. 72.
[1022] *Érec et Énide*, p. 110. Other examples can be found in Chrétien's works. When royalist troops fight traitors it is said that they are 'defying them valiantly': *Cligés*, p. 144. It also occurs in other literary sources. When talks between William of Orange and Acelin break down Acelin states his defiance: 'I defy you [*Je le desfi, ce li mant je par vos*]': *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 1834. Here defiance takes on a mutual aspect for William's negotiator answers with another defiance: 'We defy you and all your traitorous barons [*je vos desfi, oiant toz voz barons*]': *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 1837. This usage is also seen in the duel between Guy of Alemagne and William of Orange for they defy (*desfi*) each other: *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 2540.

You have killed our lord'[1023]

This use of defiance combines the two uses of the word - as a challenge and as a rejection of service. Moreover, it also suggests that traitors should not be served.

'Defiance' could also refer to the breaking of a peace. The phrase used to tell us that Macbeth broke a peace with Earl Siward, for instance, is 'defied the peace' (*defuit la pes*).[1024]

At other times defiance refers to the renunciation of service.[1025] When the messenger of Alexander is told by Alis that he will not give up the Greek throne he calls on the Greeks to defy Alis: 'In the name of your brother I formally challenge you, and on his behalf I enjoin everyone I see here to renounce you and come over to him. It is right that they should join his cause and acknowledge him as their lawful lord. Let those who are loyal show it now!'[1026] Chrétien calls this Alexander's 'defiance' of Alis.[1027] The advisors of Alis respond to this speech and counsel him to seek peace with his brother.[1028] Faced with the prospect of losing support should he oppose his brother Alis accepts their advice.[1029] In this instance followers had determined the policy of their lord.

Defiance could involve the renunciation of homage. Since, as we have seen, homage was usually connected with land holding, this involved the rejection of the bond of tenure. This is apparent in the words Gaimar uses for Beorn's defiance of King Osbryht after the king has raped his wife:

> 'The king saw him. He called him.
>
> Beorn at once defied [*defiat*] him:
>
> "I defy thee [*Jo te defi*], and give thee back all.
>
> I will hold [*tenir*] nothing of thee,
>
> Never will I hold [*tendrai*] aught of thee,
>
> Thy homage [*homage*] I return [*rendrai*] to thee"
>
> Then he left the house.
>
> With him came many good lords'[1030]

Here Beorn returns his homage and lands when he announces his defiance; without homage or land he does not owe Osbryht any service. This may be similar to the view of William of

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[1023] Gaimar, Ll. 1887-89.

[1024] Gaimar, L. 5045. Other MSS use *defruist*.

[1025] A parallel with this refusal of service can be seen with Ottonian times, for an imperial bishop was able to refuse a request of the king brought my messenger for an unusual service with the words 'Your lord must have lost his mind': Althoff, p. 170.

[1026] *Cligés*, p. 153.

[1027] *Cligés*, p. 153.

[1028] *Cligés*, p. 154.

[1029] *Cligés*, p. 154.

[1030] Gaimar, Ll. 2681-88.

Jumièges who depicted those who rebelled against William as breaking *fidelitas*.[1031] However, it should be stressed that formal defiance did not ensure that one was not accused of treason. In *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, for example, William says that when a man had defied (*deffier*)[1032] Louis, William had defended his natural lord (*naturel seignor*)[1033] and apprehended the *felon*.[1034]

Defiance could also be threatened. When Cligés is trying to persuade his uncle to let him duel with the duke of Saxony, Chrétien writes 'if it is refused him... he will never again serve his uncle's cause and honour even for a single day.'[1035] And so Cligés gets his way. By threatening to defy his uncle Cligés was able to get his way. The three aristocrats who decide to tell Mark of the continuing scandalous affair between his wife and his nephew swear that they will make war on the king if he does not banish Tristan.[1036] They then tell Mark: 'If you do not banish your nephew from court so that he never returns, we shall no longer support you nor keep peace with you. We shall make our neighbours leave the court, for we cannot put up with this.'[1037] Mark takes this threat seriously. He tells them: 'You are loyal to me.... Give me your advice, I beg you. You must advise me well, for I do not want to lose your service. You know I have no wish to lose your service.'[1038]

The clearest example of defiance is Kay's refusal to serve Arthur. Here we see clearly that rulers took defiance very seriously. Meleagant comes to court claiming to hold many knights, ladies and maidens from Arthur's lands and household. This not only diminishes Arthur's honour but also shows that he is unable to defend his people. When Meleagant challenges any knight at court to duel with him - the prisoners to be freed if Meleagant loses, the queen to be taken prisoner if he wins - Kay decides to force the issue. He tells Arthur:

> 'My king, I have served [*servi*] you well
>
> In good faith [*boene foi*] and loyally [*lëaumant*];
>
> But now I take my leave
>
> I will go away and not serve [*servirai*] you;
>
> I have neither the will nor the desire
>
> To serve [*servir*] you any longer.'[1039]

[1031] See Teunis, p. 204.
[1032] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 184.
[1033] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 188.
[1034] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 190.
[1035] *Cligés*, p. 171.
[1036] Béroul, p. 60.
[1037] Béroul, p. 61.
[1038] Béroul, p. 61.
[1039] *Lancelot*, Ll. 87-92, my translation.

Here Kay clearly refuses to serve Arthur. We should note that this is a rejection of service but not necessarily of faith. Arthur takes this threat very seriously. The situation is made worse by Kay being the seneschal at Arthur's court: he is in a position of authority and could set an example others might follow. Arthur first asks 'Are you serious, or just joking?'[1040] When Kay replies that he is taking his leave in all seriousness the king becomes desperate and asks the queen to beg him to stay.[1041] When she asks Kay refuses, so 'the queen, in all her majesty, fell down at his feet. Kay begged her to rise, but she replied that she would not do so; she would never rise again until he had granted her wish. At that Kay promised her he would remain, but only if the king and the queen herself would grant in advance what he was about to request.'[1042] This turns out to be the right to duel Meleagant.[1043] The lengths that Arthur and Guinevere are willing to go to show how serious they took Kay's defiance – although here Chrétien does not use the term.

Chrétien uses the concept elsewhere. When Sir Garin learns that his lord wishes to seize his guest (Gawain) because he believes that he is a merchant pretending to be a knight Garin says:

> I am your man [hom] and you are my lord [sire]:
>
> For me and all my lineage [lignage]
>
> I here renounce our homage [homage] to you
>
> I now defy [desfi] you totally.'[1044]

This causes his lord to retract his statement.[1045] Here again we see a lord taking defiance most seriously and seeking to pacify the defiant follower. We also see defiance as the renunciation of homage and of the condition of being a 'man'.

The detail found in Chrétien's work is in contrast to what we find elsewhere. In the *Song of Dermot*, for instance, we hear how the earl of Leicester 'turned against his lord' ('*sur sun seignur esteit turné*').[1046] Similarly, when William Marshal leaves the company of the Young King we are told simply that he 'withdrew'.[1047] Although Béroul does not use the phrase he shows a familiarity with the idea of defiance. During the tryst under the tree Tristan seems (to pretend) to seek to quit Mark's service. He says: 'All my weapons are pledged to him', and asks Yseut to 'discharge me from the debt I owe my host.'[1048] Yseut replies saying: 'If the king were to hear a word of your wanting to be released from your pledges, he would

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[1040] *Lancelot*, p. 208.
[1041] *Lancelot*, p. 208.
[1042] *Lancelot*, p. 209.
[1043] *Lancelot*, p. 209.
[1044] *Perceval*, Ll. 5276-79.
[1045] *Perceval*, Ll. 5282-88.
[1046] *Dermot*, L. 2956.
[1047] *HGM*, L. 5480.

obviously think you were disloyal.'[1049] This is not the only time Mark is threatened with defiance. The three aristocrats who inform Mark of the continuing love affair between Yseut and Tristan threaten to leave his court if he does not banish Tristan.[1050] When Mark shows his persistence to execute Yseut for her affair with Tristan his seneschal, Dinas of Dinan, quits his court. Having told Mark that he has served him loyally for a long time he finally says: 'King, I am going to Dinan. By the lord who made Adam, I would not see her burnt'.[1051]

A theme common to many announcements of defiance is stressing the service they have done to the lord. In Kay's defiance of Arthur given above, 'service' is referred to three times in the space of six lines.[1052] Reference to renunciation of homage is also frequent, though less so than the denial of service. Both of these are vertical relationships and suggest that 'defiance' may have been used only to repudiate formal, vertical relationships, and particularly relationships between tenant and landlord.

This is seen most clearly in *Le Charroi de Nîmes*. When his nephew Bertrand tells William that Louis is distributing fiefs (*fievez*) to the *barons* William goes to his court. William first lists what he has done for Louis. Louis' first offer is to give William all the land (*terre*) of one of his peers (*pers*) when that peer should die.[1053] William complains by saying that this is too long for a *bachelor* of his age to wait.[1054] When Louis continues to refuse to grant William any land William declares that he would have no honour (*honiz*) if he served (*serf*) him any longer.[1055] He and his household (*mesnie*) then leave court.[1056] The poet now remarks that William is angry because he has served (*servi*) him for a long time.[1057] William again reminds Louis of his service (*servise*) and says that Louis had forgotten this when he was distributing his *terres*.[1058] He then adds that when a criminal (*felon*) defied (*deffier*) Louis he had defended him as his natural lord (*naturel seignor*).[1059] He then stresses his service (*servi*) to Louis[1060] and comments that those who serve (*servoie*) never benefit.[1061] He later again stresses that he has served (*servi*) Louis.[1062] Next, William claims that he has served (*sert*) a bad man (*male gent*) and a wicked lord (*mauvés seignor*).[1063] Louis now admits that

[1048] Béroul, p. 51.
[1049] Béroul, p. 52.
[1050] Béroul, pp. 60-61 (ending L. 623).
[1051] Béroul, p. 72.
[1052] *Lancelot*, Ll. 87-92.
[1053] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 76-77.
[1054] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 81, 89.
[1055] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 114.
[1056] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 115-20.
[1057] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 129-30.
[1058] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 180-81; '*servise*' L. 180.
[1059] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 184-90; '*deffier*' L. 184.
[1060] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 257.
[1061] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 256-64; '*servoie*' L. 264.
[1062] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 276.
[1063] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 297-303.

William has served him with love - or served for love - (*servi par amor*).[1064] In the light of this Louis offers William two areas of land held by orphans - it is unclear whether this is wardship or lordship of the land - and the hand of an heiress, but these are refused.[1065] Here William is living up to the ideals of kingship of defending widows and orphans seen in *Le Couronnement de Louis* - ideals that Louis should have been living up to. So Louis offers William a quarter of his empire.[1066] This is refused because if he accepted it the *baron chevalier* would criticise him for deceiving Louis and taking half his kingdom.[1067] Louis is unable to offer anything else so William leaves the court angrily.[1068] By this stage William has repeatedly stressed that he has served Louis, and that because of this he deserves a better reward. This reinforces the idea that defiance is primarily the renunciation not of 'faithfulness' but of 'service'.

But that is not the end of the discussion of William's defiance for William meets Bertrand outside. When William tells his nephew that he has served (*servi*) Louis without reward[1069] he brings this criticism from Bertrand:

> 'You must not provoke your rightful lord but, on the
> contrary, serve him and honour him, and protect and
> defend him against all comers.'[1070]

This states what a follower should do for his lord and is reminiscent of the tolerance demanded of a follower in the *Leges Henrici Primi*. It is also repeated by William Marshal who tells Richard I that:

> 'All men [*home*] of good birth
> Should suffer hardship and great pain
> For their rightful lord [*naturel seingnor*].'[1071]

But William of Orange again says that he has served (*servir*) without reward.[1072] William now explains his anger by saying that Louis' desire to pay for his services is a reproach.[1073] But when William says that he feels like removing the crown from Louis' head Bertrand again reproaches him:

[1064] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 306.
[1065] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 300-68.
[1066] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 380-95.
[1067] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 396-403. Arithmetic is seldom a strong point of poets.
[1068] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 404-14.
[1069] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 420.
[1070] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 422-24. The French text reads: '*Vo droit seignor ne devez pas haster, / Ainz le devz servir et hennorer, / Contre toz homes garantir et tenser.*'
[1071] *HGM*, Ll. 10109-12.
[1072] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 429.
[1073] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 432-33.

'You must not threaten your rightful lord, but uphold and
exalt him, and help him against all who come against
him.'[1074]

William now agrees, saying that it is the command of God that 'one must always love loyalty
[*La leauté doit l'en toz jorz amer*].'[1075] Bertrand then finds a settlement: Louis can give
William Moslem Spain![1076] They then walk back into court holding hands[1077] and ask Louis,
who is against the idea.[1078] Now William says 'You are my lord, I do not wish to do you
wrong [*Mes sires estes, si ne vos quier boisier*].'[1079] Eventually Louis agrees to the request.[1080]
However, he makes an agreement (*convenant*) saying that he will aid William only once in
seven years.[1081] This is a special contract.[1082] It means that Louis has prevented losing the
service of William only through making a special contract with him.

The concept of defiance was also used to end relationships of service between
women. When Cariado claims that Kaherdin and Tristan fled (in fact it was their squires),
Brangain, who lost her maidenhood to Kaherdin on the urging of Yseut, rebukes Yseut and
quits her service saying: '*Ysolt, e vus e lui deffi*'. Yseut then hears herself *desfiement* (defied)
and says that Brangain no longer loves her.[1083]

The notion of refusing to serve may be echoed in the struggles for Magna Carta; for
the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* describes the initial struggle as the barons threatening
to withdraw their *servise*.[1084] This may imply that the barons were threatening to formally
defy John.

If defiance is the renunciation not of faithfulness but of homage and service, what is
the difference between them? As we have seen in the chapter 'Formal Ties: Homage and
Oaths', faithfulness is a reciprocal relationship whereas homage involves the subordination of
one person to another. It is this inequality that is being rejected. The follower is stating that
the lord has failed to acknowledge (or reward) his service and that, as a consequence, this
service will no longer be given. This nuance is an important difference.

[1074] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 437-40. The French text reads: '*Sire, ne dites pas que ber. / Vo droit seignor ne
devez menacier, / Ainz le devez lever et essaucier, / Contre toz homes secorre et aïdier.*'
[1075] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 442.
[1076] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 444-59; William agrees (Ll. 460-62).
[1077] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 463.
[1078] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 480-505 (asking), 512-30 (Louis trying to dissuade).
[1079] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 547.
[1080] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 580-88.
[1081] *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 585-93.
[1082] This appears to be similar to the agreements of Stephen's reign: an agreement between two men defining
their relationship and the amount of aid the one can expect. Its occurrence here suggests that such contracts,
though rare, were known, and known outside the context of England's civil war.
[1083] Thomas, Ll. 1334 (Brangain's speech), 1338 (Yseut hears it), 1362 (Yseut's complaint).
[1084] *HGM*, L. 15044.

Breaking an agreement other than one of homage and service may also have been grounds for desertion. According to the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* William des Roches changed sides twice because his superiors failed to keep their agreements.[1085] He had a *couvenance* with the French king that, should he, his wife, her son and friends (*amis*) support him, his lord would receive Poitou, Gascony, Maine and Anjou - but the French king reneged on this deal.[1086] Because of this William no longer trusted the French king's words or agreements ('*Ne son dit ne sa couvenance*').[1087] This led to William making a *couvenance* with King John that, should William return these lands and his lord and lady to John so that they were all 'good friends' (*bon ami*), then John would henceforth listen to his counsel.[1088] But John did not keep his *couvenant* and so William returned to the French king.[1089] We should note that the concept of defiance does not occur in these changes of alignment.

The fall of Normandy in 1204 provides many examples of followers deserting the king of England. On the surface one might expect there to be some examples of ritual defiance, but this does not appear to be the case. As far as I know there are no reported cases of ritual defiance during these events. This may simply be through a lack of evidence but it could be that there were no (or very few) cases. We have seen that defiance is the rejection of a lord, usually on the grounds of failure to reward service. It may be that contemporaries thought this ritual to be inappropriate for the situation in Normandy at the start of the thirteenth century. Perhaps they thought John had given them sufficient rewards and tried to help them?

If they did not use the concept of defiance, how did the aristocrats change sides? The *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* provides several examples. The king of France declared that all those who did *homage* to him before a fixed date would be able to hold land from him.[1090] William Marshal and the earl of Leicester paid 500 silver marks each to the French king to buy time on the condition that, should John be unable to recover the land within a year and a day they would do *homage* to the French king.[1091] William then informed John that he had to perform *hommage* to the French king or he would lose his lands. According to the Marshal's biographer, John described William as loyal (*leial*) and so allowed him to do *hommage*.[1092] Although this story is probably largely fictional - the author trying to place William's behaviour in the best light - it is useful for what it reveals about ideals. By the time the poet wrote his *Histoire* - if not when William changed sides - it would seem that one was

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[1085] These episodes are HGM, Ll. 12437-526. See the subsequent notes for specific terms.

[1086] *HGM*, Ll. 12459 (*couvenance*), 12454 (*amis*), 12451-67 (French king breaking the agreement).

[1087] *HGM*, L. 12470.

[1088] *HGM*, Ll. 12447 (*couvenance*), 12484 (*bon ami*), 12485 (counsel).

[1089] *HGM*, Ll. 12522 (*couvenant*).

[1090] *HGM*, Ll. 12869-71; 12870 for *homage*.

[1091] *HGM*, Ll. 12884-98; 12898 for *homage*.

[1092] *HGM*, Ll. 12947-66; 12953, 12961 (*hommage*), 12958 (*leial*).

supposed to ask one's superior before doing homage to another. Back in Normandy the French king reminded William of their *couvenance* and said that he must do *humage* or lose his lands; so William did *hommage*.[1093] When John then complained that William acted against his interests William replies that he did so with his permission.[1094] This does not prevent John from later complaining again about this. This provokes William to claim that he was never *fals* (false, disloyal) and never did 'treason nor any evil deed [*traïson ne moleste*]'.[1095] According to the author William was not alone in changing sides like this: everyone between Bayeaux and Anet made a *convenance* with the French king.[1096]

Although the concept of defiance is seen in both the Orange Cycle and Béroul's *Tristan* we have seen that it is expressed most clearly in the work of Chrétien de Troyes. These literary sources greatly augment the meagre evidence offered by historical sources. The concept occurs in two contexts. Firstly it is used when two people meet and begin to fight - it is their challenge to each other. The second context is far more specific for it refers to the renunciation of homage or service - not, it should be noted, of 'fealty' or even of 'faithfulness'. However, as we have seen in the cases of Robert of Gloucester and William of Scotland, faith and friendship were often renounced at the same time. It would seem that by the late twelfth century - if not before - it was becoming accepted that a follower could legitimately break faith with his superior. But he could only do so after first striving to aid his lord. By the mid-thirteenth century, however, the concept had broadened. Now the king could defy his followers, for Henry III thought that he should defy a man before he could attack him.[1097]

[1093] *HGM*, Ll. 12979-89; 12980 (*couvenance*), 12984 (*humage*), 12989 (*hommage*).
[1094] *HGM*, Ll. 13027-90.
[1095] *HGM*, Ll. 13150 (*fals*), 13155 (*traïson ne moleste*).
[1096] *HGM*, Ll. 12911-14; 12913 (*convenance*).
[1097] In 1233 Henry III first defied the Marshal to place him 'outside his homage': Matthew Paris, *Chron. Maj.*, vol. 3, pp. 249, 258. In similar fashion Henry III defied the earls of Leicester and Gloucester before the battle of Lewes in 1264, provoking them to renounce homage and faith: *Chron. T. Wykes*, p. 149. This is found in Pollock and Maitland, vol. 1, p. 303 and is discussed in Prestwich, *Edward I*, p. 44.

4

FRIENDS

We now turn to the final part of our trinity of socio-political ties. Friendship takes many forms and means different things to different people. Although in recent years historians have turned their attention to friendship they have largely been concerned with spiritual friendship and friendship between monks. Given the comparative wealth of material for such studies this tendency is only natural, but it says little about what friendship meant to most people most of the time. This study will begin to redress the imbalance. After assessing the importance of friendship as a concept we will examine five types of friendship: friendship as courtesy, formal friendship, emotional friendship, company and companionship.

Although possibly the weakest bond - and certainly the one most neglected by historians - friendship was of major importance in twelfth-century society. In a world where communication was based largely on face-to-face contact the way in which people interacted would have had a greater importance on politics than today;[1098] even today personality and friendship seems to play important roles in determining political behaviour.[1099] But friendship was important not only in itself but also because it provided the 'glue' that held together both lords and followers and families.

The words *amor* (love) and *amicitia* (friendship) could mean a variety of things and describe several types of relationship. *Amor* could be used to describe the attitude of man to God, of man to his lord, and of man and woman.[1100] *Amicitia* is more narrowly defined but is still vague. Agreements use it to describe the relationship between the two sides but here the word is used to describe two very different relationships. Firstly, it is used in treaties of alliance where one can accept that the two people may have been friends. But it is also used

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[1098] The importance of personality is perhaps seen in the failure of Matilda to secure the English throne following Stephen's capture at Lincoln in 1141: although the evidence of her domineering, arrogant and unaffable character is questionable, most modern historiography sees this as causing the alienation of support. For example, Gillingham, *Richard Coeur de Lion*, p. 20.

[1099] For example, there is current media speculation about rivalry and possible hostility between John Prescott and Peter Mandelson within the UK cabinet. In contrast, personal friendships between Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan and Tony Blair and Bill Clinton have been seen as assisting Anglo-American relationships. Shared interests can also bring together people from opposing political parties, such as the co-operation between the Sports Minister Tony Banks and David Mellor, both fans of Chelsea football club.

[1100] Benoit uses *amor* to describe the bond between marriage partners, members of a family and that between Duke William and his followers. But for Benoit it also had an element of mutual respect and can be seen as a

in peace treaties where the two sides had been enemies. Here the word can indicate little more than a statement of intent: that they would like to be friends.[1101] *Amor* is also used in such contexts.

In French sources *amis* can mean emotional friendship. By this I mean a personal relationship based on mutual affection developed over a period of time. But it is also used far more loosely. In many instances people call one another 'friend' only minutes after they have first met. When used like this the word can indicate little more than non-hostility. Sometimes, indeed, the term is used in mockery or to hide one's true feelings.[1102]

Such an imprecise use of language should not be too surprising. In modern English 'friend' can refer to someone you know only slightly or someone you spend much of your free time with. Indeed, in many modern European languages the same word can be used to describe anything from a simple friend to a boyfriend.[1103] This is not to say that the modern language of friendship is imprecise, only allusive. Clarity is added through the use of adjectives. Consider, for example, 'close friend', 'best friend', 'old friend' and 'family friend'. Each of these phrases has its own shade of meaning. In addition there are terms such as 'mate', 'workmate', 'colleague' and 'comrade' that have a special context and implication. Clearly in modern usage 'friend' has a wide scope in meaning, and in the twelfth century it covered a similarly large area.

It is often difficult to differentiate friendship from other bonds in the sources. This is because family members could describe each other as friends and a lord could call his followers friends. When Érec and Énide leave her home, for example, Chrétien remarks that her parents 'wept because of the tenderness and the sweetness and the friendship that they had for their child.'[1104] Fathers could call their sons 'friend',[1105] husbands their wives and wives their husband;[1106] brothers could be friends,[1107] nephews could be friends with their uncle,[1108]

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call for unity. In this way it is similar to the way charters and theologians use *caritas*. On Benoit see Teunis, pp. 200-1, 208-9.

[1101] This is discussed at greater length in the chapter on Formal Friendship.

[1102] Examples are given later when in the discussion of name substitutes in the chapter on Courtesy.

[1103] For example *Freund* in German; *ami* in French; *amico* in Italian. The French word *copain* is another example for it ranges in meaning from boy/girlfriend to the English 'mate', 'pal' and 'chum'.

[1104] *Érec et Énide*, p. 55.

[1105] Bademagu calls his son 'friend': *Lancelot*, p. 283.

[1106] Cuheran calls his wife *bele amie* ('good friend') and *maie amie* ('my friend') and she reciprocates using *amis*: Cuheran to Argentille: Gaimar, Ll. 257, 315; and Argentille to Cuheran: Ll. 306, 311.

[1107] The earl of Salisbury is described as King John's 'close friend and brother [*ert ami e frére*]': *HGM*, Ll. 14737-38. When the brothers Alexander and Alis settle their dispute Chrétien remarks 'They made their peace and were friends again': *Cligés*, p. 154. However, it is unclear whether he saw this as a political friendship or as an expression of sentiment. Given that the phrase comes immediately after a peace settlement it is possible that Chrétien was referring to political friendship.

[1108] William of Orange's nephews are called friends: *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1486, 1495.

and *coisins* and *parenz* could be called friends.[1109] This shows that the notion of friendship crosses socio-political boundaries but does not mean *amis* are always relatives. It seems that friendship was additional to family ties, that it could be super-imposed onto the blood-based structure. This explains why it has been argued that *amis* is another word for relative. Since relatives could be hostile but friends were not, when family members aided each other they could be described as friends. 'Friends' and 'relatives' are not synonyms, but nor are they mutually exclusive. Whereas 'relatives' are connected by blood, 'friends' are connected by mutual support. It is quite possible for the two to be combined but equally possible for there to be relatives who are not friends and friends who are not relatives.

It has been suggested that friendship was a horizontal tie. This view holds that only equals or near-equals could be friends. This need not be true.[1110] Indeed, there is considerable evidence to show that the relationship between a superior and a follower was often one of 'friendship'. For example, Arthur is joyous when Érec returns to his court,[1111] calls him 'dear good friend',[1112] and the author says that 'the king [Arthur] had great love for Érec'.[1113] This shows that friendship could be expressed in vertical relationships. As within the family, friendship could exist between lord and follower. In both instances 'friendship' was the glue and the symbol that held two people together. This suggests that 'friend' could be used to describe any relationship based on affection or mutual support.

[1109] Meilier instructed his *coisins* and *parenz* to damage William's land (*terre*): *HGM*, Ll. 13555-62. He then told King John that, with the support of his *amis*, he could capture William: *HGM*, Ll. 13599-614. Haveloc, seeking support, is told to go to Denmark to find his *amis* and *parenz / parent*: Gaimar, Ll. 600, 607 (*amis*), 602 (*parent*), 608 (*parenz*). Although when Perceval meets his first cousin (they do not know each other) she calls him 'friend'; after they have learned of their relationship they use 'cousin' instead. In so doing they stress their family connection: *Perceval*, p. 425. She uses 'good friend' once more: *Perceval*, p. 426.

[1110] Relationships can be asymmetrical despite using the language of equality: Critchley, *Feudalism*, p. 114.

[1111] *Érec et Énide*, p. 88.

[1112] *Érec et Énide*, p. 89.

[1113] *Érec et Énide*, p. 89. This view is supported by King Evrain calling Érec 'dear friend' and 'friend': *Érec et Énide*, pp. 106, 108. At the end of the poem Arthur again calls Érec 'friend' and Érec calls his father-in-law (who is his tenant) 'my good host and my good friend': *Érec et Énide*, p. 118. Similarly, Guivret and Érec describe each other as both 'lord' and 'friend': *Érec et Énide*, pp. 84-85, 104. King Arthur calls Lancelot 'my friend' when he finally turns up to fight the duel with Meleagant: *Lancelot*, p. 291. Arthur also calls Perceval 'friend' when they first meet; here Arthur seems to be showing how friendly and approachable he is - Perceval appears to be an ignorant Welsh peasant: *Perceval*, p. 393 (twice). The seneschal Kay likewise terms Perceval 'friend', though here the term is used with heavy irony: *Perceval*, p. 393. Arthur also calls the squire Yonet 'friend' whereas the squire calls him 'lord': *Perceval*, p. 396. Arthur calls the defeated Clamedeu 'friend': *Perceval*, p. 416. The Fisher King calls Perceval 'brother' when they meet on the river and 'friend' when they are in the Grail castle: *Perceval*, pp. 418 ('brother'), 419 (three times), 422 (friend). Guinevere calls the Haughty Knight of the Heath 'friend' when he surrenders his lover to her at the bequest of Perceval: *Perceval*, p. 431. Arthur calls Perceval 'friend' when he returns to his court as an accomplished knight: *Perceval*, p. 437. Gawain calls a squire who gave him some information 'friend': *Perceval*, p. 441. Gawain saw Guinevere as a friend as well as a superior: *Perceval*, p. 492. Governal is described as Tristan's 'dear' (*chier*) and 'good company' (*bien le connut*): Béroul, Ll. 971, 976. Both of these have been given the misleading translation of 'companion': Béroul, p. 69.

But what was friendship? A friend was the opposite of an enemy, and friendship was the opposite of hatred,[1114] but a lack of hatred was not enough for friendship.[1115] 'Friend' (*ami*) is also contrasted with a 'stranger' (*estrange*),[1116] so a friend could be well-known. In addition, a maiden might call a knight who served her 'my friend',[1117] so a friend could be someone who served you. More cases will be given when we look at the different types of friendship. All these shades of meaning crystallise around the idea of giving aid.

This suggests a definition of friend as 'someone who gives aid' or 'someone who stands with you'. This seems to lie behind the use of *amis* when we hear that when Henry II left Ireland, Earl Richard was left with his friends, *ses amis*.[1118] These people could be relatives, superiors, followers or anyone else. These basic ideas of mutual support lie behind all the more specific meanings of friend and companion we will examine. They also explain why in dealing with the loss of Normandy in 1204 the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* states that:

'Lack of friends [*d'amis*] and wealth [*d'aveir*]
Has often greatly harmed the cause of many a man.'[1119]

These thoughts lead William Marshal to tell King John 'You haven't many friends [*amis*]' and tell him that he had 'paid no attention to the first signs of discontent'.[1120]

Althoff has commented on this. He has argued that followers of the same lord could become friends, thus creating horizontal links between them. Lords would have supported such developments as friendships increased group solidarity. The lord would likewise have sought to make friends with his followers as this augmented his position by appealing to affection whilst retaining the ties of law and power. Althoff sums up this policy by saying that a lord desired 'to be respected as a lord, to be loved as a friend'.[1121] In other words, lords wished to bind their followers by a mixture of fear and love, *timor et amor*.

[1114] This is seen in Alexander's love-sick monologue: 'My heart, which was my friend, has treated me poorly in abandoning me for my enemy. I can accuse it of treason, for it has done me a great disservice. I thought I had three friends: my heart and my two eyes, but it seems that they all hate me': *Cligés*, p. 133.
[1115] Soredamors, thinking of Alexander, says to herself 'Then I don't hate him. But does that make me his friend? Not at all - no more than I am anyone else's': *Cligés*, Ll. 913-15.
[1116] *Lancelot*, p. 250; *Yvain*, p. 303; Béroul, p. 90; Marie, *Guigemar*, L. 68.
[1117] *Perceval*, p. 484 (three times).
[1118] *Dermot*, L. 2775. Allies are also described as friends. An abbot tells Louis that he has supporters in the town: 'You have more friends [*amis*] today / than you knew of when this dark morning came': *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1710-11.
[1119] *HGM*, Ll. 12670-71.
[1120] *HGM*, Ll. 12723, 12740.
[1121] Althoff, p. 214: '*wie ein Herr geachtet, wie ein Freund geliebt*'. This copies Thietmar of Merseburg's description of the future Henry I's marriage celebration as causing those present to love him as a friend and respect him as a lord: Althoff, p. 207.

i

TYPES OF FRIEND: COURTESY

One avenue of exploration is 'name substitutes'. By this I mean words that replace names in dialogues - words such as 'friend', 'lord' and 'nephew'. When a substitute is used the poet (or the character speaking) is stressing that relationship. This means that in that specific context the poet believed this bond to be the most important tie between the people. Of course there are limits to the examples we can use - the character must have had a choice of names, titles or substitutes to choose from - but many examples exist in vernacular literature. The greatest value of this methodology is that it allows the relative strength of ties to be assessed. For example, since Arthur is both the king and uncle of Gawain we can see which bond - family or follower - each of them stressed at any one time.

Very often 'friend' is used as part of a greeting. A squire called Yonet, for example, calls the yet-to-be-knighted Perceval 'friend', and here we are told that the squire was very courteous - so it seems this was a polite and proper greeting.[1122] Here there can be little true affection as the people are often complete strangers. But what it does imply is a statement of intent: that the speaker is not hostile. Essentially, it is simple courtesy.[1123] This explains why messengers are called 'friend' and 'brother'.[1124] Such usage cannot be used to assess who was friends with whom in the real world but does suggest that the concept of friendship was prevalent in twelfth-century society.

There are many examples of this usage[1125] but several common contexts can be seen. Often 'friend' is used by a superior addressing a follower. In such cases the word is used as

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[1122] *Perceval*, p. 392. When Yonet sees Perceval trying to pull the scabbard off the Red Knight's corpse he again calls him 'friend': *Perceval*, p. 395. After Yonet has put the armour on Perceval reciprocates, calling him 'friend': *Perceval*, p. 396.

[1123] To an extent this use is similar to the modern usage of words like 'love' or 'dear', for example by shop assistants talking to customers, although today people might object to these name substitutes.

[1124] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 2435, 2460, 2471: *'Amis, bels frere'*.

[1125] When Érec first meets the queen and offers himself as escort she immediately calls him 'good friend' and again soon after: *Érec et Énide*, pp. 38, 39. When someone offers Érec and Énide food Érec calls him 'good gentle friend' and after they shared a meal 'friend': *Érec et Énide*, p. 76. After Érec defeats Maboagrain in the episode of the Joy of the Court he calls him 'friend': *Érec et Énide*, p. 111. The nurse of Fenice calls Cligés 'my friend' when she gives him the potion to give to Alis that will save her mistress' virginity: *Cligés*, p. 162. Yvain calls a woman 'my sweet friend' when she asks him to help her: *Yvain*, p. 358. The charcoal-burner who meets Perceval calls him 'young man' and 'friend': *Perceval*, p. 391. When Perceval sees a maiden in a castle he calls her 'friend'[1125] and over dinner she calls him 'dear friend': *Perceval*, p. 405. When she comes to his bed in the night he calls her 'dear friend': *Perceval*, p. 406. When Perceval meets another maiden she too calls him 'friend' until she learns his identity: *Perceval*, p. 425 (twice). Perceval also calls a maiden in tattered clothes 'friend': *Perceval*, p. 427. Gawain calls a young girl who had asked him to fight in a tournament for her love 'friend' and again when she gives him a love token: *Perceval*, p. 447, 449. He also calls a maiden who is grieving for the wounds her lover has suffered 'my sweet friend' and one he meets looking at herself in a mirror: *Perceval*, pp. 461, 463 (twice). A holy hermit calls a penitent Perceval 'dear

an honorific because of its implications of equality, familiarity and, possibly, informality. For example, when Henry II welcomes twelve Irish men to his court he calls them 'his close friends' (ses druz), in marked contrast to the poet who calls them traitors and felons.[1126] Similarly, King Alfred called together ses amis to fight the Danes.[1127] It is also used to address troops.[1128] This use of 'friend' is similar to that of 'brother', as discussed in the chapter on Artificial Kinship.

This term is also used after the ice is broken. In these contexts there could have been an emotional bond between the two people. For example, a vavasour who had invited Érec to stay calls him 'good friend'[1129] and after Érec's victory Érec calls his host 'good friend.'[1130] King Stephen similarly calls the child William Marshal 'friend' twice when they are playing a game.[1131] Again, after his release from captivity Richard I allegedly singled out Baldwin de Béthune for particular praise and described him as 'my good friend [mon boen ami]'.[1132] A woman could even call her husband 'friend' and 'lord'.[1133] Many other examples exist of people who knew each other well calling each other 'friend'.[1134] This shows that people could use 'friend' as a name-substitute even for people they knew very well.

'Friend' is also used to signal intent and a bond of trust and affection. When Sigar realises who Haveloc really is (the son of his old king) he calls him 'my friend' (mien ami)

friend' and 'brother': Perceval, p. 459 ('friend' twice). Gawain calls a helpful boatman 'friend': Perceval, pp. 471 (three times), 472. When Yseut's messenger addresses King Arthur he says 'God save King Arthur and all his company, from his friend Yseut the fair!' - and yet Yseut and Arthur have never met: Béroul, p. 123. Arthur later calls Yseut's messenger 'friend': Béroul, p. 127. A knight calls a maiden 'my friend': Marie, Guigemar, p. 49. A woman calls a lover 'my fair sweet friend': Marie, Guigemar, p. 50.

[1126] Dermot, Ll. 2515 (ses druz), 2500 (traiterez), 2507, 2568, 2574, 2629 (tratres), 2518, 2640 (traitur), 2505 (fel). Likewise, the first knight Perceval sees calls him 'my fair sweet friend', 'young man' and finally 'good brother': Perceval, pp. 383 (friend), 383, 384 (twice), 385 (three times) all 'young man') and p. 385 (brother).

[1127] Gaimar, L. 3367.

[1128] When Maurice de Prendergast is instructed to lead fifty archers he is called amis: Dermot, L. 694. In a similar fashion, William Marshal addresses his army as 'seignor ami': HGM, L. 16381.

[1129] Érec et Énide, pp 43, 44.

[1130] Érec et Énide, p. 53.

[1131] HGM, Ll. 609, 613. In similar fashion Arthur greets the young Alexander calling him 'amis' and biax amis': Cligés, Ll. 359 ('friend'), 367 ('dear friend').

[1132] HGM, L. 10122. Given Baldwin's close relationship to the Marshal, discussed below, this passage should be treated with caution.

[1133] Érec et Énide, p. 68. A man might call his lover 'fairest friend': Perceval, p. 425. Similarly, when Érec's lover has been given a palfrey by her cousin he calls her 'my sweet friend': Érec et Énide, p. 54. Alis calls his wife 'my sweet friend' in his dreams when he believes he is making love to her: Cligés, p. 163. See also Thomas, Ll. 38-39 (amis, bel sire), 57 (bele amie). Here amis is better seen to mean 'love'.

[1134] Having previously given Alexander a gift the queen calls him 'my friend': Cligés, p. 140. After a shared meal Arthur calls Cligés 'friend' and then asks his name and lineage: Cligés, p. 184. The daughter of Bademagu who finds Lancelot when he is imprisoned in Meleagant's tower calls him 'my friend': Lancelot, p. 288. When Lancelot has been healed and is given a rich cloak he calls her 'my dear friend' and 'my sweet noble friend' and kisses and embraces her: Lancelot, p. 289. She calls him 'good gentle friend: Lancelot, p. 289. Perceval calls the maiden whom in ignorance he forcibly kissed and stole her ring 'fair friend': Perceval, p. 390. Ladies at court might call the young daughter of their lord 'dear friend': Perceval, p. 443. After two knights have sworn to tell each other the truth they call each other 'friend': Perceval, p. 486. Mark calls the dwarf who sets the trap for Tristan and Yseut 'friend': Béroul, p. 62. After the love potion wears off Tristan calls Yseut 'friend': Béroul, p. 97. Yseut calls him 'fair sweet friend': Béroul, p. 98. Other people

and declares 'I love [*aim*] you now more than I did yesterday.'[1135] Here Sigar is more willing to give Haveloc support and this change of attitude is signalled by calling Haveloc 'my friend' and stressing the love between them.

'Friend' is also used to slyly draw someone onto your side. Alis, for example, calls the messenger of Alexander 'good gentle friend' when the messenger asks him to return Greece to Alexander.[1136] This political usage is seen again when Arthur calls the eldest daughter of the lord of Blackthorn 'friend' even when he thinks she is wrong to try to disinherit her sister.[1137] A third example is a knight calling a maiden 'friend' when he wants to get some information from her.[1138] Such usage suggests that the word carried 'emotional weight' and that people did not want to let their friends down.

'Friend' is also used in the hope of reconciliation. When Yvain has been verbally abused by the people of the town of Dire Adventure an old lady calls him 'friend' and explains that they meant no harm.[1139] Perceval similarly calls the Haughty Knight of the Heath 'friend' when he wants to calm him down and explain that it was he who kissed his lover.[1140] This usage further supports the idea that 'friendship' carried emotional weight. It also suggests that friends did not - or were not supposed to - quarrel.

The relationship between a teacher and a student could also so be one of friendship. While Gornemant of Gohort teaches Perceval he calls him 'friend'.[1141] After the first lesson they feel close enough to hold hands[1142] and afterwards Gornemant continues to call him 'young man'[1143] and 'friend'.[1144] When he makes Perceval a knight (by attaching his spur and girding on his sword) he kisses him.[1145] He now calls him 'brother', stressing their familiarity and equality as knights.[1146]

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described Governal as Tristan's 'friend': Béroul, p.144. When Roland talks to Oliver shortly before his death he calls Charles 'O king, friend': *Chanson de Roland*, L. 1697.
[1135] Gaimar, Ll. 667, 669.
[1136] *Cligés*, p. 153.
[1137] *Yvain*, p. 369.
[1138] *Perceval*, p. 483.
[1139] *Yvain*, p. 359. They hoped he would not try to stay there because it was dangerous.
[1140] *Perceval*, p. 429. Gawain calls Kay 'my good friend' when he wants to placate him: *Perceval*, p. 435. Anguingueron calls Perceval 'my good friend' when he is begging for mercy after their duel: *Perceval*, p. 409 (three times). When Yseut wishes to appease Brangain who has just defied her she addresses her as *amie*: Thomas, L. 1425.
[1141] *Perceval*, pp. 399 (twice), 400 (four times).
[1142] *Perceval*, p. 400.
[1143] *Perceval*, pp. 401, 402.
[1144] *Perceval*, p. 401 (twice).
[1145] *Perceval*, pp. 401-2.
[1146] *Perceval*, p. 402.

