

CREATIVITY, THE TRICKSTER, AND THE CUNNING HARPER KING:

A STUDY OF THE MINSTREL DISGUISE ENTRANCE TRICK

IN KING HORN AND SIR ORFEO

by

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A Dissertation

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DISSERTATION APPROVAL

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Fulfillment of the Requirements

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

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TITLE: CREATIVITY, THE TRICKSTER, AND THE CUNNING HARPER KING:
A STUDY OF THE MINSTREL DISGUISE ENTRANCE TRICK IN KING HORN
AND SIR ORFEO.

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Mark Addison Amos

This study focuses on Stith Thompson's minstrel disguise motif K2357.1

"Disguise as musician to enter enemy's camp," or the minstrel disguise entrance trick, and its use in King Horn and Sir Orfeo. Heroes in this motif use unexpected cunning trickery, posing as minstrels to enter an enemy stronghold peacefully, overcoming a formidable problem.

This study compiles a comprehensive catalogue of twenty-three twelfth through fourteenth century Northern European minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes, undertaking a comparative analysis defining the motif's basic features and typical patterns. Along with providing the necessary contextual framework for a study of Horn and Orfeo's disguise episodes, this analysis suggests amending the motif's currently indexed title, increasing the number of episodes catalogued from three to twenty-three, and adding a previously uncatalogued motif, "noble fosterling excels in music."

Additionally, this study examines the motif's archetypal associations, revealing two main informing traditions in Hermes the mythological trickster and David the Biblical cunning harper king, resulting in three classifying categories for these episodes: Chronicle Tales, Tales of Enchantment and the Trickster, and Noble Fosterling Tales.

From the harper king tradition, these episodes generally contain a cunning, higher-ranking/ noble hero who is a soldier and a talented performer in the northern minstrelsy tradition, with a substantial problem. The trick also represents five distinctive Hermean characteristics: border-crossing, disguise, trickery, music/ the bard, and paradox. Each of these disguise-heroes also uses what appears to be a form of human magic combining trickery, technical skill, and music or spoken words, all of which traditionally have magical connotations. The trick also illustrates two creative thinking processes in its intersection of contradictory concepts—minstrel and warrior—as well as evidencing a boundary-crossing form of identity-play with the hero's simultaneous possession of two incompatible sets of societal expectations as he assumes the identity of minstrel without relinquishing his identity as knight. Although cunning can be a dangerous trait, these heroes or their tricks are generally portrayed positively, as the welcome resolution to a seemingly insurmountable problem, most often performing a positive function in these episodes and highlighting the value in medieval society of leaders with creative ingenuity.

DEDICATION

Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary:

praise him in the firmament of his power.

Praise him for his mighty acts:

praise him according to his excellent greatness.

Praise him with the sound of the trumpet:

praise him with the psaltery and harp.

Praise him with the timbrel and dance:

praise him with stringed instruments and organs.

Praise him upon the loud cymbals.

praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.

Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.

Psalm 150 (KJV)

"What has appeared to me to be an impossible situation is fast becoming a possibility."

Robert H. Schuller

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CHAPTER 1

THE MINSTREL DISGUISE ENTRANCE TRICK

What does a hero do when he finds himself in an impossible situation where customary tactics are useless; magic is not in the cards, and divine intervention unlikely? He could give up. Or he could use cunning. In both King Horn and Sir Orfeo, the hero wiggles out of just such a squeeze by using a minstrel disguise entrance trick—a sort of musical Trojan horse for which the enemy's closely guarded gates swing open in welcome.

In King Horn's second disguise episode, Horn encounters Fikenhild's stone tower while attempting to rescue Rimenhild from a second undesired wedding. Disguised as minstrels, he and his men are invited in, gaining unhindered access to their enemies. Orfeo, too, encounters a seemingly hopeless situation after his adored wife, Heurodis, is abducted by the Fairy King while under the protection of “ten hundred” of Orfeo's armed knights and whisked away to an Otherworld castle (A183).¹ By posing as a minstrel, Orfeo is admitted to the Fairy King's castle and proceeds to win Heurodis back. Each of these disguise moments is made up of two important elements: 1) disguise as a minstrel in an attempt 2) to enter enemy territory peacefully. Together, these elements combine to create what I will call the minstrel disguise entrance trick. It is this moment of minstrel disguise, most particularly in the two Middle English texts of King Horn and Sir Orfeo, that this study will investigate.

This trick is used to cross boundaries, pass through unsafe territory safely or enter a hostile compound, such as an enemy camp, castle, or fortress, by appearing harmless. The focus of these disguise episodes is on the hero's positive use of cunning or clever strategy to succeed in the face of what would normally be certain failure. Once inside, the hero can undertake a number of different actions, for example espionage, attack, rescue, or theft.

This disguise moment is a recurring motif indexed in Stith Thompson's Motif-Index of Folk Literature as K2357.1 "Disguise as musician to enter enemy's camp," though neither Horn nor Orfeo is among the three entries listed here. The entrance trick itself, using disguise to enter an off-limits area, exists in many forms. As sub-categories to K2357 "Disguise to enter enemy's camp <castle>," following musician, Thompson lists pilgrim, beggar <pauper>, merchant, leper, carpenter <tradesman>, juggler, churl <bachlach>, and woman. Additionally, the opposite situation is also acknowledged: entry K521.4.2.1 designates "Musician in danger puts on his musician's attire as if about to play; escapes."