Rebels could see their comrades as friends. Count Angrés, for instance, saw the traitors quartered by Arthur as his friends.[1147] This may be in a political sense and shows that in times of trouble one's supporters were friends.

Friends are also seen in charter addresses. Some charters are addressed (in part) to friends (*amicis*) and offer greetings (*salutem*) and friendship (*amicitiam*).[1148] Such language seems formal and may owe much to the conventions of diplomatic form. Nevertheless, they may refer to formal friendship, that is, to people attached to the grantor in some formal way, or it may refer to people who had 'friendly relations' with the grantor. Such people might be members of the grantor's clientele. However, without more detailed investigation we cannot be certain whether such addresses refer to affinities or whether the style is just a matter of diplomatic form without any direct correlation to the structure of the grantor's followers.

'Friend' was not the only word used as a name substitute. 'Vassal' seems to have been used in a similar context. One could describe a friend (or a prospective enemy) as a 'vassal'. Thus when Érec challenges for the sparrowhawk the other knight replies 'Who are you, vassal, who have challenged me for the sparrowhawk?'[1149] In like mood Érec calls his

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[1147] *Cligés*, p. 141.

[1148] A charter of William III earl of Warenne of 1138 x 47 to Nostell priory is addressed '*Willelmus comes de Warenna Willelmo filio Raven vicecomiti suo et omnibus vicecomitibus futuris de Wachefeld et Roberto filio Elie et Ranaldo filio Britonis et omnibus baronibus et fidelibus et amicis suis et ministris Francis et Anglis salutem et amicitiam*': *Early Yorkshire Charters*, vol. 8, p. 83. William earl of Essex (probably William de Mandeville and from the time of Henry II or Richard I) addressed a charter to Thomas fitz *Aluredi* '*Guillelmus comes Essex, omnibus Hominibus et Amicis suis Francis et Anglis Clericis et Laicis salutem*': *Formulare Anglicanum*, no. 294; similar addresses were used by William de Goldingeham (no. 291), Richard de Lucy (nos. 79, 288), Robert Hose son of Walkelini Hose (no. 295), Elyas de Beventune (no. 296), Humphrey fitz Robert (no. 300) and again William earl of Essex (no. 414). In 1157 x 1158 David Olifarde addressed a charter to his 'peers, friends and men': '*paribus amicis et hominibus*': Keith Stringer, 'A Cistercian Archive: the earliest charters of Sawtry Abbey', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 6 (1978-81) 325-34 no. 3, p. 333. A charter of Walter de Lacy of 1202-31 similarly began 'Walter de Lacy to all his men and friends present and future': '*Galturus de Lasci omnibus hominibus suis et amicis presentibus & futuris*': Morris, Rupert H., *Chester in the Plantagenet and Tudor reigns* (Printed for the author, Chester, 1894) p. 11; I owe this reference to Christopher Lewis. Ranulf II earl of Chester addressed a grant to Alan Silvester of Storeton and Puddington in Wirral in 1130 x 1140 '*R. comes Cestrie constabuloni et dapifero et omnibus baronibus suis et hominibus et amicis*': *Chester*, no. 35. Similarly, Ranulf's confirmation of Robert earl of Gloucester's gift of Chipping Campden to his daughter Matilda countess of Chester at Lincoln 27 October 1141 x 1145 is addressed '*Rannulfus comes Cestrie episcopo suo Bangoriensi et constabuloni et dapifero et omnibus baronibus suis et hominibus Francis et Anglis et Walensibus et omnibus amicis suis salutes*': *Chester*, no. 59. Similar charters of the earls of Chester come from 1186 x 1200 (no. 203), 1207 x 1211 (no. 212), ?1208 x 1217 (no. 233), 1208 x 1213 (no. 282), 1208 x 1217 (no. 373) and June-September 1215 (no. 394 - the 'Magna Carta of Cheshire'). Out of the thirty charters in *Facsimiles of Early Cheshire Charters* only two include 'friends' in the address; both refer to land being exchanged for goods or money that will be paid annually and also refer to 'homage and service': *Facsimiles of Early Chester Charters*, ed. Geoffrey Barraclough (The Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 1957) nos. 5(1) (Roger de Rollos to his sister Agnes in c.1185 x 1190) and 9 (Hugh of Dutton to his son Adam). Other addressees were specific to an individual or locality, to the earl's tenants (men, barons and faithful), to his officials (constables, stewards, barons, justiciar, sheriff, officers, bailiffs and men) or 'to all the faithful'. The addresses used by the earls of Chester are discussed in Hudson, 'Diplomatic and legal aspects of the charters', pp. 156-59. An agreement taking the form of a chirograph could open with a reference to friendship: '*hec est amicabilis composicio*': *Chester*, no. 251.

[1149] *Érec et Énide*, p. 47. L. 840: '*vassax*'.

opponent 'vassal'.[1150] When the two have fought each other to exhaustion they still refer to each other as 'vassal'.[1151] Even at the end of their contest, when Érec's opponent sues for mercy, he describes Érec as 'vassal'.[1152] However, once Érec has spared his life his former opponent calls him 'noble knight',[1153] while Érec continues to call him 'vassal'.[1154] In another bad mood Érec calls Kay 'vassal' and threatens to strike him if he insists.[1155] Elsewhere Chrétien has other opponents calling one another 'vassal'.[1156] In these examples 'vassal' seems to have been an abusive term - you called your enemy 'vassal'. But this is not always the case. As argued above ('Securing Followers: Homage and Oaths'), *vassus* could mean 'ideal follower'.[1157] It may be that Chrétien is alone in using 'vassal' in this fashion, but to be reliable such a claim would require a wider examination of contemporary literature.

When one wanted to be polite one could use the term 'lord'. For example, when Gawain is instructed by Arthur to ask a stranger politely about his business he calls him 'lord'.[1158] When Lancelot wishes to ask for Gawain's spare horse he calls him 'lord'.[1159] The same word could also be used to address your friends, as Alexander addresses his companions.[1160] Those captured in a tournament refer to their victor as 'lord.'[1161] *Seignor* is also the word used to by a poet to address his audience.[1162]

References to blood relationships follow a similar pattern. A father, for instance, might refer to his daughter as 'my dear daughter'.[1163] Perceval calls his mother 'mother'[1164] and she calls him 'son'.[1165] Gawain calls his brother 'brother'.[1166]

[1150] *Érec et Énide*, p. 47. L. 851.
[1151] *Érec et Énide*, p. 48 (twice).
[1152] *Érec et Énide*, p. 49.
[1153] *Érec et Énide*, p. 49.
[1154] *Érec et Énide*, p. 50.
[1155] *Érec et Énide*, pp. 86 (twice), 87 (twice). Kay wishes to take him to Arthur's court.
[1156] Two giants also call Érec 'vassal' when he challenges them for having captured a maiden's lover: *Érec et Énide*, p. 91 (twice). The knight (Maboagrain) guarding the maiden during the quest for the Joy of the Court twice calls Érec 'vassal': *Érec et Énide*, p. 109. In return Érec - in a conciliatory mood - calls him 'friend': *Érec et Énide*, p. 109. Cligés also refers to opponents as 'vassal': *Cligés*, p. 165. The knight guarding the spring who attacks Calogrenant calls him 'vassal' when he challenges him: *Yvain*, p. 301. The two demon brothers who fight Yvain in the town of Dire Adventure call him 'vassal': *Yvain*, p. 364. When Kay challenges the day-dreaming Perceval he calls him 'vassal': *Perceval*, p. 434. A maiden who wishes to test Gawain by causing him suffering calls him 'vassal': *Perceval*, p. 463, 468 (twice). He continues to call her 'friend': *Perceval*, p. 469. A hideous squire calls Gawain 'vassal' as he curses him and when he has been hit by Gawain: *Perceval*, p. 467 (both). When you really wanted to insult someone you called them 'knave' (and probably a good few other words the poets fail to mention!): *Cligés*, p. 165.
[1157] We are told, for instance, that 'there was no better vassal' than Naimes: *Chanson de Roland* L. 230. When people wish to praise Érec they exclaim 'God, what a vassal! He has no equal under the heavens': *Érec et Énide*, p. 53.
[1158] *Érec et Énide*, p. 87.
[1159] *Lancelot*, p. 210.
[1160] *Cligés*, pp. 138, 145.
[1161] *Cligés*, p. 184.
[1162] *La Prise d'Orange*, L. 1.
[1163] *Érec et Énide*, p. 43.
[1164] *Perceval*, p. 386 (twice), 388.
[1165] *Perceval*, pp. 386 (four times), 387 (twice), 388 (twice).

Other words are also used as name substitutes. Perceval is often called 'young man' and 'youth'.[1167] The name of a profession could also be used in this way. Thus Kay is often called 'seneschal'[1168] and Perceval calls a charcoal-burner 'peasant'.[1169] Sometimes these phrases could be combined. Fenice, for instance, calls Cligés 'friend, good sir'.[1170] But 'friend' seems to be the word most commonly used like this.

[1166] *Perceval*, p. 439.

[1167] *Perceval*, pp. 391 (by the charcoal-burner), 392 (twice; by the Red Knight), 394 (by a maiden), 408 (four times; once by Anguingueron, three times by Chrétien himself), 409 (Chrétien).

[1168] As in *Érec et Énide*, p. 51.

[1169] *Perceval*, p. 391.

[1170] *Cligés*, p. 175.

ii

TYPES OF FRIEND: FORMAL FRIENDSHIP

Before we go further it is necessary to draw a distinction between two types of friendship.[1171] One will be termed 'genuine' or 'emotional' friendship. Here the people are bound together by a bond of affection. The other will be termed 'formal' or 'political' friendship. Here the people are bound together by oath or ritual; there need not be any sentiment of affection between them.[1172] Both types of friendship are seen in the vernacular sources. Later we will discuss the special type of friendship known as 'companionship'. Companionship was a close bond that combined elements of both formal and emotional friendship. Distinguishing between these types in the sources can be difficult but it is necessary if we are to understand the nature of friendship in the Middle Ages.[1173]

By 'formal friendship' I mean a relationship that is based not on emotion but on the realisation of political interest. What such agreements show is that, at the very least, the participants were willing to limit their aggression. If this sounds strange a modern parallel

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[1171] Aspects of this chapter have been presented by the author in three conference papers: '*Conventiones* and royal authority: Stephen the not-so-bad?' (University of Houston, Texas, USA, 1995); 'Conflict resolution among aristocrats in Stephen's reign' (International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 1996); 'The terminology of friendship in twelfth-century England' (International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 1998). Much of the Latin evidence is also detailed in John Meddings, 'Loyalty and War in Twelfth-Century England', (Unpublished MA thesis, University of Leeds, 1994).

[1172] Althoff claims 'friendship in the Middle Ages was not an expression of subjective emotion but had the character of a contract': Althoff, p. 86. The resulting associations could be inherited and brought equality and reciprocal rights and obligations: Althoff, p. 87. Until late Carolingian times *amicitia* only occurred between ruler and foreign princes: Althoff, p. 96. This was because Charlemagne banned oaths of alliance between friends: Althoff, p. 156. On *amicitia* see particularly Althoff, pp. 89-119. See also T. Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages (800-1056)* (London, 1991) pp. 138-41, 144-50, 256, 290. On agreements and dispute settlement see also S. Roberts, 'The study of disputes: anthropological perspectives', in *Disputes and Settlements: Law and Human Relations in the West*, ed. J. Bossy (Cambridge, 1983) pp. 1-17; W. Davies and P. Fouracre, eds., *The Settlement of Disputes in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1986); Jane Martindale, '"His special friend"? The settlement of disputes and political power in the kingdom of the French (tenth to mid-twelfth century)', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th series, vol. 5 (1995) 21-57; Karl Schmid, '*Unerforschte Quellen aus Quellenarmer Zeit: Zur amicitia zwischen Heinrich I und dem westfränkischen König Robert im Jahre 923*', *Francia*, 12 (1984) 19-47, 136, 141-42. Modern parallels are easy to come by: we still refer to countries that support our own as 'friendly', and states can still have 'friendly relations'.

[1173] The task is not made easier by the occasional use of political terminology to describe emotional friendship. For example, when Brangain is convinced by Tristan that it was not himself but his squires whom Cariado saw fleeing Thomas says that she accepted his *fei* (faith) and that henceforth they were in *l'acordement* (accord): Thomas, Ll. 1989-90. From this passage alone it would be possible to see a formal relationship between these people, but we know from the rest of the text that this assumption would be inaccurate. At other times the relationship is simply obscure. In *Girart de Vienne* Roland and Oliver may make a pact of friendship for Roland pledges Oliver his loyalty (*loiauté*), that he will share all his territorial possessions with him and marry his sister Aude: *Girart de Vienne*, Ll. 5935-49. That in the *Chanson de Roland* they are often described as 'companions' suggests it may be possible for formal friendship to develop into the close bond of companionship. Historical sources can be equally vague. William Marshal is asked by someone 'make me a gift, / Out of *amors* and as a reward': *HGM*, Ll. 1145-46. This passage may refer to political friendship but it could be the request for a gift by a genuine friend.

might help: we still refer to countries as being 'friends'. We say, for example, that Britain has 'friendly relations' with the United States. It is this sort of friendship with which we are concerned.

Co-operation alone cannot be taken as evidence of an agreement. The Beaumont twins, Robert of Leicester and Waleran of Meulan, are known to have co-operated during the civil war of Stephen's reign but there is no evidence that they were bound by a written agreement.[1174] Nor can we be sure that a formal agreement was involved when we hear that by 1152 William de Beauchamp 'had sided whole-heartedly with [Roger] the earl of Hereford'.[1175] But it is perhaps in the context of formal friendship that we should understand how love could allow former enemies to be friends.[1176]

We must be particularly careful in using literary evidence to put forward ideas of formal friendship. Often the poets are at pains to show people are friends and then move the story on as fast as possible. Under such circumstances people might be portrayed as making friendships far faster than they would in the real world. While literature may shed light on the condition it cannot stand as evidence alone. But it is clear that writers believed friendships could be created through agreement and that friends would fight alongside each other against a common foe.

The most celebrated political agreement coming out of twelfth-century England is the final agreement of earls Ranulf of Chester and Robert of Leicester. Dating from 1149 x 1153, this describes the obligations each earl agreed to. The terms were reciprocal, showing that the two earls treated each other as equals.[1177] Although some agreements, such as those between successive earls of Gloucester and Hereford can compete with this treaty in terms of complexity, many - indeed most - were far simpler affairs. Some appear to have been oral

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[1174] Robert seems to have kept an eye on his brother's English possessions as he is reported as having destroyed Stephen's siege works at Worcester in 1145 x 1146: Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. T. Arnold (Rolls Series, 1879) pp. 282-83. More convincing than this is a writ from Waleran to Robert from 1136 x 1141: *The Coucher Book of Selby*, vol. 2, no. 1157. Davis considers this to be evidence of an 'alliance': Davis, *King Stephen*, p. 113.

[1175] *GS*, ch. 117, p. 229. On the stormy relationship between William and his (?former) lord Waleran of Meulan see the 1141 charter of Matilda to William: *Regesta* 3, no. 68. It is discussed in Davis, *King Stephen*, pp. 113-14 and Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, p. 50.

[1176] *Leges Henrici Primi*, 76.5b (concerning wergeld).

[1177] Firstly, 'The earl of Leicester will keep faith with earl Ranulf saving the faith due to his liege lord' and 'Earl Ranulf will keep faith with the earl of Leicester saving the faith of his liege lord'. Secondly, 'And if it shall be necessary for the earl of Leicester to go upon the earl of Chester with his liege lord, he may not bring with him more than twenty knights' and 'And if it shall be necessary for the earl of Chester to go upon the earl of Leicester with his liege lord he may not bring with him more than twenty knights'. Thirdly, 'Neither the earl of Leicester's liege lord nor any other may attack the earl of Chester or his men from the earl of Leicester's castles or his land' and 'And neither the earl of Chester's liege lord nor any other may attack the earl of Leicester or his men from the earl of Chester's castles or his land'. Finally, 'And the earl of Leicester ought to help the earl of Chester against all men except the earl of Leicester's liege lord and Earl Simon [of Northampton]' and 'And the earl of Chester ought to help the earl of Leicester against all men except the earl of Chester's liege lord and Earl Robert de Ferrers [of Derby].'

agreements between neighbours or grants to religious houses in compensation for damages made earlier.[1178] But all these agreements have one thing in common for they attempt to guide the future relations between two powers.

These agreements can be found in a wide range of sources.[1179] One problem that arises is whether to translate phrases formally or informally.[1180] For example, the *Gesta Stephani* describes how in 1136 Stephen made 'every effort of *amor*' to the 'new men' of Henry I to bring them to an *amoris concordia* in which they 'obtained all their requests according to their desire and paid *hominum* with the addition of a *iusiurandum liberale*'. But how are we to translate such phrases? Here *amor* may mean 'a positive overture' but in other contexts it implies a formal alliance. Again, *amoris concordia* here seems to refer to a loose arrangement but elsewhere it is used to mean 'treaty'.[1181] The final two phrases in the quotation further illustrate the difficulty: while *hominum* does indeed seem to refer to something akin to our concept of homage, the *iusiurandum liberale* seems too loose to refer to a rigid concept of 'fealty' but could well allude to a promise to keep good faith.[1182]

As the words used by writers tell us much about these agreements it is worth looking at their use of language in detail. Chroniclers seem to use love and friendship as synonyms. Orderic Vitalis is a good example of this.[1183] He records that in 1113 Henry I of England and Louis VI of France resolved to make a *pacem firmare* ('firm peace') and so bound themselves into an *amoris vinculum* ('alliance of love') to keep the peace (*pax*).[1184] Five years later Louis accused Henry of breaking their *foedus*, causing Henry to assert that it was Louis who had first broken their *pactum amicitiae* but that, nevertheless, he was still willing to keep their *amicitiae foedus* provided Louis made amends. A *concordia* was then ratified: castles were restored and captives freed.[1185] When this agreement was renewed by King Stephen in 1137

[1178] An example of a grant to a religious institution for damages is the 1139 x 1147 agreement of Robert earl of Leicester and Alexander bishop of Lincoln: *Registrum Antiquissimum of the Cathedral Church of Lincoln*, vol. 2, ed. C. W. Foster (Hereford, 1931) no. 324, pp. 16-17. The agreement grants ten burgesses from the earl of Leicester to the bishop of Lincoln as compensation for previous damage to his property.

[1179] See Meddings, pp. 6-7.

[1180] There is an interesting parallel here in the modern meanings of 'feudal' and 'feudalism' which have both general and specific meanings: Susan Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*; John O. Ward, 'Feudalism: interpretative category or framework of life in the Medieval West?' in E. Leach, S. N. Mulcherjee and J. O. Ward (eds.), *Feudalism: Comparative Studies*, pp. 40-49.

[1181] For the use of *concordia* as 'treaty' see for example the third *conventio* between the earls of Chester and Leicester. Similarly, the term *confederatio amoris* refers to two specific and detailed agreements, those between successive earls of Gloucester and Hereford.

[1182] A similar problem has recently been seen in the work *Glanvill* which appears to use 'fee' in two ways, a specific way meaning 'land held in fee' and a more general one meaning 'holding'. See Hudson, *Land, Law and Lordship*, p. 19.

[1183] On Orderic's use of language see also Meddings, pp. 27-28. A recent translation of *amicitia* in the *Historia Novella* of William of Malmesbury is 'an alliance of equals': John Gillingham, '1066 and the introduction of chivalry into England', George Garnett and John Hudson, eds., *Law and Government in Medieval England and Normandy. Essays in honour of Sir James Holt* (Cambridge, 1994) p. 49.

[1184] Orderic, vi, pp. 180-81.

[1185] Orderic, vi, pp. 288-99.

Orderic describes it as a *foedus amicitiae*.[1186] Here Orderic seems to use *pactum, foedus* and *concordia* interchangeably in addition to using *amor* and *amicitia* as synonyms.

Orderic also uses the language of friendship when describing the relationship of Henry I and his brother Robert Curthose. In 1101 the two brothers agreed a peace (*pax*) but the following year Henry accused his brother of breaking the *foedus*.[1187] Curthose promised to redress these transgressions and renounced his pension of £3,000. In return Henry restored the earldom of Surrey to William de Warrene, renewed the *foedus* with Curthose, and assured him of his *amicitia*.[1188] Here it is unclear whether by *amicitia* Orderic meant anything more than simple 'friendship' between the brothers, but it is likely that he intended the more specialised meaning that we find him employing to describe the relations of Henry with Louis of France.[1189]

Orderic is not alone in using such language, nor in using several phrases to describe the same agreement. The *Gesta Stephani*, for example, describes an agreement of 1141 between the Empress Matilda and Henry bishop of Winchester as a treaty of peace and friendship (*pacis et amicitiae foedus*) and as a treaty of peace and concord (*pacis et concordiae foedus*).[1190] The same words were also used as synonyms in the early Middle Ages.[1191]

We may also find formal friendship in legal texts. This seems to be expressed when we are told in the *Leges Henrici Primi* that 'every lord [*dominus*] may bring a charge against his men [*hominibus*] and friends [*amicis*] if anyone does him a wrong'.[1192]

The two agreements between successive earls of Gloucester and Hereford (1141 x 1142 and 1147 x 1149) call themselves an alliance of love, *confederatio amoris*. This is also the language of friendship. Although the first of these agreements looks like a treaty of alliance it is perhaps closer to a peace treaty. This is seen in the clause by which Gloucester took Hereford's son as hostage. Here 'love' describes the *intention* but not the *sentiment* of

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[1186] Orderic, vi, pp. 482-83. Robert de Torigni and Henry of Huntingdon say it was a *concordia*. Torigni, p. 132; Huntingdon, p. 260.

[1187] On three accounts: by not taking action against traitors; by failing to enforce justice; and by restoring to Robert de Bellême the castle of Argentan, the bishopric of Séez and the forest of Gouffern.

[1188] Orderic, vi, pp. 12-15.

[1189] Three years later the two brothers had again fallen out. According to Orderic, Curthose feared being put on trial for his incompetent government and so offered Henry the service of the count of Evreux as a bribe to win his *amicitia*. Here Orderic's use of the word could be in its basic meaning of 'good will', although the relationship was formalised by a *foedus*. See Orderic, vi, pp. 58-59.

[1190] On this text see Meddings, p. 10. This description is similar to the way Bohemond is said to have made a *concordatus* (to return the animals his followers had seized) with Byzantine officials for *amicitia*: *Gesta Francoram*, p. 10. Again, the 'king' of Tripoli, Fakhr al-Mulk ibn Ammar, offered Raymond of St-Gilles a 'faithful pact of friendship' (*fideliter pactum iniret amicitiam*): *Gesta Francoram*, p. 83.

[1191] The alliance created by the Strasbourg oaths of 842 between the brothers Ludwig the German and Charles the Bald are termed *pax, foedus*, and *amicitia*: Althoff, p. 97; also pp. 125, 133.

[1192] *Leges Henrici Primi*, 86.1.

the earls.[1193] In other words, the use of the word *amor* does not mean that the relationship was one of 'love' but that they wanted to be allies.

This relationship was developed by their heirs. The *confederatio amoris* of their sons, William earl of Gloucester and Roger earl of Hereford, is far more precise and defines their relationship as Roger being the man (*homo*) of William. In addition it provides greater clarity as to the aid that the earl of Gloucester will give to the earl of Hereford, in particular that he will help to disinherit Gilbert de Lacy. Here the two earls seem to be creating not an uneasy peace but an active alliance to further their shared interests. This means that the phrase *confederatio amoris* was able to refer to both a peace agreement and an active alliance: it was not specific to a particular type of agreement.

However, not all contemporary agreements used the language of friendship. Gaimar, for example, describes relationships in terms not of friendship but of artificial brotherhood. In an attempt to negotiate a peaceful conclusion to their dispute Cnut offers to divide up the land with Eadmund saying:

> "'And let us be brothers [*freres*] in truth.
>
> I will swear [*iurrai*] to you, you swear [*vurez*] to me,
>
> To keep this brotherhood [*fraternite*],
>
> As if we were born of one mother [*de une mere*],
>
> As if we were both brothers [*frere*],
>
> Of one father [*pere*] and one mother [*mere*];
>
> Also let there be hostages [*ostages*] between us;
>
> Trust me, and I will trust you.'"[1194]

Eadmund then asks:

> "'Will you carry out this talk [*parlement*]?"
>
> "Yes," said Cnut, "in truth,
>
> Let there be a pledge [*afie*] between us.
>
> Here I pledge [*afi*] you my faith [*fei*],
>
> I will keep this covenant [*couenant*] thus."
>
> This covenant [*couenant*] was pledged [*afie*].
>
> Behold all settled [*acorde*].
>
> On this covenant [*couenant*] they embraced.
>
> These covenants [*couenanz*] were well kept.'[1195]

[1193] These two earls were not the only prominent men using agreements to promote peaceful relations. Ranulf of Chester seems to have used agreements to bring peace several times: see Meddings, pp. 67-69.
[1194] Gaimar, Ll. 4339-46.

This agreement describes creating a bond of artificial brotherhood rather than of creating friendship.[1196] The new relationship is signalled by a ritual of embracing. But whilst this display of formal affection might be the outward demonstration of the settlement the agreement itself involved an exchange of pledges. Moreover, the settlement was backed up by the realistic and pragmatic step of exchanging hostages. Finally, whilst the negotiation is called a *parlement* the agreement itself is described as a covenant four times and as an accord once. This shows that that there was a perceived difference between a negotiation and a settlement. Unfortunately Gaimar might not be a reliable guide to twelfth-century practice as he was describing an earlier time and may have been influenced by his perceptions of that time.

The final agreement between the earls of Chester and Leicester also makes no reference to love or friendship. Instead, the agreement describes itself as a *conventio... et finalis pax* and is arranged on the basis of oaths of faith with each earl pledging to the other. This is very different to the language of friendship.[1197] It may mean that there were three mechanisms for ending disputes, one using the idea of friendship, one artificial brotherhood, the other that of homage and lordship.

The closeness of covenants to formal friendship is seen in the *History of William Marshal*. A *parlement* between the kings of England and France led to a covenant (*convenances*) that gave John's niece in marriage to Louis 'for concord and for being friends [*por concorde & por estre amis*].'[1198] This would seem to be a treaty of friendship but it is called a covenant.

The timespan of when political covenants were used is uncertain.[1199] Writing in the early twelfth century but recording details of the end of the eleventh, the author of the *Gesta*

[1195] Gaimar, Ll. 4352-60. After this the agreement is called *lacordement*: Gaimar, L. 4368. We are told that afterwards the two kings ruled more equally than brothers or kinsfolk (*frere ne parent*) and that they loved (*sentreamerent*) each other more than brothers (*frere*): Gaimar, Ll. 4396 (*frere ne parent*), 4397-98.

[1196] This shows the importance of the family to medieval society and to political ideas.

[1197] Other twelfth-century documents describing themselves as covenants from *Formulare Anglicanum* include the agreement ('*conventio et concordia*') between the convent of Bath and William Hosato in 1123 (no. 136) and two *conventiones* concerning Christchurch Canterbury (nos. 137-38). In modern law 'covenant' is still used to describe a variety of agreements. One modern dictionary of law defines a covenant as 'A written document in which signatories either commit themselves to do a certain thing, to not do a certain thing or in which they agree on a certain set of facts. They are very common in real property dealings and are used to restrict land use such as among shopping mall tenants or for the purpose of preserving heritage property.' See the on-line Legal Dictionary of the WWLIA at http://www.wwlia.org/diction.htm.

[1198] *HGM*, Ll. 12012 (*parlement*), 12014 (*convenances*), 12018 (*por concorde & por estre amis*).

[1199] On the development and proliferation of these agreements see also Meddings, pp. 17-21. To this it should be added that the Bible also terms agreements 'covenants'. This suggests Church involvement in the process. This connection can perhaps be seen in the way religious covenants appear in vernacular texts. Gaimar, for example, has King Eadwine claim to have a *covenant* with God that he would baptise his children in return for military victory: Gaimar, L. 1185; other MSS use the spelling *covent* and *cuvent*. For the geographical distribution of the agreements see Meddings, pp. 72-74. To the arguments presented there it should be noted that although most studies show Stephen's power to be concentrated in the south east two charters from

Francorum described the agreement between the Emperor Alexios and the Franks as a *conventionem* and the agreement by which Bohemond was to occupy the city of Antioch if he was able to capture it (which he proceeded to do) as a *conventio*.[1200] Moreover, when the count of Poitou threatened the abbot of Saint-Jean de Sorde in the 1060s the abbot went to the duke of Aquitaine to secure '*fedus et conventiones et pactum*' - but was unsuccessful.[1201] This suggests that the phrase could describe political agreements much earlier than was previously thought, at least to the time of the Norman Conquest of England. Although in the later twelfth century *Glanvill* does not mention *conventiones* under Henry III the writ of covenant (*breve de conventione*) became common in the context of conveyances of land.[1202] By the death of Edward I a *conventio* had to be a sealed, written document.[1203]

Agreements are also described in contemporary vernacular literature. The works of Chrétien de Troyes contain many examples. For instance, after meeting Gawain Perceval says 'I give you my word to accompany you wherever you wish, for that is right, and I am most honoured to now be your friend.' They then embrace and take off their armour.[1204] Here we are looking at a formal agreement to become friends that is then sealed with a ritual embracement.[1205] Formal friendship is also seen in the *Song of Roland*. Blancandrin advises the Saracen King Marsile to offer Charles 'faithful service and very great friendship [*fedeilz servises e mult granz amistez*]'.[1206] He later tells Marsile 'you will have an excellent pact [*mult bon plait en avreiz*]'. This is an offer of alliance using the language of friendship. We also catch a glimpse of the rituals involved for when Ganelon later agrees to betray Roland Marsile kisses him on the neck.[1207] As a mark of friendship [*amistiez*] a Moor then gives him a precious sword as a gift[1208] and they kiss.[1209] Another Moor then gives Ganelon a helmet and they kiss on the mouth and face.[1210] The queen then gives him two necklaces for his wife and

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Shropshire show him to be a figure of authority in the mid-Welsh March in 1138 and 1146 x 1148: D. C. Cox, 'Two unpublished charters of King Stephen for Wenlock Priory', *Shropshire History and Archaeology. Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society* 66, ed. R. A. Preston (1989) 56-59. Although most of our evidence for agreements in the real world come from magnates - the earls of Chester, Gloucester, Hereford and Leicester occur in all but a handful of the known agreements - this may be put down to chances of survival and the fact that chroniclers were more interested in their activities than in the actions of the less powerful: see Meddings, pp. 74-75. On the increased use of friendship alliances during the late Carolingian period see Althoff, p. 111.

[1200] *Gesta Francorum*, pp. 45, 75.
[1201] *Le Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Jean de Sorde*, ed. P. Raymond (Pau, 1873) no. 40, cited Martindale, '"His special friend"', pp. 37-38.
[1202] The Curia Regis Rolls for Easter 1271 alone contain 35 such actions: Pollock and Maitland, vol. 2, p. 216.
[1203] Pollock and Maitland, vol. 2, p. 219.
[1204] *Perceval*, p. 436.
[1205] Another example is when the duke of Saxony hears that his nephew has been killed he offers his friendship to whoever brought the slayer's head to him: *Cligés*, p. 164.
[1206] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 29.
[1207] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 601.
[1208] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 617-24.
[1209] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 626.
[1210] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 633.

says that she loves [*aim*] him (there is no kiss here).[1211] These gifts and kisses seem to be formalising the agreement, similar to shaking hands today. Formal friendship is also seen in other literary sources.[1212]

Other terms were also sometimes used. According to Gaimar, King Penda made an *acordement* with the kings Cwichelm and Cynegils to make war on Eadwine.[1213] King Griffith of Wales also made a *sacordat*.[1214] However, when we hear that William Marshal knew that there would be no *acort* with those left behind if he left Ireland, it would appear that it is referring to a level of peace and goodwill and not to a specific agreement.[1215]

Gift-giving may have been used to create formal friendship. We have already seen this with Ganelon. When Pierre de Leschans returned a horse to William Marshal some people said that William should give him a share of the horse 'for agreement and for friendship [*Par concorde e par amist*[*i*]*é*].'[1216] This phrase makes it clear that the gift symbolised friendship and was *for* friendship. The episode is repeated for a second horse with another person.[1217] It was through ceremonies such as these that formal friendship was probably created. However, there is a problem. According to the *Leges Henrici Primi* it was commendable (*laudem*) for the person offered a gift for *amicitia* that he 'gives back the whole thing'.[1218] This seems to suggest that gifts were not exchanged when friendship was contracted. This appears to contradict what we have seen in the other sources. This could be because one source is inaccurate or misleading or because we are dealing with different types of source.

We have seen that many words were used to describe agreements. The use of several phrases to describe what is essentially the same thing suggests a lack of precision or consistency with the meaning of words.[1219] Phrases such as 'covenant', 'pact of friendship', 'concord of love' and so on all refer to agreements that seem to be of the same genre. This may mean that these types of arrangement were new to twelfth-century England, or at least that the writing down of such agreements was new. Marjorie Chibnall has claimed that most agreements of the early twelfth century would have been oral in nature.[1220] Such agreements

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[1211] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 634-37.

[1212] When Guy of Alemagne learns he will meet William of Orange in a duel he offers to make peace (*paiz*) and become good friends (*bon ami*): *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 2531. When William refuses they defy (*desfi*) each other: *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 2540.

[1213] Gaimar, Ll. 1211-25, quote L. 1220.

[1214] This *lacordement* lasted only a short time: Gaimar, Ll. 5071 (*sacordat*), 5073 (*lacordement*).

[1215] *HGM*, L. 13462.

[1216] *HGM*, Ll. 3965-94, 4076-196; quotation L. 4172.

[1217] *HGM*, Ll. 4202-84.

[1218] *Leges Henrici Primi*, 36.2.

[1219] See Meddings, pp. 15-16.

[1220] Chibnall, 'Anglo-French', p. 16. Also Martindale, '"His special Friend"', pp. 34, 44-45; Althoff, p. 118; Meddings, pp. 9-15. Until the second half of the twelfth century most agreements were oral. Charters

would have been sealed through rituals performed in front of witnesses. As the written word became increasingly important to government it was natural that these agreements likewise came to be recorded in writing. It may be that the profusion and confusion of terminology found in documents of the mid-twelfth century stems from this. In other words, there was as yet no established language for recording such agreements. As the century progressed written agreements became more common and this lead to a gradual defining of what terms meant. By the thirteenth century many of these terms and concepts had crystallised.[1221]

Some differences can be explained by looking at the type of source and the aims of the author. Latin chronicles use treaty (*foedus*) but charters and vernacular texts use covenant and the terminology of friendship.[1222] How are we to account for this difference? Since the word *foedus* was often used by historians in antiquity its use by chroniclers in the twelfth century may be through an attempt to recapture the writing style of the classical past.[1223] No such concerns worried the writers of charters or vernacular histories. Writers of charters were concerned less with elevating their style than with producing effective political documents. The word *conventio* should therefore reflect contemporary political usage. Vernacular texts may have been translating terms from Latin charters and chronicles and using words from normal speech.

The differences in terminology also suggest that there were several ways to tackle the same problem. This problem was how to organise and describe an agreement between two people. Three solutions were found. Firstly, one could use the language of friendship that had been a part of political life on the continent since the early Middle Ages.[1224] This solution is seen in texts that refer to love and friendship. They include Latin charters, Latin chronicles and vernacular texts. The second solution was to couch the agreement in terms of lordship, faithfulness and homage. This is seen, for instance, in the agreements of the earls of Chester and Leicester.[1225] Finally, there was the new language of the covenant. Although borrowing

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recording transactions between laymen were probably the product of unusual and difficult circumstances and are therefore not reliable evidence of 'normal procedure': Hudson, 'Diplomatic and legal aspects of the charters', p. 154.

[1221] See Klaus van Eickels, '*Homagium* and *Amicitia*: rituals of peace and their significance in the Anglo-French negotiations of the twelfth century', *Francia* 24/1 (1997) 133-40.

[1222] As we have seen, the final agreement between the earls of Chester and Leicester - recorded in a Latin charter - described itself as a *conventio*. For vernacular sources see Marie, *Eliduc*, L. 770 (an agreement between Eliduc and his beloved that he would return to her). Similarly, during talks at Le Goulet Richard I complained that Philip had broken an earlier *couvenanz*: *HGM*, L. 11476.

[1223] On the terms and style used by chroniclers see Meddings, pp. 15-16.

[1224] Althoff describes a treaty of friendship in 587: Gregory of Tours, *Historia Francorum*, bk. 9, 20; cited Althoff, p. 91.

[1225] The dispute during the First Crusade between Bohemond and Raymond of St-Gilles was ended after mediation by the bishops, Godfrey duke of Lower Lorraine, Robert count of Flanders, and Robert Curthose of Normandy. The formal agreement involved both Raymond and Bohemond putting their hands in those of the bishop, presumably in a ceremony similar to the act of homage if not homage itself: *Gesta Francorum*, p. 76.

from the language of property disputes the transference of this to the field of political dispute settlement was a new and radical departure.[1226]

These solutions were not mutually exclusive. The second charter of Matilda to Geoffrey de Mandeville[1227], for example, describes itself as a 'conventio et donatio' and in both terms and language it is mid-way between a charter of enfeoffment and an agreement between two equals. Much of the charter is simply a generous grant of land but there are some highly unusual aspects. Firstly, Geoffrey secured ten named people who were to be both witnesses and guarantors of Matilda's faith[1228] and fifteen more who were to ensure that Matilda kept to the agreement - a common occurrence in agreements but highly unusual in a royal grant. Secondly, Matilda placed her hands in Geoffrey's, in an inversion of the normal act of homage. Such agreements demanded a new style of recording, which is why this agreement refers to itself as 'conventio et donatio', an agreement and a gift.

These different solutions to the problem of dispute settlement and organising political relationships are seen in the different ways such agreements were recorded. For an agreement that took the form of an enfeoffment there was already an established method of recording the transaction - the charter of enfeoffment - but where a settlement was not organised around an enfeoffment difficulties were bound to arise. This helps to explain why so many different terms were used. We will return again to the subject of dispute settlement in our discussion on Conflict Resolution.

Agreements could be used to fulfil a variety of objectives. Many, perhaps most, were peace treaties. Gaimar says that after murdering King Cynewulf, Cyneheard offered to make a covent with the dead king's household such that he would make them richer if they aided him - but this was refused.[1229] Gaimar also describes the agreements between Cnut and Eadmund[1230] and between Cnut and King Malcolm[1231] as covenants. Such covenants seem to

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[1226] Although charters recording a political agreement and describing themselves as conventio die out soon after they begin, agreements continued to be called covenants. For example, in 1200 the Royal Court recorded a convenit between Geoffrey Canceis and Alan Martell: Curia Regis Rolls of the Reigns of Richard I and John Preserved in the Public Record Office. Richard I-2 John, vols. 1-3 (London, 1922-26) p. 212. In 1220 the Royal Court recorded in Somerset an agreement between an abbey and Philip de Albinaco: Curia Regis Rolls of the Reign of Henry III Preserved in the Public Record Office, vol. 8 (London, 1938) p. 296.

[1227] Regesta 3, no. 275. On this charter see J. H. Round, Geoffrey de Mandeville: A study in the Anarchy (London, 1892); R. H. C. Davies, 'Geoffrey de Mandeville reconsidered', EHR 79 (1965) 299-307; J. O. Prestwich, 'The Treason of Geoffrey de Mandeville', EHR 103 (1988) 283-312; R. H. C. Davies, 'The Treason of Geoffrey de Mandeville', EHR 103 (1988) 313-17; and Prestwich and Davies, 'Debate: Geoffrey de Mandeville: a further comment', EHR 103 (1988) 960-68.

[1228] Huius fiduciae... obsides per fidem et testes.

[1229] Gaimar, L. 1883.

[1230] Gaimar, Ll. 4356, 4357, 4359 (couenant), 4360 (couenanz).

[1231] Gaimar, L. 4748.

be similar to the regional peace treaties of Stephen's reign.[1232] Many of these twelfth-century agreements took the form of enfeoffments (and as such were recorded in writing). But it should be remembered that these were not 'normal' charters of enfeoffment showing generosity or an attempt to bind the recipient closer as they involved land that was being fought over and were primarily aimed at bringing peace to the region.

Agreements were also used to bind people closer. These agreements can be between people who were unequal in terms of power. Robert of Gloucester's agreements with William fitz John and Ralph Luvel in 1138 seem to have been of this nature.[1233] Agreements between unequals are also seen in the middle third of the twelfth century.[1234] They show that Henry II as well as the Empress Matilda and Stephen used agreements to further their aims and stabilise their position. This has important implications for how we should view such agreements for whereas historians have seen them as weakening royal power it may be that they strengthened it.[1235] The *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* also describes similar agreements. In describing the fall of Normandy in 1204 it records that everyone between Bayeaux and Anet made a *couvenance* with the French king.[1236] This (or these) cannot have been between men who were equals in terms of power or status.