One example of a non-musical entrance trick recorded in the fourteenth century is the Welsh tale of Culhwch and Olwen in which Cei, known in later Arthurian literature as Kay, poses as a tradesman. In this story, Arthur's men are required to get the sword of Wnach the giant as one task in a complicated quest. They are told that the giant "will not give it to any one, neither for price nor for favour, nor canst thou compel him" (Jones 120). The men appear at Wnach's castle gate and ask the gatekeeper to open up. He replies: "Knife has gone into meat, and drink into horn, and a thronging in Wnach's hall.

Save for a craftsman who brings his craft, it will not be opened again this night" (121).

Cei explains he is a sword furbisher, is invited in, and handed his prize.

The early critic J.S.P. Tatlock provides several examples of the use of beggar and pilgrim disguises for gaining access to restricted areas or untouchable people. Among them he lists the Saxons in Geoffrey's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (VIII, 24) who dress as beggars to enter the British court, spy, and poison a well to kill Uther; Brianus who disguises himself as a poor man with a staff in order to gain intelligence and finally to murder his master's enemy, Pellitus (XII, 7); and Horn, who dresses as a beggar in *King Horn* and *Horn et Rimenhild* to rescue Rimenhild and destroy the intended groom (347-48).² Likewise, in *Guy of Warwick*, Guy enters the German emperor's court disguised as a pilgrim, and Bevis in *Bevis of Hampton* gains access to Josyan and is led within the castle to his horse by dressing as a palmer.

The minstrel figure, however, stands out among the many disguise pilgrims, lepers, tradesmen, and beggars in medieval literature as a figure particularly rich in meaning, and when the minstrel disguise is woven together with the entrance trick motif, we discover a resonant archetype leading us toward folk, Biblical, mythological, and even anthropological studies. To access these associations, however, we must go beyond surface-level questions of plot construction, authorial intent, or artistry, seeking deeper levels of the image's meaning.

When we compare multiple examples of this motif, we will see that the minstrel disguise provides some practical advantages in the narrative not necessarily offered by other disguises. For example, when a hero appears at the gate of his enemy dressed as a minstrel, he is immediately welcomed in, and generally a party-like atmosphere ensues—

a distinct improvement over Horn's first disguise as beggar, when he had to kick the gate in to be admitted (C1069-74). The situation in Horn and Orfeo is more solemn than usual though: Rimenhild believes she has been forsaken by Horn and is being forced to marry Horn's enemy; Orfeo enters the Fairy King's castle, filled with all variety of disfigured people. In these two instances, the minstrels are welcomed-in more to provide solace than revelry. But it is typical in literature that once the minstrel arrives, a celebration begins or is enhanced, creating a sense of trust in the audience for the bringer of this mirth, as well as providing a distracting performance.

A celebratory or at least solace-inducing mood, a feeling of trust, and a distraction are all very helpful for the hero when he is ushered in through his enemy's gate. These three benefits appear repeatedly in minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes, as we will see, and they make practical sense on the narrative level for plot development. Several additional practical benefits for the disguise minstrel have been noted by the critics. Glynnis Cropp, for example, explains that the jongleur disguise provided "mobility and security for the traveller....Added to this ease of movement was the facility with which the *jongleur* entered a court and directly approached a noble lord or king" (43). We can see an example of this in Sir Orfeo when Orfeo arrives at the Fairy King's palace after living ten years as a wildman. Here Orfeo appears to come from the lowest levels of society, but his wild appearance does not keep him from performing for the king. In fact, Orfeo attempts to educate the Fairy King in court etiquette concerning minstrels by explaining:

Y nam bot a pouer menstrel;

&, Sir, it is þe maner of ous

To seche mani a lordes hous:

Þei we nouȝt welcom no be,

Ȝete we mot proferi forþ our gle.' (A 430-34)

Like this literary image of Orfeo as a poor minstrel, real-life performing minstrels were generally not found among the upper classes. For while "the ability to sing, compose, and play an instrument was a courtly skill expected of nobles in the Middle Ages" (Lawrence 35), possessing the skills of minstrelsy does not equate to being a professional minstrel. The occasional upper class minstrel did exist, however. The *Chevalerie Ogier*, for example, "a *chanson de geste* written about 1200, states that its author was a *jongleur*, Raimbert de Paris, who was the best of his kind. One manuscript of the poem adds: 'He was a gentleman and all his family also; he wrote many songs of great heroism'" (13). Likewise, Urban Holmes mentions minstrels who were "laymen of high degree" such as Conte d'Arras, the author of *Ille et Galeron* and *Eracle*, and the troubadours in the south of France as well as the *trouvères* in the north (160). We can also see literary examples of disguise-minstrels clothed in noble apparel, such John de Rampaigne's disguise as a wealthy Ethiopian minstrel in one of two minstrel disguise episodes in *Fouke Le Fitz Waryn*. Cropp too mentions the splendid dress of the non-entrance trick minstrel disguises of Fresne in *Galeran de Bretagne* and Merlin in *L'Estoire de Merlin* (38, 41).

More generally, however, real-life traveling minstrels will have come from the lowest orders. John Southworth, in *The English Medieval Minstrel*, underscores this harsh reality for the majority of minstrels: "It's not just that the status of the minstrel was low; for very many of his contemporaries, he was altogether beyond the pale of social

acceptance. In this respect, he was worse off than a serf; if the serf occupied the lowest place in the medieval hierarchy, the minstrel had no place at all" (4-5). Dieter Mehl explains that wandering minstrels "often made a nuisance of themselves by their begging and importunity so that special laws were proclaimed against them" (7). Lee Ramsey remarks: "minstrelsy, though it required training, was an accomplishment shared by all kinds of people, including beggars" (12). Thus, by disguising as a wandering minstrel or even a beggar minstrel, the hero could become in some measure invisible, while still ensuring his admittance to the innermost circles. Mobility, security, proximity and a certain anonymity—coupled with a celebratory mood, a feeling of trust, and a distraction—would make this disguise attractive to poets for practical purposes.