Agreements such as these shed light on the subject of political structures and dynamics. In the feudal model relationships are seen in terms of land tenure. But we have seen a plethora of agreements governing relationships that are not based on tenure. The concepts involved, the ideas expressed and the outward form of agreements are often far removed from the idea of relationships based on tenure. We hear little of service, lordship or homage and get only a few references to faith. Agreements were used to end conflict, to organise alliances and to bind people closer. Beyond the edges of a lordship it is likely that a magnate's influence was still felt even though he had no direct authority. Here people might act on occasion with the lord who was regionally dominant, but such people should not necessarily be termed followers: 'allies' is perhaps the best description. But contemporaries may (would?) have used the word 'friend'. A certain Ernold, for example, collected his men (*gent*) and his friends (*amis*) to form a host (*ost*) to counter a Danish invasion.[1237] Here we do not know whether there was any formal tie between Ernold and his friends but it is clear that

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[1232] For example, Robert of Gloucester with the Welsh (four in 1136), Warwick-Clinton (1137 x 1138), Chester-Gloucester (1141 x 1145), Chester-Marmion (1144 x 1146), Chester-Leicester 1 and 2 (1145 x 1147 and 1148 x 1149), Briouze-Hereford (1148 x 1155), and possibly Northampton-Mauduit (unknown date).

[1233] The *Gesta Stephani* claims that William and Ralph were bound to Robert not only by homage but also by friendship and a 'compact': *GS*, ch. 31, p. 66.

[1234] These are recorded and discussed in chronological order for 1135-1153 in Meddings, pp. 84-96, and listed in appendix 1, below.

[1235] I presented this argument at the 1995 Haskins Society conference at Houston in a paper called '*Conventiones* and Royal Authority: Stephen the Not-so-bad?'; an abstract was printed in the Anglo-Norman Anonymous newsletter in 1996. It is hoped that this paper will be developed for publication.

[1236] *HGM*, L. 12913.

he had some influence over them and that they would fight with him against a common enemy. Seen in this light the analysis of friendship is another nail in the coffin of feudalism.

We have seen that although few complete texts survive recording the details of agreements much can still be said about the nature and importance of these agreements. The paucity of our documents probably has as much to do with their chances of survival as it does with the frequency of their production. Most sources from this period were preserved in religious houses and were maintained because they concerned that house. But most agreements were perhaps not written down, and those that were would not normally have been preserved as they concern neither monastic houses nor tenure. It is perhaps this poor chance of survival rather than an infrequency of use that explains our lack of texts. Perhaps such agreements were not as common as fealty, homage and service being given exchange for property, but they were important.

The subject of friendship in the Middle Ages is complex. In the field of formal agreements it is closely connected with concepts of brotherhood, faith, homage and conveying property. This lack of a unified approach and language suggests that recording such agreements in writing was new. But that authors did not feel it necessary to explain their terms may mean that contemporaries were familiar with this language.

[1237] Gaimar, Ll. 5412 (*gent, amis*), 5413 (*ost*).

iii

TYPES OF FRIEND: EMOTIONAL FRIENDSHIP

We will now turn to look at emotional friendship. Historiography of the twelfth century seldom refers to this type friendship and there has been no discussion of its importance or structure. Despite this dearth of scholarship emotional friendship probably played a major role in the social and political life of people in this period. Emotional ties surely existed between personal friends even though evidence of it is hard to find. For the twelfth century it is often impossible to detect friendship in the real world but as sources become more plentiful in the thirteenth century it begins to be possible.[1238] This thesis constructs a methodology through which the subject of friendship can be studied for the twelfth century and gives some suggestions as to who may have been friends.

Although reliable feelings of emotion are often hard to find in Latin sources[1239] vernacular ones make it clear that such bonds were important. For example, when William Marshal left to go on a pilgrimage he sad goodbye to his friends (*amis*) as well as his kinsmen, and his fatal illness was a source of pain to his friends (*ses amis*).[1240] This type of friendship also appears in the records of legal cases.[1241]

[1238] For example, the wives of Simon de Montfort and Henry III, both called Eleanor, appear to have been friends in 1252-53: Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, p. 41. Simon de Montfort himself appears to have been friends with Robert Grosseteste bishop of Lincoln 1235-53, the theologian Adam Marsh and Walter de Cantilupe bishop of Worcester 1236-66: Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, pp. 80-83. As a child the future Edward I developed an important friendship with his cousin Henry of Almain son of Richard earl of Cornwall. Henry was loyal through the troubles of 1259 and although they separated in 1262 they were together again in 1264 at the Battle of Lewes. Henry died in 1271 whilst returning from crusade on the orders of Edward: Prestwich, *Edward I*, pp. 5-6, 33, 37, 45, 74. Edward's crusade of 1270-72 seems to have forged significant friendships for it included Edmund of Lancaster, William de Valence, Henry of Almain, Roger Clifford, Roger Leyburn, Hamo Lestrange, Richard de La Rochelle and Thomas de Clare. During the crusade Otto de Grandson emerged as a trusted henchman and Joseph de Chauncy prior of the English Hospitallers was recruited as Edward's treasurer. He also met John of Acre who went on to construct Edward's castles in North Wales: Prestwich, *Edward I*, pp. 66-69, 81-82. Prestwich also describes Edward as being loyal to a close circle of friends, such as his chancellor Robert Burnell, his treasurer Walter Langton and the Savoyed knight Otto de Grandson: Prestwich, *Edward I*, p. 110.

[1239] Some examples can be seen, but these may not be reliable. We are told of the 'great friendship' (*maximam amicitiam*) between Bohemond and Pirus at Antioch but it is uncertain whether this is emotional or formal friendship. Although Bohemond calls him 'my friend' (*amicus meus*) and the author again calls him *amicus* it remains that they are negotiating a contract whereby Pirus will allow Bohemond's forces into the city in exchange for honour, riches and a christening: *Gesta Francorum*, pp. 44-46. Similar ambiguity exists when the Turks say they will become friends (*amicitia*) with the Christians should they convert to Islam: *Gesta Francorum*, p. 67.

[1240] *HGM*, Ll. 7260-63 (going on pilgrimage); *HGM*, Ll. 18787-88 (illness). After a tournament people looked for their friends (*amis*) who had been captured, others for their kinsmen (*parenz*) and friends (*amis*): *HGM*, Ll. 3021, 3027. Literature regularly shows emotional friendship. When we are told that on his wedding day Tristan was attended by his *amis*, for example, it seems reasonable to conclude that they were associated to him at least in part by feelings of affection: Thomas, L. 422. People described as friends express emotion elsewhere. When Eliduc is banished 'his friends [*ami*] were very sad that he was leaving them': Marie, *Eliduc*, Ll. 77-78. When people see that their friends are dead they are upset because of the personal loss:

An essential factor in developing friendship is the compatibility of the two personalities. A character clash between people, for instance, could become the source of a life-long quarrel. But it is not enough to know that 'this king had a fiery temper' or that 'this man was devout' as these are external manifestations of demeanour. If we are to unlock the secrets of friendships we need far more detail. But even if we had this level of information it would be difficult to form reliable conclusions as people can be friends with people with different personality traits to themselves.

Through examining contemporary literature and theories drawn from social psychology one can build up a picture of the structure and nature of medieval friendships. Having done this we can begin to attempt to describe friendship structures in the real world.

Psychologists have identified four key factors that determine friendships in the modern world. These are: physical attractiveness,[1242] proximity,[1243] familiarity[1244] and similarity.[1245] All these factors are seen in our sources[1246] so it seems that the same factors

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Cligés, p. 148. When Tristan is wounded his *amis* are aggrieved: Thomas, L. 803. The English In Ireland with Maurice de Prendergast wish to return to England to see their *amis*, implying an emotional bond: *Dermot*, L. 1307. We can also see that friends would want to visit each other for one woman was kept in a tower by her jealous husband so that she did not leave to see her family (*parent*) or friend (*ami*), implying that normally she would see them: Marie, *Yonec*, L. 40. Friendship also existed between women. For example, when Énide goes to Érec at the end of the episode of the Joy of the Court she is accompanied by other ladies who were 'moved by friendship and the desire to keep her company': *Érec et Énide*, p. 113. Relationships with a sexual dimension can also be viewed as friendships. The bond between lovers is obviously very close, as seen by the distress of a maiden whose lover has been kidnapped by two giants: *Érec et Énide*, p. 90.

[1241] In 1199 at the Huntingdon court the prior of Repton admitted to breaking open certain writs, reading them, and then entrusting them to Gervase Wreng to take to Godefrey de Insula who was his 'familiar friend' (*amicus familiaris*) - and that in so doing he behaved like a fool: *Curia Regis Rolls of the Reigns of Richard I and John Preserved in the Public Record Office. Richard I-2 John*, vols. 1-3 (London, 1922-26) p. 113. Although this could refer to a formal friendship it appears to be one with at least an element of affection.

[1242] Physical attractiveness is known to be important for mixed-sex and adult-child relationships but may well apply to all types. This is because our social standing and self-esteem are enhanced when we are in the company of physically attractive companions.

[1243] See Z. Rubin, *Liking and Loving* (New York, 1973) for marriage in 1930s Philadelphia; on friendship patterns in apartment houses, L. Festinger, S. Schachter and K. Back, *Social Pressures in informal Groups: a study of human factors in housing* (New York, 1950); for college dormitories, P. F. Priest and J. Sawyer, 'Proximity and Peership: Bases of balance in interpersonal attraction', *American Journal of Sociology*, 72 (1967); and on dormitory and classroom seating in the Maryland State Police Training Academy, M. W. Segal, 'Alphabet and Attraction: An unobtrusive measure of the effect of propinquity in a field setting', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 30 (1974). Proximity can also have a negative effect as initial antagonisms may be accentuated: A. Schiffenbauer and R. S. Schiavo, 'Physical distance and attraction: an intensification effect', *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 12 (1976) 274-82. This test involved a female confederate acting in a friendly or unfriendly manner as the subject 'waited for the experiment to begin'. Since most initial contact is of a friendly or neutral nature proximity tends to have a positive effect. Holt was aware of the importance of proximity in determining political activity: Holt, *The Northerners*, particularly p. 70.

[1244] Familiarity - often induced by proximity - further increases liking. The more frequently people see a face the more they imagine they would like the person: R. B. Zajonc, 'Attitudinal effects of mere exposure', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Monograph supplement 9 (no. 2) (1968) 1-29 using the photographs of strangers; T. H. Mita, M. Dermer and J. Knight, 'Reversed facial images and the mere exposure hypothesis', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 35 (1977) 597-601 using an image and mirror image of a face to see which the individual and their friends preferred.

[1245] This may be because people value their own opinions and so prefer to be with people who support them. In a year-long study of university roommates it was discovered that while familiarity made roommates like

promoting friendship today were present in the Middle Ages. This allows us to develop a methodology to investigate emotional friendship. We look at each factor in turn.

Literature frequently describes heroes as 'good looking'[1247] and their lovers as beautiful.[1248] Other characters are sometimes very ugly.[1249] The culture also allowed men to

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each other after a year, those who were initially similar tended to form closer friendships: T. M. Newcomb, *The Acquaintance Process* (New York, 1961).

[1246] For example, they can be seen operating in the reconstruction of village life in Montaillou by Le Roy Ladurie: Mengarde Clergue, Guillemette 'Belote' and Na Roqua, three matriarchs of the village, had a 'special friendship'. They lived in the same village (proximity), all belonged to wealthy families and were militant Cathars (similarity) and they visited one another, took the sun in the doorway to the Clergue's cellar and sent parcels to whichever one of them was currently imprisoned by the Inquisition (familiarity). See Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou. Cathars and Catholics in a French Village 1294-1324*, trans. Barbara Bray (Harmondsworth, 1980) p. 251. Similarly, Gauzia Clergue, Guillemette 'Maurine' (Maury), Guillemette 'Benete' and Sybille Fort were 'great friends'. They were all wives of Montaillou farmers of the middle class and were heretics (proximity and similarity): Le Roy Ladurie, pp. 251-52. Again, according to Alazaïs Fauré, Guillemette 'Benet', Guillemette Argelliers, Gauzia 'Belote' and Mengarde the priest's mother met almost every day (familiarity): Le Roy Ladurie, p. 255. But it should be remembered that the absence of these factors does not prevent friendship; Béatrice de Planissoles, former *châtelaine* of Montaillou, for instance, had no qualms in making female friends below her social group: Le Roy Ladurie, p. 252.

[1247] Érec is described as being 'so handsome that there was no need to seek a man of finer looks anywhere': *Érec et Énide*, p. 38. An observer later remarks that 'he has an excellent posture on the horse and he certainly looks like a valiant knight! He's very well-built and well-proportioned in his arms, his legs, and his feet': *Érec et Énide*, p. 46. Énide was infatuated with his good looks: *Érec et Énide*, p. 56. Alexander was also attractive for he had a 'well-proportioned body [and] was the fairest of them [his companions] all': *Cligés*, p. 137. His son, Cligés, seems to have been even more attractive. Chrétien says that he was more handsome than Narcissus: 'His hair resembled pure gold and his face the morning rose. His nose was well-made and his mouth fair, and he was built according to Nature's finest pattern....[He] combined good sense and beauty, generosity and strength': *Cligés*, p. 156. His looks are also stressed at *Cligés*, p. 185. Kay is also attractive: 'he had a cap of fine cloth over his blond hair, which had been plaited into a braid - there was no more handsome knight in the world, but his beauty and prowess were spoiled by his evil tongue': *Perceval*, p. 415. Cuheran was handsome with good hands, legs and feet and his body was 'graceful, sweet and smooth': Gaimar, Ll. 106-10. Roland is described as having a noble body and a fair and smiling face: *Chanson de Roland*, L. 1159. Later he is recognised by a Moor 'From his fierce countenance and his noble body, / His gaze and his whole bearing': *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 1640-41. The emir who finally opposes Charles is also attractive: 'His crotch is very large / And he has slender hips and broad ribs; / His chest is large and handsomely formed, / His shoulders are broad and his face is very fair, / His look is fierce and his hair curly, / It was as white as a flower in summer': *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3157-62. Later it is added: 'The emir has the look of a true baron; / His beard is white, just like a flower': *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3172-73. Thierry is also attractive: 'His body was spare and slim and slender, / His hair black and his face somewhat tanned. / He is not big, but nor is he too small': *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3820-22.

[1248] When Érec rode with Énide to Arthur's court 'he kept looking at her blonde hair, her laughing eyes and unclouded brow, her nose and face and mouth; and from this a great affection touched his heart. He admired everything, down to her hips: her chin and her white throat, her flanks and sides, her arms and hands': *Érec et Énide*, p. 56. Soredamors was also beautiful and had golden hair, a bright brow, eyes that shined like candles, a symmetrical face and nose, a smiling mouth, a perfect row of ivory teeth, as well as nice ears, chin and throat, white shoulders, and a bosom as white as freshly fallen snow: *Cligés*, pp. 132-33. Another beautiful maiden had free-flowing blonde hair with a high, white, smooth forehead, dark eyebrows, shining, narrow eyes, a long straight nose, rosy cheeks, and a white face: *Perceval*, p. 404. Another had blonde hair and a white face with a rosy tint: *Perceval*, p. 477. One beautiful woman was 'most courtly and wise, beautiful in body and countenance, of fair appearance and cheerful disposition: Marie, *Equitan*, Ll. 51-53. There was 'A maiden who surpassed in beauty the lily and the new rose when it appears in summer. She lay on a very beautiful bed... clad only in her shift. Her body was well formed and handsome.... Her side, though, was uncovered, as well as her face, neck and breast; she was whiter than the hawthorn blossom': Marie, *Lanval*, Ll. 93-106. Even in death the lover of Eliduc was beautiful for she was 'was like a new rose...the body so slender, the long arms, the white hands, the fingers slim, long and full. Then she knew why her husband had grieved': Marie, *Eliduc*, Ll. 1010-18.

[1249] A shepherd resembles 'a Moor, ugly and hideous in the extreme... his head was larger than a nag's or other beast's. His hair was unkept and his bare forehead was more than two spans wide; his ears were as hairy and as huge as an elephant's; his eyebrows heavy and his face flat. He had the eyes of an owl and the nose of a cat, jowls split like a wolf's, with the sharp reddish teeth of a boar; he had a russet beard, tangled

comment on how attractive other men were.[1250] We can see that beauty could inspire heterosexual love[1251] but did it influence other relationships? Physical attractiveness may have led to favourable treatment at court[1252] and good looks were associated with lordship.[1253] This would have been of practical help. In literature seeing beauty also has a major influence on the effectiveness of a fighter for it both encourages[1254] and distracts.[1255] Some may even have used sexual attraction as a political tool.[1256] It seems safe to say that physical attractiveness would have aided men and women in both social and political contexts.

Sadly there is little reliable evidence showing how attractive real people were. Coins and manuscript illuminations occasionally show us physical attributes[1257] but they are likely to

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moustache, a chin down to his breast and a long, twisted spine with a hump': *Yvain*, p. 298. Even given artistic licence this is clearly an ugly peasant. But perhaps he not so ugly as the damsel who comes to Arthur's court to denounce Perceval: 'The damsel had her hair twisted into two tight black braids and, if the words given in the book are true, there was never a creature so ugly even in the bowels of Hell. You've never seen iron as black as her neck and hands, and this was nothing compared to the rest of her ugliness. Her eyes were two holes, as tiny as a rat's eyes; she had a nose like a monkey's or a cat's, and the lips of an ass or an ox. Her teeth were the colour of egg yolk, flecked with red, and she had the beard of a goat. She had a hump in the middle of her chest, her backbone was twisted, and her hips and shoulders were well made for dancing; she was humpbacked and had legs twisted like two willow wands: just perfect for leading the dance!': *Perceval*, p. 438. The most gifted plastic surgeon would be hard-pressed to make her look even human! A squire was hideous with tangled red hair that stood up like the spines of an angry boar with eyebrows that covered his nose and face down to his long and twisted moustache. He had a hair lip, a broad, forked beard, a short neck and a high chest: *Perceval*, p. 466. Size mattered. One maiden 'felt great contempt for the dwarf because she saw how little he was' and Érec told him: 'You're disgusting': *Érec et Énide*, p. 39. Érec later describes him as a 'dwarfish freak': *Érec et Énide*, p. 50. Another dwarf is described as 'vile, low-born': *Lancelot*, p. 211. When Mark finally kills Frocin the dwarf (because he gave him the ears of a horse!) everyone is glad: Béroul, pp. 77-78. Not all dwarfs were held in contempt, though they are seen as different. The lord of the dwarfs, Bilis, King of the Antipodes, brings with him two other dwarfish kings to Érec's wedding: all three are received with honour. Incidentally, Bilis is the smallest dwarf as well as being king: in the land of the dwarfs lack of stature is seen as beneficial: *Érec et Énide*, pp. 61-62.

[1250] As at *Perceval*, p. 485.

[1251] Matthew Paris felt able to assert that Simon de Montfort was attracted to his wife Eleanor through her beauty (*elegantia*) as well as her wealth and royal descent: *Matthaei Parisiensis, Monachi Sancti Albani, Chronica Majora*, ed. H. R. Luard, 7 vols. (Rolls Series, 1872-83) vol. 3 p. 471, cited Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, p. 38. Even if in claiming this physical attraction Matthew Paris was reflecting a literary ideal rather than reality it remains that beauty was thought to be important in inducing love and marriage. Lovers might watch each other intently: *Érec et Énide*, pp. 55-56, *Cligés*, p. 157. On their wedding night Érec and Énide renew their love by looking at each other: *Érec et Énide*, p. 63. A count is drawn to love Énide because of her great beauty: *Érec et Énide*, p. 77. Another count falls in love with Énide because of her looks and wishes to marry her: *Érec et Énide*, p. 95. Physical looks also inspires love between Alexander and Soredamors: 'The fact that they saw one another but did not dare say or do anything was a source of great distress for them, and so the flames of their love increased. But it is the custom of all lovers to feast their eyes if they cannot have more': *Cligés*, p. 130. Maidens seeking husbands who watch Lancelot fight in a tournament 'felt that their beauty, their wealth, their positions, and their noble births would bring them little advantage' as all the suitors were being defeated, implying that normally these attributes would count: *Lancelot*, p. 281. Yvain falls in love because of the looks of the woman whose husband he has slain: *Yvain*, p. 311.

[1252] Énide is welcomed by the queen because of her good looks and breeding: *Érec et Énide*, p. 58.

[1253] When Érec approaches a town with Énide, Guivret and Guivret's followers Chrétien remarks that the inhabitants thought that the others must serve Érec because he was so attractive: *Érec et Énide*, p. 104.

[1254] When Érec catches sight of his love during a pause in the duel for the sparrowhawk 'his strength was renewed; because of her love and her beauty he regained his great courage': Érec et Énide, p. 48. We may here be seeing some unwitting appreciation of the modern theory of social facilitation in which drive is increased by the presence of others.

[1255] Lancelot turns his back on his enemy to look at his love: *Lancelot*, pp. 252-53.

[1256] See the chapter on Decision Making.

[1257] King Stephen, for example, is shown with a beard on his coins.

have been distorted by the artist. If we are to accept the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* we could say that John Marshal was proud of his 'hammers and anvils'[1258] - and perhaps this pride was justified. But whilst it would be amusing to explain John's popularity and success with this the inference must be treated with suspicion and the size of the Marshal's endowment - alas - remain a matter of conjecture. Of greater reliability seems to be the description of William Marshal as having handsome limbs, brown hair, wide hips and a swarthy face: although his build was impressive his face was not ideal.[1259]

Looks, however, were not the only noticeable attributes. A father claims his daughter is very beautiful but insists that 'her good sense is worth even more than her beauty'.[1260] Similarly, Lunete is 'a winsome brunette, very sensible, clever, and attractive'[1261] and a lady of Nantes is 'distinguished by her beauty, education and good breeding.'[1262] This suggests that education and intelligence were also valued.

The importance of similarity is also seen.[1263] Lovers were supposed to be not only of the same social status[1264] but also equals in beauty, courtliness, wisdom and character.[1265] But one should be careful when discussing the importance of similarity. Although people today marry others who are similar to themselves in intelligence and colour the strongest correlation is the size of their little finger![1266]

It is easy to say all aristocrats of the twelfth century shared the same education, lifestyle, social background and hobbies but very hard to go beyond such generalities. One method may be to analyse the non-political activities of individuals, such as the patronage of artists and poets, the granting of benefactions to religious buildings, and the willingness to go on military adventures - all of which provide clues to a person's tastes.[1267] While such evidence is scarce and scattered it may be possible in some instances to construct a list of

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[1258] *HGM*, L. 515.
[1259] *HGM*, Ll. 717-36.
[1260] *Érec et Énide*, p. 43
[1261] *Yvain*, p. 325.
[1262] Marie, *Chaitivel*, Ll. 9-12.
[1263] The importance of similarity is seen most clearly in companionship, discussed below.
[1264] One lady claims, in an effort to deter the advances of a king, 'love is not honourable, unless based on equality': Marie, *Equitan*, L. 137.
[1265] Érec and Énide, for example, 'were very well and evenly matched in courtliness, in beauty, and in great nobility. They were so similar, of one character and of one essence, that no one wanting to speak truly could have chosen the better one or the more beautiful or the wiser. They were equal in spirit and well suited to one another. Each of them stole the other's heart': *Érec et Énide*, p. 56.
[1266] Steve Jones, *The Language of the Genes. Biology, History and Evolutionary Future* (London, 1993) p. 110.
[1267] This is not to deny that patronage of people and institutions was not often inspired in part by political considerations.

similarities between people.[1268] As with physical attractiveness we can say that similarity was important for generating friendship but we cannot see it at work in the real world.

Proximity and familiarity are more easy to gauge, though once more our sources impose strict limitations. In general people from the same geographical area would have met more often than people from far away. Topographical features, such as mountains, moors and marsh, would also have played a part by hampering communication while roads and waterways would have aided it. Details for this can be found through looking at the distribution of lands. Within settlements people seem to have lived in very close proximity with little privacy. This would have heightened existing feelings (positive or negative). The study of individual lordships, households and retinues therefore sheds light on friendship networks.

The importance of familiarity can again be seen in literature[1269] but sources also allow us to see it in the real world. If we accept that charter witness lists record those who were present at its drafting then they show the minimal frequency that people met. While we cannot discover how often they met, we can say that they met on some occasions, and often give the place and year of these meetings. Through this method it is possible to say 'who knew whom', though there are problems in saying that they met as friends.[1270] Where we have multiple charters with witness lists from an individual we can begin to draw a better picture. Repeated witnessing suggests that the testifier and grantor knew each other fairly well, but if we are to conclude that they were on friendly terms with each other we need external corroborating evidence. Such evidence can be found in chronicles.

Such a study has been done for the retinue of Henry the Young King.[1271] From the time of his coronation in 1170 to his death thirteen years later we have seventeen charters with witness lists.[1272] Some of these appear to be from the same day and so reduce the sample to fifteen.[1273] From this collection fourteen individuals witnessed more than once. Of these, two,

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[1268] It is known, for instance, that Edward I enjoyed hunting and owned several chess sets: Prestwich, *Edward I*, pp. 114-15.

[1269] During the poem the relationship between Érec and Guivret deepens. Although they start off as strangers their relationship develops through political friendship to emotional friendship and ends as companionship. This process is described in detail below.

[1270] A lord making a pious benefaction, for instance, may have compelled lesser men to witness his piety; and if people may have been there under duress it cannot be assumed that they were friends. A similar danger exists in seeing frequent attestations as evidence of forming a permanent secretariat: C. R. Cheney and B. E. A. Jones, eds., *English Episcopal Acta, 2: Canterbury 1162-1190* (London, 1986) p. xxv. This methodology has close ties with network theory.

[1271] For a fuller treatment of the Latin sources see Meddings, pp. 60-61.

[1272] Seventeen charters of the Young King are found in *Recueil des Actes de Henri II roi d'Angleterre et duc de Normandie*, ed. Léopold Delisle, introductory volume (Paris, 1909); another is in *Facsimiles of Early Charters in Oxford Muniment Rooms*, ed. H. E. Salter (Oxford, 1929) no. 37.

[1273] Two of the charters concerning the same subject matter (Fontevrault) were issued at the same place (Chinon) in the same year (1178) and have the same witness list: these are the eleventh and twelfth charters of the Young King detailed in *Recueil des Actes*. It seems justifiable to assume that the charters were issued on

Adam de Yquebeuf and William Marshal, witnessed six times (from 1175 to 1180 and ?1174 to 1180 respectively), one, Robert de Tresgots four times (1175-80), and eight further men three times. That for several years these individuals were witnesses for the Young King suggests that they were on cordial terms with him but to reach firmer conclusions we need supporting evidence. We have this. Nine - including the three most frequent attestors - are listed by Howden as rebels at the start of the 1173 revolt.[1274] This suggests they were part of his retinue beforehand, and William Marshal certainly was.[1275] Friendship and solidarity within this group also explains why the followers of the Young King attended tournaments together when Henry was absent.[1276] We can therefore conclude with reasonable confidence that the retinue of the Young King included several friends who stuck by him through thick and thin. But even here there could be an alternative explanation for they could have been bound to Henry not so much through affection as political circumstance having 'burnt their bridges' in 1173-74.

Unfortunately, though, it is rare for the historian to have such an amount of reliable evidence. We are therefore thrown back onto educated guess-work. How common were such friendship-based retinues? Duby has argued that among the aristocracy 'youthful' males formed groups to tour round the emerging tournament circuit.[1277] Such companies were the original 'rebels without a cause', loving extravagance, play and sex as they bided their time for a lucky break that would bring them marriage and a gift of land. It seems likely that such youthful fellowships were based on friendship. This may mean that friendship was a more important tie between 'young' people than among the older generation. The lifestyle of Henry

the same day, and as such they should be treated as only one example of that group of people being together. The same is true for another pair of Henry's charters in favour of Saint-Bernard de Montjou, though here the date of one is uncertain but compatible with the other: the seventh charter in *Recueil des Actes* and no. 37 of *Facsimiles of Early Charters*; the dates are 1175 and 1170 x 1183.

[1274] Roger of Howden, *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, ed. W. Stubbs, 2 vols. (Rolls Series, 1867) vol. 1, pp. 45-46. The rebels listed who are known to have attested more than once are: Adam de Yquebeuf, William Marshal, Robert de Tresgots, William de Tintiniac, Gerard Talbot, Simon de Marisco, William de Diva, Peter de Adevilla and Saer de Quincy. Others could be there under different surnames.

[1275] The Young King had been under the tutelage of William Marshal since 1170: *HGM*, Ll. 1939-48. This text also asserts that Henry the Young King and William Marshal were friends: *HGM*, L. 2888. This may explain why when the Young King dies William is upset: *HGM*, Ll. 7088-94. Their friendship did not prevent William from sometimes being out of favour with the Young King, such as *HGM*, Ll. 5127-510.

[1276] *HGM*, Ll. 4985-86, 3433-34, 3888-900.

[1277] Here Duby uses 'youths' (*juvenes*) in a technical sense. He argues that the period of being a *juvenis* lasted from the time of being dubbed a knight to when he settled down and had children. This period could be extensive as marriage would often be impossible until he had a territorial lordship. William Marshal did not marry until his mid-forties while Arnould of Andres was a *juvenis* for thirty years. During his initial time as a 'youth' the new knight was often accompanied by a tutor, a youth of greater experience, like the Young King was placed under the supervision of William Marshal. Duby believes many first-born sons would have been a *juvenis* at some point, and that the proportion of younger sons becoming *juvenes* would have been much higher through the tendency towards primogeniture: Duby, *The Chivalrous Society*, pp. 112-18. Duby's model is supported in Heers, *Parties and Political Life in the Medieval West*, p. 277.

the Young King in the 1170s, to continue our example, seems to conform closely to this model.[1278]

On the evidence available such friendships seem to have been long-lasting. As we have already seen, the retinue of the Young King formed during his youth remained together for over a decade. Many of the most trusted followers of Henry I also seem to have been brought into his orbit before he held any territory[1279] and Helias of Maine likewise made important friends before he became count.[1280]

Indeed, friendships may have been made at a very early age. The children of a lord would have rubbed shoulders with the children of household retainers and they may have formed affective (and effective) relationships. They would also sometimes have met the children of other lords.[1281] Such childhood friendships could have formed the basis for future relationships.

But not all friendships were long-lasting. Even within the group surrounding the Young King tensions can clearly be seen. According to the *Histoire*, Adam d'Yquebeuf and Thomas Colonz (and others he refuses to name) instigated a plot against William Marshal to divorce him from the Young King some time between 1180 and 1182.[1282] This shows William was no longer friends with Adam or Thomas. As we have seen, Adam d'Yquebeuf was a regular witness to the Young King's charters and would have known William Marshal quite well; indeed, they were probably once friends. Yet whilst William could no longer count on the friendship of Adam or Thomas he was not without supporters close to the Young King for a certain Ralph claimed William was loyal (*l[e]als*).[1283] Since Ralph was willing to support William in this crisis he may have been a personal friend of William as well as a colleague.

[1278] It is worth noting here that Howden describes his follower Saer de Quincy as a *juvenis*: Howden, *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, p. 46.

[1279] In an unscheduled paper delivered at the 1994 Battle Conference C. Warren-Hollister interpreted Henry I as a *juvenis* prior to 1100.

[1280] This was argued by Richard Barton, 'Helias of Maine, Henry I, and the importance of Friendship' (Unpublished paper delivered at the International Medieval Congress, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1996; copy courtesy of the author).

[1281] In rare occasions we know that children were used as witnesses to charters for they were expected to live longer - and therefore preserve the memory of the transaction for longer. Boys were whipped before the feasting company in the woods at Le Clos de Blanc 996 x 1007 to aid their memory: *Recueil des Actes des ducs de Normandie de 911 a 1066*, ed. Marie Faroux (Caen, 1961) no. 10. Similarly, the son of the donor and two of his young friends had their ears beaten to aid their memory at Préaux in 1035: ibid., no. 89. These are cited by Brown, 'Some observations on Norman and Anglo-Norman Charters', p. 156.

[1282] *HGM*, Ll. 5127-426; 5149 (Yquebeuf named), 5155 (Colonz named). It is after the Epernon tournament that was probably held around Christmas 1179 (L. 4977 and n.) but before the second tournament of Gournay-sur-Arronde and Ressons-sur-Matz in November 1182 (L. 5492 and n.). Given this uncertainty and that the plot may have taken a while to develop these dates should be used only as a rough guide. Here it should be noted that, as observed above, both Adam de Yquebeuf and William Marshal do not witness charters of the Young King after 1180.

[1283] *HGM*, Ll. 5255-74; 5270 (*lals*). Ralph could be either Ralph Farci, a royal attendant (L. 5367) or Ralph de Hamars (L. 4699 and n., 5176); Ralph de Hamars appears to have gone on to be a retainer of Count John of Mortain in England and Ireland (note to L. 4699).

We can also say something about where these interactions would have taken place. Le Roy Ladurie has shown that in Montaillou women met to talk when they bought cheese, took grain and collected flour from the miller and fetched water as well as in the kitchen before the men got home, in bed (often three women in one bed), during delousing sessions, in the village square, when corpses were being laid out and buried, when borrowing things and when spinning.[1284] Their male counterparts met at work and to play games such as dice and chess and to sing and they also talked in the street and at the village square, particularly on Sundays.[1285] The Mass also served a social function for it brought people together, though not everyone attended regularly.[1286] Although taverns were rare outside towns, where they did exist they would have allowed old and young, men and women to come together.[1287] For the aristocracy much interaction would have taken place in castles[1288] but meals, tournaments and games would also have provided regular opportunities for social contact.

Hunting and tournaments would have reinforced social ties and created new ones. Literature makes frequent reference to hunting[1289] and tournaments.[1290] Both friends (amis) and followers (gent) might accompany a lord when he went hunting and tourneying.[1291] Shouting war-cries and slogans and the shared danger, experience and enjoyment would have strengthened existing ties and created new ones. Heraldry likewise emphasised solidarity and proclaimed the group.[1292] The result is perhaps seen in the way hunters are described as the compaignun of their leader.[1293] Such group activities also created an informal atmosphere in which people could socialise and make political contacts.[1294] In the evening after a tournament, for instance, it was custom for the high-ranking men to visit each other, discuss affairs, and get to know each other.[1295] Such events also ensured that ambitious young knights rubbed shoulders with older and more established lords. This was an ideal opportunity for networking and creating links that could last into later life. Contemporaries were aware of this

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[1284] Le Roy Ladurie, p. 254.
[1285] Le Roy Ladurie, p. 259.
[1286] Le Roy Ladurie, pp. 265-66.
[1287] Le Roy Ladurie, pp. 264-65.
[1288] Althoff, p. 13.
[1289] Érec et Énide, pp. 37, 85, Cligés, p. 201, Yvain, p. 326, Perceval, p. 485, Béroul, pp. 63, 85-86, 96 (Tristan hunting for food, not enjoyment), 114, 144, Marie de France, Guigemar, p. 44, Equitan, pp. 56, 57, 59 (twice), Bisclavret, p. 70, Yonec, p. 90; Le Charroi de Nîmes, Ll. 17-18, Gaimar, Ll. 2725-26, 3829, Thomas, Ll. 2161, 2173.
[1290] In Chrétien: Cligés, pp. 157, 179, Lancelot, pp. 273-81, Yvain, pp. 326-29, Perceval, pp. 440-50; in Marie de France, Guigemar, p. 53, Le Fresne, p. 64, Milun, L. 321, Chaitivel, Ll. 111-42; HGM, Ll. 1170-1525 (early tournaments only; it goes on to record many with Henry the Young King).
[1291] Thomas, L. 2160.
[1292] Heers, Parties and Political Life in the Medieval West, pp. 282-86.
[1293] Thomas, L. 2175.
[1294] It is during a hunt that the three hostile barons approach Mark to request that Yseut prove her innocence, though here they are unsuccessful and the request leads to their own banishment: Béroul, pp. 115-117.
[1295] HGM, Ll. 4329-38. After one tournament the Young King met with the count of Flanders: HGM, Ll. 5597-626.

political value. One young knight, for instance, 'spent freely and attended tournaments, becoming acquainted with the wealthy'.[1296]

Eating together would also have strengthened social bonds.[1297] The shared meal not only demonstrated trust and a willingness to share things but also provided a relaxed atmosphere in which emotive relationships could be formed. Meals could take the form of either a celebration or a 'business lunch' where matters of policy could be discussed. The importance attached to meals is seen by the level of detail supplied by the poets. Often we get a full description of a feast[1298] while at other times its sumptuousness is stressed.[1299] Gaimar talks of ritual drinking - '*le wesheil e le drinchail*'[1300] - and other rituals may have been involved.[1301] Whilst household followers would have eaten with their lord on most days feasts and festivals allowed larger numbers to participate. The importance of the shared meal shows why Énide's refusal to take part in her own marriage feast (she had been forcibly married) poses such a problem. This conflict is 'resolved' by forcing her to attend.[1302] Shortly afterwards Énide is again shown at a meal. This time it is with Érec and Érec's friend Guivret who is providing the food. Now her attitude is very different for she encourages Érec to eat.[1303] The contrast in Énide's behaviour at these two meals shows the importance of shared meals: one ate only with friends.

The shared meal was not the only ritual that served to augment group identity. When Alexander and his companions are knighted they take a shared bath in the sea.[1304] Genuine public festivals would also have strengthened regional ties and may have countered the private ceremonies of major aristocrats.[1305]

Beyond being of value in itself, the study of friendship is also revealing in what it tells us about the comradeship and fighting spirit of medieval knights. Knights fought in groups, but to a large extent they also lived in these same groups. This suggests that they were often friends - certainly that they were 'comrades'. This is important as the desire to impress

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[1296] Marie, *Milun*, Ll. 321-22.
[1297] Althoff, pp. 121-22, 132-33, 203-11; this includes monks and guildsmen sharing meals. The importance of feasting is also seen in other cultures. For example, in the Soloman islands, the Germans of Tacitus, medieval Japan, medieval Russia, medieval Turkey and ancient Persia. This may be because feasting demonstrates reciprocity and generosity. It is also a means of demonstrating success, and thereby of increasing prestige and attracting new followers: Critchley, *Feudalism*, p. 42-43.
[1298] For example, *Érec et Énide*, p. 89, *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, Ll. 810-15.
[1299] *Cligés*, p. 184.
[1300] Gaimar, L. 3811.
[1301] Each time Ælfthryth drank with Eadgar he kissed her: Gaimar, Ll. 3805-15. Before a meal it was custom to wash - another ritual: *Cligés*, p. 184. Weddings were a time for feasting: *Cligés*, p. 151.
[1302] *Érec et Énide*, p. 95.
[1303] *Érec et Énide*, p. 100.
[1304] *Cligés*, p. 136
[1305] Festivals were a means of demonstrating power, economic prosperity and social standing: Heers, *Parties and Political Life in the Medieval West*, pp. 114, 269, 273.

friends and ensure their safety is a major incentive to valour and heroism.[1306] But while this may be generally applicable, it is particularly apt for household knights. It is perhaps little wonder that these knights - for whom proximity, familiarity and similarity had bred close friendship - are seen as being the most loyal and effective fighting force on the battlefield.

[1306] If these arguments sound far-fetched one need only consider the organisation of modern armies. For highly readable accounts of the role of friendship in modern armies by two former soldiers see John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (London, 1976) and Hugh McManners, *The Scars of War* (London, 1993).

iv

TYPES OF FRIEND: COMPANY

It is important to differentiate between 'company' and 'companion(s)' as contemporaries used them to express very different ideas. Both occur with some frequency in vernacular sources (Histories, *Chanson de Geste* and Romance literature). The former describes only a group of people bound together by common cause but the latter has two meanings. First it can refer to people with a distinct identity who may collectively form a 'company'. Secondly, and more narrowly, companionship describes a particularly close bond between two people.

We will deal first with 'company' (*compaigne*), members of which are 'companions'. This appears to be similar to how in modern English we might refer to a group of soldiers as a 'company'. For example, the 5,000 warriors with the King of Ossory are in his *compaingnie*.[1307]

Someone belonging to a group could be called a 'companion' (*cumpainz*, *compaignon*, *cumpainiun*).[1308] For example, when hearing of the composition of an army we are told that Raymond le Gros had forty *compaignun* as well as a hundred fighting men and sixty archers; this group is later called two hundred *compainun*.[1309] Similarly, those who change sides with Maurice de Prendergast from Dermot to MacDonnchadh king of Ossory are first said to be his *compainun* and then later his household (*meiné*) - a military unit.[1310] Many other examples exist.[1311] In these instances 'companion' refers to a military group. It seems reasonable to conclude that 'companions' can describe members of a 'company'.[1312]

[1307] *Dermot*, L. 559. Similarly, those fighting alongside William Marshal at Drincourt are 'his company' (*sa companie*): *HGM*, L. 955. Richard I took a *compaingnie* with him to Gisors: *HGM*, L. 10932. A French invasion led by des Barres and Eustace the monk is described as a *companie*: *HGM*, L. 17154. The men who ride with Bertrand and Walter are their *compaigne*: *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 1894. Forty people were in one company: *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 23. When William asks about the troops in Nîmes he asks 'about King Otrant and his *compaignie*': *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 915. People that came from Saxony and Almain to join the English *compaigne*: Gaimar, L. 26. Tristan and Yseut form a *compaignie*: Béroul, L. 2252.
[1308] Traitors could also be described as 'companions': *Cligés*, p. 144. The supporters of Acelin are called this and later they are called 'traitors': *compaignons* at *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1791, 1793, 1802, 1811; traitors at *Le Couronnement de Louis*, L. 1876. Companionship can also be seen among relatives for the two demon brothers who fight Yvain at the town of Dire Adventure are 'companions': *Yvain*, p. 365.
[1309] *Dermot*, Ll. 1891-92, 1904.
[1310] *Dermot*, Ll. 1103, 1115. This is repeated later on, again for the supporters of Maurice, Ll. 2126 (*compaignun*), 2135 (*meyné*).
[1311] Miles de Cogan, for instance, defends Dublin with his *compaignun*: *Dermot*, Ll. 2276, 2398. The eight who journeyed to Ireland with Maurice de Prendergast are termed *compaignuns*, those who are on guard with Randolf fitz Ralph are described as his *compaignun* and the eight hundred with Raymond le Gros are *compaignun*: *Dermot*, Ll. 454, 989, 1609. Those whom later journey back to Ireland with Raymond le Gros are his *compaignun*: *Dermot*, L. 3019. Gaimar also says that some men from Kent captured Mul and his

Although usually companions comprise a military group this is not always the case. Gaimar, for example, describes missionaries as companions.[1313] These companions were few in number and had a very specific task - conversion. It is likely that as such they had a strong sense of solidarity and a shared identity.