A comparison of tales containing the minstrel disguise entrance trick will reveal that these fictional heroes who disguise themselves as minstrels are very often actually members of the aristocracy and masterful performers. For a real life, performing minstrel, such references to noble minstrels could obviously be a boost to his ego and craft. Tales featuring a minstrel disguise entrance trick would allow the minstrel to imagine himself, like the tale's hero, capable of amazing feats and a savior to the people. A tale like Orfeo also provides a minstrel with the "opportunity for the glorification of his own art. It is a story of the triumph of minstrelsy over seemingly insuperable obstacles, and one in which the greatest test of a ruler's worth seems to be whether he enjoys minstrelsy and is generous to minstrels" (Spearing 79). But these practical features, while important to the overall significance of this entrance trick, barely scratch the surface of its meaning. We have to go deeper.

The first step in defining and exploring this motif is to examine its defining features. What features commonly appear in these tales or episodes? Which aspects of the motif remain constant in multiple examples of its use and which are altered or alterable? Understanding the motif itself and, further, evaluating its use in Horn and Orfeo will require a sampling and analysis of medieval stories containing minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes. Up until now, however, a comprehensive index of medieval narratives including this motif has not been compiled. Although Thompson created a designation for this motif, he included only three examples under it. Likewise, several critics have noted episodes similar to the entrance tricks in Horn and Orfeo, but none of these lists is comprehensive. And aside from limited comments over these episodes which will be discussed in chapter two, no study of the uses and meanings of the motif has been undertaken. It was necessary in order to provide a context for this study of the Horn and Orfeo disguise episodes, then, to collect a more thorough catalogue of medieval minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes.

While gathering examples of the motif, rather than limiting the search to a specific time period or geographical area, I focused instead on finding any medieval stories containing an example of this entrance trick, defining medieval as ranging roughly from Beowulf through Chaucer. The resulting twenty-three episodes in twenty-one tales stem from Welsh, Anglo-Norman, Middle English, British Latin, Danish Latin, Icelandic, Norse, Old French, and Old Provençal sources, located in manuscripts dating approximately from the twelfth through the fourteenth centuries. Three of the twenty-one texts are Scandinavian—Old Norse, Icelandic, Danish Latin. One is Old French. One is Provençal. And one is Middle High German. But as an overwhelming fifteen of these

twenty-one tales could be classified as British (Middle English, British Latin, Welsh, and Anglo-Norman), the motif seems of particular interest within English culture.³

In the English court, the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, within which we can place four of the combined six Horn and Orfeo manuscripts, was a time in which minstrels were particularly in demand.⁴ As we will see later in this chapter, the three Middle English versions of King Horn as well as the Auchinleck version of Sir Orfeo likely belong to the reigns of either Edward I "Longshanks" (1272-1307), his son, Edward II (1307-27), or of his grandson, Edward III (1327-1377). The best version of Sir Orfeo, namely the Auchinleck manuscript, dates from just after the end of Edward II's reign, during the opening years of Edward III's. (In fact, in-text reference to the difficult reign and end of Edward the II and then to "our 3ong king Edward" is the basis for the positive dating) (Bliss x). Paul Taylor in "Sir Orfeo and the Minstrel King" dates the composition of Orfeo, however, from the reign of either Henry III (1216-72) or his son, Edward I, based on dialect (12). Likewise, Rosamund Allen argues in "The Date and Provenance of King Horn: Some Interim Reassessments" that King Horn was composed during the 1270's before being copied into its existing manuscripts (Date 125). We also know that the stories of Horn and Orfeo both existed in earlier versions: Thomas's Anglo-Norman Horn et Rimenhild (ca. 1170-80); and a now-lost twelfth century Old French Lai d' Orpheu, and the stories of both also existed in ballad form up until the nineteenth century (Dunn and Byrnes 216). Because of the earlier existence of both stories and the evidence pointing to composition dates prior to existing manuscripts, we may assume that these stories were popular and likely circulated in some form even before Edward I.

Evidence shows that the reigns of Henry III, Edward I and Edward II all favored the services of the minstrel and particularly those of the harper. Edward I "grew up to have a marked partiality for the harp, and is invariably found to have had at least one harper closely at hand throughout the whole of his life" beginning from early childhood on; his father Henry III employed Richard the Harper, who achieved the level of Master, to entertain the children in their nursery when Edward I was only three (Southworth 60). In fact, such musical enrichment in Edward's early childhood was not an accident. Southworth describes the musician-friendly atmosphere of Henry's court (1216-72): "From the beginning, he surrounded himself with artists of every description—poets, painters, musicians and harpers—irrespective of their origin or nationality; and though individuals came and went, he continued to do so—in spite of the unpopularity that they often brought him" (57).

As an adult, Edward I also provided minstrels to entertain his small children including one Matilda Makejoy, a female acrobat, and one Martinet, a taborer (Southworth 78). There is also the possibility that such visits included music lessons, since Martinet is recorded as having received a payment in 1304-5 of 7 s. for the repair of his tabor, broken by the children, and a year later another 11 d. for repairing the king's son's drums (77). In 1290, records show that Edward I paid 426 minstrels for the entertainment of his daughter, Margaret, her bridegroom, and their assembled wedding guests (57).

Edward I's fondness for and patronage of minstrels was an "extravagant partiality... which had not raised a breath of criticism" (Southworth 83). His son, Edward II, likewise, shared an affection for minstrels, though in this case, it becomes "an

inordinate fondness for minstrelsy" (83). Minstrels were not just enjoyed by the king's court, however: "by the reign of Edward I, there is hardly a country manor visited by Bishop Swinfield of Hereford which does not boast at least a harper in residence" (Southworth 93). So we can see that during the period when the stories of Horn and Orfeo may have found their greatest popularity, the English court appears to have been a minstrel- and music-rich environment, one particularly welcoming to the harper.

The church, however, was not quite so favorably inclined toward the minstrel. We are told that "Churchmen such as John of Salisbury, Peter the Chanter and Thomas Cabham condemned the *jongleurs* on moral grounds; the Church objected to their frivolity and to the effect they had on their audience in arousing lasciviousness and moral turpitude" (Cropp 36). It is possible though, that the type of minstrel portrayed by this motif's disguised heroes—whose acts included skills such as harping or playing of other musical instruments, singing, juggling, storytelling, composing or reciting—may have received special consideration. Thomas Cabham "explicitly exempted from condemnation *jongleurs* who had musical instruments and who presented mainly *chansons de geste* and saints' lives" (Cropp 36). Specifically, Cabham "reserves some praise for the *joculatores*, 'who sing about the deeds of princes and the lives of saints and bring consolation to men in sickness or hardship'" (Ramsey 12). Cropp states: "Approval of this section of the profession seems to have been widespread" (36). Southworth notes that "even the severest critic could view the harpers with a degree of tolerance, even favour" (70). In fact, Southworth reports a few incidents of harping from this time period that were surely not singularities: between 1289 and 1290, Richard de Swinfield of Hereford, "a scholar, renowned in his time as an especially conscientious bishop—is

entertained by a succession of harpers as he goes about his diocese" (70). A little later, at the 1309 installation of the abbot of St. Augustine, "those who assisted... 'accompanied their songs with a harp'" (91).

Here we must differentiate between two distinct minstrel traditions, one stemming from the Greeks and Romans and another associated with Germanic and Celtic tradition. The first strain, which derives from the "Roman circus or the masked mimi of the Atellane farces" included, in addition to music, other acts such as trapeze artists; jugglers with balls; jugglers with swords or daggers; stilt-walkers; fire-spitters and sword swallows; tumblers; trained dogs, bears, and horses; and animal sound imitations (Southworth 20, 13). Some of such acts were lewd or obscene (14).

The second tradition stems from Anglo-Saxon England and "the harpers who celebrated the heroic exploits of their lords and their warrior bands" (Southworth 20). "The Germanic *scōp*, like the Celtic bard and the Anglo-Saxon *gleoman*, was the guardian of those links with the past which were essential to the identity and coherence of the *cym* (kin)" (21). It is this northern tradition and the more respected and tolerated harper in particular which most directly concerns the study of King Horn and Sir Orfeo and their minstrel disguises.⁵

The heroes in this motif, as we will see, are generally outstanding musicians or performers exhibiting the various talents of playing instruments, singing, juggling, and composing or reciting poetry and stories. Southworth notes: "Juggling with swords and knives is a recognized skill among both Saxon and Norman minstrels" (33).⁶ Additionally, he explains that medieval audiences would consider what modern drum majors do, tossing a mace in the air and catching it again, juggling (30).

But Horn and Orfeo are specifically harpers. Horn is trained to harp and to sing lays. We are told early in the tale, when King Aylmar decides to take Horn as his foundling that although Horn's companions will be guided into “opere seruife,” ‘forms of attendance, duties’ (Allen 403), Horn was to be trained in musical skills. In all three manuscripts, the king orders his steward to teach Horn to harp. In fact, it is mentioned twice in the list of the areas in which Horn will be educated (C 225-240), and Horn is said to have learned his lessons well. Later, during the poem's minstrel disguise episode, once inside the castle Horn sat on the bench, took his harp, and made a lay: “He fette him on þe benche / His harp for to clenche. / He makede Rymenhilde lay” (C 1475-77).

Orfeo too was a harper. Right up front, the poet tells us: “Orfeo mest of ani þing / Loued þe gle of harping” (A 25-6). In fact, “He lerned so, þer no-þing was / A better harpour in no plas” (A 31-2). All three manuscripts agree on this basic fact about Orfeo. And when he chooses to exile himself, leaving behind his kingdom and wealth, other than the simple pilgrim's mantle or *sclauin* he takes to cover himself (in the later Bodleian text, he also takes a staff), Orfeo took “no noþer gode, / Bot his harp...,” including shoes! (A 230-31). So there is no question that Orfeo, as well as Horn, are trained and talented harpers.

Beyond the minstrel's musical and performing duties, there were several other military or hunt related jobs carried out by different types of minstrels in the medieval period. The connection between the harper and armed conflict seems to be a complicated one, but key to this type of entrance trick. During the time of Edward I and II, the herald maintained genealogical and military knowledge and arranged “state entertainment” such as pageantry and tournaments (65), and the watchman or wait sounded the hour during

the night, guarded against thieves, and watched for fires (74-75). Southworth also reports that between the reigns of Henry II (1154-89) and Edward II (1307-27), the professions of huntsman and fool were "linked" (49). The minstrel also often played the role of messenger, going on special errands for his employer (71). Despite their connections to military action and arms, however, none of these jobs was likely to bring a minstrel into direct combat. In fact, Southworth shows through an example out of Edward the III's reign that during war: "the minstrels' function as entertainers of the king and his courtiers—now his commanders—was as important as ever" (102).