Gaimar also uses the notion of companionship to describe the followers of Hereward in East Anglia after the Norman Conquest. This is important as he is now dealing with recent events that may have been within living memory of some of his contemporaries. His use of language uses a jumble of terminology. We are told that Hereward escaped from Ely with his *parent* (kinsman) Geri and five *compaignons*.[1314] He then attacked some Norman guards with his *compaignons*.[1315] After this they fled to a wood to meet their *amis* and found ten of Hereward's *priuez* ('privy').[1316] There were now eighteen [*sic*] *compaignon*.[1317] By the time

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eleven *compaignons*: Gaimar, L. 1527. The use of this phrase here is of interest as Gaimar's source, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, s.a. 687, makes no reference to companions but says simply 'xii. men mid him'. It therefore appears that Gaimar was translating his source into the language of the day. When Greslemuef of Estre-Posterne came to Arthur's court he 'brought with him twenty companions': *Érec et Énide*, p. 61. Likewise, Quirons king of Orcel, brings two hundred companions: *Érec et Énide*, p. 61. Érec asks his father to look after his companions when he goes off alone with Énide to restore his reputation: *Érec et Énide*, p. 70. The robber knights who attack Érec and Énide are described as being 'companions': *Érec et Énide*, p. 71-72. A count was with 'just three companions': *Érec et Énide*, p. 77. When Érec and Énide leave their friend Guivret he offers to escort them with some 'companions': *Érec et Énide*, p. 102. The people who accompany Cligés to Britain are termed his 'companions': *Cligés*, pp. 175, 185. When six people attack four both groups are called 'companions': *Cligés*, pp. 164-65. Those who follow Lancelot when he goes in search of Gawain at the Underwater Bridge are also termed his 'companions': *Lancelot*, p. 270. Those who fight in a tournament are 'companions': *Lancelot*, p. 276. Men at Arthur's court are Kay's 'companions': *Yvain*, p. 296. The men who fight on the side of Yvain are his 'companions': *Yvain*, p. 336. The people with a lord are his companions: *Yvain*, p. 356, *Perceval*, pp. 449, 451. The people who fight with Perceval against Clamedeu are his 'companions': *Perceval*, p. 411. A forester and Andret of Lincoln are the *compaignons* of Gerflet, Cinglor, Yvain, Tolas, Coris and Gawain: Béroul, L. 4059. One hundred leprous beggars are *conpaignons*: Béroul, L. 1159. A group of eight men hostile to the two lovers are *conpaignons*: Béroul, L. 4059. Tristan claims that he will leave Mark's court with 'neither weapons nor horse with me, nor any companion except Governal', implying that he could have had other companions: Béroul, p. 52. When Richard of Rouen meets William of Orange both their supporters are described as their *compaignons*: *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 2109, 2111, 2160. Those who fight alongside and accompany Eliduc are his *cumpainun / cumpainuns*: Marie, *Eliduc*, Ll. 154, 211, 875, 1111. When John Marshal ambushed Stephen's army Patrick earl of Salisbury lost his best *compaingnos*: *HGM*, L. 345. The twelve peers who form the rearguard with Roland are described as 'companions': *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 858, 878, possibly 1256, 1899, 2236, 3776. Similarly, Charles calls the men around him 'companions': *Chanson de Roland*, L. 1757. Usually, however, the author of the *Chanson de Roland* uses other words to describe such groups. The people who joined Roland in the ill-fated rear-guard, for instance, are usually described as 'peers' (*per*), a word that stresses equality. Gaimar records that King Osbryht raped the wife of Beorn the Butsecarl with two *compaignon* looking on: Gaimar, Ll. 2605-36, quote L. 2627. King Brocmail had fifty *compaignon*: Gaimar, L. 1092. Cyneheard was killed together with all but one of his *compaignuns*: Gaimar, Ll. 1890-97, quote L. 1895.

[1312] This is particularly true in the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*. Here groups at tournaments and the followers of a lord are regularly termed 'companies': *conrei* at *HGM*, Ll. 1307, 1417, 2497, 2520, 2535, 2802, 4462, 4796, 5520, 6062 and so on; *compaigne* at *HGM*, Ll. 1643, 2943, 2944, 3434, 3686, 3909, 4013, 4021, 4629, 6386, 6673 and so on. In learning about these groups we find those placed with the Young King are *ses compaignons*: *HGM*, Ll. 2407, 2423, 3721, 3727; and the Marshal's *gent* are quickly described as a *compaingne*: *HGM*, Ll. 10599 (*gent*), 10606 (*compaingne*).

[1313] Pope Gregory sent St Augustine and his *cumpaignon* Paulinus to convert the English and later sent some more *compaignons* to aid them: Gaimar, Ll. 1027, 1051. Augustine later made Mellitus and his *compaignon* Justus bishops: Gaimar, L. 1065.

[1314] Gaimar, Ll. 5502 (*parent*), 5503 (*compaignons*).

[1315] Gaimar, L. 5521.

[1316] Gaimar, Ll. 5542 (*amis*), 5544 (*priuez*).

[1317] Gaimar, l. 5547.

they reached Huntingdon there were a hundred of Hereward's *liges priuez* ('privy lieges'), and we are told that these *homes* were *fedeel* (faithful) to him.[1318] This group is called a *compaignie*[1319] and within this group Hereward had a *compaignon / compaignun* called Winter and another called Morkere.[1320] This may reveal a difference between *compaignons* and *compaignie*: a group of eighteen people could be described as *compaignons* but a group of a hundred was a *compaignie*. But it is clear that several phrases could be used to describe the same group. This shows the difficulty of working out what words meant.

In every case a 'company' has a distinct identity. The 'companions' are 'traitors', 'Greeks', 'followers', 'lepers', and so on. It may be that any group with a strong and independent identity could be described as being made of 'companions'. Although the term 'companion' has overtones of equality it is clear that such groups were not always only comprised of equals. It is likely, for instance, that a group of traitors had a leader. This is made clear when we realise that Alexander was the leader of his companions as he extracts oaths from them.[1321] This idea of equality in vertical relationships is seen again in the way King Arthur was with his 'companions' during a meal.[1322] Clearly this means that followers could be called 'companions'.

It is likely that within these groups everyone knew the others quite well. Sometimes we can see that there were strong emotional bonds between companions. For example, Alexander left Greece with twelve 'companions',[1323] one of whom 'he dearly loved.'[1324] When some of them believe others (including Alexander) are dead they are stricken with grief[1325] and when a companion dies in battle Alexander is angry and 'eager to avenge his friend'.[1326] This emotional bond explains why Roland is able to call his lance 'companion': he trusted his life to it, fought with it and had probably had it a long time.[1327]

The use of the possessive adjective is revealing in this context. Very often we hear not of 'X with a company' but of 'X and his company'.[1328] This is an important distinction for

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[1318] Gaimar, Ll. 5550 (*liges priuez*), 5551 (*homes, fedeel*). As we have seen, this may mean that these followers were bound to Hereward by the formal ties of homage and an oath of faithfulness.

[1319] Gaimar, L. 5555.

[1320] Gaimar, Ll. Winter: 5573 (*compaignon*), 5626 (*compaignun*); Morkere: 5701.

[1321] *Cligés*, p. 145. However, the Greeks also listened to what Nabunal said - pp. 146-47.

[1322] *Lancelot*, L. 35.

[1323] For example, *Cligés*, Ll. 110, 238, 360. By the time they assault a stronghold there are 26 - p. 147; it is possible that this includes some additional followers that Arthur had assigned to him.

[1324] *Cligés*, p. 138.

[1325] *Cligés*, Ll. 2130-32. The two brothers, who accompany Lancelot to the Stone Passage, are also described as his 'companions' and he had spent the last night as a guest in their house: *Lancelot*, p. 235 (twice).

[1326] *Cligés*, p. 146. He is also angry when he sees more of his men dying during the assault - p. 147.

[1327] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 1360.

[1328] For example, from *Dermot* alone, Ll. 1495 (*sa compaignun* - 'his companion'), 989 (*son compaignun*), 1103 (*si compainun*), 2276, 3019 (*si compaignun*), 1323, 2126 (*si compaingnun*), 1123, 1137, 1268, 1526 (*sa compagnie* - 'his company'), 1858 (*sa compainie*), 917, 1373 (*lur compaignuns* - 'their companions'), 3387 (*lur compaignie* - 'their company').

it implies that a strong link existed between the individual and the group. This choice of phrase provides a clue to the internal structure of the group and the forces acting within the group for it means that, in some way, the two belong together. The phrase 'with a company' says nothing of the relationship between the individual and the group but the phrase 'his company' tells us that the poet (and probably the individuals concerned) thought they belonged together. The same argument can be applied to the use of the possessive adjective to describe friends and the relationship between a lord and his household and men.[1329] This means that companions and friends shared a common identity and that a company, household and men saw their identity as closely bound to their leader. Indeed, I would go so far as to say that in many cases it was the lord who gave the group its defining identity and that individuals within the group thought of themselves as belonging to their leader. This, at least, is what the poets saw.

This use of 'companion' and 'company' has close parallels in Latin sources. One such parallel is *contubernius* (company) or *contubernarius* (companion). In classical Rome authors had used *contubernium* to mean a military tent used by legionaries, and this was then extended to describe an eight-man platoon. We might here be looking at clerics grappling for a Latin term for a vernacular word and concept.

This is seen in the work of Orderic Vitalis. He uses at least three words to mean 'a small body of men with a strong sense of collective identity and artificial brotherhood'. In his *Ecclesiastical History* the word *consodalis* is used nine times, *commanipulares* six times, and *commilito* forty seven times. The first two of these words had a specialised usage whereas the third had a more general meaning. *Consodalis* refers only to religious groups but includes military ventures with a religious objective. It therefore appeals to a sense of Christian unity. *Commanipulares* refers to any military group, whether or not this group had a religious dimension; here we should note that *maniple* itself was a unit in the Roman army. *Commanipulares* therefore has modern parallels with terms such as 'company' and 'platoon'. *Commilito*, on the other hand, has a more general meaning for it is used in both religious and secular contexts. It may therefore resemble more closely the vernacular concept of 'companion'. Such semantic precision should help with future identification of 'companions' and friendship groups in the real world.

How are we to interpret words that describe monks, rebels, crusaders, those fighting for legitimate authority and a group of people playing? Clearly the purpose and size of these

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[1329] Again from *Dermot* alone, Ll. 2233, 2374 (*ses amis*), 2233 (*ses druz*), 1115, 1135, 1144 (*sa meiné*), 1567, 1683, 1725, 2034, 2113, 2135, 2378, 2463, 2789, (*sa meyné*), 2328 (*sa meine gent*), 1141, 1434, 2048 (*sa gent*), 1206 (*vos genz*), 1128 (*sa haute gent*). Hudson has proposed a similar methodology. Citing *Regesta* 2 no. 697, he shows how this approach can show that land was thought to belong to a lord rather than to a tenant. See Hudson, 'Milsom's legal structure', pp. 61-62.

groups varied widely. But the different types of group all share one common attribute: a strong sense of collective identity. All these words refer to a clearly defined group - whether they be members of a religious community, a band of Christians fighting the infidel, or a bunch of rebels. Many would be close-knit communities with a strong sense of togetherness. Such groups cannot be simply labelled as 'friends' as 'friendship' need not have united them, although it is likely to have played a part. Instead they were united by circumstance. In this way they closely resemble the more general use of 'companion' in the vernacular sources - like the lepers being united through adversity, the Greeks united by birth, or rebels united by a common cause. But none of the groups found in Latin texts, close-knit as they are, are comparable to the specialised meaning of 'companion' that we find in the vernacular literature and which is discussed in the next chapter.[1330]

We have seen that in both French and Latin sources companions and companies had a strong sense of collective identity that was focused on the leader. This means that an emotional and psychological link existed between a lord and his followers. In turn, this means that any decision to go against one's lord involved breaking away from this bond and forging a new identity. Desertion and betrayal therefore carried not only legal and moral implications but also meant the individual had to create a new identity for himself. But one should not push this too far for it is unclear how difficult such a change in self-perception would have been.

[1330] However, it is possible that this type of companionship had a formal element to it. For example, Sigar calls the people with Haveloc his *compaignon* after agreeing a *peis e trues* (peace and truce) with Haveloc, his wife and his *compaienz*: Gaimar, Ll. 569, 567, 574.

V

TYPES OF FRIEND: COMPANIONSHIP

We have seen that members of a group could be called companions. However, the word can also describe a highly specific type of friendship.[1331] This type of friendship is seen regularly in both *Chanson de Geste*[1332] and Romance literature[1333] and is mirrored in the heroic

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[1331] An earlier draft of this section was presented in London at a conference on medieval friendship in a paper titled 'Companionship in twelfth-century vernacular literature'. I am grateful for the comments made on this paper by Matthew Bennet. Further research may be done on young men being brought up together at court and through reading Pierre Chaplais on Piers Gaveston and Edward II (1994).

[1332] In the *Chanson de Roland* Oliver and Roland are described as being the 'companion' (*cumpainz*) of each other twenty eight times: *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 324, 546, 559, 1006, 1020, 1051, 1059, 1070, 1113, 1146, 1160, 1456, 1463, 1546, 1558, 1672, 1692, 1693, 1716, 1723, 1868, 1976, 1983, 1994, 2018, 2027, 2201, 2207. In addition, Estorgans and Estramariz are said to be companions once: Ll. 940-41; Gerin and Gerir three times: Ll. 1618-23, 2186, 2404; and another pair once: L. 3194. It is worth noting the similarity of the names of the people that make up each pair: in literature companions are often given similar names. Roland is also referred to as the 'friend', 'peer' and 'lord' of Oliver: Ll. 1975-76.

[1333] In the romances of Chrétien de Troyes it often takes the form of the main character of the poem becoming the companion of Gawain. When Érec has been brought to Arthur's court in disguise he suddenly reveals his identity to Gawain saying 'I am Érec, who used to be your companion and friend'. Certainly their relationship was close: 'Gawain heard this and went to embrace him; he lifted up his helmet and untied his ventail; for joy he embraced him again and again, and Érec for his part did likewise'. Gawain also expresses the close nature of their relationship by immediately showing concern for Érec's wounds: *Érec et Énide*, p. 88. It is not true of Cligés but Gawain is said to be the companion of his father, Alexander: *Cligés*, p. 128. Alis asks Cligés to become his companion saying 'it is my pleasure and desire that you become my companion and join me as lord of all my empire': *Cligés*, p. 174. Here we should note that this was a formal offer and that Alis was both the emperor and uncle of Cligés, so he wanted to use the bond of companionship to reinforce existing ties. At the end of the poem *Lancelot* Gawain and Lancelot are described as 'companions': *Lancelot*, p. 290. Later Gawain calls Lancelot 'my friend' and 'good gentle friend': *Lancelot*, pp. 291, 292. However, we cannot conclude that Chrétien himself thought of the pair as being companions as the passage was written not by Chrétien but by Godefroy de Lagny who finished the poem; Godefroy's account begins where Lancelot is walled into the tower (at L. 6132): *Lancelot*, Ll. 7098-7112. Gawain and Lancelot are close friends long before the end of the poem. Their relationship starts when Gawain gives him a horse and then they journey together in search of Guinevere: *Lancelot*, pp. 211-16. Gawain calls Yvain 'his companion and friend': *Yvain*, p. 325. Gawain later refers to their 'friendship' and calls Yvain 'dear companion' and 'dear friend': *Yvain*, p. 327. Chrétien also calls them 'the two companions': *Yvain*, p. 329. He also records that they love each other: *Yvain*, p. 370. After their duel we are reminded that they are both 'friend and companion': *Yvain*, p. 373. Gawain also calls Yvain his 'companion' twice in front of Arthur: *Yvain*, p. 374. Perceval and Gawain agree to become friends and embrace: *Perceval*, p. 436. They enter Arthur's court holding hands and we are told that Perceval is Gawain's 'companion': *Perceval*, p. 437. When Gawain accepts another as a companion it shows that they are his equal and therefore that they are great knights. This seems to be one of the main literary functions of Gawain. Other companionships are also recorded in his work. The lion is described as the 'companion' of Yvain: *Yvain*, pp. 338, 376 (twice); but in the Tristan stories Tristan's dog does not seem to have been called companion. Companionship is also seen in the work of Marie de France for Meriaduc asks Guigemar to attend a tournament as a friend and companion (*ami e cumpaniun*): Marie, *Guigemar*, L. 750. Béroul may also have made use of the concept for when Tristan leaves Yseut at Mark's court Dinas of Dinan 'embraced Tristan often and begged him to be sure to come back to them; the two pledged their mutual trust.... They kissed each other many times. Dinas begged him to have no fear and to send on all his wishes and he would do everything.... Then Tristan left Dinas, and both were sad at the parting': Béroul, p. 112. Here mutual trust is pledged and the two embrace and kiss to create the relationship, and there is an affective dimension, but the word 'companion' is not used. Béroul describes the close relationship between Tristan and Governal as being that of a 'companion': Béroul, L. 2248. The word seems to have not been used in the narrow sense as the poet remarks that if Mark did not allow Tristan back into his court he would go to Dumfries or Brittany without any *conpaigne* except Governal, clearly implying that he could take others. This cautious approach is also advisable given that the poet also such phrases as *chier* ('dear'): Béroul, L. 971; and *bien le connut* ('good company'): Béroul, L. 976.

literature of earlier times.[1334] It is also seen in historical sources. The frequent use of this word testifies to the importance of the concept to individuals in the twelfth century. But what does it mean?

Companionship is most clearly seen in *Amis and Amiloun*. This is a short tale written in Anglo-Norman French in the later twelfth century.[1335] Here the names of the two central characters are based on the word for friend. Amis and Amiloun are attractive young men with identical looks and are great friends.[1336] It is worth looking at this story in detail.

Amis has an illicit affair with a count's daughter. When this is discovered the dopplegangers swap identities so that Amiloun - pretending to be Amis - can combat the seneschal who discovered the affair. This obstruction of justice is not the only trickery they get up to. After the duel the count wishes his daughter to marry the victor, and before the two companions have time to return to their original identities the wedding takes place. Despite a mysterious warning that he will get leprosy if he goes through with the wedding Amiloun continues to stand in for Amis - despite already being married. Only in the nuptial bed does Amiloun reveal his true identity. The bride is happy about this and the two friends are soon able to swap roles. In the mean time Amis has been pretending to be Amiloun. In so doing he had to share a bed with his best friend's wife, so to ensure that there was no physical contact he placed a naked sword between them.[1337] Several years later Amiloun duly comes down with leprosy and is hounded into exile. Going to the court of his friend he is not initially recognised. When Amis does recognise him, however, he hears a voice say that to cure his friend he must bathe him in the blood of his children. Amis does this; Amiloun is cured; and Amis' wife is glad that her children were sacrificed for their friendship. Thankfully there is a happy ending to thus gruesome scene for Amis and his wife go on to find their children playing happily in the sunlight.[1338]

What are we to make of this tale? Firstly, the unknown author says at the beginning that this is a song about love and loyalty, *amur* and *leauté*.[1339] Secondly, the two men describe the other as their *compaignon*.[1340] The poem therefore seems to be a study of the loyalty of companions. It presents us with a picture of the ideal (or extremes) of companionship in the twelfth century. The companions swap identities with a deliberate intention to deceive and

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[1334] Achilles and Patroclus and Gilgamesh and Enkidn can be seen as companions: Critchley, *Feudalism*, p. 40.

[1335] *Amis and Amiloun*, ed. E. Kölbing (Heilbronn, 1884). This is given a prose translation in *The Birth of Romance. An Anthology*, trans. Judith Weiss (London, 1992). The poem is 1250 lines long.

[1336] This stressing of similarity - and the confusion for the modern reader - is further highlighted by the two men having each other's names in other contemporary versions of the story.

[1337] This motif occurs regularly in medieval texts. It is seen, for instance, in the Tristan legend when Mark discovers the two lovers lying together: Béroul, pp. 88-89.

[1338] There is a Biblical precedent to this in the story of Abraham and Isaac.

[1339] *Amis and Amiloun*, Ll. 1-2.

obstruct the course of justice; Amiloun trusts Amis to share a bed with his wife; and Amis sacrifices his own children to cure his companion. These were the ideals of companionship: a willingness to defend the other even though this might mean deception and injustice; a willingness to sacrifice one's own children to heal the other; and enough trust to allow the other to share a bed with your wife. But there was nevertheless a limit placed on the relationship for God afflicted Amiloun with leprosy for taking Amis' place at the wedding.

Many of the ideas expressed in *Amis and Amiloun* are found elsewhere. Mutual support seems to have been at the heart of the relationship. Lancelot expected his companion Gawain would look for him when he is imprisoned by Meleagant 'out of love and friendship'.[1341] Co-operation often took the form of fighting as partners. Thus Yvain is helped by his lion companion to defeat the giant Harpin of the Mountain,[1342] the three brothers who accuse Lunete of treason[1343] and the two demon brothers at the town of Dire Adventure.[1344]

Companionship seems to have been formally entered into and should therefore be seen as a type of agreement. In *Daurel et Beton* Bove and Gui become companions[1345] and here we have the terms that initiated the arrangement: Gui will give Bove military service in exchange for joint authority with Bove over his possessions and on condition that he should be the sole heir of Bove should Bove die childless.[1346] The author may here be promoting companionship as a model for other socio-political relationships as this agreement is later mirrored by Bove's agreement with Charlemagne (Bove serves Charlemagne in return for Charlemagne's sister's hand in marriage).[1347] The contract may have been sealed through gift-giving[1348] but could also have involved oaths. Gaimar shows this very clearly for he describes how the kings Adelbrit and Edelsie

'were so united
That they were sworn companions [*compaignon par fei*]
And between them there was such love [*amur*]
That Edelsie gave his sister
To Adelbrit, that rich king'[1349]

[1340] For example, *Amis and Amiloun*, Ll. 87-92.

[1341] *Lancelot*, p. 287.

[1342] *Yvain*, pp. 347-48.

[1343] *Yvain*, pp. 350-51.

[1344] *Yvain*, pp. 364-66.

[1345] They are described as being 'companions' at *Daurel et Beton*, L. 390.

[1346] *Daurel et Beton*, Ll. 12-30.

[1347] *Daurel et Beton*, Ll. 132-58. This argument is proposed by Kay, p. 151.

[1348] Gawain gives Lancelot a horse: *Lancelot*, p. 211.

[1349] Gaimar, Ll. 55-59.

Here we have companionship supported by 'faith' (probably an oath) and marriage. However, the relationship also seems to have rested on power as Gaimar goes on to say that 'As long as he [Adelbrit] was so powerful [*poestis*] Edelsi was his good friend [*bien sis amis*]',[1350] implying that without that power Edelsi would not have been such a friend.

Although companionship may have been created by a ritual it was nevertheless an affective relationship. This is seen clearly in the relationship of Yvain and Gawain. Chrétien tells us that Gawain 'preferred Yvain's company to that of all other knights he knew',[1351] Gawain is described as the 'most loved man' of Yvain,[1352] and we are told that they have a 'sacred love'.[1353] This friendship makes Yvain want to save the lives of Gawain's nephews and niece.[1354] At the end of the poem Yvain and Gawain are on opposite sides in a duel because they do not recognise each other through their disguises. Chrétien shows that they would prefer to be killed rather than kill their companion[1355] and that had they known who they were fighting they would have embraced and kissed instead of jousted.[1356] When Yvain realises with whom he has been fighting he says: 'I am Yvain, who loves you more than any man in any part of this wide world, for you have always loved me and shown me honour in every court'[1357] and their peace and relationship is signalled by an embrace.[1358] Their battle is the climax to *Yvain*. The place in the poem accorded to the battle stresses its importance: Chrétien believed that his audience would appreciate how terrible it was for companions to fight.

This emotional bond is matched elsewhere. Tristan and Kaherdin love each other and have in each other both good company (*bone companie*) and great friendship (*grant amisté*).[1359] When they cry because Tristan is poisoned Tristan calls Kaherdin *beal amis, bels compainz* and *compainz* and asserts that in this land he has no friend (*ami*) and no relative (*parent*) except Kaherdin.[1360] A similar level of emotional attachment exists between Roland

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[1350] Gaimar, Ll. 77-78.

[1351] *Yvain*, p. 324.

[1352] *Yvain*, p. 345.

[1353] *Yvain*, p. 370. Chrétien makes it clear that here the problem is that two companions are fighting each other: 'Can Yvain rightfully say, if he gets the worst of it, that the man who has hurt and shamed him has counted him among his friends and has never called him anything but 'friend' and 'companion'?': *Yvain*, p. 371. At the end of the duel we are again told that they are 'friend and companion': *Yvain*, p. 373. Before Arthur Gawain twice calls Yvain his 'companion': *Yvain*, p. 374. Later Gawain again refers to Yvain as his 'companion': *Yvain*, p. 376.

[1354] *Yvain*, pp. 344-46.

[1355] *Yvain*, p. 370.

[1356] *Yvain*, p. 371.

[1357] *Yvain*, p. 373.

[1358] *Yvain*, p. 374. They then argue over who should claim to be defeated, each wanting to add to the renown of the other: *Yvain*, pp. 373-74.

[1359] Thomas, Ll. 2366 (Tristan loves Kaherdin), 2367 (Kaherdin loves Tristan), 2387, 2392 (they love each other), 2385 (good company), 2387 (great friendship).

[1360] Thomas, Ll. 2395 (*beal amis*), 2398 (*bel compaing*), 2411 (*bels compainz*), 2426 (*compainz*), 2397 (*ami* and *parent*).

and Oliver for when Oliver dies Roland says 'Now that you are dead, it grieves me to remain alive.'[1361] Their bond was close enough for them to refer to each other as 'brother'.[1362]

Companions were also equals. This is seen in the relationship between Yvain and Gawain for when they fight they do so with equal skill and bravery.[1363] After they take off their armour and weapons they 'embrace one another as equals'.[1364] This shows the importance of similarity in close friendships.

Equality is also stressed in the way companions share the same identity. This is seen most clearly in *Amis and Amiloun* where the companions have identical looks, but it is also seen elsewhere. In *Lancelot* knights not taking part in a tournament point out who was who on the field: 'And do you see those two knights... on dappled horses, with dark lions on gilded shields? One is called Semiramis, [note the second half of the name!] the other is his companion - they have painted their shields to match.'[1365] It is also seen in the way Gawain tells Yvain that he will fight under Yvain's banner if Yvain will come with him to tournaments.[1366]

The bond of companionship could be quite long-lasting. Yvain and Gawain went to tournaments together for over a year [1367] and Roland tells Oliver 'we have been together for days and years.'[1368] These might be realistic time periods but could also show an ideal and an exaggeration.

To some extent companionship may be the homosocial version of marriage. This is seen in the formal contract and ceremony that commences the relationship, the strong emotional bond between companions and the stressing of similarity. This is not to say that companions were homosexuals. A knight could also be the 'companion' of his lady.[1369] When her lover dies one woman wants to die so that her soul can be the companion of his.[1370]

How does companionship compare with blood relationships? Companionship seems to have been a voluntary association, and in this way it is clearly different to real family relationships as you cannot choose your relatives. Because of this it is likely that the bond between companions was generally more amicable but not necessarily as deep. For although one might hope that one's family would be one's closest allies this was clearly not always the

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[1361] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 2030.
[1362] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 1376, 1395, 1456, 1866.
[1363] *Yvain*, p. 372.
[1364] *Yvain*, p. 375.
[1365] *Lancelot*, p. 278.
[1366] *Yvain*, p. 327.
[1367] *Yvain*, pp. 327-29. This is an interesting parallel with the relationships of William Marshal.
[1368] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 2028.
[1369] *Perceval*, p. 391.

case. But the ideals of companionship and family relations are similar, particularly such values as co-operation and mutual support. Indeed, the concept of companionship is perhaps best seen as one of artificial brotherhood. This explains why Roland and Oliver are described as being 'brothers' four times.[1371]

This idea of companionship is not restricted to the French-speaking world. In the *Rolandslied* of c. 1170 - the text that transmitted the *Chanson de Roland* to German audiences - Roland describes Oliver as his 'most precious / loving companion' and as his 'loving companion'.[1372] In the Middle High German epic the *Nibelungenlied* Volker and Hagen have a similar relationship. These are the two greatest warriors serving the Burgundians and in the second half of the poem they form a fighting partnership. At one point Volker explicitly calls Hagen *geselle* ('companion')[1373] and also uses the word *friunt/vriunt* ('friend').[1374] Most interesting, however, is Hagen's reaction to Volker's death. He says that this loss was greater than that of any kinsman or follower.[1375] He then goes on to say that Volker was 'the best battle-companion that I ever had'.[1376] This mutual affection would seem to be the same as between Roland and Oliver, Amis and Amiloun and the various companions in Chrétien's works.

Companionship can also be seen in the real world. On the First Crusade Baldwin may have asked Tancred to be his companion. The *Gesta Francorum* records that Baldwin asked Tancred to make an *amicissime in societatem* ('friendship society') but Tancred refused to make this *societate*.[1377] If the identification of this proposal with companionship is correct then it means companionship was around by the late eleventh century at the latest. It may have existed earlier.

Of greater certainty is William Marshal and Roger de Gaugy [Jouy]. Both belonged to the Young King's household, and as such were more or less equals.[1378] In the late 1170s they agreed to team up for the tournaments of the next two years and share the profits. William's biographer records that Roger was desirous 'of company with a good companion' (*'d'acompaingnier boen compaignon'*)[1379] and that William accepted him as a *'bone*

[1370] *Perceval*, p. 423.
[1371] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 1376, 1395, 1456, 1866. These references occur when Roland and Oliver are practising military companionship by fighting the pagans.
[1372] *Das Rolandslied des Pfaffen Konrad*, ed. Dieter Kartschoke (Stuttgart, 1993) Ll. 6485 (*der aller liebeste geselle*), 6740 (*jâ du geselle liebe*).
[1373] *Nibelungenlied*, St. 2203.
[1374] *Nibelungenlied*, St. 1838.
[1375] *Nibelungenlied*, St. 2289.
[1376] *Nibelungenlied*, St. 2290 (*der beste hergeselle, den ich ie gewan*).
[1377] *Gesta Francorum*, p. 24.
[1378] *HGM*, Ll. 2427-32 (William instructed to watch over Henry), 3390 (Roger recorded as in his household).
[1379] *HGM*, L. 3398.

conpaingnie'.[1380] Their relationship lasted two years[1381] and the captures they made - and the ransoms they received for them - were recorded. These show that it was a highly successful partnership as within ten months they had captured 103 knights![1382] Here we have a fighting partnership of equals who were called companions.

William Marshal may have had other companions at other stages of his career. Before the death of the Young King Jacques d'Avesnes is described as William's *compaingnie* and we are told that Jacques 'had great love and affection for him'.[1383] In a similar way, Baldwin de Béthune is described as William's friend (*amis*)[1384] and we are told that Baldwin meant more to William than a 'neighbour' (*veisin*).[1385] This relationship may have lasted a long time for together with Hue de Hamelincourt they were in the same company that supported the Young King[1386] and after the death of the Young King these three continued to travel together.[1387] The earls of Salisbury and Warenne are also said to be William's *compaingnons*, but there is insufficient evidence to say that the term was being used in its specific usage.[1388]

By the time of his death William Marshal also had a very close relationship with Eimery de Saint-Maur, a leading Templar. In the Marshal's biography Eimery praises William for his valour, wisdom and loyalty (*lealté*)[1389] and before Eimery dies he says he loved (*amai*) William's company (*companie*) and wanted to remain his *companie* in eternal life.[1390] On his own death William was buried at Staines and placed next to Eimery de Saint-Maur, 'his friend' (*son ami*).[1391] Even if there were no formal dimension to this relationship it seems that at the end of his life William had another close relationship with this friend.

Shortly after the death of King John one of William Marshal's sons may been the companion of William earl of Salisbury. The *Histoire* records that the young Marshal and Earl William 'loved each other as if they were brothers [*Qu'il s'entramoient com[e] frere]*' and were 'good friends [*buen ami*]'.[1392] Their relationship also had a military dimension for,

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[1380] *HGM*, L. 3408.

[1381] *HGM*, L. 3409.

[1382] *HGM*, Ll. 3414-21. See also Crouch, *William Marshal*, p. 175. Later Roger is described as one of the three 'principal advisors' to the Young King (*HGM*, Ll. 6408-14).

[1383] *HGM*, Ll. 6187, 6181.

[1384] *HGM*, L. 6286.

[1385] *HGM*, L. 6820.

[1386] *HGM*, Ll. 6669-73.

[1387] *HGM*, Ll. 7196-99. As well as showing that the relationship between these three men lasted a long time this passage also shows how horizontal ties could remain after the death of a lord.

[1388] *HGM*, L. 12332.

[1389] *HGM*, Ll. 18394-98; 18398 (*lealté*).

[1390] *HGM*, Ll. 18421-25; 18421 (*amai*), 18421, 18425 (*companie*).

[1391] *HGM*, Ll. 19044-46; 19046 (*son ami*).

[1392] *HGM*, Ll. 15884, 15962.

together, they led an army round England mopping up rebel strongholds.[1393] Although to be sure we would need further evidence supporting this link the impression is that they were companions.

The number of companionships identifiable from the *History of William Marshal* suggests that it was a common practice by the end of the century to make such relationships. If we had other contemporary vernacular accounts it may be that we could identify many more.

Another pair of companions comprised Saer de Quincy and Robert fitz Walter. These men worked together for twenty years at the start of the thirteenth century. Although the term 'companions' is not used in our sources the evidence available to us supports our conclusion. An interesting parallel here is with the theme in vernacular sources of companions exchanging roles and identities for this pair shared a single coat of arms. This implies close familiarity and, most likely, genuine friendship. Their relationship must also have been one of great trust as their honour was in their companion's hands because they shared the same heraldic emblem.[1394]

As the thirteenth century progressed companionships may have become more widespread. Accounts for Edward I's Welsh wars show that in 1277 out of fifty household knights six were serving with companions and that by 1285 there were seventy seven men of which eight had companions (*commilitones*).[1395] But this apparent growth in the number of companionships may also be through the increased amount of evidence that we have for the later period.

The concept of companionship is closely related to that of 'brotherhood in arms'. This topic was raised by Maurice Keen in 1962.[1396] He saw 'brotherhood-in-arms' as being a reciprocal relationship in which the individuals promised to stay together in adversity and aid each other in all possible ways. To Keen it was not just a military bond but covered all areas of an individual's social relations.[1397] The problem with his analysis is that he forms a composite view in which developments and regional variations are obscured. In particular, most of his evidence, indeed all of his real-life examples, date from the Late Middle Ages. One should not assume that what was true for the fifteenth century was necessarily true for the twelfth.

[1393] *HGM*, Ll. 15878-16002.
[1394] On these companions see George Henderson, 'Romance and politics on some medieval English seals', *Art History* 1 (1978) 26-42.
[1395] N. Denholm-Young suggested that *commilitones* were an elite force but Prestwich says it refers to partnerships: Prestwich, *Edward I*, pp. 147-48.
[1396] Maurice Keen, 'Brotherhood in arms', *History* 47 (1962) 1-17.
[1397] Maurice Keen, 'Brotherhood in arms', 1-2.

But to a large extent Keen's analysis holds for the earlier period. The general characteristics of brotherhood-in-arms remained the same throughout the High and Late Middle Ages. The ideas of collective identity and mutual aid, profit and loyalty formed the bedrock of companionship throughout the period. What varies is the level of detail that comes down to us. Evidence from the later centuries is more diverse and more detailed. It seems that as formal, written contracts were introduced to the relationship between lord and follower the bond of companionship became equally more explicit and the obligations more precise.

Four questions still need to be addressed. Firstly, how formalised were these real-life relationships? In the case of William Marshal and Roger de Gaugy there may have been a written agreement as we know that detailed accounts were kept and that the partnership lasted two years. Elsewhere there is less evidence. But literature suggests that there was a formal element and that the relationship was created through oaths and ritual.

Secondly, is this type of relationship only possible between equals? The evidence presented here suggests companionship was only practised between near-equals but the scarcity of examples begs us to be cautious. It should also be remembered that people of unequal power could be friends. Comparisons with faithfulness and homage are also instructive. We have seen that the contract of faithfulness was equal and reciprocal but that homage created a vertical relationship. This suggests that the difference between the concepts of companionship and faithfulness might not be as great as one might first imagine. Yet that homage does not seem to have played a role in companionship *is* a major difference. Seen in this light companionship appears as the formalisation of relationships based on equality just as homage was a ritual expression of relationships based on service and reward.

Thirdly, to what extent was companionship a 'professional partnership' and to what extent was it an 'emotional relationship'? The necessary mutual trust and devotion can only have come about through genuine friendship and respect. This does not exclude there being a professional dimension to the arrangement. This is obvious in the case of the profitable relationship between William Marshal and Roger de Gaugy. But all the examples, literary and historical, depict the companions as fighting together as a team.

Fourthly, do different authors (or genres) use the word differently? This does not seem to be the case. The use of the word in the *Chanson de Roland*, Béroul's *Tristan*, the *Lais* of Marie de France, the romances of Chrétien de Troyes, German epics and the *History of William Marshal* all seem to be the same. This suggests that the concept was widely known (but not necessarily widely used in real life) during and beyond the twelfth century and throughout much of Latin Christendom.

We have seen that different types of friendship existed. A single relationship could evolve through several of these categories. The relationship between Érec and Guivret allows us to chart a relationship from hostility through formal friendship to emotional friendship and finally companionship. Initially they fight. When Guivret has been defeated in single combat by Érec he sues for peace. After revealing his name and power he says 'I should very much like to be your confident and friend from this time forward'.[1398] This is reciprocated for when Guivret promises to help him Érec says 'You are my lord and friend'.[1399] To symbolise this new relationship

> 'each of them kissed and embraced the other. Never from
> such a fierce battle was there such a sweet parting, for
> moved by love and generosity each of them cut long,
> broad bands from the tail of his shirt, and they bound up
> each other's wounds. When they had bandaged each
> other, they commended one another to God.'[1400]

Since Érec and Guivret have only just met it is unlikely that their relationship is held together by pure emotion although they probably admired each other's skill. Instead it seems likely that they were offering each other friendship in a formal way. The embrace and hug would then be a ritual to seal the new relationship. Later Érec and Guivret duel because they fail to recognise each other. When Guivret learns whom he has wounded he is very apologetic and quickly says 'I am your friend, Guivret.'[1401] Érec immediately replies: 'Friend, get up! You are forgiven for this injury, since you did not recognise me.'[1402] Guivret then helps Énide care for Érec's wounds and they share a meal, during which Guivret calls Érec 'friend' three times.[1403] When they finally part Chrétien remarks that Érec and Énide have found Guivret to be a 'great friend'.[1404] By now they seem to have developed strong emotional ties. Later still Érec calls Guivret 'friend', Chrétien refers to Guivret as Érec's 'good companion',[1405] and Guivret is able to claim Érec loves him - the love of a friend.[1406] It may be that although the relationship between Guivret and Érec began as formal friendship by the end of the poem it has transformed through emotional friendship to companionship.[1407]

'Companion' is used in two ways. It can refer to members of a group of people with a shared identity; such groups were called companies. The other meaning is more specific and

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[1398] *Érec et Énide*, p. 84.
[1399] *Érec et Énide*, p. 85.
[1400] *Érec et Énide*, p. 85.
[1401] *Érec et Énide*, p. 99.
[1402] *Érec et Énide*, p. 99.
[1403] *Érec et Énide*, pp. 99-100.
[1404] *Érec et Énide*, p. 101.
[1405] *Érec et Énide*, p. 103.
[1406] *Érec et Énide*, p. 104.

describes a particular close relationship between two people. This relationship combined elements of formal and emotional friendship. Whereas 'friend' was vague and often misleading 'companion' had a specialised meaning. A companion was someone one could trust, fight beside and spend a long time with. A companion was more than just a friend or comrade: he was the closest friend you had.