Along with their duty to entertain, minstrels not intending to fight could easily find themselves on the battlefield. Southworth explains that following the Norman Conquest, the Anglo-Saxon tradition of minstrelsy flourished again in the thirteenth century through the English harpers (87). Of the ten harpers appearing at the 1296 Ipswich marriage of Edward I's daughter, Elizabeth, Southworth states that "most had probably been engaged" in Edward's recent raid on Scotland: "their main task on campaign was to take note of those individual acts of prowess that were afterwards recorded in the form of *sirventois* or 'duty' songs to be recited after the battle, and then, in a more polished state, on occasions such as the Ipswich feast" (87).

This conclusion seems logical when we consider again the Anglo-Saxon scop and his role: "The harper-poet of the oral tradition was also a storyteller and historian; the stories and songs that he sang were the people's remembrance of their past" (Southworth 21). Posit The Finnesburh Fragment, Waldere, The Battle of Maldon, and The Battle of Brunanburh, each seeming as though it might have been composed in the thick of battle.

These poems preserved the Anglo-Saxon history through generations by their repeated recitation in the hall, and preserve it still for us today.

For that reason, during times of war, this type of minstrel might have been something like our modern war correspondent, observing the action but not usually participating in it. In that case, a soldier would be accustomed to seeing such a minstrel on or near the battlefield but would likely not consider him a threat. Southworth even describes one occasion occurring in 1136 in which two minstrels were used as bait to draw-out would-be attackers: Gerald of Wales writes how Richard FitzGilbert, after being warned of a possible ambush by the Welsh, allowed his singer and fiddler to proceed him through a thick forest. The Welsh ambushers cleverly allowed the minstrels through safely and waited for FitzGilbert himself. Here again, the ambushers knew the minstrels were no threat and so allowed them to pass safely. Additionally the Welsh wisely gained the element of surprise against FitzGilbert, who was prepared to sacrifice his musicians for his own safety.

Additionally, in the stories of Daurel and Beton and Gerbert de Montreuil's La Continuation de Perceval it is portrayed as unheroic to fight against a minstrel. In Continuation, Perceval explains that he would "debase" himself by laying even a hand on a minstrel (Fresco 1136). And in Beton, when the hero taunts his downed opponent explaining he was bettered by a minstrel, "The man's comrade saw him fall and was angry and ashamed" (Shirley 78).

Because musicians may have been a common sight on the battlefield, often present but rarely posing any threat, real-life minstrels may have from time to time used their benign reputation in order to gain a tactical advantage (at least in somewhat-

embellished historical accounts). Take for example the story traced by Southworth of the Norman Jongleur, Taillefer, who apparently played an important role in the Battle of Hastings: "we have five separate testimonies to a jongleur's decisive intervention in the Battle—all written within a hundred years of the event—of which four refer to him by name" (33). The most complete version of the story is told by Gaimar in Norman French in about 1140. Gaimar tells how this *ioglere* went alone in front of his own ranks toward the English frontline on horseback, carrying a lance and a sword.

Before the English he did wonders.

He took his lance by the butt

As if it had been a truncheon.

Up high he threw it,

And by the head he caught it. (qtd. in Southworth 31)

He did this three times and then threw it into the English ranks, injuring a soldier. Next he threw his sword into the air three times and caught it.

One said to the other, who saw this,

That this was enchantment

Which he did before the folk. (31)

Wace's *Roman de Rou* declares that Taillefer sang the stories of Roland and Oliver and of Charlemagne and Roncesvals before striking the first blow of the battle (Southworth 32). William of Malmesbury, though not naming Taillefer, confirms that the song of Roland was sung (32). Another source, *Carmen (Song) of the Battle of Hastings* notes that Taillefer performed his feats following "a period of uncertainty on the part of the Normans " (Southworth 31). In other words, the minstrel sang and juggled his

weapons in front of the enemy. Why? The Carmen explains that his actions "heartened the men of France and terrified the English" (Southworth 32). Gaimar explains that observers regarded the performance as some form of enchantment.

Causing such a disruption in the enemy ranks alone would provide an opening for the Normans. But Taillefer does not stop after his singing and juggling performance, returning to the sidelines. Instead, he does something even more unexpected and actually precedes the rest of the army into battle. After juggling his sword, Gaimar reports that the *ioglere* "charged into the English line and was engulfed" (Southworth 31).

However courageous, Taillefer's solitary charge was also a clear infraction of the strict chivalric code which forbade men of inferior rank (let alone minstrels) to advance against the enemy ahead of their betters; such behavior was viewed as a snatching of honour from those who were properly entitled to it. (Southworth 35)

Such a move must have been a real shock to the enemy troops, and if it was an individually planned act and not a last ditch effort on the part of the Norman leadership, an equally large shock to the friendly troops as well. Here we see an example of some of the practical advantages built into the minstrel disguise. Taillefer creates a distraction with his music and show and then takes advantage of the trust the men have for minstrels by charging them, a very unminstrel-like thing to do. But here the additional factor of magic also comes into play. Although Taillefer does not use actual magic, to the observers the music and performance contained connotations of magic or spell casting. But even without casting real spells, the minstrel seems to carry a sense of wonder and magic, which in these disguise episodes is amplified by the hero's use of cunning trickery and technical skill—each of which have magical connotations. Thus, as we will see,

even when the hero is capable of performing magic in these episodes, he does not take advantage of these powers to enter enemy territory. He uses instead this trick, which in itself appears to be a very potent form of human magic.