[1407] This does not stop Érec calling Guivret 'dear friend': *Érec et Énide*, p. 104 (twice).

vi

FUNCTIONS OF FRIENDS

In addition to meeting social and psychological needs the main function of friendship was help. This is why *Garin Le Loheren* asserts that wealth is found in relatives (*parenz*) and friends (*amis*).[1408] It also explains why when Alexander addresses his companions about aiding Arthur against the traitor Angrés:

> 'they all said: "We'll never fail you!" And each one
> added: "So help me God, anyone who fails you now is not
> your friend!"'[1409]

This aid included paying ransoms,[1410] standing as pledges in a trial,[1411] fighting as a champion[1412] and attending court together[1413] as well as general support[1414] and being generous.[1415] Such support may have been expected for friends also ask for favours.[1416]

In particular friends gave political and military support. After the death of King John, for example, the young Marshal told his father he would besiege Marlborough with 'my friends [*mes ami*]'[1417] and William Marshal's bailiff summoned an army of '*ses homes & amis*'.[1418] Mutual help is also seen in the way *compaignons* helped each other in battle.[1419] This support is why friends are sometimes mentioned alongside tenants and men[1420] and why followers can be called friends.[1421]

[1408] *Garin Le Loheren*, L. 10172, cited by Kay, p. 200.

[1409] *Cligés*, p. 138.

[1410] People captured in tournaments expected their friends (*amis*) and acquaintances (*conoissance*) to want to ransom them: *HGM*, L. 3032.

[1411] Lanval had 'no relatives or friends [*n'i aveit parent ne ami*]' at the king's household and so found it difficult to find people willing to stand as surety (*plegges*), implying friends and relatives would have fulfilled this function: Marie, *Lanval*, L. 399.

[1412] When a king needed a champion to defeat a giant he turned first to his relatives (*parenz*) and his friends (*amis*): Thomas, L. 792.

[1413] Earl Richard, for example, went to the court of Henry II with his *amis* and *druz*: *Dermot*, L. 2233.

[1414] Kay says that Bademagu showed him friendship: 'whenever he was aware that I needed anything, he never failed to arrange to have it prepared for me as soon as he knew my need': *Lancelot*, p. 257.

[1415] William of Orange claims to be generous to his friends (*amis*): *Le Charroi de Nîmes*, L. 1175.

[1416] King Arthur thought he could ask a friend to do something for he tells Yseut 'I have begged the king [Mark] your lord, in loyalty and friendship, never to believe what the villains say about you': Béroul, p. 143.

[1417] *HGM*, Ll. 16013-22; quotation L. 16021.

[1418] *HGM*, L. 17783.

[1419] *HGM*, Ll. 16895-97; quotation L. 16896.

[1420] When Count Angrés prepares to rebel against King Arthur his army is comprised of his tenants and friends: *Cligés*, L. 1061. Similarly, Marie de France says that Guigemar attacked Meriaduc with his 'friends and men' (*ami e genz*): Marie, *Guigemar*, L. 877.

[1421] The 'barons, knights and household' who fight with Dermot are later called his friend (*amis*) and close friend (*druz*): *Dermot*, Ll. 893 (*baruns, chevalers e meiné*), 907 (*amis, druz*). Those who fight for Earl Richard in Ireland are 'his friends and his close friends' (*ces amis e ces druz*): *Dermot*, L. 1900. Donnell son

Sometimes friends were willing to go against the ruler's will in order to help each other. When Cligés and Fenice escape from Greece, for instance, Chrétien says that they 'had friends in the party [the pursuing force] who, had they discovered them, would have rather provided hiding places than bring them back to court.'[1422] This suggests that sometimes ties of friendship may have over-ridden ties of lordship.

Friends are likewise shown aiding each other in Thomas' *Tristan*. This text also shows how people could persuade one another and how several relationships can exist side-by-side. Tristan asks Kaherdin to go to Yseut 'for/by companionship and your faith', stressing their friendship to add emotional weight to his request. When this approach does not produce immediate results Tristan says he gives him faith (*vus affei*) and that he will become 'your liegeman' (*vostre liges hum*). This provokes Kaherdin to call Tristan *bel compaing* and *amis*, assert that he owes Tristan *lealté*, and go to fetch Yseut.[1423] Tristan then instructs Kaherdin to summon Yseut through her *fei* but also stresses her love (*amor*) and friendship (*amisté*) and claims that they had a *covenance*, made when they parted and she gave him her ring.[1424] When he reaches Queen Yseut he dutifully tells her that Tristan sends her 'friendship, service and greeting' (*amisté, service e saluz*) and assures her that Tristan 'is your liegeman and friend' (*Liges hum vus est e amis*). He then summons her by her *fei* and *lealtez* and reminds her of her *covenant*.[1425] In these instances the poet hints that although friendship should have been enough to secure aid the characters thought it wise to use other arguments to ensure it. This also shows how friendship could exist alongside other relationships. It was the sum of these different ties that made up the total strength of the relationship between Tristan and Yseut.

Giving aid brought with it a role in decision-making and friends can be seen offering advice.[1426] This seems to have been backed up by legal custom for the *Leges Henrici Primi*

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of Dermot is called *amis* by Earl Richard because at this stage Donnell was one of the few Irish still loyal to him: *Dermot*, L. 1796. Those who fight alongside John the Wade are *ses amis*: *Dermot*, L. 2374. The French captured at Mirabeau are termed by the French king 'our friends [*nos... amis*]': *HGM*, L. 12289. After successfully raiding the English the Danes returned home to get more support: they collect their *amis*: Gaimar, L. 2074. After some shipwrecks the Danes had to make a truce as they suffered through lack of *ami* and *bone compaignie*.[1421] Alfred called together his *amis* to fight the Danes: Gaimar, L. 3367.

[1422] *Cligés*, p. 204.

[1423] Thomas, Ll. 2430 (*par cumpanie e sur la fei*), 2433 (*vus affei*), 2435 (*vostre liges hum*), 2441 (*bel compaing*), 2443(*amis*), 2447 (*lealté*).

[1424] Thomas, Ll. 2527 (*fei*), 2533, 2539 (*amor*), 2535 (*amisté*), 2515 (*covenance*).

[1425] Thomas, Ll. 2710 (*Amisté, service e saluz*), 2713 (*Liges hum vus est e amis*), 2730 (*fei*), 2731 (*lealtez*), 2745 (*covenant*).

[1426] Æthelred's *amis* advised him to marry Emma, Richard's sister, because with the Norman's as his friends (*ses amis*) he would be able to subdue the opposition: Gaimar, Ll. 4122 (the *amis* offering advice), 4129 (*ses amis*). This is a clear indication that friends would give advice and military assistance. A maid (Lunete) offers advice to her lady (Laudine), saying she should re-marry, and is then thought of as a 'loyal friend': *Yvain*, pp. 314-16. Later she offers more advice, telling her lady to summon her people and seek their advice on how to defend her spring from King Arthur: *Yvain*, p. 318. Also later still when Yvain again goes to the spring at the end of the poem: *Yvain*, p. 377. Gaimar records that Æthelred took *conseil* with *ses amis*:

states that an impleaded person may seek counsel (*consilium*) from his friends (*amicis*) and relatives (*parentibus*).[1427] Having this role meant that friends could influence one person to help another.[1428] This can be seen in the way the poet says that if William Marshal could win back the favour of the Young King:

> 'He will be loved even more,
>
> Even more exalted and in demand
>
> And a greater source of pleasure to his friends [*amis*].'[1429]

This could refer simply to William being richer himself and therefore able to reward his friends. But it could also mean that he would be able and willing to exert influence on the Young King to help his friends.

Influencing people for friends shows that friendship networks were important. The saying 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend' also fits. Having discovered that the gate-keeper, like him, supports Louis William calls him 'friend, good brother.'[1430] Here we see not only an ally being described as a friend but also friendship being assimilated to the family structure. There is also a version of the saying 'a friend in need is a friend indeed': 'they always say that time of need is the best test of a friend'.[1431]

That friends were willing to give military aid also meant that they had to be involved in dispute settlement. For unless they were satisfied friends might continue to prosecute the quarrel. This is seen in two episodes involving Gawain. When Guiganbresil accuses Gawain of treason he tells his brother that he 'would gladly have sued for peace and offered such amends as all his friends and mine would have acknowledged satisfactory'.[1432] Gawain tells another knight: 'If I have wronged you in any way, I'll very gladly make amends in front of your friends and mine so that all will be made right and good.'[1433] Sadly it is unclear what type of friends are referred to in these passages and so we cannot tell whether they were political or social friends.

Past kindness is repaid. When Yvain finds himself trapped in a castle having killed its lord he is found by Lunete. She reveals that when she visited Arthur's court no one spoke

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Gaimar, Ll. 4123 (*conseil*), 4122 (*ses amis*). In this example *amis* may mean 'supporters' rather than people bound through an emotive bond.

[1427] *Leges Henrici Primi*, 46.4.

[1428] When some ladies see Lunete about to be executed they lament 'We will not know what to do when we lose our good friend, who gave us such counsel and such aid and took our part at court! At her recommendation our lady dressed us in her finest robes; things will be different for us, for we will have no voice at court': *Yvain*, p. 349.

[1429] *HGM*, Ll. 5687-89.

[1430] *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1557, 1630: 'Amis, bels frere'.

[1431] *Yvain*, p. 377.

[1432] *Perceval*, pp. 439-40.

[1433] *Perceval*, p. 489.

to her except Yvain, and for this she will now aid him: 'you, to your credit, honoured and served me there; for the honour that you paid me then I'll now give you the recompense.... Now you may be confident and certain that if you trust in me you will never be captured or harmed.'[1434] Afterwards she calls him 'friend'[1435] whereas before she calls him 'sir knight'.[1436] When Yvain learns that Lunete is accused of treason for persuading her mistress to marry Yvain he calls her 'sweet friend'[1437] and 'good friend'.[1438] With the help of his lion Yvain defeats three knights to save her.[1439] Thus here we have Yvain showing a kindness to a woman that is later repaid, and that her help is then repaid with military aid. This suggests that the obligations of friendship were broad and probably undefined.

[1434] *Yvain*, p. 307.
[1435] *Yvain*, p. 308.
[1436] *Yvain*, p. 307.
[1437] *Yvain*, p. 340.
[1438] *Yvain*, p. 341.
[1439] *Yvain*, pp. 350-51.

vii

PROBLEMS WITH FRIENDS

Friendship had its limits. Fulfilling an oath could over-ride friendship,[1440] breaking a promise could end a friendship[1441] and fear could cause friendship to break.[1442] Thomas was well-aware that 'company' and general 'companionship' could also fail. He says it is better to have no *companie* than to have a *compainun* who was jealous, had no *amor* for you or who only brought bad things.[1443] He goes on to say that Tristan has *compainuns* who bear him hate (*haïz*) instead of love (*amez*).[1444]

Yvain wonders whether it is possible for the widow whose husband he has slain to love him and be his friend:

> 'And should she consider me her friend? Yes, indeed,
>
> because I love her. Yet I must call her my enemy because
>
> she hates me, and rightfully so, since I have killed the one
>
> she loves. Am I therefore her enemy? Indeed I am not,
>
> but her friend instead, for I've never loved anyone so
>
> much.'[1445]

This passage demonstrates the moral dilemmas Chrétien explores. Although Yvain wants to be her friend he believes this is not possible because he has killed her husband. Later, however, they wed.[1446]

There were also limits to companionship. Because Roland refused to sound his horn before the battle commenced (or possibly because he wanted to after the battle had begun) his companion Oliver says:

> 'By this beard of mine;

[1440] A knight sworn to fight everyone who came to a certain spot says 'I can inform you [Érec] in all honesty that I have no friend so dear that I would have held back in any way against him': *Érec et Énide*, p. 112.

[1441] Arthur tells Kay 'A gentleman should never undertake to promise anything to another that he cannot or will not grant him, for he might then earn the dislike of this person who otherwise would have been his friend but who, once the promise has been given, expects it to be kept': *Perceval*, pp. 393-94.

[1442] The two brothers who accompany Lancelot to the Sword Bridge leave him there as they refuse to make such a dangerous crossing: *Lancelot*, p. 245.

[1443] Thomas, Ll. 811-22.

[1444] Thomas, Ll. 823-24.

[1445] *Yvain*, p. 313.

[1446] *Yvain*, p. 322. The lady overcomes her hatred through the argument put forward by her maid: since Yvain slew her husband in a duel he must be a better knight: *Yvain*, p. 316. The lady herself explains her reasoning: 'You have done me no wrong; nor did you wrong him, for had he been able he would have killed you': *Yvain*, p. 317.

If ever I see my noble sister Aude,

You will not lie in her arms.'[1447]

This shows Oliver is far from pleased with Roland. When Roland asks him why he now bears him a grudge Oliver replies:

'Companion, you have been the cause of it.

For a true vassal's act, in its wisdom, avoids folly;

Caution is better than great zeal.

Franks are dead because of your recklessness;

Charles will never again receive our service.

If you had heeded me, my lord would now be here;

We should have fought this battle and won it.

King Marsile would have been captured or killed.

Roland, we can only rue your prowess;

Charlemagne will have no aid from us.

There will be none like him until the Day of Judgement;

You will die here and France will be ashamed by it.

Today our loyal comradeship is at its end;

Before evening there will be a sorrowful farewell.'[1448]

Thus although there is still a strong emotive bond between Roland and Oliver this does not save Roland from reproach.

Other companionships have more spectacular endings.[1449] In *Daurel et Beton* Gui murders Bove and as he dies he declares Gui to be a 'false companion [*fals companhs*]'.[1450] But even now Bove still calls Gui 'friend' (*amicx*) and tells him how to avoid being convicted of murder by placing the boar's teeth in his side and his spear in the boar.[1451] This shows Bove's love for Gui survives even the most severest of tests. In *Raoul de Cambrai* Bernier murders his companion Raoul when Raoul is given lands Bernier's family stood to inherit. Here Bernier is also motivated by a desire for vengeance as Raoul had murdered his mother.[1452] In *Aye d'Avignon* Garnier and Berengier are *conpaignon*[1453] for four years but they quarrel over Charlemagne's plan to marry Garnier to Aye as Berengier also wants to marry her. Charlemagne's suggested compromise, that Berengier marry one of Garnier's sisters, is

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[1447] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 1719-21.
[1448] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 1723-36.
[1449] These are discussed throughout Sarah Kay, *The* Chanson de Geste *in the Age of Romance: Political Fictions* (Oxford, 1995).
[1450] *Daurel et Beton*, L. 390.
[1451] *Daurel et Beton*, Ll. 398-403.
[1452] *Raoul de Cambrai*, Ll. 1328-38, 1518-19. The story is discussed by Critchley, *Feudalism*, p. 32.
[1453] *Aye de Avignon*, L. 24.

refused.[1454] At the start of *Orson de Beauvais* Hugon betrays his companion Orson for money and through his lust for Orson's wife Aceline.[1455] These texts show that companionship had its limits and that people were interested in them. They also suggest that breaking the bond of companionship was severe and unusual as they are dramatic episodes in the poems.

The breaking of friendship was also a major event. When a host plots to kill Érec Énide calls this 'an act of gross disloyalty and treachery'[1456] because he should act as a friend to his guests. After the count has been defeated he admits he was in the wrong: 'Her beauty inflamed me. Because I desired her, I wanted to kill her lord and hold her by force. Evil was certain to come to me from it; evil has befallen me, for I have behaved rashly and disloyally, treacherously and madly'.[1457] This suggests that breaking the ties of hospitality could be seen as treachery.

Compared with other socio-political ties the sources rarely show emotional friendship being broken. This might be a misleading impression. Whereas relatives and followers would remain as relatives and followers during and after a quarrel, friends would no longer be friends but former friends. This means that while we may see relatives hostile to each other and followers hostile to a superior we are unlikely to see hostile friends. This would explain why broken friendships are shown only occasionally.

Friendship was a major factor influencing the behaviour of aristocrats in the twelfth century. At the root of the concept of friendship was affection. Stemming from this was the notion that it was polite to call someone 'friend' and that 'horizontal' agreements could called by termed pacts of friendship. By the twelfth century, however, the notion had expanded such that groups with a strong collective identity could be called 'companies'; within such groups people are likely to have been friends. In contrast to these general notions, the concept of 'companionship' was highly specific and combined elements of formal and emotional friendship into a particularly close bond. Nevertheless all these types of friendship could be broken, and when broken the relationship ended.

[1454] *Aye de Avignon*, L. 223.
[1455] *Orson de Beauvais*, Ll. 215, 218, cited by Kay, pp. 219-20.
[1456] *Érec et Énide*, p. 78.
[1457] *Érec et Énide*, p. 82.

5

SOCIO-POLITICAL DYNAMICS IN ACTION

i

DECISION MAKING

Any activity revealing a socio-political dynamic involves a decision. A follower, for instance, would have to make the decision whether to rebel or remain loyal. It is therefore worthwhile to look at the decision-making process. If power can be seen as the ability to shape action, then a study of decision making is a study of power.

In seeking to explain the activities of people in the past historians commonly assume that, by studying the political, social and economic circumstances, a rational explanation ought ideally to be found. Although willing to examine the organisational limitations imposed on political actors and the necessary compromises to keep all sides content, historians generally fail to mention other potential influences. Psychologists are more cautious in their analysis of why people do things. In particular they are aware that individuals sometimes make irrational or ill-conceived decisions because of the situational forces surrounding them. These factors include how the individual felt at the time and the effect of the social environment on his ability to take rational decisions. This chapter concentrates on the psychological factors that may have influenced the decisions taken by medieval lords.

We will examine four aspects of decision-making. Each of these is concerned with a separate type of power.[1458] Firstly, the obvious question of who made decisions.[1459] Secondly

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[1458] These views on power are summarised and discussed in Steven Lukes, ed., *Power* (Oxford, 1986) pp. 9-10; and, in more detail, Steven Lukes, *Power. A Radical View* (London, 1974).

[1459] On this aspect of power see Robert Dahl, *The Concept of Power* (1957), especially pp. 202-3. Dahl essentially sees power as control over behaviour. This view of power is similar that of Weber: 'power [*Macht*] is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own

we will assess who influenced decisions. Within this discussion we will examine a third type of power, that of how society and culture influenced the result[1460] and how the process itself may have affected the decision.[1461] Finally we will examine who controlled and manipulated the agenda.[1462] This can be seen as non-decision-making power. Whilst the decision-maker might hold the most important position those with influence clearly held some power. We will also examine the process of decision-making and whether this was made in a formal or informal environment. After this examination of the decision-making process we will discuss the closely related field of conflict resolution. Here we will be concerned with the different methods of ending disputes, the different types of settlement, and the different ways of ensuring an agreement was kept.

Social scientists adopt two approaches in studying group decision-making.[1463] Unfortunately neither of these approaches are possible for the medievalist as we know neither what was said nor what the initial preferences were. To an extent using literature can overcome this. Although one must be cautious - they are likely to be the product of imagination and owe much to dramatic intent - literary texts do reveal how decisions were made. We can see the decision-making environment, the size and make up of the groups involved, the type of person who played an important part, the role of the leader and how conflicts were resolved. Furthermore, the literature tells us how these groups operated and reached their decision. This is an important step as we can then begin to investigate the possible affects of these processes. Much of the evidence in this chapter is therefore taken from contemporary literature.

The question of who took decisions is generally easy to answer: it was the prerogative of the lord to make the decision.[1464] This is seen when Maurice de Prendergast

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will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests': Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, p. 53.
[1460] On this see in particular Steven Lukes, *Power. A Radical View.*
[1461] Management theory on this topic is detailed below.
[1462] For the theory see Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz, *Poverty and Power: Theory and Practice* (New York, 1970), especially p. 7.
[1463] The social communication approach analyses who says what to whom and whether what they say meets with general agreement. This shows two things: groups tend to have both a task-orientated leader who focuses on the demands of the task and a people-orientated leader who attends to feelings and social needs. It also shows that leaders usually participate highly in group discussions. The second approach is social combination. This analyses how the initial preferences of each group member relates to the final outcome of the group discussion. Combining these approaches reveals four important trends. Firstly, faction size within the group determines the *amount* of speech in support of their particular idea; the size of a faction is lineally related to the proportion of the group's time devoted to the ideas of that faction. Secondly, size determines the *content* of speech (large groups share more common arguments than small ones). Thirdly, forcing members to indicate their position at the start of discussions (such as by taking a show of hands) alters the style of the discussion from evidence-driven to verdict-driven; this tends to make compromise more difficult. Finally, arguments expressed by a majority tend to have more influence than those expressed by a minority. See Baron, Kerr and Miller, *Group Process, Group Decision, Group Action*, pp. 93-94, 106-8.
[1464] Weber labels such an action as *Herrschaft* (domination, leadership, authority) - 'the probability that a command with a given specific content will be obeyed by a given group of persons' - and gives as an example the head of a household: Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, p. 53; summarised vol. 1, p. 212. Such

says to his followers 'I ask for your advice, my lord barons, as to how we shall act in this affair' and they answer 'You are the one to decide'.[1465] But although the lord had the right to make decisions it may have been that once the decision was made he could not change his mind. For when Gawain warns Arthur of the dangers of the hunt for the white stag the king replies: 'this I know well, but I will not give up my plan for all that, for the word of a king must not be contravened'.[1466]

Personal circumstance, however, can influence decisions. A new lord (particularly a young one), for example, could lack the confidence to pursue a policy against experienced or powerful opposition. Personal factors such as anxiety, elation and anger can lead individuals to make a decision that they otherwise would not have made.[1467] Studies have also shown that people are influenced by their mood state as regards their perception of risk and their choices involving risk.[1468] Stress, caused by time pressure and the perception that all alternative courses of action have risks, influences the ability of individuals to take good decisions. Although moderate stress induces vigilance extremely high stress produces hypervigilance and tends to lead to extreme risk-taking behaviour. The progression from low to high stress tends to make the individual try to avoid the source of stress by procrastination, diffusing responsibility to others, and by rationalisation.[1469] It is likely that people in the Middle Ages

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authority rests on custom, affectual ties, material interests (which alone are unstable), idealism and a belief in legitimacy: Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, pp. 212-13.

[1465] *Dermot*, Ll. 1334-35, 1337.

[1466] *Érec et Énide*, p. 38.

[1467] Anxiety may have blinded Admiral Kimmel, responsible for the US naval base of Pearl Harbour in 1941, to compromise alternatives that may have prevented the disaster that soon occurred. He had received warnings about a possible Japanese attack and saw two courses of action: to place Pearl Harbour on constant red alert at the expense of urgent training and supply activities that would prove costly if the Japanese attacked anywhere else; or to maintain Pearl Harbour as a training and supply port, which ran the risk of high costs should the Japanese attack there. Anxiety caused by the repeating warnings may have blinded him to compromise policies that may have saved the situation - such as maintaining a stepped-up alert involving aerial surveillance and the maintenance of anti-aircraft installations at full strength. Mann explains 'The Kimmel case is an example of how strong, unpleasant emotional states (such as anxiety, guilt and shame) generated by severe decisional conflict may impair normal patterns of information processing, leading in turn to unnecessarily risky decisions'. Euphoria may have influenced Truman's decision to drop an atomic bomb on Nagasaki after the successful detonation of the first on Hiroshima. With Japan already close to surrender before Hiroshima, the dropping of a second bomb may have been both unnecessary and excessive. Truman's emotional state may have made him overlook or ignore information about the prospects of a rapid return to peace and of the risk of 'overkill'. The mood resulting from the outcome of one decision may therefore influence an individual in dealing with a similar decision. Finally, America's reaction to the Suez crisis of 1956 may have been heavily influenced by the personal anger of President Eisenhower for he took the lead in pressing for strong punitive measures against America's closest allies. This forced Britain and France to pull out of Egypt with great loss of face and damaged relations between the US and Britain and France. He may have taken a different decision if it were not for his emotional state. For these three examples see Leon Mann, 'Stress, affect, and risk taking' in J. F. Yates, *Risk-Taking Behaviour* (Chichester, 1992) pp. 201-3. These examples show that personal emotive states may play a role in the political decisions of individuals.

[1468] Mann, pp. 204-5.

[1469] A study on the decisions made during Israel's wars in 1967 and 1973 found that while moderate stress augmented decision making, high stress harmed it: M. Brecher, *Decision in Crisis: Israel 1967 and 1973* (Berkeley, 1980). Experiments using induced stress - such as the threat of electric shocks - find similar results. For these, and on stress in general, see Mann, pp. 207-15 and the sources cited there. In a study on the effects of crisis-induced stress on the decisional performance of policy makers during the lead up to World War One, the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Korean War it was discovered that it led to a search for

would also have suffered from stress during crises such as rebellions and wars. It may be that this stress sometimes led individuals to make poor decisions.

Both happiness and sadness also influences an individual's ability to make good decisions. Research shows that a mild positive mood tends to increase the willingness of the individual to take risks only when the chance and/or cost of failing is low.[1470] But how does being happy influence the *quality* of decisions? Happy people tend to be more creative in their solutions and simplify decision problems through adopting heuristics - models that simplify how things work. This process tends to produce efficient rather than sloppy thinking. But it is not all good news for happy people for they are less able to critically process persuasive messages. Sad people, however, suffer a slow down in their ability to process information, a reduction in their powers of reasoning, and take longer to reach decisions. In cases of severe depression patients suffer not only a slow-down in their decision making but also a reluctance to make decisions, a tendency to give greater weight to risks than to benefits and to practice risk-avoidance. Moreover, when choosing whom to employ sad people tend to be influenced not by a candidate's task-related skills but on their social skills.

These studies show a host of personal factors which influence decision-makers. To understand fully why an historical figure chose one course of action it is therefore necessary to know how they were feeling at the time - something for which the sources available to the medieval historian are sadly inadequate. Yet this does not mean one should ignore these factors. Attempts can be made to assess the emotion of people at certain times. A military leader faced with imminent battle who has suffered repeated defeats, for instance, probably feels highly stressed and somewhat miserable.[1471] Similarly, if we assume that insurrection was not a decision taken lightly it is likely that each individual was placed under considerable stress when choosing whether to rebel or not, a level of stress that may have been increased through time-pressure imposed by a changing political situation. This means that crucial decisions in the past could have been taken when individuals were not functioning at their best. It follows that some apparently 'stupid' decisions may have been caused, in part, by the psychological well-being of the individual.

Decision-makers are also directly influenced by other people. Since in the modern world many decisions are taken not by individuals but by groups, considerable research has

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short-term solutions, simplistic and repetitive thinking, a restrictive search for alternative solutions, and a reduced evaluation of alternatives and their consequences. See O. R. Holsti and A. L. George, 'The effects of stress on the performance of foreign policy makers', *Political Science Annual*, 6 (1975) 255-319.

[1470] The 'common sense' observation that 'happy people think positively, are therefore more optimistic in their decisions, and therefore take more risks' only applies to decisions in which they are not personally affected by the result. On this and other affects of mood see Mann, pp. 215-25 and the sources cited there.

[1471] Perhaps this reasoning may help to explain, for instance, the decision to change the angle of attack at the disastrous siege of Damascus during the Second Crusade.

been done on the characteristics of group decisions. This has shown that group decisions tend to be more extreme than the decisions of individuals.[1472] Stemming in part from this is the more worrying phenomenon of groups sometimes making gross errors of judgement. Here it will be argued that the dynamics observed today were active in the medieval world.

Although it might be the king's responsibility to take decisions he could call on advisors to guide him.[1473] This is not to say that decisions were taken by majority vote[1474] but

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[1472] This affects both the willingness to take risks and the opinions expressed. If individual group members are positive about one course of action prior to group discussion, for instance, the final outcome of the group discussion is likely to be even more positive about this action. Similarly, if the constituent members are initially inclined to take risks then group discussion tends to lead to a greater willingness to take risks. This arises because although people wish to conform to the group consensus they also want to be seen positively. This can lead to individuals expressing opinions more extreme than the group's, a process which causes the group opinion to become more extreme. Several explanations are possible. One is that people are more likely to present points in favour of the position they initially favour and to repeatedly discuss shared viewpoints. As each member conforms to the group's idea it becomes harder and harder for an individual to express dissent against the majority. The result is that only arguments in favour of the group's idea are raised, a process which further convinces any doubters. On polarisation see D. G. Myers and H. Lamm, 'The group polarisation phenomenon', *Psychological Bulletin*, 83 (1976) 602-27; and D. J. Isenberg, 'Group polarisation: a critical review of meta-analysis', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 50 (1986) 1141-51. This process is known to affect political opinions: S. Moscovici and M. Zavalloni, 'The group as a polariser of attitudes', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 12 (1969) 125-35. It also affects jury verdicts: M. Isozaki, 'The effect of discussion on polarisation of judgements', *Japanese Psychological Research*, 26 (1984) 187-93; and M. R. Kaplan and C. E. Miller, 'Group decision making and normative versus informational influence: Effects of type of issue and assigned decision rule', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 53 (1987) 306-13. Both of these are applicable to the medieval world.

[1473] A group influencing the decision of a leader is seen in the treatment of William the Carpenter lord of Melun during the First Crusade. William deserted; Tancred brought him back; and he spent the night in Bohemond's tent lying on the ground in disgrace. At daybreak Bohemond accused him of acting dishonourably and betraying Christians like he had previously done in Spain. The Franks then assembled as a group and asked Bohemond not to punish him any more. Bohemond granted this through *amor* on condition that William took an oath (*iurauerit*) not to desert before reaching Jerusalem, and he made Tancred swear that he and his men would not harm William, implying Tancred wanted to. Here it is clear that a group managed to alter a leader's actions. For this see *Gesta Francorum*, pp. 33-34. Another example is seen when following the death of King John a council was held over to decide who should make Henry a knight and whether to wait for the earl of Chester to arrive before crowning Henry: *HGM*, Ll. 15287-321. Since at this point there was no king it may be that more decisions were taken in a group environment. Many examples are also seen in literature. William of Orange sought the advice of his followers over what should be done with traitorous clerics: *Le Couronnement de Louis*, Ll. 1747-60. When a count looking after Énide and Érec believes Érec to be at death's door he summons his barons and tells them of his plan to marry Énide: *Érec et Énide*, p. 95. The privy council of Tiebault of Tintagel forces him not to seek war against his lord and foster-son Meliant: *Perceval*, p. 441. Following Alexander's daring raid 'the traitors gathered in council to determine what was to be done': *Cligés*, p. 143. When Alexander appears in Greece Alis, who has taken the crown for himself, 'called together his most trusted advisors and asked their counsel'. In this instance the counsellors go against the emperor and advise him to seek peace with his brother and avoid war, fearing that everyone, including the two brothers, may die. Alis agrees to follow their advice on condition that he keeps the crown: *Cligés*, p. 153. He sends messengers to Alexander saying that if he could keep the crown and title Alexander could govern the land. Alexander agrees to these terms on condition that Alis never marries so that Cligés will inherit the empire on his death. The brothers agree to this and swear oaths to keep the settlement: *Cligés*, p. 154. The followers of Alis persuade him to take a wife, thereby breaking the oath he made to his brother (who has now died): *Cligés*, L. 2623. This could be seen as resulting from many reasons. Firstly, it could be seen as a simple case of the minority (the emperor) conforming to the view of the majority (his advisors). Secondly, it could be that this was what Alis wanted to do anyway - although Chrétien blames wicked counsel for changing his mind. Thirdly, it may have been just a necessary development for Chrétien's story - Alis had to marry so that Cligés could eventually triumph. As always when using literary sources the historian must be cautious. Slander spread by his peers persuades the king of Brittany to banish Eliduc without a formal trial: Marie, *Eliduc*, Ll. 41-46. Perhaps, too, one should see the chastisement of Lanval by the knights in this light: Marie, *Lanval*, Ll. 407-8. Finally, we are told that Earl Richard came into conflict with Henry II through lies (*mesunge*) and evil influence (*mavaise entisement*): *Dermot*, Ll. 2245, 2246.

[1474] This is observed by Althoff, p. 190.

that certain people may have influenced the decision-maker. When followers successfully influenced their lord it is peer pressure in action. The persuasive force of counsellors is seen in the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* for it shows that many in the entourage of Henry II blamed the Young King's counsellors for the problems of 1173-74.[1475]

Women could also have significant influence over a decision-maker. In Chrétien's works at least, women were not averse to using sex as a political tool.[1476] Marie de France also shows persuasive women. One woman 'questioned him [Brisclavret] repeatedly and coaxed him so persuasively that he told her his story, keeping nothing secret.'[1477] Wives in particular are likely to have had considerable influence. Edward I's second wife, Margaret of France, for instance, is shown interceding with the king on behalf of people seeking pardon.[1478] In so doing she may have been fulfilling a specific (and perhaps traditional) role.

Group decision-making allowed policy to be orchestrated in a collective environment in which people could express their ideas. It also allowed rulers to test the level of support they had for a particular course of action. Many charters contain evidence that decisions were reached in a group environment - the witness list. If we assume the witnesses were present when the charter was drafted then each list names those individuals present when the decision was made public; other people may have been present who were not recorded as witnesses. Although there is no proof that the decision had not been taken beforehand and was now only being declared, it seems reasonable to assume that very often what was recorded in the charter was the product of communication between the lord and several counsellors. Indeed, this view becomes clearer when one realises that one of the basic duties and rights of a follower

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[1475] Many told Henry II: 'My lord, it is this person and that who is doing this to him / I mean those you have assigned to him as tutors; / It is they who determine his behaviour': *HGM*, Ll. 1975-78. Later it is the advisors of the Young King who are blamed for the revolt: *HGM*, Ll. 2345-2354. The poet also remarks that the French king accepts advice as 'that seems the right and sensible thing to do': *HGM*, L. 2312.

[1476] When a count who finds Énide beautiful (*Érec et Énide*, p. 77) plots to kill Érec she pretends to go along with his plan and uses the prospect of sex to manipulate him. She tells him: 'I should already like to feel you naked beside me in bed': *Érec et Énide*, p. 79. Here Chrétien remarks 'She knew well how to intoxicate a rogue with words', meaning that she was trying to manipulate him: *Érec et Énide*, p. 79. Énide is not the only woman who uses her sex-appeal to manipulate men. When a beautiful woman whose castle is being besieged comes nearly naked to her guest's bedroom in the night and wakes him up with her tears Chrétien tells us 'she had come to shed tears over his face for no other reason, in spite of what she pretended, than to inspire in him the desire to undertake the battle, if he dared, to defend her and her lands': *Perceval*, p. 406. After he agrees to help her she is willing to spend the night with him, lying by his side they lie in each other's arms with their lips touching: *Perceval*, p. 407. This tactic works as the next day he agrees to fight for her in exchange for her love: *Perceval*, p. 407. She then pretends to try to discourage him: *Perceval*, p. 407. Again Chrétien shows that she is manipulating him: 'She pretended to discourage him by her words, though in fact she wished him to fight; but it often happens that one hides one's true desires when one sees someone who is keen to enact them, in order to increase his desire to fulfil them. And thus she acted very cleverly, by discouraging him from doing the very thing that she had planted in his heart to do': *Perceval*, p. 407. Although we might be delving here into male fantasies the general idea seems plausible.

[1477] Marie, *Bisclavret*, Ll. 59-62.

[1478] Prestwich, *Edward I*, pp. 129-30.

appears to be to counsel the lord and that it was an ideal for a lord to listen to counsel.[1479] Here lords were placed in a difficult situation. On the one hand, if they did not listen to counsel they could be accused of behaving like an autocratic tyrant. On the other, if they listened too much to counsel they could be seen as weak and be accused of being duped by courtiers. This is a fine line to tread: it is hardly surprising that some strayed from the path.

The power to give advice meant that eloquence was important. The seneschal Kay is described as eloquent, though often this is done derogatively.[1480] Kay also believes Gawain is skilled in flattery[1481] and is proved right when Gawain brings Perceval to court through politeness.[1482] In the *Chanson de Roland* Ganelon - who dissuaded the Franks from accepting the counsel of Roland - is also described as having skill with words.[1483] Chrétien himself was not averse to flattery. Despite his protestations of innocence he clearly flatters his patron in the opening lines of *Lancelot*.

Of course, advice was not always taken. If the *Histoire* is to be believed, Stephen refused advice to kill the young William Marshal (held as hostage) three times.[1484] Henry the Young king likewise refused to take the advice of William Marshal concerning tactics at a tournament.[1485] Of interest here is that although William advised against capturing Renaut of Nevers it is William who ended up capturing him.[1486] This suggests that a good follower would carry out a policy even if he did not agree with it. Sometimes people received

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[1479] This is seen, for instance, in the writings of Fulbert of Chartres, *Letters and Poems*, no. 51. In extreme cases it may even have been that aid was conditional on taking the given advice: Althoff, pp. 136-37. However, a ruler did not have to carry out the advice he received: Althoff, pp. 188-89, citing as an example Charlemagne's decision to marry his daughter to Einhard after seeing that they were carrying on an affair without being married (it is recorded in a twelfth-century source). At one point King Arthur claims listening to counsel is a kingly ideal: *Érec et Énide*, p. 59. King Mark often listens to advice but in the end realises he has done this too much and turns against his counsellors saying 'if I do not disown them now and banish them from my land the villains will no longer believe in my power. They have tested me enough already and I have given in to them too much': Béroul, p. 118. Yseut's messenger to Arthur says as much: 'the king's mind is not steadfast: sometimes he thinks one thing, sometimes another': Béroul, p. 124. Arthur's followers also believe Mark to be under the sway of the three barons: 'King Mark does whatever they tell him to' and Evain says that Danoalan (one of the three) 'knows how to make a fool out of a king': Béroul, p. 125. Counsel has also been discussed on the sections on the functions of followers and superiors.

[1480] *Érec et Énide*, p. 87. Yvain tells Kay and the queen 'My lord Kay is so clever and able and worthy in all courts that he'll never be deaf or dumb. He knows how to answer insults with wisdom and courtesy, and has never done otherwise': *Yvain*, p. 302.

[1481] *Perceval*, p. 435.

[1482] *Perceval*, pp. 435-36.

[1483] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 425-27.

[1484] *HGM*, Ll. 509-38 (refusal to hang him), 539-60 (refusal to catapult him at the castle), 566-94 (refusal to tie him to a climbing frame that would be used to scale the walls).

[1485] *HGM*, Ll. 3751-76. Another example is that Guigemar refuses to take a wife despite the urging of his friends unless she can first undo her shirt: Marie, *Guigemar*, Ll. 641-50.

[1486] *HGM*, Ll. 3825-39.

conflicting advice. This may have given the lord a greater freedom of choice but also meant that his supporters were divided.[1487]

The legal process also involved group decisions. Justice tended to be communal and one should not forget that 'Common Law' is 'group law'.[1488] This suggests that decisions may have been more extreme than any of the decision-makers wished it to be before they started their deliberations. This may help to explain the unpopularity of Becket and his eventual murder: people wishing to impress Henry II would have advocated - and perhaps implemented - strong measures, and these views may have pushed Henry II to be more extreme.

The dangers of group polarisation is as nothing when compared to the potential effects of 'groupthink'.[1489] This is the label given to a collective decision in which the group decided on a course of action no constituent member advocated, an event which often leads to disaster. Several key factors need to exist within the decision-making group for this to occur. These factors are: a high level of group cohesiveness in which individuals wish to remain in the group; isolation of the group from outside influence; the absence of a systematic procedure for evaluating the pros and cons of the decision options; a directive leader who explicitly favours one option and thereby draws support to that course of action; and a high level of stress. These prerequisites can lead to an illusion of invulnerability, morality and unanimity, pressure on dissenters to conform, the self-censorship of dissent so that private doubts are not voiced, collective rationalisation in which the idea is made to sound attractive without any realistic appraisal of its strengths and weaknesses, and self-appointed mindguards who actively attempt to prevent the group from receiving and discussing information that cuts across the preferred option. This leads to serious flaws in the decision-making process. These include an incomplete survey of the group's objectives and alternative courses of action, a failure to examine the risks of the preferred choice, a poor and incomplete search for relevant information, a selective bias in processing the information at hand, a failure to reappraise rejected alternatives, and a failure to develop contingency plans should the decision lead to failure. Here it is important to remember that we are not talking about a group of sycophants too frightened to speak their mind in case they offend the leader. On the contrary, the

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[1487] The *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* shows William giving advice to Baldwin count of Flanders that was different to that offered by either his 'high men' or his barons: his advice was accepted: *HGM*, Ll. 10799-852.

[1488] On communal justice see Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities*.

[1489] For the information and arguments presented in this paragraph see I. L. Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: a psychological study of foreign-policy decisions and fiascos* (Boston, 1972). Janis believes this process can be seen in how the Japanese were allowed to attack Pearl Harbour so effectively in 1941, in H. S. Truman's decision to invade North Korea in 1950, in J. F. Kennedy's decision to invade Cuba in 1961 that led to the Bay of Pigs fiasco, and in the escalation of the Vietnam War through 1964-67 by L. B. Johnson.

constraints that prevent individuals from openly expressing doubts and critically evaluating policy options are subtle and often accidental.[1490]

Although the sources available to us do not allow for a full investigation as to whether groupthink occurred in the Middle Ages[1491] our position is not hopeless for we can assess whether it was possible for groupthink to have occurred. We know that many decisions were taken in a group environment, and the notion of *curialitas* may have been a formalisation of this group. This group would have consisted of the lord and his closest advisors, and perhaps other followers if the discussions took place in the main hall of his residence. This group would have known each other very well. They shared a background, social position, education and value-system and they had a common objective in that in large part they depended for advancement on the success of their lord. They also regularly ate, hunted and trained for war together; many perhaps slept in the same room. Many, as we have seen, are likely to have been friends. This would mean that the group would have had a very high level of cohesiveness - the first crucial factor in allowing groupthink to occur. It may also be that the group was isolated from outside influence in that only non-hostile aristocrats are likely to have been consulted. In addition there may not have been a *systematic* procedure of evaluating proposed courses of action. It also seems likely that in many instances the lord was a directive leader who explicitly favoured one course of action - one thinks of the rages and bellowing voice of Henry II for instance - which would have discouraged dissent. Sometimes we can see kings taking a directive role, as will be seen with the trial of Ganelon. Contemporaries were aware that fear of angering a lord could prevent people from offering good advice.[1492] Many decisions must have been taken under high levels of stress - particularly those concerned with war and rebellion. The evidence also suggests that many collective decisions were unanimous,[1493] but we must remember that the texts are not verbatim

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[1490] Janis, p. 3.