Outline of the Study

Although the minstrel disguise episodes in King Horn and Sir Orfeo are examples of a catalogued folk motif, as we will see in the next chapter this motif has never been investigated. Therefore, in order to move forward, I must begin by first taking one step back and building the necessary framework for this exploration by compiling a comprehensive catalogue of twelfth through fourteenth century Northern European minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes and then undertaking an analysis to define the motif's basic features. This I do in chapters four, five, and six, which respectively cover what I have termed Chronicle Tales, Tales of Enchantment and the Trickster, and Noble Fosterling Tales. An explanation of the analysis methodology and a brief overview of findings are also located in chapter four. Additional results as well as details on how the Horn and Orfeo episodes compare within this catalogue can be found in Appendix A.

Despite my harsh criticism of earlier critics for focusing mainly on the practical benefits of the minstrel disguise, much of my work in defining the typical features of this motif will remain at the narrative level—but in doing so, this comprehensive analysis provides the foundation for chapter four, five, and six's deeper investigation into the motif's mythic and archetypal associations, leading toward the identification of its two main informing traditions in the figures of Hermes, the mythological trickster god, and David, the Biblical cunning harper king. This archetypal exploration culminates in

chapter seven with an investigation of the motif's focus on the positive potential of creative ingenuity, its representation of two creative thinking strategies, and its exploration of boundary-crossing identity-play.

As natural expressions of these archetypes, it made sense to include the investigation of the King Horn and Sir Orfeo minstrel disguise episodes among their companions within the three comparative analysis / archetypal investigation chapters. But additional analysis of these two focal poems can also be found in the chapter three individual investigation of Horn, the chapter seven examination of creativity, and within the appendix. A more detailed outline of chapter contents is provided at the close of this introductory chapter.

Within this study, the first text I will focus on is King Horn. According to A.C. Spearing in "Early Medieval Narrative Style," King Horn requires a special level of attention as an example of what he calls non-metaphorical style early medieval narrative (55). Spearing explains that the modern reader is not practiced in reading and appreciating this type of poem because the styles of such texts "are so simple as to seem transparent; they dissolve under scrutiny, leaving behind only the actions narrated, not the narrative itself" (55, 24). To appreciate the technical and artistic aspects of this poem, according to Spearing, the reader must make "a conscious effort to be analytical," requiring a technique of close reading (55). Within each of the chapters, therefore, I follow Spearing's dictate, in effect pausing the action of these poems with close reading, to gather evidence directly from the texts, providing my own translations of Old English text and leaving Middle English in its original edited form.

King Horn exists in three versions, found in three manuscripts: C text—Cambridge University Library manuscript Gg.4.27 (2); O text—Laud Miscellany 108, Bodleian Library, Oxford; and L text—Harley 2253, British Library, London. All are believed to date from between 1290 and 1330, as Rosamund Allen reminds us in her note, "Some Textual Cruces in King Horn" (73). Allen reviews the dating of each manuscript in detail in the introduction to her edition of King Horn. The "commonly agreed date" for C manuscript is 1300, but scholars have dated it as early as 1250-75 and as late as mid-fourteenth century (Allen 3). The Laud Miscellany, or the O text—(Oxford), is considered the earliest. O manuscript contains two different hands and dates late 13th century or around 1300 (3, 8). The Harley manuscript, or L text—(London), contains three different handwritings and according to Allen is the latest copy, thirty years later than manuscript C, dating from about 1330-40 (3, 13).

Unless otherwise noted, when quoting from any of the three versions I will refer to Hall's 1901 edition of the three texts, which remains the standard. Hall provides all three versions of the text but places the greatest emphasis on C text, stating: "C approaches the original more nearly than L or O: a consensus of L and C, or of O and C, in doubtful passages gives the text of the original" (xiv).

Allen's 1984 edition of King Horn contains one text, based on the C manuscript, but also provides notes listing variant readings from the other two versions. Although Allen feels that C text dates between the other two, she gives it precedence because she too believes it to "present an earlier state of the text than OL" (3). Allen does not simply provide the text of C manuscript, however. Because she believes all three extant versions to have been heavily corrupted by "100 years of scribal debasements," she has attempted

to "restore its original form" by including "conjectural emendations" within square brackets (1-2). I have avoided quoting from her edition, though more recent than Hall's, in order to remain truer to the extant manuscripts. I have, however, taken advantage of her scholarship by quoting from her supplemental materials, which Ralph Hanna praises in his review of the edition, explaining: "a substantial portion of the volume is devoted to...a concerted analysis of all the evidence. Allen examines something more closely approximating the total variant sample for a Middle English poem than any other editor has ever done" (938).

The 1990 Dunn and Byrnes edition of Horn, on the other hand, is based on the L text or Harley manuscript. Although it is nice to see this manuscript represented on an equal footing with O and C, I have not quoted from Dunn and Byrnes's text.

When deciding which version, O, L, or C, of King Horn to focus this study on I often quote from C text mainly because it is usually given precedence by scholars. However, I find myself strongly swayed by Robert Longworth's assessment that the medieval romances are a special breed of text, originally delivered orally by minstrels, differing at every telling and individualized by each performer. Although "it has usually been assumed...that variants are symptomatic of or synonymous with textual and artistic corruption," Longworth suspects that "variation was both expected and encouraged among medieval *romanciers* in the telling of their stories" (2). Identifying the definitive text for such a story would prove an impossible task because a definitive text may never have existed. Longworth explains of Sir Orfeo, "the three texts may represent three distinct and equally authentic realizations of the romance" (3). Since I find the same to

be true for King Horn, I am reluctant to lean too heavily on C text alone and instead often quote from all three versions when making a point about the story of King Horn.

Sir Orfeo, the second focal text of this study, exists like Horn in three extant manuscripts: A text—Auchinleck MS (Advocates' 19.2.1); H text—MS. Harley 3810; and B text—MS. Ashmole 61 (Bodleian 6922) (Bliss ix). Bliss reports that based on internal evidence, the Auchinleck MS, or A text, can be "confidently" dated at about 1330 (x). He also explains that this version is "not far removed from the original and represents it with reasonable accuracy" (Bliss xv). Dunn and Byrnes base their version of Orfeo on the A text. The H text, or MS Harley, on the other hand, is "much abbreviated," consisting of just 509 lines as compared to the 604 contained in version A, with handwriting pointing to the start of the fifteenth century (xv, xi). Bliss assigns a date of after 1488 for the final manuscript, B text, or Ashmole 61, and calls the text "a curious mix of accuracy and corruption" (xii, xvi). As with Horn, I will use all three versions when referring to the text of Sir Orfeo, quoting from Bliss's 1954 edition.

Each chapter of this study includes examples from and textual analysis of relevant medieval texts. Chapter two begins by looking closely at what critics have already said about the minstrel disguise episodes in King Horn and Sir Orfeo. It then considers two minstrel disguise studies, and finally moves to more general studies of disguise in Middle English as well as some non-English medieval texts.

Chapter three presents a close reading of the minstrel disguise episode in Horn illustrating how the poet's use of sea-threat images in his exploration of deception and fidelity points out how Horn makes and keeps promises to Rimenhild. This chapter also examines the poet's addition of tides into this disguise episode as the poem's culminating

water-threat image, thus more closely integrating the entrance trick into the poem's overall theme and heightening the level of Horn's challenge. Within this chapter, we will also investigate the poet's careful description of the timing of events during this episode and their possible coordination with real-life tidal cycles. Finally, we will explore the real-world castle that may have inspired the special features given to Fikenhild's tower.

Chapters four through six present this study's newly compiled catalogue of twenty-three Northern European minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes, including King Horn and Sir Orfeo, and provide a comparative analysis of the tales based on six basic components found in each story. This discussion is separated by chapter into three story-type categories: Chronicle Tales, Tales of Enchantment and the Trickster, and Noble Fosterling Tales.

Chapter four begins this investigation in two parts by first outlining the methodology for this analysis and giving a brief overview of some of the findings. Second, this chapter discusses each of the semi-historic Chronicle Tales and begins the work of isolating the basic features of the archetype inspiring this motif.

Chapter five explores the Tales of Enchantment and the Trickster, including Sir Orfeo. Here we will also examine the special relationship between the minstrel disguise entrance trick and the mythological trickster-figure, Hermes, explaining some of the less positive features of these entrance trick heroes and uncovering Hermes's specific connections with border crossing, disguise, trickery, music/ the bard and paradox—the defining features of this entrance trick. This chapter also reviews the underlying connections between music, trickery, and magic to understand the entrance trick hero's special form of human magic.

Chapter six completes the comparative analysis with a look at the Noble Fosterling Tales, among which we find King Horn. This chapter considers the multi-talented, innately noble, musically gifted but still somewhat smudged character of King David, the cunning harper king, as a model for the previously uncategorized motif of "noble fosterling excels in music," represented in the noble fosterling hero. Additionally, this chapter outlines the three-part story formula we find in the Noble Fosterling Tale, comparing it with the early years of David's life again as a model. This chapter also considers the split between Trickster and Noble Fosterling Tale heroes, which echoes the trickster's general move away from dualism toward dichotomy, as the noble fosterlings are almost completely gleaned of their more negative trickster qualities and enhanced with inherent nobility. Finally, here we begin the examination of the nature of cunning, focusing on its connotations of dangerous ambivalence and its associations in both the Biblical and mythological tradition with the divine.

In chapter seven, we intensify this investigation of cunning by focusing on creative ingenuity. Drawing on the research of creativity and the trickster, as well as on an exploring instinct called the Ulysses Factor based on the character of Odysseus, we examine how the two forms of boundary crossing in these episodes represent processes of innovation which can lead to real change.

In this chapter, we also learn how the entrance trick itself illustrates two distinct creative thinking processes in which the contradictory concepts of minstrel and warrior intersect in the entrance trick hero when he assumes the identity of minstrel without yielding up his identity as knight. In addition to representing the conjunction of opposing concepts (such as celebration and mourning), these moments also illustrate the

simultaneous coexistence in one character of two incompatible sets of societal expectations. Yet while evidence of the entrance trick hero's rule breaking is upsetting to convention-bound characters, we also see that he or his clever trick, as the welcome solution to an otherwise overwhelming problem, generally fulfills a positive function in these tales.

Finally, this chapter will explore the cultural appeal of this type of hero and possible reasons why this motif seems to have particularly piqued the interest of medieval British culture, which again leads us back to a consideration of the motif's roots in the trickster, the harper king, and human innovation.

Chapter eight, the concluding chapter, provides a review of the study as a whole with recommendations for amendments to the Stith Thompson and Gerald Bordman folk motif indexes. Appendix A provides a review of the comparative analysis results, locating Horn and Orfeo among their companion tales, as well as highlighting and discussing each poem's unique deviations from more typical formulations of this motif.