[1491] 'The documents most needed for testing group dynamics hypotheses are verbatim records of formal group meetings and of informal conversations among the members. These were impossible for Janis to consult - so instead he relied on minutes of meetings, diaries, memoirs, letters and prepared statements: Janis, p. v. The situation for the medievalist is far more bleak. Not only have we no verbatim accounts of group meetings, we seldom have any record of what was said at all beyond the occasional brief, highly suspect reconstructions found in chronicles. It would be interesting to examine medieval dissidents and the reactions they sparked: Becket would be one; Robert de Bellême perhaps another.

[1492] In *Renaut de Montauban* Idelon of Bavaria tells Charlemagne: 'you have said what you wish and what you want. There is no one who could stand before you whom you would not at once wish to convict of treachery if he did not say what you wished and what you wanted': *Renaut de Montauban*, Ll. 5728-32. Cited by Kay, pp. 60-61.

[1493] Charlemagne was given unanimous advice to punish his daughter after discovering she was having an affair with Einhard: Althoff, pp. 188-89. Althoff may be wrong to claim that in Emperor Otto's later prosecution of Duke Liudolf, Frederick archbishop of Mainz and Duke Conrad people were free to speak their minds and to disagree with the king: only Liudolf did so, and he had to leave (probably flee) the court the next night: see Althoff, pp. 189-90. Such behaviour does not sound like the emperor was willing to accept disagreement. When Arthur decides to journey to the spring described by Calogrenant 'everyone at court approved the king's decision, for the barons and young knights were all very eager to go there': *Yvain*, p. 303. Nobody disagreed with Arthur's desire to give Énide the honour of the white stag: 'All cried out with a single voice... "You may freely kiss her; we all concede it with one voice"': *Érec et Énide*, p. 59. When Arthur

accounts and the scenes usually come from the imagination of poets and as such may not accurately describe medieval practice. But we can see that all the antecedents necessary for groupthink were present in the halls of medieval lords.

The idea that people would not give objective advice but say things they thought their lord wanted to hear is supported by Chrétien for he has Fenice say:

> 'If he [Cligés] is skilled in the use of flattery, as one must be at court, then he will be rich before he returns. Whoever wishes to be in his lord's good graces and sit at his right hand... must pick the feather from his head, even when there isn't one. But there is a contrary side to this: even after he has smoothed down his lord's hair the servant does not have the courtesy to tell his lord of any wickedness and evil within him, but lets him believe and understand that no one is comparable to him in valour and in knowledge, and his lord believes he speaks the truth. A man is blind to his real self if he believes what others tell him of the qualities he doesn't possess. Even if he is wicked and cruel, cowardly and spineless as a hare, stingy, crazy, and misshapen, and evil in both words and deed, someone will praise him to his face and then laugh at him behind his back. When his lord is listening, he praises him in conversation with another, pretending that his lord cannot hear what they are saying to each other; but if he truly thought he could not be overheard, what he would say would not be pleasing to his lord. And should his lord wish for a lie, he is quite ready to back him up and his tongue is never slow to proclaim the truth of whatever his master says. Anyone who frequents courts and lords must be ready to serve with lies.'[1494]

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wishes to cross over to Brittany 'He brought together all his barons to seek their counsel and ask to whom he could entrust England until his return.... It seems that everyone agreed it should be entrusted to Count Angrés of Windsor': *Cligés*, Ll. 422-31. This proves to be a bad decision because Angrés rebels: *Cligés*, pp. 135-36. Now Arthur blames his counsellors: 'He [Arthur] said that they were entirely to blame for his worries and strife since it was at their counsel that he had entrusted his land to the hands of a renegade': *Cligés*, Ll. 1068-74. Again their decision is unanimous: 'To a man they agreed that the king spoke rightly and well, for they had given him that advice' and they all swear oaths to support the king - again a unanimous decision: *Cligés*, p. 136.

[1494] *Cligés*, p. 178. Courtiers are also shown telling lies and flattering their lord: *Cligés*, Ll. 4512-51.

This speech lends considerable credence to the idea that groupthink may have sometimes occurred in medieval courts.

Groupthink may explain why people sometimes seem to have followed foolhardy policies. These could include the many examples of barons revolting against the king only to suffer defeat, perhaps such as the rebellion of Robert de Bellême in 1101-2. Here a baron - albeit a powerful one - chose to rebel when to the modern eye there was little chance of him succeeding. Henry the Young King was another potential victim. Could it be that in a highly stressful environment an isolated, cohesive group led by a persuasive and opinionated leader developed major flaws in its decision-making process which generated an illusion of invincibility? Perhaps a lord wishing to discuss the prospects of successful rebellion with his most trusted counsellors sounded too positive, inducing his counsellors to raise only positive aspects about the proposed course of action. In this way the group might take a decision that no one thought appropriate. If such reasoning sounds implausible - 'aristocrats were not that stupid' - remember that political leaders in the twentieth century have been victims of groupthink.

Such arguments do not seek to replace existing historical explanations but to supplement them. Historians still need to examine political and social contexts and seek rational explanations for policy decisions. But where people adopt a course of action with no apparent rational explanation there may be case for suggesting that groupthink occurred, that misconceived thinking lead them to follow policies with little chance of success.

A lord could also manipulate discussions by controlling the agenda and setting parameters for the debate. Chrétien provides a good example of this. When Alexander captures four traitors he delivers them to the queen but Arthur demands they be handed over to him.[1495] Despite much opposition Arthur gets his way. He first meets his wife in private and demands that they be handed over then assembles his 'good and faithful knights'.[1496] Although most are against killing the traitors they are bulldozed by Arthur for 'they assembled in front of the royal tent to determine by lawful judgement the agony and torture by which the four traitors were to die'.[1497] This shows a lord was able to set the limits of discussion. Again the king gets his way: while some think they should be flayed alive and others that they should be hanged or burned, Arthur thinks they should be quartered, and his view prevails.[1498]

[1495] *Cligés*, pp. 138-39.
[1496] *Cligés*, p. 140.
[1497] *Cligés*, p. 140.
[1498] *Cligés*, p. 140. They are pulled apart by four horses beneath the castle walls: *Cligés*, p. 141. This is similar to how Ganelon - a traitor - is punished in the *Chanson de Roland*.

Not all kings took a directive role in discussions. Those who did not would have avoided groupthink. In the *Chanson de Roland* when Marsile's envoys reach Charles he is with 15,000 of his supporters,[1499] and it is in front of this multitude that their message is delivered[1500] and that Charles responds.[1501] It is from this point that we see his approach to collective decision-making. Charles summons over a thousand Franks as 'he wishes to be entirely guided by the men of France'.[1502] This comment should be seen as a statement of the ideal: Charles - the ideal king - listens to the advice of his barons. Such a gathering, though not on so a grand scale, would probably have assembled in the real world of the twelfth century when such a momentous decision was being taken. The council begins. Charles is the first to speak and he outlines the parameters of the decision[1503] and everyone accepts that they must take care.[1504] The floor is then open for discussion. Roland argues against the proposals[1505] and at first only Ganelon is willing to reply and state the alternative.[1506] Ganelon then gains the support of Duke Naimes[1507] and the Franks say 'the duke has spoken well.' Now no one is prepared to speak against Ganelon and Naimes. There is little sign of any discussion, planning or consideration of alternatives (but would we expect them in a poem of heroic adventure?). Indeed, the only prolonged disagreement arises when they have to decide whom to send to Saragossa as a messenger, and again it is Roland and Ganelon who clash.[1508] Throughout the discussion the king takes only a back-seat role. He defines the limits of the debate but lets the counsellors make the decision. At other times rulers seem to play even smaller roles.[1509] This reminds us of the dangers of generalisation: some leaders may have taken a directive role, other may not, and whether and how they did may have varied.

The role played by groups is not all gloomy. Compared with individuals, groups are far more likely to show dissent and rebel against an authority they believe to be in the

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[1499] These include Roland, Oliver, Samson, Anseis, Geoffrey of Anjou, Gerin and Gerir: *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 104-9. The 15,000 is surely poetic licence.

[1500] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 122-36.

[1501] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 143-46.

[1502] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 167. These men include Duke Ogier, Archbishop Turpin, Richard the Old and his nephew Henry, Count Acelin of Gascony, Tedbald of Reims and his cousin Milon, Gerin and Gerer, Roland, Oliver and Ganelon: *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 170-76.

[1503] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 180-91.

[1504] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 192.

[1505] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 196-213.

[1506] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 220-29.

[1507] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 232-243.

[1508] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 244-318.

[1509] This is seen, for instance, in the way the 'Saracens' are able to stop Marsile from attacking Ganelon when he starts to relate his message: *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 450-55. But in general it is Marsile - rather than his supporters - who talks to Ganelon: *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 485-660. King Mark also takes a back-seat role. When he receives the letter of reconciliation from Tristan Mark summons his household in the night to discuss the matter: Béroul, p. 103. He tells them 'I beg you to give me your counsel. You must advise me well': Béroul, p. 104. After the letter has been read out the advice is unanimous: 'There was not a baron in Cornwall who did not say: "King, take back your wife.... But we cannot advise you to allow Tristan to remain on this side of the sea"': Béroul, p. 106. Mark accepts this advice: Béroul, p. 106. The unanimous support is recorded in the letter as Ogrin is able to tell Tristan that 'All his [Mark's] people have advised him on this [taking back the queen]': Béroul, p. 107.

wrong.[1510] This also has implications for medieval history. When a king announced a course of action this would very often have been to a group and when each aristocrat returned home he would have entered a new group - that of his own followers. These two groups would have had ample time to reconsider and question the wishes of the king - the exact circumstances needed for collective dissent. The readiness of groups to show rebellion therefore helps to account for the frequent challenges to royal authority observed in the Middle Ages. But such observations cannot provide a complete explanation of why a policy was followed. Historians still need to concentrate - *but not exclusively* - on the political and socio-economic circumstances in which people operated in order to discover rational explanations of behaviour.

Although heeding advice can be seen as a loss of power for the lord, and despite the problems associated with group decisions, lords could benefit from hearing advice. This may explain why not having advisors was seen as a problem.[1511] As today, people in authority may have felt that group decisions were more reliable than decisions made by one person - perhaps because it allowed dissent to be voiced before the idea was turned into policy.

Contemporaries were aware that counsellors held considerable power. We have already seen that flattery was used. Chrétien remarks that 'there is no court in all the world that is free of wicked counsel, and barons often stray from the paths of loyalty in believing wicked counsel'.[1512] Tristan and Yseut often complain about counsellors turning Mark against

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[1510] Asch found that a subject was less likely to conform if there was another dissenter: S. E. Asch, 'Effects of group pressure upon modification and distortion of judgements', in E. E. Maccoby, T. M. Newcomb and E. L. Hartley (eds.), *Readings in Social Psychology* (New York, 1958). Milgram found that only 10% of his subjects were willing to continue to the end of the series of electric shocks when there were two other people playing the role of 'Teacher' (actually confederates of the experimenter who had been instructed to begin arguing about whether to continue or not at 150 volts and for the one to quit at 210 volts). Moreover, Milgram found that no subject was willing to complete the series when two experimenters - the authority figures - quarrelled over whether to continue: S. Milgram, 'Behavioural study of obedience', *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 67 (1963) 371-78 and S. Milgram, *Obedience to Authority: An experimental view* (new York, 1974). These experiments show that an individual is more likely to show dissent when another person raises doubts about the opinion voiced by either the majority or the authority. Groups also encourage dissent by allowing group members to clarify their doubts and offer support for rebellion. One study tested whether a group of subjects would allow videotapes of them voicing opinions they had been instructed to give to be presented in court to determine 'community standards'. Of 33 groups only one failed to show dissent while 16 had all members refusing to sign the final affidavit that would allow the tapes to be used in court. But one should be careful in praising these individuals for standing up to their beliefs as many simply chose conformity to the group rather than obedience to authority: W. B. Gamson, B. Fireman and S. Rytina, *Encounters with unjust authority* (Homewood, Illinois, 1982). In part these findings are explained by social impact theory: social influence (such as authority and the pressures of conformity) will be less effective when defused over many target individuals: B. Latané, 'The psychology of social impact', *American Psychologist*, 36 (1981) 343-56.

[1511] We are told that during the siege of Winchester Matilda lacked not only troops but also 'A prominent advisor / To give her counsel': *HGM*, Ll. 195-96.

[1512] *Cligés*, p. 155. Examples of advice being given in literature include Alis being persuaded to seek marriage by his barons: *Cligés*, p. 155; and Clamedeu advised by his old mentor on how to conduct the siege of Biaurepaire: *Perceval*, pp. 411, 412. Yseut is concerned that she might come to grief following her reconciliation with Mark because of the hatred three barons held for her, implying she thought they could influence Mark: Béroul, p. 110.

them. Tristan complains bitterly 'he is angry with me because of his evil counsellors.... My dear uncle ought not to believe the slanders that are told about me'.[1513] Of course, the 'slanders' are correct, but it remains that counsellors had turned Mark against his wife and nephew. Although this is a familiar motif and places the blame away from the lord and onto a counsellor it still stands as evidence for the persuasiveness of counsellors. It may have been that sometimes those who could persuade were more powerful than the nominal leader.[1514]

People working in the administration would have had other powers, too. Beyond serving as advisors they would also, to some extent, have been able to control access to information and filter out ideas contrary to their own. In behaving like this officials would have had a limited control over the agenda. This explains why people wanted to be able to give advice.[1515] It should also be remembered that those working within the royal administration were often major landholders in their own right and would therefore have been given consideration as aristocrats.

The agenda would also have been limited because most people with access to the king came from a single large group, the aristocracy. This may have prevented the wishes and needs of craftsmen, merchants and peasants from reaching the ears of the king. The Church may have provided an alternative voice but would very often have agreed with the attitude of the Crown. For although the Church, as an institution, was powerful and occasionally clashed with lay powers, the wishes of Church and Crown very often coincided, such as in promoting law and order and the peaceful settlement of disputes. It should also be remembered that most leading clerics in this period were of aristocratic rather than humble origin and would therefore have shared many of the values and assumptions of their secular counterparts.

Many questions still need to be answered. Was the environment private or public? How regular were meetings, in terms of time of the day, days of the week, and so on? How formal were these meetings? Did people have particular roles or duties?

It is clear that sometimes policy decisions were expressed in a highly formal manner. This is most clearly seen when the decision concerned land tenure. When Yseut is formally reconciled with Mark she gives a gift to the church of St Samson.[1516] Mark then also distributes gifts and frees slaves.[1517] Here donations - and therefore charters - stem from a reconciliation. Another opportunity to present charters was a wedding. On the day of his marriage to Ælfthryth, King Eadgar gave gifts to bishoprics and abbeys and restored *honurs* to

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[1513] Béroul, p. 50.
[1514] This is argued by Althoff, using Tacitus: Althoff, p. 21.
[1515] William des Roches, for example, made a *couvenance* with King John such that the king would act on his counsel (*conseil*): *HGM*, Ll. 12447 (*couvenance*), 12485 (*conseil*).
[1516] Béroul, pp. 113-14.

desheritez (disinherited) people.[1518] However, it should be noted that in these cases a donation - and especially a charter - is the result of a decision and not the decision itself. It is quite possible that a decision would have been reached beforehand and only made public at a later date. This would mean that the witness list would not necessarily faithfully represent the people who were consulted.

Some decisions may have been reached in less formal surroundings. The *Histoire* records that after a tournament the high-ranking men gathered around the Young King for talks on many subjects[1519] and later we are told that it was custom for the high-ranking men to meet each other in the evenings to discuss affairs and get to know each other.[1520] Sometimes decisions were made under the influence of alcohol. According to Gaimar, for instance, King Eadgar was drunk when Æthelwold asked for the hand of Ælfthryth.[1521] This is revealing as it means that some decisions may have been taken in a relaxed manner, perhaps during a feast. This is seen when a counsel of Henry the Young King with Geoffrey count of Brittany, the count of Lusignan and Roger de Gaugy was held after a meal.[1522] In such an environment feelings of 'togetherness' may have been stronger but analytical powers would have been weaker. This contrasts with the way other decisions, such as treaties, were celebrated by a feast but negotiated beforehand.

We have seen that many decisions were made in a group environment. These groups could be called *barnage* (this has previously been argued to mean supporters), *hauz homes* (high men, perhaps the leading people who had done homage), *conseil* (counsel, or perhaps council), *savie hume* ('wise men')[1523] and *parlement*.[1524]

Although here we are primarily concerned with lay society it is worth taking a brief look at monastic groups. We have a clear idea about the decision-making structure in monasteries through the Rule of St Benedict. Every day - and at the same time each day - all

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[1517] Béroul, p. 114.

[1518] Gaimar, Ll. 3922-26.

[1519] *HGM*, Ll. 3302-8.

[1520] *HGM*, Ll. 4329-38. At one such meeting the count of Flanders sought to convince the Young King to take William Marshal back into his service (he failed): *HGM*, Ll. 5597-626.

[1521] Gaimar, Ll. 3680-3708.

[1522] *HGM*, Ll. 6402-14.

[1523] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 20.

[1524] When messengers return to Earl Richard 'They tell their message out loud / In the hearing of all the *barnage*': *Dermot*, Ll. 1863-64. Similarly, after he was appointed regent to Henry III, William Marshal took *conseillia* with the *hauz homes*, who are described as 'worthy and loyal men [*prodommes leials*]': *HGM*, Ll. 15774 (*conseillia, hauz homes*), 15782 (*prodommes leials*). After hearing of a naval defeat King Philip of France summoned a '*conseil de France*': *HGM*, L. 17604. By the early thirteenth century, if not before, meetings could be termed *parlement*. These often seem to have been peace talks. A *parlement* was held to end a war between England and France: *HGM*, L. 12012. Louis, the son of the king of France, sought a *parlement* with William Marshal to discuss terms for a settlement: *HGM*, Ll. 17637, 17674. This led to Louis leaving England under a truce (*trive*): L. 17746. Morgan's rebellion was concluded through a *parlemenz*: *HGM*, L. 17788.

the monks assembled in the Chapter House and the head of the house presided. Here complaints could be heard and policy decisions made. This is a highly structured and formal arrangement. But even here it is uncertain whether there was a permanent secretariat to record transactions.[1525] Although monks were probably more disciplined than their lay kindred it is possible that some of this organisation was passed on to lay society.

In secular society discussions may have taken place in the great hall in front of many people but it is likely that much took place behind closed doors in the medieval equivalent of a cabinet meeting or a board of directors. In some cases there may have been a special chamber into which the lord could withdraw for private discussions with his trusted counsellors, the privy chamber. There was certainly a place like this at the Exchequer for we hear that

> 'He [the Usher] also keeps the door of the privy chamber
> [thalami secretorum] adjoining the hall of the Exchequer.
> Into this the Barons withdraw when some doubtful case
> comes up at the Exchequer which they would rather
> discuss privately than in everyone's hearing.'[1526]

It was perhaps in such a place that the discussions between William Marshal and his household officials after the death of King John took place.[1527] The same crisis also saw the papal legate take William Marshal, the bishop of Winchester, the earl of Chester and some of the 'high men' (hauz homes) into a separate room away from the larger assembly.[1528] That such places existed suggests that private meetings of small groups to discuss policy and decide on a common approach were a frequent and accepted part of twelfth century politics.[1529] It may also imply that decision making had an element of accepted (perhaps required) procedure.[1530]

Who comprised these small groups and what was their function? This is an important question as it touches not only the decision making process but also the type of person who

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[1525] On the possible existence of episcopal, monastic and secular chanceries see C. R. Cheney and B. E. A. Jones, eds., English Episcopal Acta, 2: Canterbury 1162-1190 (London, 1986) p. xxv; D. E. Greenway, Charters of the Honour of Mowbray, pp. lxvii-lxx; R. B. Patterson, Earldom of Gloucester Charters, pp. 16-21; Teresa Webber, 'The Scribes and Handwriting of the Original Charters', in The Earldom of Chester and its Charters. A tribute to Geoffrey Barraclough, ed. A. T. Thacker, Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society, vol. 71 (Chester, 1991) 138-47. Webber concluded for Chester that although from the 1190s onwards charter production was probably more organised it is still difficult to speak of a formal, organised writing office for the earl of Chester: ibid., pp. 146-47.

[1526] Dialogus de Scaccario The Course of the Exchequer and Constitutio Domus Regis The King's Household, trans. Charles Johnson (Edinburgh, 1950) p. 44.

[1527] HGM, 15401-64, 15624-708. These are discussed below.

[1528] HGM, Ll. 15549-58.

[1529] Althoff believes discussions were first made within a small and informal group with close bonds of familiarity and / or friendship. Such discussions ensured that remarks made to a formal and large group would gain support. He sees this as an important function as they helped prevent controversy in official discussions. See Althoff, pp. 191-93. This is a different (but compatible) view to the one presented here for the twelfth century. The view presented here is compared with Althoff's in more detail below.

had influence at court and the function and power of various socio-political groups. Although our sources are sometimes vague[1531] it seems that although relatives,[1532] friends[1533] and companions[1534] might be consulted it was followers who were consulted most often.[1535] Seneschals may have been particularly prominent in giving advice for Kay is shown criticising Calogrenant,[1536] Yvain,[1537] and Gawain,[1538] and is rebuked for this behaviour by Guinevere.[1539]

The *History of William Marshal*'s account of the deliberations after the death of King John are invaluable for assessing what type of person took part in discussions.[1540] When the *haut homme* first asked William Marshal to become regent to the young Henry III, he refused.[1541] He then took counsel with his household followers who are named as John the Marshal, Ralph Musard and John of Earley. Although the first two of these advised him to accept, John of Earley argued against it claiming he might lose power in the long-run by having to bribe support through granting out his own lands. This view won.[1542] This was a closed counsel among only a small number of William's closest associates. Because of this environment each person may have been more willing to speak his mind freely. But, equally,

[1530] Althoff also believes discussions were 'run according to fixed forms': Althoff, p. 186.

[1531] At times it is unclear what type of person was present. We are told, for instance, that Earl Richard summoned 'all the *barun* to give counsel' but when they are assembled he seeks the advice 'from all his carnal friends': *Dermot*, Ll. 1799, 1820. Whoever comprised this group would appear to have been close friends with the earl. Indeed, this highlights one of the main problems in examining socio-political organisation: it is likely that many followers would have been friends. The phrase used is '*ces charnals amis*' and translators have given two different interpretations. Orpen translates this as 'his kinsfolk and friends' but Conlon prefers 'friendly kinsmen'. Given the confusion it is perhaps better to simply say 'intimate friends' and maintain the ambiguity of the original.

[1532] Gaimar, Ll. 2689 (Beorn and his family following his defiance of King Osbryht).

[1533] When faced with civil war Æthelred allegedly took *conseil* with *ses amis*: Gaimar, Ll. 4123 (*conseil*), 4122 (*ses amis*). In this context *amis* probably means 'supporters', so we should not see this group bound together primarily by emotive ties.

[1534] It was on the counsel of his *compaignons* that Henry the Young King approached his father about crossing the Channel to travel: *HGM*, Ll. 2406-7.

[1535] Meilier held a *parlement* in Ireland with the *chevaliers* and *gent* of William Marshal to see if they should obey a summons: *HGM*, Ll. 13695, 13699 (*parlement*), 13696 (*chevaliers, gent*). King Alfred took *conseil* with *si feail* ('his faithful'): Gaimar, Ll. 3183 (*conseil*), 3134 (*si feail*). In the *Song of Dermot* the English are involved in the decisions of Dermot once they have proved their worth: *Dermot*, Ll. 520-41, 932-43, 1200-7. When threatened by the king of France, Baldwin count of Flanders took advice from his 'high men' (*hals home*) and *barons*: *HGM*, Ll. 10789 (*hals home*), 10790 (*barons*). These two groups disagreed, and the poet remarks that this often occurred: *HGM*, Ll. 10793-98. The king of France took counsel from 'his *barons* and his high men [*haute gent*]: *HGM*, L. 11348; and also from '*Li baron de France*': *HGM*, L. 11697. When King John demanded a second son as hostage from him, William Marshal took counsel with his *gent* and *barons*: *HGM*, Ll. 13362-84; 13383 (*gent, barons*). When William Marshal was asked to return to Ireland he took counsel with his *genz*: *HGM*, L. 13448. When the French king threatened to invade King John took counsel with his *barons* and then summoned William Marshal from Ireland to hear his advice: *HGM*, Ll. 14494-526; 14501 (*barons*). John is said to take advice concerning the French threat from William Marshal, the earl of Salisbury and Geoffrey fitz Peter the justiciar: *HGM*, Ll. 14605-12. The next year William Marshal and the *haut homme* advised John to campaign in Poitou: *HGM*, Ll. 14672-74.

[1536] *Yvain*, p. 296.

[1537] *Yvain*, p. 302.

[1538] *Perceval*, p. 435, 436-37.

[1539] *Yvain*, p. 302.

[1540] Although the account may be unreliable in some aspects - it stresses William's reluctance to become regent and emphasises the legitimacy of his position (he is chosen by the aristocracy and the legate) - it should be reliable for its depiction of the process of decision-making.

[1541] *HGM*, Ll. 15373-400.

[1542] *HGM*, Ll. 15401-64.

the possibility of groupthink was greater because of the strong level of cohesion within the group.

This was not the end of the process. The *haut homme* met again to appoint a regent. The bishop of Winchester said it should be the choice of Alan Basset, who said it should be either the earl of Chester or William Marshal. William said it should be the earl of Chester and added that he would serve him loyally (*leialment*). The earl of Chester countered this saying it should be the Marshal because William was 'so feared and yet so loved [*E tant cremuz e tant amez*]'.[1543] Again the large meeting had resulted in stalemate.

Since the large counsel failed the legate tried to ensure agreement by taking selected people into a different room. These people were William Marshal, the earl of Chester (the two contenders), the bishop of Winchester and some (*une parti[e]*) of the *hauz homes*. The hope was that a small group would be able to reach a decision where the larger group had failed. It also allowed the legate to press more heavily on the Marshal (by bribing him with the remission of his sins).[1544] This again failed to produce a settlement but did make the Marshal rethink.

The following night William Marshal again took *conseil* with John the Marshal, Ralph Musard and John of Earley. This time the poet calls them William's 'sure counsellors [*conseil seür*]'.[1545] In this meeting John of Earley changed his position and argued that even if William lost all support he would still gain honour if he protected Henry III, and so if William accepted he could not lose.[1546] This argument convinced the Marshal that he should become regent. It is possible that in John of Earley changing his mind we see the influence of the majority on a minority.

A clear pattern emerges from this passage. The first environment for making a decision was a large assembly consisting of the 'high men'. These meetings twice ended in stalemate. When these assemblies failed to reach a decision the legate brought the most important people into a separate room and tried to lean on the Marshal to accept the appointment. This suggests that the legate thought it would be easier to make a small group reach a decision than it would be to get a larger one to. But this was not the only sub-group involved, for before making up his mind William consulted with three of his closest supporters as to what he should do.[1547] It was in these small groups, not the large assembly,

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[1543] *HGM*, Ll. 15483-536. As we have seen, being feared and loved was an ideal of lordship.
[1544] *HGM*, Ll. 15537-58.
[1545] *HGM*, L. 15627.
[1546] *HGM*, Ll. 15624-708.
[1547] When the Marshal was absent this group may have acted as his deputies. At an earlier date, when Meilier held a *parlement* to see if the followers of William Marshal would obey a summons by King John, John of

where the arguments were thrashed out. It makes sense that a lord would usually first consult his closest supporters (who were not necessarily the most powerful) before making a major decision for these people could offer trustworthy advice as their position relied on the success of their lord.[1548] The one area of doubt with this passage is that often a large assembly would have had a dominant figure present, such as the king, who was absent in these discussions. Where such a figure was present the dynamics of large assemblies may have been different but the role played by small groups probably remained.

A similar decision-making procedure was adopted at the peace talks that ended Morgan's rebellion against William Marshal when he was regent.[1549] These talks are termed a *parlemenz*.[1550] During the negotiations Llywelyn held a *conseil* of his faithful (*fee[i]l*).[1551] This group formulated a proposal that could be put to the opposition. When William Marshal heard the proposal he summoned 'his counsel [*son conseil*]', which consisted of those 'in faith [*en fei*]' with him,[1552] and took their advice. Again we see the vital importance of small groups splitting away from the main group to discuss strategy.

The same process is also seen in the discussions over who should replace the Marshal as regent. A large counsel was summoned that consisted of William Marshal, Henry III, the legate Pandolfo, the earls and those of 'greatest account [*greindres contes*]'.[1553] In this counsel William Marshal disagreed with the bishop of Winchester.[1554] With the large group failing to reach a decision they split into smaller groups. William Marshal now took counsel (*conseillerai*) with his son, his wife, his *gent*, John the Marshal and those he trusted most ('*plus se fiot*'). This group decided to make God, acting through the legate, the guardian of Henry III.[1555] William Marshal then informed Henry III and the legate what he had decided.[1556] This was then formally declared before the *barnage* - which made the bishop of Winchester very angry.[1557] Although the text may be inaccurate it demonstrates two important things. Firstly, at this meeting there were two factions - the Marshal versus the bishop of Winchester. Secondly, as elsewhere in this text, when a large body of people failed to reach a decision the counsel divided into smaller groups that were focused on a single lord, and it was one of these bodies that reached a decision and imposed it on the opposition.

Earley, Stephen d'Evreux and Jordan argued against obeying, suggesting that these were the most influential (or loyal) followers: *HGM*, Ll. 13719-52.
[1548] Althoff, pp. 80-81.
[1549] The talks are Ll. 17788-872.
[1550] *HGM*, L. 17788.
[1551] *HGM*, Ll. 17804 (*conseil*), 17803 (*feel*).
[1552] *HGM*, Ll. 17817 (*son conseil*), 17818 (*en fei*).
[1553] *HGM*, Ll. 17949-52.
[1554] *HGM*, Ll. 17993-18018.
[1555] *HGM*, Ll. 18019-62; 18025 (*conseillerai*), 18026 (*gent*), 18036 (*plus se fiot*).
[1556] *HGM*, Ll. 18063-90.
[1557] *HGM*, Ll. 18091-114; 18095 (*barnage*).

Similar indecision seems to have arisen during the subsequent war against Louis and his supporters in England. After victory at Lincoln a 'common counsel [*coumum conseil*]' was held.[1558] Two alternative courses of action were proposed - to besiege London or to raise the siege of Dover - but in the finish William Marshal chose to keep the prisoners and set a date for a new *conseil*.[1559] This passage suggests that the common counsel failed to reach a decision, possibly suggesting a poor decision-making structure as well as a major disagreement over policy. This may have arisen through the Marshal, as regent, holding less authority than a king. It may therefore be that although a lord risked cowing his ministers into sycophants if he took a directive role in counsels, he nevertheless had to sometimes declare his position to avoid procrastination and governmental paralysis. The role of a lord in counsel, as elsewhere, was a delicate one where excess in either direction could lead to greater problems. Leaders in many walks of life today are faced with the same problems, from the chair of small societies to business leaders and senior politicians. In all these cases, mediaeval and modern, the solution chosen may have more to do with personality than well-thought-out strategy.

But perhaps it was not all gloom for decision-making when the dominant lord was absent. At least without a leader taking a directive role alternative courses of action could genuinely be discussed. This is seen clearly in the *Histoire*'s account of the Marshal as regent. As we have seen, after victory at Lincoln those loyal to Henry III and William Marshal considered whether to besiege London or to raise the siege of Dover.[1560] Similarly, after a naval victory the Marshal sought advice from his supporters and was presented with two options: those who had not fought at sea argued in favour of besieging London while those who had said that the French should be forced out of England.[1561] Although the lack of a clear leader could lead to indecision and inactivity it did at least mean that alternatives could be proposed and analysed.

Openly discussing problems could also minimise opposition. By drawing important people together and reaching an agreed decision it was hoped that all the people present would feel bound to keep the decision. This was clearly Arthur's intention following the hunt for the white stag when his followers were jealous of each other because each wanted his lady to be seen as the most beautiful.[1562]

Collective decision making is also a way of avoiding conflict. When three of his barons threaten to rebel Mark seeks to maintain them in his court by asking - and accepting -

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[1558] *HGM*, L. 17038. This phrase may be being used as a synonym for *parlement*.
[1559] *HGM*, Ll. 17036-68; *conseil* L. 17065.
[1560] *HGM*, Ll. 17036-68.
[1561] *HGM*, Ll. 17645-70.
[1562] *Érec et Énide*, p. 41.

their advice.[1563] Laudine of Landuc similarly seeks the counsel of her people over whether she should re-marry. By doing this 'she received him [Yvain, her new husband] with greater honour'.[1564] Yet before this public gathering occurred there had been two more exclusive meetings. The first was between Laudine and her maid in which her maid advised her to take a new husband so that her lands would be defended.[1565] The second was between Laudine and her barons.[1566] Here we see three distinct stages. First one's closest friends were asked, then one's important followers, and only then was the decision made public. By adopting this procedure a superior minimised the chance of opposition to the proposed course of action. How does this procedure compare to that described in the *History of William Marshal*? Firstly, both show the importance of small groups for constructing policy. However, whereas Marie shows a progression from small group to large the *History* shows that the first forum for discussion was the large counsel. This difference suggests two distinct strategies but it may be that the Marshal would have first discussed the situation with his closest supporters before going to the large meeting. If so, our two sources would be showing the same process of decision-making.

Legal disputes were also settled by collective judgement. At the trial of Ganelon are Bavarians, Saxons, Poitevins, Normans, Franks, Germans, Teutons and men from the Auvergne.[1567] Here Charles takes an active role. At the start he accuses Ganelon of causing the deaths of two thousand Franks through betrayal.[1568] After Ganelon has claimed his innocence 'the Franks reply: "Now we shall hold a council."'[1569] Following a speech by one of Ganelon's kinsmen all the barons are in agreement except Thierry, the brother of Geoffrey.[1570] When the barons ask Charles to absolve Ganelon he refuses and accuses them of being felons to him [*vos estes mi felun*][1571] - essentially he is telling them they made the wrong decision and should think again. Now Thierry speaks in favour of executing Ganelon.[1572] Again people are convinced by the orator.[1573] A duel is then prepared in which Thierry and Pinabel can fight to decide the fate of Ganelon.[1574] When Pinabel is defeated Charles asks his barons what he should do to these men:

'"What is your advice concerning those whom I detained?

[1563] Béroul, p. 61.
[1564] *Yvain*, p. 322.
[1565] *Yvain*, pp. 314-18.
[1566] *Yvain*, p. 321.
[1567] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3793-96.
[1568] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3750-56.
[1569] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 3761.
[1570] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3797-806.
[1571] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3806-14.
[1572] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3827-36.
[1573] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 3837.
[1574] *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3841-57. For this duel Charles demands surety and Pinabel provides thirty of his kinsmen: *Chanson de Roland*, Ll. 3846-47.

> They came to support Ganelon in his trial;
>
> For Pinabel they agreed to become hostages."
>
> The Franks reply: "Not a single one shall live."'[1575]

In this episode Charles has played a very active role and had a major affect on the outcome. We also see that the punishment for treason was death.

A similar procedure is seen in Marie's *Lanval*. But although the king plays a directive role in the proceedings he accepts the judgement of the barons. The queen accuses Lanval of shaming her and the king demands pledges (*plegges*). Gawain and his companions (*cumpainun*) agree to do this and the king warns them that they might lose their land and fiefs (*teres e fieus*) because of this. The trial is decided by the barons and the king accepts their judgement: Lanval did not insult the queen by saying his love was more beautiful because he spoke the truth.[1576]

We can see one of the rituals involved during such trials by looking at the *Song of Dermot*. When Maurice de Prendergast is criticised for escorting MacDonnchadh safely away he calls for a trial to prove he had done no wrong:

> 'And Maurice folded his glove
>
> Gave it in pledge to his lord
>
> That in his court he would face up
>
> To whatever he had done wrong
>
> They stood security enough for him
>
> Did some renowned English *vassals*'[1577]

This is not seen as an act of defiance but as a way of proving Maurice's innocence. The ceremony involved (folding the glove and returning it to his lord) suggests that the process - or at least the idea - was well-established beforehand. The same procedure is seen later in the poem. Robert fitz Stephen is accused of being a *felun* and brought before Henry II. Robert then folds his glove and tenders it to the king to show his willingness to redress any grievances.[1578] It may be that the other examples of aristocrats being tried followed a similar procedure.

Althoff provides two examples of real-life decision-making procedure. One German emperor took a directive role in a prosecution, and here again the defendants are allowed to speak only after those supporting the emperor have spoken. This procedure would make it very hard to go against the ruler for it combined respect for an authority figure with the peer

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[1575] *Chanson de Roland*, L. 3948-51.

[1576] Marie, *Lanval*, Ll. 311-646.

[1577] *Dermot*, Ll. 2149-54.

pressure of a majority. If the procedure is reliably recorded, it is of little surprise to hear that two of the three accused admitted the ruler was right and that the third was forced to concede after withdrawing from court.[1579] A similar decision-making procedure was adopted in the eleventh century by Otto of Northeim when he complained to the Saxons about the injustices inflicted by Henry IV: at the end of his speech he asked those present to tell the others of injustices they had suffered through Henry IV and that then they would take a general judgement about their course of action. By arranging the discussion in such a fashion only one outcome was likely. Otto was probably aware of this and - if the source is reliable - he would therefore have been deliberately structuring the discussion to appear consensual with little risk that he would be gainsaid.[1580] Such examples suggest poor decision-making practice if the aim of the discussion was to generate new ideas and consider all options. But if the aim of the meeting was to rouse passions and get support for the leader's wish these examples suggest lords were highly skilful and cunning for they manipulated a decision by controlling the procedure of the discussion.

[1578] *Dermot*, Ll. 2521 (accused of being a *felun*), 2641-44 (Robert's act).
[1579] For this prosecution see Althoff, pp. 189-91.
[1580] Althoff, p. 191.

ii

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The topic of decision making is closely related to that of conflict resolution.[1581] We have already seen how the two are combined in legal trials. Althoff has argued that in the early Middle Ages the aim of settlements was to enable the parties to become friends.[1582] The sources for the High Middle Ages allow a more detailed investigation to be undertaken. They suggest a variety of negotiating processes, three styles of language (friendship, brotherhood and covenant) and several means of ensuring agreements were kept.

Once again vernacular literature is very useful. Gaimar gives considerable detail on the negotiations between Eadmund and Cnut. Whether or not Gaimar is a reliable source for what really happened over a century before, he can be used to give a picture of what forms the resolution process and settlement could take. He records that after much devastation the *barons* made their leaders *parle kesacorderent* ('talk until agreement')[1583] and their solution was single combat.[1584] This settlement was supported by an exchange of *iure* (oaths) and *'ostage, e afiez'* (hostages and sureties).[1585]

The process of dispute settlement had several stages. When a poet wants to show O'Dempsey's intransigence in the face of Earl Richard's aggression he says that he refused to parley (*parler*), to give *ostages* and to make peace.[1586] Here we see three elements that would form part of a dispute settlement: a negotiation, an exchange of hostages, and the settlement itself. These elements are seen in the real world in the *conventiones* of Stephen's reign. Similar language is used in the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*: a war between King John and France ended with a *parlement* that resulted in a *convenances*.[1587] This shows that by the early thirteenth century there was a distinction between 'talks' and 'agreements'.

[1581] Parts of the discussion on dispute settlement were presented in a paper titled 'Conflict resolution among aristocrats in Stephen's reign' (International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 1996).
[1582] M. T. Clanchy, 'Law and Love in the Middle Ages', in J. Bossy, ed., *Disputes and Settlements. Law and Human Relations in the West* (Cambridge, 1993) p. 47.
[1583] Gaimar, Ll. 4255 (*barons*), 4256 (*parle kesacorderent*).
[1584] Gaimar, Ll. 4259-77.
[1585] Gaimar, Ll. 4278 (*iure*), 4279 (*ostage, e afiez*).
[1586] *Dermot*, Ll. 2781 (*parler*), 2782 (*ostages*), 2783 (*pes*).
[1587] *HGM*, Ll. 11987-12004 (the war), 12012 (*parlement*), 12014 (*convenances*).

Several processes were available for dispute settlement. These included negotiation (direct negotiation between the two parties, whether face-to-face or through messengers), mediation (someone approved of by both sides who would suggest terms to bring about a compromise - for example, using someone related to both sides),[1588] conciliation (referring disputes to a third party, such as a cleric, who would recommend proposals for a settlement; these proposals would not be enforceable), and arbitration (a third party who would suggest proposals that the disputing parties had to accept - like a lord enforcing a settlement between two tenants).[1589]

Since face-to-face discussions could be dangerous, messengers were used to break the ice. Fear and distrust would often have kept leaders apart until a basic framework had been agreed. In the late twentieth century we have grown used to the idea of 'talks about talks' and 'proximity talks' to prepare the way for face-to-face meetings between opposing leaders. Anyone who has followed the course of peace talks in Northern Ireland will have seen how difficult it can be to get former enemies to sit down at the same table.[1590] This means that mediators and messengers are regularly used in our own time. In the twelfth century the same problems were met with the same solutions. The *Leges Henrici Primi* describes four groups who could mediate between a *dominus* and a *homo*: peers (*compares*), neighbours (*uicinos*), members of his household (*domesticos*) and strangers (*extraneos*).[1591] During Stephen's reign most mediators seem to have been clerics.[1592] Where laymen were

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[1588] Althoff likewise notes that people who tried to solve conflicts usually had close ties to both parties: Althoff, pp. 196-97.

[1589] The same methods are available today in the context of international law, along with using a commission of inquiry to 'find the facts', referring to the United Nations, settlement by regional machinery such as exists within the EU, arbitration by the International Court of Justice, and conciliation in the form of Advisory Opinions of the International Court of Justice. On this see Martin Dixon, *Textbook on International Law*, 2nd edn. (London, 1993) pp. 223-45. Martindale records the methods of dispute settlement available in Aquitaine to c.926-1137 as being mediation and negotiation, judgement by duke, a chosen individual or by the general consensus of the whole court, and judgement by God through a duel, although this appears to have been a last resort: Martindale, '"His special friend"', p. 47.

[1590] For the first time in seventy years, and after many preparatory meetings and the urgings of both the UK and Irish governments, Ulster Unionists sat down at the same table as Sinn Fein on 23rd September 1997: they sat down, made a statement complaining about the presence of Sinn Fein, and left. A few days later peace talks began in earnest between all parties. On 11th December progress had been made such that Gerry Adams was able to lead a Sinn Fein delegation to 10 Downing Street, the first time anyone linked to the IRA had been there since Michael Collins seventy five years earlier. In February 1998 Sinn Fein were (temporarily) banned from the talks after the IRA was suspected of breaking its cease-fire. Many of the discussions on 10 April 1998 that led to the Good Friday Agreement took place in small groups of supporters with messengers being used between the groups - a method reminiscent of that used in the High Middle Ages.

[1591] *Leges Henrici Primi*, 43.9.

[1592] On the church's attempts to limit and end conflict in Stephen's reign see in particular Holdsworth, pp. 79-83. In France the Church had been heavily involved in bringing peace to war-torn regions for over a century. The Truce and Peace of God were organised by the Church and brought some respite to afflicted areas. In England this did not happen. Individual churchmen, however, were involved. In the negotiations of Stephen's reign abbots seem to have been used less than bishops. The 1153 treaty of Winchester, for example, was arranged by Archbishop Theobald and Henry bishop of Winchester. Bishop Henry had favoured a negotiated settlement as early as 1140. In the final *conventio* between the earls of Chester and Leicester the earls pledged their faith in the hands of the bishop of Lincoln to keep to the agreement. If the *conventio* was breached and amends not made within 15 days then the bishops of both Chester and Lincoln

involved they were connected with both disputants through tenure or blood.[1593] Mutual friends of the two opposing camps are also likely to have played a part but our sources are not detailed enough to prove this. When Stephen wished to secure the support of John Marshal, for example, he first used messengers and proposed a meeting at Ludgershall - which John refused.[1594] Superiors, churchmen and family members all contributed to the agreement between Geoffrey de Clinton and the earl of Warwick. The charter explicitly states who brought the two sides together: 'Earl Roger grants... on the advice of the King, the bishop of Winchester, the earl of Warenne, Robert and his other brothers'. Here are clearly revealed those people who brokered the peace. Messengers were also used to arrange safe-conducts so that real peace talks could begin.[1595] It is worth noting also that Robert of Gloucester announced his *diffidatio* in 1138 through messengers.[1596]

The importance of messengers continued through later stages of the process. Protracted negotiations meant that agreements were arranged by envoys. For example, William of Malmesbury claimed that a month passed during the negotiations organising the exchange of King Stephen for Robert earl of Gloucester in 1141.[1597] Again this timeframe has similarities with the late twentieth century.[1598] In the case of discussions between John Marshal and Robert fitz Hubert (the covenant was never ratified) the *Gesta Stephani* actually records the process of negotiation: Robert

> 'sent word to John by intermediaries that he would make a
> pact of peace and friendship with him, that he wanted to
> ask admission to his castle for the sake of giving and
> receiving advice, that it was his intention to keep the pact
> unbroken and their harmony unimpaired. But John,
> perceiving that he made all these promises in the hope of
> surprising the castle [of Marlborough] (which was the
> fact), gladly and affably agreed to his requests, and after
> admitting him to the castle shut the gates behind him and

'to do justice upon him as for broken faith'. In addition, each earl gave two hostages to the bishops that were to be handed over to whoever kept the agreement.

[1593] See Holdsworth, pp. 83-86. The use of a follower is seen in the way Richard de Granville was employed by the earl of Gloucester in 1136 to make contracts with the Welsh of West Glamorgan: Rice Merrick, *Morganniae Archaiographia*, pp. 39-40. A superior could also bring about a peaceful settlement to a quarrel between two of his or her followers. The Empress Matilda seems to have done this for Waleran of Meulan and William de Beauchamp in 1141: *Regesta* 3, no. 115.

[1594] *HGM*, Ll. 283-94.

[1595] *Dermot*, Ll. 2055-86.

[1596] *HN*, ch. 467, p. 23.

[1597] *HN*, ch. 510, p. 68.

[1598] In the 1990s envoys and mediators have been used over a long period in conflicts in the former Yugoslavia (both in Bosnia and Kosovo) and in the dispute between Palestinians and Israel - and most likely elsewhere.

> put him in a narrow dungeon to suffer hunger and torture.'[1599]

Envoys were also in the negotiations in 1141 for the release of Stephen and Robert of Gloucester, in the abortive negotiations for a general peace in 1146 between Stephen and Matilda, and for the agreement between Stephen and Roger earl of Hereford in c. 1152.[1600] It is likely that they were used elsewhere as enemies would find it hard to meet face-to-face until a rough agreement had already been made. Sometimes these envoys were of considerable rank - the earl of Cornwall, Reginald, was used by Matilda in 1146 under a promise of safe-conduct (but he was still captured by Philip of Gloucester).

Sometimes intermediaries may have taken the role of arbitrators. This would seem to be the case when William Marshal and other barons were asked to find an accord (*l'acorde*) between Engelger de Bohun and Ralph d'Ardene.[1601] If two people had a dispute but shared a common lord they could go to this lord's court to agree *amicitia*, and if this failed the lord could impose a formal judgement (*iudicium*).[1602]

The church also seems to have played a prominent role in the negotiations between Stephen and Matilda and Henry, particularly in 1153. Before the battle of Lincoln, for example, Henry bishop of Winchester tried to bring peace.[1603] This may also have been the role of the cardinal who negotiated between the kings of England and France at Le Goulet.[1604]

When peace negotiations broke down people were placed in an awkward situation. During negotiations between Earl Richard and King MacDonnchadh the lands of MacDonnchadh were pillaged by O'Brien king of Munster. Maurice de Prendergast, who had brought MacDonnchadh to the talks under safe conduct, saw this as *traisun*, declared the aggressors had 'trespassed against faith' ('*vos feiz avez trespassez*'), called them perjurers (*parjurés*), and escorted MacDonnchadh safely away. For doing this Maurice was criticised by others at Earl Richard's court who justified their actions on the grounds that MacDonnchadh had previously expelled Dermot from Leinster. This provoked a crisis with Maurice demanding to know what he had done wrong. He was able to gain enough support in court to end the quarrel.[1605] In this passage Maurice had seen the granting of safe conduct as binding but others had not, resulting in a dispute within the group.

[1599] *GS*, p. 106.

[1600] *HN*, ch. 507-13, pp. 67-70; *G. S.*, ch. 95, p. 187; *G. S.*, ch. 117, p. 228.

[1601] *HGM*, Ll. 11791-99; a recent translation uses 'arbitrate' for *l'acorde*: *HWM*, L. 11793.

[1602] *Leges Henrici Primi*, 57.1a.

[1603] *HGM*, Ll. 656-72.

[1604] *HGM*, Ll. 11399-726.

[1605] *Dermot*, Ll. 2106 (*traisun*), 2111 (*vos feiz avez trespassez*), 2112 (*parjurés*), 2140-48 (criticism of Maurice), 2149-54 (Maurice's defence at court).

Turning from the process of negotiation to the settlement itself we see that there was a difference between a truce and a peace. Whereas a peace was supposedly of unlimited duration a truce was limited to a specified period.[1606] Old French texts frequently use 'truce' and 'peace' to describe agreements[1607] and the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* uses these terms with precision. For the talks at Le Goulet we are told that a cardinal went to France to advise the French king to make either a peace (*pais*) or a lasting truce (*trive*).[1608] Richard I and the cardinal first discussed terms for a peace[1609] during which Richard complained that Philip had broken *les couvenanz* that they had previously agreed.[1610] Only when these negotiations failed did they attempt to make a truce[1611] - but again the negotiations broke down because Richard demanded his lands be returned. Eventually they settled on a truce (*trieve*) to last five years with a *convenanz* that Philip was to hold Richard's former castles but that Richard would continue to hold the lands around them.[1612] We can see from this that not only was a 'peace' more desirable than a 'truce'.

Truces could be used to negotiate a lasting settlement. To get to this stage, however, was a delicate matter. There are several examples from the twelfth century where truces were abused. When the garrison of Newbury agreed a truce (*trieve*) with Stephen so that they could contact their lord, John Marshal wrote to Stephen asking for a longer truce (*trieves*) so that he could contact Matilda.[1613] Stephen agreed to this request only when John agreed to give his son William as a hostage.[1614] But Stephen was wrong to trust John even when he had his son as hostage because John refortified Newbury and broke the agreement.[1615] Later in the century, according to the Marshal's biographer, Richard I thought it was *traïson* when the French undermined the castle of Vaudreuil during peace negotiations.[1616] That agreements could be broken like this explains why measures were taken to try to ensure they were kept.

[1606] This point is also made by Holdsworth who distinguishes three types of agreement: truce (a pause in war for restricted purposes), safe conduct (a few people given protection for a limited time and purpose) and peace (theoretically unlimited in time or in relation to people and places): Holdsworth, p. 83.

[1607] Gaimar, for example, regularly uses 'truce' and 'peace'. Æthelbald and Cuthred made a *triwes* with the Welsh: Gaimar, L. 1771. The Danes made a truce with some English: Gaimar, Ll. 2563 (*triues*), 2574 (*triwes*). Having made a *triwes* with the men of Wessex and Mercia the Danes broke the *peis e triues*: Gaimar, Ll. 2857 (*triwes*), 2869 (*peis e triues*). Alfred of Wessex made a *triues* with the Danes and Mercia made a *triwes* with them: Gaimar, Ll. 3042 (*triues*), 3046 (*triwes*). After Alfred's victory the Danes continued to break the *triues*: Gaimar, L. 3357. Under pressure King Eadward made a *triues* with the Danes: Gaimar, L. 3469. King Eadward also made a peace and truce (*pes e triues*) with King Malcolm of Scotland, but this lasted only a few days: Gaimar, L. 5097.

[1608] *HGM*, Ll. 11401 (*pais*), 11402 (*trive*).

[1609] *HGM*, Ll. 11464, 11467, 11486 (*pais*), 11484 (*pès*).

[1610] *HGM*, L. 11476.

[1611] *HGM*, Ll. 11528, 11532 (*trieve*), 11545, 11546, 11556 (*trive*). William Marshal himself later distinguishes between *pais* and *trieve*: L. 11679.

[1612] *HGM*, Ll. 11571 (*trieve*), 11572 (*convenanz*).

[1613] *HGM*, Ll. 461-66 (first truce), 473-77 (John Marshal's request).

[1614] *HGM*, Ll. 478-90.

[1615] *HGM*, Ll. 493-508.

[1616] *HGM*, Ll. 10542, 10548.

Some agreements were written down but we have texts only occasionally. The *Histoire* records that the agreement that saw the release of King Stephen for Robert of Gloucester was written down.[1617] The treaty of Le Goulet between Philip of France and Richard I was also written down:

> 'The truce was agreed [*prise*] and written down [*escrite*]
>
> Word for word under the terms cited
>
> And worked out at an earlier stage
>
> No word was omitted.'[1618]

But it is unclear when such treaties began to be written down. Although we have texts of treaties between England and Flanders from the early twelfth century we do not have texts for those between England and France.[1619] It may also be that agreements involving a prince were more likely to be recorded than others for although written records were produced by an royal chancery from the twelfth century it is not certain whether this organisation was mirrored below this level at this time.[1620]

Political agreements can be further divided into two types.[1621] Firstly there are those that are aimed primarily at preventing or ending conflict.[1622] Such would seem to be the treaties between the earl of Gloucester and the Welsh in 1136 (though in at least one of these homage was taken in exchange for a grant of land), and that between the earl of Leicester and the bishop of Lincoln (1139 x 1147). These agreements helped to limit the effects of civil war by establishing peace on a regional basis. R. H. C. Davis has called this process 'The Magnates' Peace'.[1623] He believed that in the closing years of the civil war an increasing number of magnates removed themselves from the conflict by making peace agreements with other magnates. We can now modify this view. While his ideas were right his dating was wrong. It can now be seen that even in the early years of the war some aristocrats were making peace agreements. If it was not until the 1150s that large numbers of people refused to fight the seeds had been sown long before. This means that the bringing of peace was a gradual process.

[1617] *HGM*, L. 699 (*Esi fu ceste pais escri[t]e*).

[1618] *HGM*, Ll. 11719-22, claiming that no word was left out. Before the final terms had been reached Richard dismissed the proposals saying 'This truce will never be set down in writing': L. 11556.

[1619] *Diplomatic Documents Preserved in the Public Record Office*, vol. 1, 1101-1272, ed. Pierre Chaplais (London, 1964) nos. 1-2.

[1620] Patterson, *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, pp. 16-21; Greenway, *Charters of the Honour of Mowbray*, pp. lxvii-lxx; Webber, 'The Scribes and Handwriting of the Original Charters' 138-40. On the possibility of writing office in Normandy before 1066 see R. Allen Brown, 'Some observations on Norman and Anglo-Norman charters' in Diana Greenway, Christopher Holdsworth and Jane Sayers, eds., *Tradition and Change. Essays in Honour of Marjorie Chibnall Presented by her Friends on the Occasion of her Seventieth Birthday* (Cambridge, 1985) pp. 147-53.

[1621] See Meddings, pp. 8-9.

[1622] For early examples of formal friendship being used to end feuds see Althoff, p. 94.

[1623] Davis, *KS*, ch. 'The Magnates' Peace'.

The other type of agreement attempted to provide a framework within which future relations could operate, such as by creating a dependence of lord and man. These sometimes give the conditions under which aid will be given. Here one thinks of the final *conventio* between the earls of Chester and Leicester (1149 x 1153) and of the two agreements between the earls of Gloucester and Hereford (1141 x 1143 and 1147 x 1149). But to an extent this division is arbitrary: the Salisbury-Marshal agreement of the mid-1140s was aimed at ending a regional conflict in Wiltshire between John Marshal and Patrick earl of Salisbury but took the form of John becoming the man of Patrick and marrying his sister.[1624] Nevertheless it remains an important distinction: there is a great difference between a treaty which ends a quarrel and one in which the two sides unite against a common foe; the one is peaceful, the other aggressive.

Several methods were used to ensure agreements were kept. Perhaps the most successful was that of marriage.[1625] Yet it should be remembered that marriages reinforced and sealed an agreement but was not the agreement itself. This is seen in the way a conflict between England and France was settled with a *convenances* in which John gave his niece in marriage to Louis 'for concord and for being [or becoming] friends'.[1626] The difference between an agreement and the marriage that formalised it is also seen in the way a dispute in France was settled through Philip Augustus granting William count of Ponthieu the territory he disputed with Renaud count of Boulogne at the same moment that Renaud's son married William's daughter: both originate from Compiègne in September 1208 but the settlement is recorded in a different charter to the marriage.[1627]

But other means of securing peace were available. One method was the granting of land. This was used to great effect by the earl of Gloucester in 1136. The Welsh had taken the opportunity presented by the death of Henry I to make war on the Anglo-Norman settlers. By early 1136 they had met with such success that they had retaken much of their lost land and killed Richard de Clare. This so alarmed the earl of Gloucester that he began a policy of appeasement in the March. This is seen in four surviving agreements with Welsh leaders from Glamorgan and Senghenydd. Morgan and Iorwerth did homage to Robert in exchange for 300

[1624] *HGM*, Ll. 368-77. This is discussed in Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 14-16.

[1625] This technique was used by Roger earl of Warwick and Geoffrey de Clinton in 1137 or 1138 (Geoffrey marrying Roger's daughter); Reginald son of Henry I and William fitz Richard in 1140 (Reginald marrying William's daughter); Patrick earl of Salisbury and John Marshal in the mid-1140s (John marrying Patrick's sister); William earl of Gloucester and Robert earl of Leicester 1147 or 1148 (William marrying Robert's daughter); and the earl of Leicester again and Simon earl of Northampton in the closing years of the civil war (Simon marrying another of Robert's daughters). A marriage could also provide the basis for a later settlement. The marriage of Ranulf of Chester to Robert of Gloucester's daughter in the reign of Henry I, for example, probably facilitated the settlement of a dispute between the two earls in Stephen's reign. On the longevity of the agreements in Stephen's reign and the measures used to ensure they were kept see Meddings, pp. 70-72.

[1626] *HGM*, Ll. 12014 (*convenances*), 12018 (*por concorde & por estre amis*).

acres; Rhys and Rhiwallon received some land (and possibly did homage); and Robert probably bribed off the Welsh of Senghenydd as well.[1628] Here we see that the grantor was in fact the 'weaker' party and the man who did homage the 'stronger'. This is clearly the reverse situation of normal enfeoffments. These are not the only cases where this happened. In the mid-1140s Ranulf of Chester gave the earl of Leicester some land and a few years later added the castle of Mountsorrel. As Edmund King has shown, these grants were to a large extent forced by the pressure Robert exerted on the earl of Chester.[1629] Again, the weaker party was the one granting land.

This policy of granting land to bribe off an enemy met with mixed success. The earl of Gloucester seems to have been very successful. He made the grants in 1136. Two years later Orderic Vitalis records that Morgan still held Usk for Robert. But it seems to have lasted far longer. On Robert's death - eleven years later - the brothers made a grant to Bristol abbey for the care of his soul showing they still saw themselves as his men. But whilst the agreement seems to have been in origin a peace settlement it also led to co-operation as several chroniclers refer to Welsh contingents fighting for Robert at Lincoln in 1141 and at Tetbury in 1144. This long-term support seems to have been well-worth the grants of land Robert made in 1136. By contrast, the earl of Chester seems to have been most unfortunate as his first two agreements with the earl of Leicester lasted for only a few years: the earls made three agreements in the space of three to nine years!

Hostages were also used to guarantee agreements. We have already seen that when Robert of Gloucester and Miles of Gloucester made their *confederatio amoris* in 1141 to 1143 Robert took Miles' son as hostage. The final *conventio* of the earls of Chester and Leicester also used hostages, though here they were given to the two bishops and therefore kept out of the clutches of the other earl. According to Gaimar in one *triwes* the Danes swore oaths (*iurerent*) and gave *ostages* to Alfred.[1630] Similarly, after some shipwrecks off Exeter the Danes were forced to give *ostages* and swear to keep the peace (*iurerent peis*) and serve (*seruir*) the king.[1631] But providing hostages did not ensure that an agreement was kept. As we have seen John Marshal gave the appearance of not caring for his child when Stephen held his son hostage. Similarly, the men of Poitou gave John 'hostages and promises [*ostages... e fiances*]' but did not keep their *couvenances*.[1632] This uncertainty over whether hostages really would ensure an agreement was kept explains why the 1153 Treaty of Westminster adopted

[1627] *Recueil de Documents pour servir a L'Histoire de Montreuil-sur-Mer 1100-1464. Supplément au Cartulaire Municipal*, ed. Georges de Lhomel (Compiègne, 1907) nos. v, vi.

[1628] See Crouch, 'The march and the Welsh kings'; Crouch, 'The slow death of kingship in Glamorgan' 20-41.

[1629] King, 'Mountsorrel and its region in King Stephen's Reign', 1-10.

[1630] Gaimar, Ll. 3088-95; 3089 (*iurerent*), 3091 (*ostages*), 3095 (*triwes*).

[1631] Gaimar, Ll. 3104-24; 3117 (*ostages*), 3119 (*iurerent peis*), 3120 (*seruir*).

[1632] *HGM*, Ll. 12535 (*ostages... e fiances*), 12536 (*couvenances*).

three security measures: hostages, the creation or recreation of tenurial relationships and the use of another power to bind the parties.[1633]

Althoff sees disputes and their settlement in Germany from the tenth to the twelfth century conforming to a model through which both sides were able to keep face. This fixed and ritualised procedure involved the unconditional subordination of the loser quickly followed by the victor forgiving the transgression and restoring office and honour to the loser.[1634] In such an environment an early display of anger (ritualised or real) could signal the existence of a dispute and set the wheels of conflict resolution turning before violence was perpetrated.[1635]

The activities of Henry I and the variety of measures used to ensure agreements suggests that arrangements were kept not so much because of 'honour' as *Realpolitik*. Despite all efforts to ensure their preservation agreements lasted for only as long as they suited both sides. Founded in political interest, they survived only for so long as they were expedient to both parties. This is a problem that has plagued peace-makers from the Middle Ages down to the present. Yet even those agreements that were short-lived did have a role for they set down the intentions of the two protagonists and provided a framework within which future relations could operate.

With the absence of an effective higher authority lords had to make their own security arrangements and their own alliances. These agreements could not be enforced by an external authority. This means that they essentially fulfilled the same function as treaties do in modern international law. That is, they are the means by which parties 'create certain and specific obligations and, because they are the result of a conscious and deliberate act, they are more likely to be respected.'[1636] This explains why agreements were contracted even though there was no guarantee the other side would stick to it. That some of these agreements were short-lived should not be too surprising. Peace-makers in our own time have faced similar problems - as in Ireland and the former Yugoslavia. If in the twelfth century peace negotiators were sometimes unsuccessful it is perhaps more because of difficulties inherent in the problem than in the 'incompetence' of the mediators or the 'fickleness' of the belligerents.

[1633] Holdsworth, p. 85.
[1634] Althoff, pp. 197-203.
[1635] On displays of anger and dispute settlement see Richard E. Barton, 'Lordship in Maine: Transformation, Service and anger', *ANS* 17 (1994) 41-63.
[1636] Martin Dixon, *Textbook on International Law*, 2nd edn. (London, 1993) p. 21.

6

CONCLUSION

Many of the topics that we have been concerned with are found in a single section of Gaimar's *Lestorie des Engles*. This is the passage we have seen before in which Cnut and Eadmund negotiate a peaceful conclusion to their dispute and is worth repeating in full. Cnut offers to divide up the land:

> "'And let us be brothers [*freres*] in truth.
>
> I will swear [*iurrai*] to you, you swear [*vurez*] to me,
>
> To keep this brotherhood [*fraternite*],
>
> As if we were born of one mother [*de une mere*],
>
> As if we were both brothers [*frere*],
>
> Of one father [*pere*] and one mother [*mere*];
>
> Also let there be hostages [*ostages*] between us;
>
> Trust me, and I will trust you.'"[1637]

Eadmund then asks:

> "'Will you carry out this talk [*parlement*]?'"
>
> "Yes," said Cnut, "in truth,
>
> Let there be a pledge [*afie*] between us.
>
> Here I pledge [*afi*] you my faith [*fei*],
>
> I will keep this covenant [*couenant*] thus."
>
> This covenant [*couenant*] was pledged [*afie*].
>
> Behold all settled [*acorde*].
>
> On this covenant [*couenant*] they embraced.
>
> These covenants [*couenanz*] were well kept.'[1638]

After this the agreement is called *lacordement*.[1639] We are finally told that afterwards the two kings ruled more equally than brothers or kinsfolk (*frere ne parent*) and that they loved (*sentreamerent*) each other more than brothers (*frere*) do.[1640]

Many themes are touched on in this brief passage. The most obvious is that it describes an agreement between two men who were roughly equals in terms of power and

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[1637] Gaimar, Ll. 4339-46.
[1638] Gaimar, Ll. 4352-60.
[1639] Gaimar, L. 4368.

status in this land. That they sought an agreement means they sought to settle their difference by negotiation rather than violence. The agreement is presented as creating a bond of artificial brotherhood - thus betraying the importance of the family to medieval society and political ideas - and this new relationship is signalled by a ritual of embracing. But whilst this display of formal affection might be the outward demonstration of the settlement the agreement itself involved an exchange of pledges, with Cnut pledging his *fei*. Moreover, the settlement was backed up by the realistic and pragmatic step of exchanging hostages. The settlement is therefore secured in three different ways: by a public show of (false?) affection in which the two appear as brothers, by oaths, and by an exchange of hostages that would make both leaders think twice before breaking the terms of the settlement. Finally, whilst the negotiation is called a *parlement* the agreement is described as a covenant four times and as an accord once.

The concepts involved, the ideas expressed and the outward form of the agreement are all far removed from the idea of relationships being based on tenure. We do not hear of service, lordship or homage and get only a single reference to faith. We do not know how common such agreements were; but that Gaimar did not think it necessary to explain these terms suggests that they were familiar to his twelfth-century audience. This suggests that any model of medieval political structures must take into consideration the possibility of their being a number of 'horizontal' relationships, some of which at least were formally entered into, in addition to any 'vertical' structures. This passage is therefore of great importance to anyone wishing to create a comprehensive model of twelfth century political relationships.

These measures echo the agreements of Stephen's reign. It will be remembered that many agreements survive from this reign, both in charters and in chronicles. Some of these charters describe themselves as *conventiones* - covenants. As the final agreement between the earls of Chester and Leicester shows, these twelfth century agreements, just as that between Cnut and Eadmund in Gaimar, could involve mutual oaths to keep faith. Moreover, the phrases used by Latin chroniclers to describe these agreements, such as 'pact of friendship', mirror the sentiments expressed in Gaimar's stress on brotherhood. It therefore seems that the agreement detailed by Gaimar should be seen as a forerunner to the aristocratic agreements of the mid-twelfth century. Taken together, such evidence suggests that the use of agreements was widespread at this time. If we have few records of such agreements this has perhaps at least as much to do with their chances of survival as it does with their frequency of production. Most of these agreements were perhaps not written down, and those that were would not normally have been preserved as they concerned neither monastic houses nor land rights (the two areas where survival of material has been greatest). Perhaps such agreements

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[1640] Gaimar, Ll. 4396 (*frere ne parent*), 4397-98.

were not as common as faithfulness, homage and service being given exchange for property, but they were important.

In addition to what it tells us about formal political structures the passage in Gaimar also reveals much about the importance of the family. Cnut suggests that they should become like brothers and act as if they shared the same parents. This implies that he saw the family as the basic unit of social organisation and that the bond between brothers was great. This view is reinforced by the poet's comment that henceforth they ruled more equally and had more love for each other than brothers.

Real affection seems to have existed between the two men - at least in the eyes of Gaimar. When Eadmund is murdered by Eadric Streona, Cnut executes Eadric saying:

> 'This man slew my brother [*frere*]
> In him I have avenged all my friends [*amis*]
> He was indeed my brother [*frere*] in truth'[1641]

Although the reasons for his action may have been as much political as emotional Cnut is clearly able to justify his actions by refering to his brotherhood with Eadmund.

This execution scene is also important for what it tells us about friendship. That Cnut feels it necessary to say that in killing Eadric 'I have avenged all my *amis*' implies that he thought that without doing this action himself his *amis* would have sought to do so. In other words, *amis* would have sought to take revenge. Friendship can therefore be placed alongside the family and power relationships (agreements, fealty, homage and affinities) as a determinant of political action.

Of course, what type of friendship Cnut and Gaimar were refering to is open to question. As we have seen, several types of friendship can be seen in contemporary sources.

Rituals were important as they could define, create and strengthen a group. Each of these elements is quite different. Firstly, a ritual could create a formal relationship out of nothing. Secondly, a ritual could formalise and define an exisiting informal relationship. For example, since one could follow a lord without swearing loyalty, a loyalty oath could formalise an existing relationship rather than create a new one. Finally, rituals can strengthen existing bonds by restating the relationship or by providing a shared experience. Rituals fulfil the same functions today, though perhaps they were more common and more powerful in the Middle Ages.

[1641] Gaimar, Ll. 4479-81.

Theories drawn from the discipline of social psychology are a useful weapon in the armoury of the historian. Whilst these theories should not replace the diligent search for political, social and economic factors that provide rational explanations for past events they can add new dimensions to our understanding. For so long as historians concentrate almost exclusively on events and organisations we can provide only a partial picture of reality in which the human side of the past is shrouded in mystery. The approach presented here allows us to add a human face to the past.

Every individual belonged to many different groups, and each of these are likely to have influenced behaviour. It is important to realise that the composition and aims of these groups may have altered over time. Peer pressure may have meant that a number of rebels in any rebellion may have wished to remain loyal but were pressurised into rebellion by their associates. This helps explain the regional differences so often observed in rebellions as it shows that people are likely to follow the lead of their neighbours through social pressure as well as fear of the military and political consequences of standing out from the group.

Vernacular literature is useful to the historian primarily because it details aspects of life not covered by other sources. It reveals codes of behaviour, the meaning of words and the importance of groups such as family, followers and friends. In particular it has the advantage of detailing informal structures and influences. But there are problems. These stem from the fact that the writer wished to entertain rather than give a factual portrait. An author, for example, might make things up, exaggerate, or sacrifice accuracy for the sake of style and literary effect. Yet these problems can be overcome, and the struggle has its rewards.

The Church has been largely absent from our analysis. Yet the Church was powerful not only because ecclesiastics and monks were major landholders but also because they could assert moral authority and, at times, sway hearts and minds. In a larger project a study of the impact on loyalty of excommunication and interdict, such as occurred in the reign of John, would be worthwhile.

When reading medieval sources it is important to realise that words meant different things to different people. This is particularly true when one compares the use of the same word across wide areas of time or space. If one fails to take account of this then there is a danger of forming a composite and inaccurate view of the Middle Ages. Also, one should not forget that the same word could sometimes be used by the same author to mean different things. This was particularly common if a word could have both a general and specific meaning, as in the case of *fidelitas*. Only at the end of the medieval period did words begin to attain sharper definitions, largely through the work of academic lawyers and the growth of scholastic learning. For the historian, the job of translation is made more difficult by the

existence of near-synonyms. Much of the problem, however, may rest on the common belief that words had specific meanings rather than general ones. For this reason this thesis has tended to give translations that imply general meanings rather than have specific, formal definitions. Yet behind the different shades of meaning a general idea is present in many of the terms used.

Words often seem to have been used in two contexts, a formal and informal one. This is true for *amor, amicitia,* and *fidelitas.* Both *amor* and *amicitia* could describe both a general state of friendship between two people or be used in a technical sense to refer to a formal political alliance. By describing an agreement as one of 'love' or 'friendship' the scribe seems to have been attempting to put a superficial gloss over the political reality that led to the treaty being drafted. *Fidelitas* seems to have had both a general and a specific meaning. In its general form *fidelitas* meant simply 'good faith' or 'faithfulness' but in its technical sense it meant something akin to the modern concept of 'fealty', namely a formal oath to give support to another, a contract that was legally binding. In Old French *felte* describes only a formal oath whereas *fei* seems to have been used in both a general and specific manner. It is important to try to distinguish between the general and specific meanings. Often this is possible through the context in which the word occurs, but where one is unable to assess whether the writer meant a formal or informal rendering, it is perhaps safer to take the general meaning.

Nevertheless, it is clear that there were underlying ideas behind the use of words. There was an idea of the obligations placed on lord and man, even if one should not subscribe to the model given to us by Fulbert of Chartres. This involved a right to legitimate rebellion if the lord failed to give his man his due, as argued by William of Malmesbury for Robert earl of Gloucester and by Jordan Fantosme for King William of Scotland.

The twelfth century witnessed several conceptual developments in the field of formal ties. Each of these developments will be discussed in turn before turning to the wider problem of why these developments took place. They can be summarised in the table below:

Modern English	FAITH	FEALTY	AGREEMENT	DEFIANCE
Latin Charters	*Fidem*	?	*Conventio / Finalis Pact / Confederatio Amoris*	*Diffidare / Diffidatio*
Latin Chronicles	*Fidem*	?	*Foedus, Pactio* etcetera	*Diffidare / Diffidatio*
Old French	*Fei / Feid*	*Felte*	*Cuvenant*	*Defi / Desfi*
Earlier Usage	Yes	No?	Yes (but not *conventio*)	Yes
Early Twelfth (1100-1135)	Yes	No?	Yes (as property conveyance)	No?
Mid Twelfth (1135-55)	Yes	Yes (Gaimar)	Yes	Yes (Malmesbury)
Late Twelfth (1155-1200)	Yes	No?	Yes (but not *conventio*)	Yes (Fantosme)
Later Usage	Yes	No?	Yes	Yes

DEVELOPMENT OF TERMINOLOGY

IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY

The idea of 'faith' seems to have maintained its usage throughout the period. It had a wide variety of meanings, some specific, some general. It could mean 'trust', the relationship between man and God, and something similar to the modern concept of fealty.

By contrast, the word 'fealty' seems to have had a highly specific meaning and in the French souces I have used it occurs only in Gaimar. But since the word probably derives from the Latin *fidelitas*, it could have been in use at an earlier time. Gaimar uses *felte* to refer to a specific type of political relationship, the oath connected with this relationship, and the ceremony that created this relationship. It also occurs only in the context of kingship. Whereas 'faith' had several shades of meaning, varying from the very general to the highly specific, 'fealty' had only a specific meaning. This distinction may be reflected in the survival of the word in later legal texts, and through these to the modern usage of 'fealty' in English.

Words for 'agreement' also seem to have undergone development at this time. This is seen in both charters and narrative sources. Charters from the early twelfth century use *conventio* to describe certain property conveyances. From the 1130s onwards, however, the term was extended to include a new type of political agreement. Although definitions are hard, one could say that a *conventio* is an agreement, oral or written, that does not assume or make use of any external power that might enforce the terms of the agreement except that which is given in the terms of the agreement itself. Put more simply, a *conventio* does not refer to an effective higher political authority.[1642] In this regard *conventiones* may be equated with modern international law in that they are 'law' not because they are enforceable but because they are accepted by the community.[1643] A *conventio* would be considered as 'law' by contemporaries because it took the form of oaths exchanged before witnesses. A willingness to keep to the terms of a *conventio* could come through moral authority or fear of retaliation (military or otherwise) by the other party or by the community at large; again, this is paralleled in modern international law.[1644] This definition is useful as it includes both the original use of the term (as a property conveyance) and the use of the term in the mid-twelfth century as a more general, political agreement. This means that in the field of power-politics, *conventio* may be a 'new word' to describe a new type of political relationship.

Latin chronicles from the period reveal similar agreements, but do not use the word *conventio*. Instead, they use traditional terms such as *pactio* and *foedus*. This may reflect a desire on the part of chroniclers to assimilate their style to that of the writers of Classical Rome. Whereas charters served a practical purpose and attempted to describe reality, the writers of Latin chronicles would have been interested in style and expression (seen as the classical tradition), and may therefore have not wanted to use a new term. Writers using Old French, by contrast, seem not to have been bound by such considerations - they were using an oral, vernacular tradition rather than a written, Latin one - and use the term *cuvenant* to describe this type of agreement.

The concept of defiance became more widespread at this time. Although William of Malmesbury cannot be credited with first using the term he may have played a major role in making its use more widespread for within a few decades of his work we find the term used in both Latin and French sources. Malmesbury believed that Robert's 'defiance' was excused as

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[1642] Some do refer to God and the Church.

[1643] The existence of a means of enforcing a law is not a necessary quality of law. 'Enforcement may be irrelevant to the binding quality of international law... [something] is "law", not because it will be enforced, but because it is generally accepted or tolerated by the community.... The fact of enforcement may be a reason why individuals obey the law, but it is not the reason why it is actually law. In international law, then, the fact that rules come into being in the manner accepted and recognised by states as authoritative is enough to ensure that they are "law".': Martin Dixon, *Textbook on International Law*, 2nd edn. (London, 1993) p. 5.

[1644] Modern international law has, in addition to these constraints, the possibility of action by the Security Council and the International Court of Justice of the United Nations. See Dixon, pp. 5-8.

Stephen had usurped the throne and broken his faith to Robert; because by doing homage to Stephen, having already offered homage to his sister during his father's lifetime, Robert had himself broken a formal pledge; and because the pope had ordered him to keep his oath to his sister. To Fantosme, on the other hand, rebellion was justified if a lord refused to return one's due inheritance. Although such arguments do not add up to a 'law of defiance' it does suggest that there were certain notions about when rebellion was justified.

Taken together, these developments show a strong interest in the way political relationships were organised, defined and expressed. How are we to account for this? As the developments are not restricted to any particular time or place we cannot say that the debate was the product of a single, great thinker. Rather, it seems to have emerged from general political and cultural conditions.

The developments seem to occur during periods of political uncertainty, particularly Stephen's reign when the Anglo-Norman world was in turmoil. Such political confusion probably gave rise to debates on the duties of followers and the limits of service. Stephen's reign not only saw usage of the word *felte* (Gaimar wrote c. 1135) but also the development of the *conventio* from a property conveyance into a more general political agreement and the re-emergence of defiance as a word and concept. But Stephen's reign was not the only period of political insecurity found in the Early and High Middle Ages. To explain why the development occurred at this time we must look for other factors.

The twelfth century saw a great increase in the use of the written word. This is seen in the huge increase of written material and in the creation of new types of written material.[1645] This would have created not only an interest in the use of language[1646] but also accelerated the exchange of ideas. And it should be noted that many of the major aristocrats who used agreements were engaged in literary production as patrons.[1647]

In addition, the twelfth century witnessed a change in the nature of academic discourse. The new scholastic learning, spurred on by the recently acquired texts of Aristotle,

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[1645] On this see in particular Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record England 1066-1307* (London, 1979) pp. 1-3, 34-35. Duby has also commented on the increased use of literacy: Duby, 'The Renaissance of the twelfth Century', pp. 155-58, 164. For secretarial pratices before 1066 compare Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1943) pp. 546-47 with R. Allen Brown, 'Some observations on Norman and Anglo-orman charters', pp 147-55; for a milder view, David Bates, *Normandy Before 1066* (London, 1982) p. 154. However, although a royal chancery emerged in the twelfth century it is not clear whether this development was repeated by the aristocracy: *Gloucester*, pp. 16-21; *Mowbray*, pp. lxvii-lxx; Webber, pp. 138-47.

[1646] Hudson, in discussing land, has suggested that the 'increasing use of documents may also have encouraged more precise concern with words': Hudson, Milsom's legal structure', p. 63.

[1647] One thinks of Robert of Gloucester, Waleran of Meulan and Brian fitz Count.

sought a greater precision of words. This interest in definition is likely to have contributed to the development of terminology seen in the political documents of this time.[1648]

The development of new terminology to describe political relationships in the twelfth century can therefore be ascribed to three factors. Firstly, there was a background of increased use of written records. This move towards written records was augmented by the new scholasticism that sought a greater precision of definition. The move towards literacy from the late eleventh century would have involved a search for new terms and phrases while the later intellectual developments would have led to an increased precision. Finally, political instability, such as witnessed in Stephen's reign, generated an environment in which precise terms and written agreements met pragmatic needs. Alone, none of these conditions would have given rise to the development, but taken together they provided both the necessary background and the specific cause. It was the existence of political instability within the context of the twelfth century renaissance that allowed the debate to occur and new terms and concepts to evolve.

These changes may also have led to development in the meaning of formal relationships. At the start of the twelfth century ceremonies and oaths created a climate of expected behaviour - to behave, for example, 'as a friend'. These are general patterns of expected behaviour and in principle people were obliged to help in all situations of life. However, by the thirteenth century, and probably by the end of the twelfth, contracts placed specific obligations on each party.[1649] Instead of having a general expectation of behaviour the contracting parties now had specific duties they had to fulfil. This is a major change, a movement away from generalities towards specifics. It is seen in the surviving agreements of Stephen's reign which specify the amount of service due and the context in which this would occur. This change could not have taken place without a growth in the use of the written word and a new concern for definition in language. The early appearance of these changes in England may therefore be due to the early and widespread adoption of the written word in royal and aristocratic government. However, it should not be forgotten that from 1066, if not before, land was given in exchange for specific quantities of military service.

Other political concepts were also present in the twelfth century, such as a 'hierarchy of lordship'. Here one should realise that a hierarchy of lordship does not necessarily involve a 'hierarchy of tenure' - still less a 'feudal system' - as lordship (the acceptance of homage and promises of faith) did not necessarily involve territorial grants. Such a hierarchy of

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[1648] I owe this argument to Klaus van Eickels. Duby has argued that in this period there was only one audience: 'The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century', p. 161.

[1649] Althoff, pp. 117-118; he cites as an example the formal and specific relationship between Frederick I Barbarossa and the Zahringen, duke Berthold IV. I have also benefited here from discussions with Klaus van Eickels.

lordship is reflected in both the Meulan-Neubourg *conventio* and the final *conventio* of the earls of Chester and Leicester. In both these *conventiones* it is agreed that the principal loyalty of the contractors is owed to a higher authority, either the *ligius dominus* or the *domini Normannie*. Similar ideas are also found in the charter of Matilda to William de Beauchamp, though here it is the *homo* who seems to be able to determine the nature of the agreement. This concept of a hierarchy of lordship need not have been based on a hierarchy of tenure.

How does this view compare with other interpretations of medieval social and political structures? Compared with the models put forward by Bloch and Ganshof it is clear that the image presented here is much less certain. It seems that we cannot talk of 'systems' as such definition is simply not reflected in the sources. There seems to be no clear picture of the respective duties of lord or man, though clearly there were ideas of 'good lordship' as well as notions of a 'hierarchy of lordship'. The extent to which any moral value or type of inter-personal arrangement was prevalent in twelfth-century society is also unclear. There is also doubt over the precise meaning of words, and because of this the historian's vision is blurred. But there do seem to have been underlying ideas as to what words meant. The view is also obstructed because the sources are fragmentary and derive largely from a single social group. In short, the picture of medieval society presented here is slightly fuzzy; but a reliable if indistinct picture is better than a definite but inaccurate one, and in time historians will hopefully improve on the image.

We have seen how words and concepts evolved over time but have not yet provided models of social organisation or their political dynamics.

One can examine the importance and nature of emotions in the twelfth century, mainly through vernacular literature. People seem to have experienced emotions similar to our own. It therefore seems likely that their behaviour was also influenced by their emotions, just as ours is today.

The family unit consisted of parents and their offspring. Beyond this immediate group only uncles and nephews had any regular political influence. Males held more power than females. The concept of the family also served as a model for other types of relationship. In particular we should note that close friends are termed 'brothers' and helpful superiors 'fathers'. Familial ties must have been important in determining how people behaved but despite the work of Duby and the urging of Holt not enough work has been done in this field for twelfth-century England. Although evidence such as inheritance patterns and descriptions of lineage can provide us with a view of contemporary attitudes to the family it provides little reliable evidence of affection or loyalty among family members. This is because such evidence deals with the relationship between the living and the dead; that someone remembers

their dead parents with affection does not mean that they necessarily stood by each other when alive. Nevertheless, such evidence as there is suggests that the family in the High Middle Ages had similarities in structure to that of our own day. Brothers could co-operated and sons sometimes adopted the policies of their fathers, but there is also evidence of tension and hostility within the family unit. This is clearly seen in the relationship between Henry II and his wife and sons, but the extent to which the royal family was typical is open to doubt.[1650] The family could also be used as the basis of political groups. This could lead to an area being dominated by a single family that recruited members from other families.[1651] In English historiography such groups are called affinities.

Several types of follower existed. The three major groups, defined by conditions of service, are: household retainers, enfeoffed knights and 'neighbours'. Although in this thesis the term 'followers' has been used to describe these people, as a group they could be called 'clientele'.[1652] Such a term implies recruitment through a variety of means, including blood, friendship and fidelity. This accurately describes the situation in twelfth-century England. Moreover, 'clientele' may be more useful than 'affinity' as 'affinity' originally meant 'connected by blood', and historians do not want this implication.

Household knights were perceived as being more loyal than enfeoffed ones. This seems to have been because, in general, they had closer emotional ties to their lord and because their service was not compromised by concern for their own territories.

Concepts such as 'vassal', 'fealty' and 'homage' occur only infrequently and it is possible that several types of loyalty oath were used. Care must also be taken in using words such as 'vassal'. Whereas historians tend to use 'vassal' to mean 'someone who has sworn fealty' contemporaries used it to mean 'good and loyal follower' or as a term of abuse. When they wish to refer to someone bound by homage contemporaries used 'man' instead. Historians would be wise to follow the practice of contemporaries as 'man' has fewer connotations than 'vassal'.

While there is a substantial body of evidence that vows of faith were common there is still doubt as to the nature and importance of these oaths. Land offered in exchange for oaths of *fidelitas* produced formal relationships between lord and man. Such arrangements were the basis of magnate power. Evidence exists of strong ties of affection among tenants to baronial houses and there are cases of one family holding land from another over several generations.

[1650] Families could fragment through insults, assassinations, affronts and petty jealousies, such as occured in medieval Italy: Heers, p. 106.

[1651] This happened in Italy where simple conflicts between two families developed into vendettas by political faction because each family had recruited a substantial following: Heers, p. 101.

[1652] As for example in Heers, pp. 101, 108, 113-14.

But while there is temptation to conclude that continuity of tenure is evidence of continual loyalty it should be remembered that the two are not the same. A tenant might retain his possessions despite being disloyal if his lord was unable or unwilling to confiscate his land either because the tenant was powerful or because he had powerful allies. Affection could also be bought and obedience enforced. Nevertheless, it seems fair to conclude that the foundation of magnate power were tenants - the honorial baronage.

Ideas of justified rebellion came to assume great importance during the civil war of Stephen's reign. Such thoughts were expressed not only by William of Malmesbury but also in the third *conventio* of the earls of Chester and Leicester. Later, similar ideas re-emerged in the writings of Jordan Fantosme. Although the evidence does not add up to a legal formulation on 'defiance' it does show that contemporaries were interested in the moral problems posed by rebellion. The idea that rebellion could be justified would have reduced the psychological pressure to obey authority. This, when added to the argument that medieval rulers held the psychological resources of authority only in a reduced form, helps explain the frequency of rebellion in the Middle Ages. In this way concepts of legitimacy and ideology had real force and helped shape the power and political standing of medieval rulers.

Household knights and tenants would have had direct and formal links with the lord. Beyond these people was a larger and less defined group who tended to obey the will of the lord. Historians have labelled such groups 'affinities' but contemporaries called them 'neighbours'. These people may have had formal links with the lord but their loyalty was held through a combination of fear and love. The number of people within each affinity depended on the lord's power (economic, territorial, military, judicial and political) and his charisma.

Medieval lord-follower relationships have parallels with other organisations[1653] and the idea of relationships having duties to and from each party is not peculiar to the medieval world.[1654] However, it may be that the European and Japanese traditions, compared to other cultures, place greater emphasis on personal loyalty to a warrior lord.[1655]

[1653] Pre-modern Japan saw the lord-follower bond as one of five fundamental relationships. Medieval Russia saw a combination of personal relationships and landholding. The Mamluks of medieval Egypt promoted loyalty and comradeship between freed slaves and their former masters. Persia showed similarities throughout Parthian, Sassanid and Arabic times. Nazi Germany organised the state around leader-follower relationships and stressed personal honour and loyalty. The Rajputana area of India in the early nineteenth century saw land grants, military liability, relief, wardship, escheat, forfeiture and aids. In contrast the public sovereignty of classical Rome made no contract with its citizens and saw disobedience as treason, and in pre-modern Turkey the ruler was absolute. However, the patron-client relationship was commonplace in the Roman world. For these comparisons see Critchley, *Feudalism*, pp. 35-51, 102, 111-12.

[1654] Using the idea of binary opposites one can easily construct binding relationships today in which each party have duties and rights: Student-Teacher, Leader-Follower; Husband-Wife; Employer-Employee.

[1655] Critchley, *Feudalism*, p. 42.

Friendship emerges as a major force in twelfth-century society. Five types of friendship can be identified: friendship as courtesy; political friendship; emotional friendship; company; and companionship. Although 'friend' was a very general word 'companion' had a much more precise meaning. Companionship referred to friendships, usually between two people, of long duration with a strong emotional attachment but that was initiated in a formal manner. Companionship can be seen in the real world of the twelfth century.

Emotional friendship can be analysed through a new methodology. For although our sources say little about 'friendship' itself they reveal many of the factors that determine friendship: physical attractiveness, proximity, familiarity and similarity. Both written and non-written sources inform us about physical attractiveness. In many instances charter witness lists allow us to assess proximity and familiarity. The study of non-political behaviour may reveal sufficient information to talk about similarities in a few cases. Physical geography may also have influenced the structure and extent of networks and dynamics. An investigation into friendship is rewarding in itself but also for the greater undestanding of socio-political dynamics it affords and for the additional light it sheds on the functioning of medieval armies.

The importance of friendship and charisma is difficult to evaluate with any confidence. While there is an abundance of evidence showing that individuals had contact with others - every charter witness list does this - assigning 'friendship' to these associations is highly questionable. However, where we have independent corroborating evidence, as with the followers of the Young King, it seems fair to conclude that there were strong mutual affections within the company. But where such evidence is lacking one can only guess at the forces that drew the group together.

Other categories of friendship may have also existed. We are told, for instance, that when Richard I met William Marshal the king welcomed him more warmly than any other 'however much a friend [amiz] or intimate [privez] he was.'[1656] This phrase suggest that there may have been a further catagory of follower-friends who were termed 'intimates'.

Friends were emotionally as important as family members. When Ganelon leaves for Spain and believes he will not return he asks people to send word to the people dear to him:

'Offer greetings to my wife on my behalf
And to Pinabel, my friend [ami] and my peer [per],
And Baldwin, whom you know to be my son'.[1657]

[1656] HGM, L. 10085 (L. 10086 of translation).
[1657] Chanson de Roland Ll. 361-63.

Of the three people Ganelon thought to mention one was a friend, the others close relatives.

These types of social group fulfilled many of the same functions. This is shown in the following table.

		Family	Follower	Superior	Friend
Aid	Military Aid	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Stand as legal Surety	Yes			Yes
Counsel	Offer Advice	Yes	Yes		Yes
	Command			Yes	
Dispute Settlement	Duty of Peace-making			Yes	
	Act as Messenger	Yes	Yes		
	Act as Intermediary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Functions of Socio-Political Relationships

Each relationship brought with it a set of expectations on both sides of the relationship. Whilst it is tempting to see this as evidence of reciprocity being particularly marked,[1658] we should remember that the same is still true today. Relatives still feel certain obligations to one another, employers and employees have duties that are usually specified, and people expect certain behaviour from friends. There is nothing peculiarly medieval about the concept of reciprocity or of service for reward.

Each socio-political group fulfilled its own function yet several groups fulfilled the same function. All the groups - relatives, followers, superiors and friends - sought to aid each other. This is seen in the way Gaimar shows Ælfthryth's household, major tenants and relatives coming to court with her when the king appeared to be denying her her inheritance.[1659] In addition, relatives, followers and friends gave advice. Relatives and friends could also stand as surety during legal proceedings. And relatives and followers could serve as messengers. Followers were also supposed to answer summons and serve their superior. In return a superior was expected to reward followers and resolve conflicts. Because each

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[1658] For example, Althoff claims for the early middle ages 'the imagination is completely marked by the principl eof giving and receiving': p. 117.

[1659] Gaimar, Ll. 3837 (meisne), 3875 (barons), 3880-81 (those having a fieu from her and her father), 3882 (parenz).

group's members were supposed to help in times of trouble it meant that people would usually want to belong to several groups. Networks were thus created and exploited.[1660] Nor should we forget that people could be bound to another by more than one bond.[1661] Thus relatives might hold land from one another and enter into alliances of political friendship. In situations such as this the multiple connections would have reinforced each other and resulted in a stronger attachment.

The dynamics of these groups can be seen in the fields of decision making and conflict resolution. *All* important decisions were taken in a group environment. This may have had important repercussions as group decisions tend to be more extreme than those of individuals. However, power seems to have been centred on small groups of perhaps four individuals. These subgroups seem to have considered alternatives and organised policy before presenting their decisions to the larger group. In such a system eloquence would have been important. However, although sometimes a lord might take a leading part in the discussions at other times he sat back and listened. Courts may have contained flatterers who would not tell the truth if a lord advocated something stupid and in some instances this may have led to groupthink - the adoption of a policy no one really wanted. Peer pressure would also have played a role. In addition emotions such as anxiety, happiness and anger are likely to have influenced the ability of decision-makers to think rationally as well as their ability to assess risk. Through cautiously infering how some people felt at certain times, we can come to a better understanding of how some of the poor decisions in the past were reached.

It is often difficult to determine which socio-political relationship influenced a political decision. Often several ties will have been combined. Althoff has claimed for the early and central Middle Ages that although there is no common rule as to which type of relationship was paramount in influencing political behaviour the family appears to have been the strongest.[1662] However, vernacular sources of the twelfth century suggest that the group most commonly consulted for policy decisions was that of followers. This would have meant followers would have had considerable influence. If both this and Althoff's analysis is correct it means that there was a change in the relative power of social groups around 1100 away from the family and towards that of followers. This would be a major change.

Similar processes are likely to have occurred during negotiations to settle a dispute. Here messengers were used, sometimes under safe conduct, to arrange the location and time of face-to-face meetings or to negotiate a broad agreement that could be built upon later. These agreements were called covenants or treaties of friendship. Although originally mainly oral in

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[1660] This was the same on the continent in the early Middle Ages: Althoff, pp. 8-9, 217.
[1661] For this in the ninth century see this see Althoff, pp. 164-65.
[1662] Althoff, p. 215.

nature, they became increasingly written as the twelfth century progressed. Several methods were used to try to ensure they were kept. These included swearing oaths, granting land and exchanging hostages, but the most successful seems to have been inter-marriage. The many recorded attempts to resolve conflicts says much about the mentality of the aristocracy: although often in conflict, they also knew the value of peace. That some of their attempts to organise settlements failed probably has less to do with their 'bellicose nature' than with the difficulties inherent in the problem of peace-making.

What can we conclude about the nature of lordship in this period? The foundations of magnate power were close relatives and, as Stenton suggested, the honorial baronage.[1663] Whether or not one agrees with the term, these followers were bound to their lord not only by homage and oaths of faithfulness but also by grants of land. A fief bound the tenant to his lord not only through the collective identity that must have existed in such a community but also by a fear of forfeiture and the denial of patronage. Ties of tenure, faithfulness and homage also gave the relationship a formal structure. Such methods of lordship would mean that a magnate could more or less control what a tenant did in the wider political world. An aristocrat of lesser standing, however, may have been unable to control the actions of tenants, particularly if another lord was dominant in that region.

But although ties of tenure and blood may have formed the foundation of an aristocrat's strength they were not the totality of his power. Household retainers would have augmented this power and militarily they superseded it. In addition to these groups a wider affinity existed of people bound to the lord through informal as well as formal ties. Some of these people may have been tied to the dominant aristocrat through oaths of loyalty but others may simply have realised that it was 'in their best interest' to co-operate with him. In such a world love and fear would have been more important determinants of loyalty than formal structures such as oaths, homage and grants of land. This has led Crouch to say that 'the most significant form of political organisation in England in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries had little to do with honor, counties and fees. It was a form of power focused on a discrete region and a dominant personality who sought to control it.'[1664]

Several factors determined the loyalty of individuals. Chief among these was fear. The territory held by a magnate brought with it a proportional amount of power which could be used to control his tenants and influence his neighbours. This state of affairs is revealed most clearly in the agreements of 1135-1155. Here the absence of effective royal authority in regions such as Cheshire, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Leicestershire allowed magnates to exercise territorial lordships and extend their influence through means both fair and foul.

[1663] Stenton, *First Century*, particularly ch. 3.

But while the use of force was largely restricted to periods of civil war more subtle persuasions were not. A magnate could induce fear not only through the threat of military action but also by the denial of patronage, through the subversion of law courts, and by petition to the king. Such abilities allowed a magnate not only to control his immediate locality but also to influence the surrounding area.

However, the extent to which this pattern was repeated below the level of the magnate is unclear. The covenants, from which much of our evidence is derived, come from the most powerful men in the kingdom: they do not reveal power structures headed by men below this level. But this lack of evidence does not necessarily mean that lesser men were unable to employ similar methods of lordship on a smaller scale.

Informal ties of love and fear were stronger than the formal ones of homage and fealty. Love could be bought through rewards as well earned through leadership, personality and charisma. Fear could be induced through the threat of physical violence against persons and property as well as the denial of patronage and the manipulation of law courts. The over-riding strength of these informal ties is seen in the way followers were not always loyal to those to whom they had pledged support. These informal ties of love and fear can be summarised by the word 'respect', for respect implies both love and fear. For a follower to be loyal he must have respect for his lord. To claim that in the Middle Ages informal ties were more powerful than formal ones is not to deride this period as a time of lawlessness for corruption, bribery and bullying have been common to many times and most places.

Beyond love and fear medieval rulers had an array of methods for increasing the chances of obedience and peace. Weber lists eleven methods open to medieval rulers and almost all of these can be seen to have been used by the kings of England in the twelfth century.[1665]

Two final distinctions of terminology are useful in describing the structure of magnate power. There are important differences regarding power between the words 'control' and 'influence' and in terms of scale between the words 'local' and 'regional'. To say that one has 'control' over another implies a direct and absolute method of determining the

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[1664] Crouch, 'Stenton to McFarlane', p. 194.

[1665] These are: following an itinerary to ensure a personal presence; using hostages; a duty to attend court regularly; a duty for the sons to attend court; appointing relatives to high office; brief tenures of office; excluding officials from districts where they had territorial power (this is opposite to the usual practice of the twelfth century); using celibates as officials (the clergy were regularly used for administrative posts); systematic surveilance of officials (kings such as Henry II seem to have had a good network of people to gather information); creating a competing official in the same district (as Henry I used Geoffrey de Clinton to limit the power and freedom of Roger earl of Warwick: see D. B. Crouch 'Geoffrey de Clinton and Roger, earl of Warwick: New Men and Magnates in the reign of Henry I', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research 55 (1982) 113-24); and using officials from outside the top strata of power (such as Henry I's employment of 'new men'). For this list see Weber, Economy and Society, vol. 3, pp. 1042-43.

activities of that individual. 'Influence', by contrast, implies merely a measure of effective authority. Whereas control is more or less absolute, influence is a shadowy quality where the strings are more concealed. Coming to the second distinction, the difference between 'local' and 'regional' is one of geographical extent. Whereas 'local' refers to the immediate area around which one is based, 'regional' is a larger territory, nominally the size of a few counties - 'the North', 'South Wales', 'East Anglia'. These definitions, although hazy, enable us to give greater precision to our description of magnate power.

Whereas a magnate had local control he had regional influence. Close to home, and particularly within his own honor, one would expect that, if he was efficient, a magnate would have had more or less total control over the inhabitants. Further afield his power would decline as his sphere of interest merged with that of other powers. Beyond his immediate locality he would have to compromise and temper his ambitions. Within this more extensive but less clearly defined area would operate his affinity, people under his will but not tied to him by a link of tenure. In striving to achieve his ambitions and extend his influence he might make treaties with other lords that recognised common interests, form alliances, or peacefully conclude disputes.

The loyalty of followers was ensured by a mixture of *amor et timor*, of love and fear. They might follow him through duty, affection, or hope of reward. But they would also follow his lead through fear of the consequences should they not - not only the threat of denied patronage but also the prospect of violence against property or person. In securing the loyalty of lesser men a magnate held a stick as well as a carrot.

Are the conclusions drawn in this thesis about emotion and power relationships applicable to other periods? This is, essentially, the question of whether what we have seen were 'products of their time' or 'universal experiences'. I will not claim that the observations I have made have a universal validity. However, during the course of this thesis comparisons have been drawn between situations in the twelfth and twentieth centuries. If for the twelfth and twentieth centuries the family can be said to be nuclear, if politics and power were and are influenced by informal forces more than formal ones, and if emotional friendship was and is a powerful bond, it does not mean that these conditions have always existed, nor does it mean that they existed throughout the intervening centuries. But it is suggestive. Strong parallels can be drawn between the twelfth century and the twentieth, but I am in no position to claim their universal validity.

This thesis has constructed a model of socio-political dynamics in the twelfth century. As with all models a balance has had to be struck between detail and clarity, and

many of the problems found in this picture of society are found in other models.[1666] Several other models are certainly available.[1667] To begin with there are models of specific parts of the culture, such as the legal framework[1668] and the community.[1669] Other models have sought to describe the entire political structure and its dynamics. The concept of feudalism and the 'feudal pyramid' is a model of socio-political organisation that sees the fief (tenure on the condition of military service) as the dominating and defining factor.[1670] Stenton created an alternative (but similar) model based on the solidarity of the honorial baronage.[1671] More recently, the concept of 'bastard feudalism' has been pushed as a model of twelfth-century political dynamics.[1672] All these models have their advantages.[1673] Nor should it be forgotten that if a model does not harmonise with all the evidence it may still describe the dominant dynamics within that society.[1674] But there are problems with all of these models.

[1666] For example, the use of binary oppositions (that is, terms defined by their oppositional relationship to one another) is common to many models for they provide a clear picture (but at the expense of accuracy): see Hudson, 'Milsom's legal structure' pp. 59-60. In this thesis binary oppositions are seen in the analysis of, for example, defiance and treason, service and reward, followers and superiors and love and fear. But there are also tripartite divisions, such as family, followers and friends and the three types of follower (household, enfeoffed and neighbour). In comparison with binary oppositions, tripartite models tend to sacrifice some clarity for greater accuracy. Hudson's comparison of Milsom's *The Legal Framework of English Feudalism* to Levi-Strauss's *Structural Anthropology* is instructive on the pitfalls of model building. He noted that both are difficult to comprehend, both use 'argument by fit' (that is, reconstructing the whole from a fragment by presenting lots of data), both rely on assertion to provide a framework of the picture, both aim to study underlying structures behind the actor's own perceptions and statements, and both emphasise the importance of noting what people do not think: see Hudson, 'Milsom's legal structure', p. 59 n. 57. The reader must judge how similar this thesis is to these works.

[1667] These are described and discussed in more detail by Crouch, 'From Stenton to McFarlane', pp. 179-200.

[1668] For example, Pollock and Maitland, *The History of English Law*, Milsom, *The Legal Framework of English Feudalism*; and most recently Hudson, *Land, Law and Lordship*.

[1669] See in particular Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community in Medieval England'; Heers, *Parties and Political Life in the Medieval West*; Holt, *The Northerners*.

[1670] It has already been said that the idea of a 'pyramid' structure is first recorded in Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond*, p. 170. This was a development of the earlier notion of a hierarchy of social groups expressed, for example, in H. W. C. Davis, *England Under the Normans and Angevins, 1066-1272* (London, 1905) p. 186; and R. Allen Brown, *The Normans and The Norman Conquest* (London, 1969) pp. 5, 23.

[1671] Stenton, *First Century*, particularly ch. 3. This model was still being pushed in the 1980s, for example Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, particularly pp. 107-32, 38, although the model is questioned pp. 115-31. Other studies have also questioned this model, noting in particular that tenants often had other holdings: R. Mortimer, 'Land and Service: the Tenants of the Honour of Clare', *ANS* 8 (1986) 177-97; Holt, *The Northerners*, pp. 36-37, 55-60; H. M. Thomas, *Vassals, Heiresses, Crusaders and Thugs: The Gentry of Angevin Yorkshire, 1154-1216* (Philadelphia, 1993) pp. 19-32. For further criticism of the model see the chapter on Enfeoffed Followers.

[1672] K. B. McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays*, ed. G. L. Harriss (London, 1981) 23-44; S. L. Waugh, 'From tenure to contract: lordship and clientage in thirteenth century England', *EHR* 101 (1986) 811-39.; Crouch, 'A Norman *conventio* and bonds of lordship in the Middle Ages', pp 299-324; Crouch, 'Debate: bastard feudalism revised: comment', pp. 165-77; Crouch, 'From Stenton to McFarlane' pp. 193-97: Crouch, 'The myth of feudalism'; Crouch, *William Marshal*, ch. 5-6; Carpenter 'Debate: bastard feudalism revised: comment', pp. 177-89; Coss, 'Bastard feudalism revised' pp. 27-64; Coss, 'Debate: bastard feudalism revised: reply', pp. 190-203. This model would include that of Heers for Italy from the twelfth to the fifteenth century as Heers' model stresses how the aristocracy, at once mercantile and warrior, was organised around prominent families with their clienteles competing and conflicting with each other: Heers, *Parties and Political Life in the Medieval West*, p. 243.

[1673] The same conclusion was reached by Crouch, who added that only the model of local lordship and local community was satisfactory: Crouch, 'Stenton to McFarlane', p. 197.

[1674] Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community', p. 357.

Earlier models have failed to take into account several factors that contributed to political behaviour. Chief among these is the importance of informal influences. This thesis has demonstrated that informal ingredients such as love and fear were more powerful than formal structures created through homage and oaths. Earlier models also fail to take into account the importance of situational forces on decision makers and the role and strength of emotional ties.

Political behaviour was influenced by three distinct social groups. These were: the family, followers and friends. The aristocratic family of the twelfth century seems to have comprised parents and their children. Within this small group emotional bonds were very strong. Beyond this inner-circle affection quickly declined yet uncles and nephews maintained political influence. Three types of follower can be identified through examining methods of recruitment: household retainers, enfeoffed tenants and 'neighbours'. Of these, household knights were generally the most loyal and had the strongest emotional attachment to the lord. Friendship appeared in five guises. The word could be used as a courtesy or to describe either formal or emotional relationships. In addition, a group could be called a 'company' while 'companionship' describes a particularly close relationship between two people that combined formal and emotional elements. All these groups can be seen in both the literature and the real world of the twelfth century. Every individual would have belonged to several of these groups and each group would have influenced his or her behaviour. An individual's actions would have been influenced by all these social groups and through the pragmatic calculation of self-interest. It was the combination of these that determined political behaviour.

APPENDIX 1:
PRINCELY AGREEMENTS, 1135-55

Below is a list of princely covenants entered into during the civil war between King Stephen and the Angevins. It is arranged in approximation to chronological order. Unless stated in brackets Angevin agreements were made by Matilda until 1149 and by Henry fitz Empress afterwards.

In this and the subsequent appendix secondary literature identifying the covenant has not been given.[1675] The agreements marked '?' cannot be identified with certainty but are likely to have occurred. Those marked by '??' were never ratified.

No	Date	Stephen	Angevin	Source
1	1135	London		*G. S.*, ch. 2, p. 7[1676]
2	1135x1136	General / Church 1		Stubbs, p.142[1677]
3	1136	Miles of Gloucester		*Regesta* 3, no. 386[1678]
4	1136	Miles of Gloucester		*Regesta* 3, no. 387
5	1136	David of Scotland 1		R of H, pp. 145-6[1679]
6	1136	Robert of Gloucester		*GS*, p. 14 *HN*, p. 23[1680]
?7	1136	Welsh		*GS*, pp. 14-16[1681]
?8	1136	Barons		*GS*, p. 22[1682]
?9	1136	'New men'		*GS*, p. 25[1683]

[1675] They are discussed at greater length in the appendices of my earlier MA: Meddings, 'Loyalty and War in Twelfth-Century England'.

[1676] Although there is clear evidence that the Londoners are acting as a sworn association, whether they were recognised as such is debateable.

[1677] This seems to be a 'preliminary grant', the main one being no. 10, because it covers similar issues.

[1678] This should be seen in conjunction with no. 4. However, the two agreements can be seen as two records of the same agreement.

[1679] This is the First Treaty of Durham.

[1680] The reference in the *Gesta* suggests that Robert may have been granted favourable terms by Stephen, much like Miles of Gloucester was. Both sources show Stephen giving Robert some verbal undertakings prior to Robert's homage.

[1681] These references are particularly vague and may not amount to a *conventio*.

[1682] It is possible that this vague reference implies Stephen made agreements with other aristocrats at the start of his reign.

[1683] *Ibid.*

10	1136	General / Church 2		Stubbs, pp. 143-44[1684]
11	1138		Robert of Gloucester (Geoffrey of Anjou)	Torigni, p. 136; Orderic vi, pp. 514-16
?12	1138	Castle Cary		GS, p. 69[1685]
?13	By 1139	Unknown		GS, p. 91[1686]
14	1139	Matilda	Stephen	GS, p. 91[1687]
15	1139	David of Scotland 2		R of H, pp. 176-78; J of H, p. 300[1688]
?16	1139x1140 /1143	Geoffrey de Mandeville 1		Regesta 3, no. 273[1689]
17	1140x1141	Ranulf of Chester		GS, p. 111; HN, p. 46; Lib El, pp. 320-1[1690]
18	1141		Henry bishop of Winchester	GS, p. 119; HN, pp. 50-51, 63[1691]
19	1141		Geoffrey de Mandeville 1	Regesta 3, no. 274
20	1141/1142		Geoffrey de Mandeville 2	Regesta 3, no. 275
21	1141/1142		Aubrey de Vere	Regesta 3, no. 634
22	1141		William de Beauchamp	Regesta 3, no. 68, Round, p. 313
23	1141		Waleran of Meulan (Geoffrey of Anjou)	Orderic, vi, p. 548-49; Torigni, p. 142[1692]
24	1141	London (Queen Matilda)		GS, p. 125
25	1141	Robert of Gloucester		GS, p. 137; HN, pp. 76-70[1693]
26	1141	Geoffrey de Mandeville 2		Regesta 3, no. 276
?27	1143		Henry de Tracy	GS, p. 151[1694]
28	1143x1144	Robert fitz Hildebrand		GS, p. 152[1695]

[1684] This is the 'Oxford Charter of Liberties'.

[1685] The surrender of the garrison may have involved an agreement.

[1686] A vague reference that imply that Stephen held other agreement with aristocrats before the arrival of Matilda in 1139.

[1687] This is the agreement by which Stephen allowed Matilda to travel from Arundel to Bristol. Clearly it was of short duration.

[1688] This is the Second Treaty of Durham.

[1689] Although probably just a grant elevating Geoffrey to the rank of earl it has been included in this list for it provides the context for the later agreements of Geoffrey de Mandeville.

[1690] Although these may refer to nothing more unusual than an oath of *fidelitas* they show a wider agreement. The existence of their 1146 agreement lends credence to this interpretation.

[1691] Although the terms of the *Gesta* are unhappily vague William of Malmesbury is able to provide considerable detail, giving both the extent of Henry's service and the names of three *obsides* to the agreement. It seems that the bishop had negotiated an agreement with the empress comparable to those of Geoffrey de Mandeville and William de Beauchamp. Matilda may here be dealing with henry in his capacity as legate.

[1692] That Torigni is able to give us specific terms - Waleran received the castle of Montis Fortis (Montfort-sur-Risle) - suggests that Waleran had been able to exact a written charter from Geoffrey when he changed sides in the civil war. Orderic calls it a *fedus* whereas Torigni uses *concordia*.

[1693] This is the exchange of King Stephen and Earl Robert: they had both been captured in 1141 and were here released in exchange for each other.

[1694] This change of allegiance may have involved a formal agreement.

29	1145 Faringdon	Unknown		*GS*, pp. 183-85[1696]
30	1146	Ranulf of Chester		*Regesta* 3, no.178; *GS*, p. 185[1697]
31	1146	Philip of Gloucester		*GS*, p. 187
??3 2	1146	Matilda	Stephen	*GS*, p. 187
33	1147	Unknown (Eustace)		*GS*, p. 209
34	1148		Bishop of Salisbury	*Regesta* 3, no. 794
35	By 1149		Ranulf of Chester (David of Scotland)	*GS*, p. 217
36	1149		Bishop of Salisbury	*Regesta* 3, no. 795
37	1152	Unknown		*GS*, pp. 227-29[1698]
38	1152	Roger of Hereford		*GS*, pp. 229-31
39	1153	Henry	Stephen	*GS*, p. 233
40	1153		Jordan of Marlborough	*GS*, p. 233
41	1153		Magnates	*GS*, p. 235[1699]
42	1153		Robert of Derby	*GS*, p. 235
43	1153		Stamford Castle	*GS*, pp. 234-36
44	1153		Ranulf of Chester	*Regesta* 3, no. 180
45	1153		Robert of Leicester	*Regesta* 3, no. 438[1700]
46	1153		Bishop of Salisbury	*Regesta* 3, no. 796
47	1153	Henry	Stephen	*GS*, p. 239
48	1153	Henry	Stephen	*GS*, pp. 238-40; *Regesta* 3, no. 272[1701]
49	1153x1154		Robert of Leicester	*Regesta* 3, no. 439
50	1154x1155		Roger of Hereford	*Rot Chart*, p. 61
51	1155		Morgan ab Owain of Glamorgan	*CCRol*, II, 358-59; *PR2HenryII*, 49

[1695] When William de Pont de l'Arche quarrelled with Henry bishop of Winchester he requested aid from Matilda, and she dispatched Robert fitz Hildebrand. But Robert proceeded to hold William's castle for himself, seduce his wife, reject Matilda and make a *foedus* with the king and Bishop Henry.

[1696] These unknown men include Ranulf of Chester and Philip son of Robert earl of Gloucester (nos. 30-31).

[1697] This may be a revision of no. 17.

[1698] These include Roger earl of Hereford (no. 38).

[1699] These include the earls of Derby and Leicester (nos. 42, 45 and 49).

[1700] Although addressed to the son, this charter should be seen as a grant to Earl Robert as the son was only a child at this date.

[1701] This is the Treaty of Winchester, later ratified at Westminster.

APPENDIX 2:
LAY AGREEMENTS, 1135-55

NO.	DATE	CONTRACTOR 1	CONTRACTOR 2	SOURCE
?1	By 1135	Marchers	Welsh	*GS*, p. 14
2	By 1136	Richard fitz Gilbert de Clare	Unknown Welsh of Ceredigion	*GS*, p. 17
3	1136	Robert earl of Gloucester	Rhys ap Iestyn of West Glamorgan	Morganniae,p. 39[1702]
4	1136	Robert earl of Gloucester	Rhiwallon ap Iestyn of West Glamorgan	*Morganniae*, p. 40
5	1136	Robert earl of Gloucester	Morgan & Iorwerth of Glamorgan	Bristol, f .27v[1703]
?6	1136	Robert earl of Gloucester	Gruffydd ap Ivor Bach of Senghenydd	*Glamorgancia*, vol. 1[1704]
7	Nov. 1137 x Dec. 1138	Roger earl of Warwick	Geoffrey de Clinton	Crouch, appendix 2
?8	1138 after the *diffidatio*	Robert of Gloucester	William fitz John of Harptree castle	*GS*, p. 66
?9	1138 after the *diffidatio*	Robert of Gloucester	Ralph Luvel of Castle Cary	*GS*, p. 66
?10	1139	Robert earl of Gloucester	Henry of Blois bishop of Winchester	*GS*, p. 89; *HN*, p. 35[1705]
11	1140	Reginald son of Henry I	William fitz Richard	*GS*, pp. 100-02
12	1140	Ranulf earl of Chester	Alan earl of Richmond	*GS*, p. 116[1706]
13	25 July 1141 x 24 Dec. 1143	Robert earl of Gloucester	Miles earl of Hereford	Davis, pp. 145-46[1707]

[1702] This and the following *conventio* were made by Richard de Granville for Robert of Gloucester.

[1703] This charter is a grant of land to Rumney church but refers to the earlier grant of 300 acres on the Rumney levels by Robert in exchange for homage. It is translated in D. B. Crouch, 'The slow death of kingship in Glamorgan, 1067-1158', *Morgannwg*, 29 (1985) appendix.

[1704] Cited by Crouch, 'Robert, earl of Gloucester, and the daughter of Zelophehad', p. 230.

[1705] Although the *Gesta* claims that the agreement was only a false rumour the *Historia Novella* includes corroborating evidence: shortly afterwards Empress Matilda was escorted to Bristol by Waleran of Meulan and Henry of Blois. Since it is probable that Waleran was the choice of Stephen Henry was probably the choice of Matilda, implying that she trusted him. See the comment by Davis, *Gesta Stephani*, p. 88 n. 1.

[1706] Alan does homage to Ranulf to procure his freedom: it is an agreement to secure his release but may have shaped future relations. This suggests that the homage was done, not to secure tenure, but to secure Alan's release from captivity.

[1707] Davis, *King Stephen*, p. 141, notes that 'the most remarkable feature of the treaty as a whole is that the conditions which it stipulates are all in the interests of the earl of Hereford' when all that Miles has to do is surrender one hostage. However, although Miles does gain promises of assistance there is no mechanism in the *conventio* to ensure that Robert kept these. By contrast, although Robert gained no promises of help he

14	27 October 1141 x 1145	Ranulf earl of Chester	Robert earl of Gloucester	*Chester*, no. 59, pp. 71-72[1708]
?15	1144 x 1145	Ranulf earl of Chester	Eustace fitz John	*Chester*, no. 73, pp. 85-87[1709]
16	1144 x 1146	Ranulf earl of Chester	Robert Marmion III	*Chester*, no. 74, pp. 87-88[1710]
17	By 1146	Roger de Berkeley	Walter, brother of Roger earl of Hereford	*GS*, p. 190
18	1145 x 1146	Patrick earl of Salisbury	John Marshal	*HGM*, Ll. 368-77[1711]
19	1145 x 1147	Ranulf earl of Chester	Robert earl of Leicester	*Chester*, no. 82, pp. 94-95
?20	By 1152 (probably after 24 Dec. 1143)	Roger earl of Hereford	William de Beauchamp	*GS*, p. 229[1712]
21	1147 x 1148	William earl of Gloucester	Robert earl of Leicester	*Gloucester*, p. 5[1713]
22	31 October 1147 x 9 March 1149	Roger earl of Hereford	Robert earl of Leicester	Referred to in no. 23
23	31 October 1147 x 9 March 1149	William earl of Gloucester	Roger earl of Hereford	Davis, pp. 144-45
24	1148 x 1149	Ranulf earl of Chester	Robert earl of Leicester	*Chester*, no. 89, pp. 102-03 and Stenton, pp. 285-86
?25	By 1149 x 1153	Robert earl of Leicester	Simon de Senlis II earl of Northampton	Simon appears as Robert's ally in no. 27[1714]

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retained a means of ensuring the co-operation of the earl of Hereford - his son - which would have proved most valuable if, as Davis (*King Stephen*, pp. 143-44) suggests, relations between the two remained tense.

[1708] Ranulf had married the daughter of Robert by c. 1135. This confirmation charter settles a dispute over Chipping Campden (Gloucestershire). Davis, *King Stephen*, p. 113, considers this arrangement to be an 'alliance'.

[1709] Eustace is made Ranulf's constable. This is therefore a method of securing Eustace's support that does not involve land tenure.

[1710] In 1144 Ranulf and Robert Marmion II had been at war over the possession of Coventry (resulting in the death of Robert II). This grant therefore appears to be a *conventio* aimed at restoring peaceful relations between the earl and the heir of his fallen enemy. *Chester Charters*, no. 74 also claims to be a grant from Ranulf to Robert but is probably spurious: see Barraclough, *Chester Charters*, pp. 88-89.

[1711] This is discussed in Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 14-16.

[1712] William had a stormy relationship from 1141 with his (?former) lord, Waleran of Meulan, particularly over the possession of the castle and town of Worcester. This conflict is also seen in the charter of Matilda to William de Beauchamp in 1141 (appendix 1, no. 22).

[1713] The marriage of Earl William and Earl Robert's daughter Hawise is dated soon after 1147 by Patterson in *Earldom of Gloucester Charters*, ed. R. B. Patterson (Oxford, 1973). For the territorial exchange connected with this see Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, p. 85.

?26	By 1149 x 1153	Ranulf earl of Chester	Robert de Ferrers earl of Derby	Robert appears as Ranulf's ally in no. 27[1715]
27	1149 x 1153	Ranulf earl of Chester	Robert earl of Leicester	Chester, no. 110, pp. 123-26 and Stenton, pp. 286-88, trans. pp. 250-53
28	5 Sept. 1148 x 1155	Roger earl of Hereford	William de Briouze	Hereford, p. 185
29	By 1154	Robert earl of Leicester	Roger earl of Warwick	*Red Book*, p. 325[1716]
30	Unknown	Simon de Senlis II earl of Northampton	William Mauduit III	Implied by *Beauchamp*, no. 177, pp. 103-04[1717]
?31	By 1153	Robert de Ferrers II earl of Derby	William Peverel of Nottingham	Davis, *KS*, pp. 112-13[1718]
??32	1140	Robert fitz Hubert	John Marshal	*GS*, p. 106[1719]
??33	1153	Ranulf earl of Chester	William Peveril of Nottingham	*GS*, p. 237[1720]

[1714] In addition to the implied relationship in the third Chester-Leicester *conventio* Simon married Robert's daughter and regularly witnessed Robert's charters. Davis, *King Stephen*, p. 113, considers this sufficient evidence to claim there was an alliance between the two earls, but this need not have amounted to a written *conventio*.

[1715] Davis, *King Stephen*, pp. 112-13, argues that this reference shows the two earls were allies but that by 1153 their relationship had deteriorated to such an extent that Robert was in alliance with William Peverel of Nottingham who had just tried to poison Ranulf.

[1716] This source shows that land (3.5 fees each) were exchanged by the two earls during the reign of Stephen, implying a formal written agreement. It should also be remembered that the two earls were first cousins.

[1717] This charter (of c. 1158 x 1174) of Earl Simon III confirms an earlier grant of his father, Simon II, that shows that Simon II married his daughter, Isabel, to William Mauduit. Since this was a marriage of unequals it seems that there must have been an overtly political reason behind the marriage.

[1718] Davis remarks that they were in alliance when William tried to poison Ranulf of Chester but I cannot find evidence to substantiate this claim.

[1719] This 'conventio' was only ever proposed, never ratified. The proposal was that Robert and John would make a pact of peace and friendship, but while the negotiations were being conducted John imprisoned Robert.

[1720] At the meeting referred to here William tried to poison Ranulf. It therefore seems that William had invited Ranulf to his residence under the pretence of discussing a peaceful solution to their quarrel but then went on to attempt to poison his guest.

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