Notes

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all quotes from Sir Orfeo are from the A. J. Bliss text, and those from King Horn are from Joseph Hall.

² See Tatlock 347-48 for additional examples of disguise in literature. Hall 154 also provides several references to medieval disguise episodes.

³ Four of these fifteen tales are versions of the same Baldulf story by different authors, contained in histories of England. (In fact, eight of the twenty-one stories occur as Chronicle Tales.) If we call all four versions of Baldulf one story, however, then twelve of eighteen stories are of "British" origin.

⁴ Glynnis Cropp also notes that the *jongleurs* were popular "especially in the thirteenth century, perhaps as a result of Louis IX's patronage" (36).

⁵ The idea that King Horn is part of a northern tradition is supported by other internal evidence. Jamison notes: "Based upon such information as place and character names, scholars guessed that the story of King Horn could have originated from the Anglo-Saxons, the Anglo-Normans, Norse Vikings, or Danes (Burrow 89)" (48). See Schofield for a specific discussion of Norse characteristics in Horn.

⁶ Southworth also notes that Gaimar's version of Havelok describes its hero as a jongleur "because of his skill in overturning and throwing opponents in wrestling matches, staged for the amusement of the court" (30).

CHAPTER 2

A REVIEW OF MINSTREL DISGUISE CRITICISM FOCUSING ON
KING HORN AND SIR ORFEO

To dig into the minstrel disguise entrance trick motif, uncovering the heart of its meaning, we must concentrate on the fusion of the minstrel figure with the cunning trickery inherent in the entrance trick. Here we encounter a very specific mix of features, including physical boundary-crossing, disguise, paradox, music or the bard, and trickery. This unusual combination of elements leads us directly to Hermes and the trickster figure with his life- and society-changing powers. A careful study of this motif, then, must consider the relationship between the disguised hero and the trickster as both use creative cunning to circumvent typical societal or heroic conventions when they are found ineffective. In addition to its trickster origins, this motif is closely associated with the cunning harper king image, finding a model in King David's character traits and early life. David too, therefore, deserves a closer look. Likewise, cunning, identity-play, music, magic, and the divine all find a place in this motif, calling for a study of both its Biblical and mythological traditions. And perhaps surprisingly for a medieval motif, this investigation must consider creativity and the power of human ingenuity represented in these characters.

Unfortunately, despite the rich archetypal associations found in this motif, critics have largely ignored these minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes, and thus far, no

studies of the minstrel disguise entrance trick motif have been undertaken. What attention Horn and Orfeo scholars have paid to these disguise moments tends to be slight, either simply mentioning the disguise within plot summary or noting the very practical purposes disguise serves in the episode, including its function as a plot device or reflection of a medieval proclivity toward the real-life use of disguises.

Even when we widen the scope to include research outside of Middle English literature, we find only two studies in which the general disguise of minstrel is examined in depth: Glynnis Cropp's brief article "The Disguise of the '*Jongleur*'" (1986) and Marilyn Lawrence's unpublished dissertation, "Minstrel Disguise in Medieval French Narrative: Identity, Performance, Authorship" (2001). Cropp underlines this lack of research at the start of her article: "While reference has occasionally been made to the disguise of 'jongleur' and its use in medieval French narrative, particularly in two or three well known examples, there has been little attempt to examine the disguise episodes" (36). Marilyn Lawrence, too, reports that "few scholars have focused on minstrel disguise and the particular questions it raises" (14). In fact, Lawrence's research uncovers only one article, Cropp's, which considers the minstrel disguise in multiple medieval texts. The "few other studies" in her focal area of medieval French narrative consist of articles that explore a single issue in a single text.

General disguise studies, too, which could also aid in this investigation, are difficult to find in any number. In fact, the tendency to avoid disguise studies already appears almost a century ago in Gertrude Schoepperle's treatment of Tristan's disguises in Tristan and Isolt: A Study of the Sources of the Romance (1913):

There are legions of instances in medieval fiction in which the hero disguises

himself in order to accomplish a purpose. It seems futile to attempt to classify them. They occur in ballads, romances, and history with inevitable uniformity.

The favorite disguises are of course those of wandering classes, such as traders, pilgrims, lepers, minstrels, and fools. (Schoepperle 227)

By 1998, however, Debra Black, in "Anagnorisis: Revealing Didactic Purpose in the Use of Disguise in Middle English Romances," notes that disguise studies have indeed been neglected, but her comment indicates an improved inclination toward the value of this research, one finally welcoming in-depth investigations: "Because it has remained relatively unexplored except as a narrative device to move plot, the use of disguise in the Middle English verse romances then becomes an area of knowledge about medieval life that still has much to tell us if we look beyond the surface" (9-10).

This chapter will review the limited critical commentary on the King Horn and Sir Orfeo minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes, moving then to the two extended studies of minstrel disguise by Cropp and Lawrence. The third portion of this chapter will have an enlarged focus, handling general studies of disguise.

Although it doesn't explain why so few general disguise studies exist, one possible reason for the lack of direct critical attention to the disguise moments in King Horn is that until relatively recently, critics have questioned the artistic value of the poem. In the more recent criticism of King Horn as well as that of Sir Orfeo, a great deal of energy has been expended illustrating the literary value of both texts, which have traditionally been viewed as flawed or of inferior workmanship. In Horn, critics have objected to what they considered flat characterizations, a skeletal description of events, and lack of true emotion, sometimes calling the poem primitive in comparison to *Mestre*

Thomas's *Horn et Rimenhild*. Although *Orfeo* usually fared better because of its magical fairy charm, almost invisible artistry, and more rarified status as a *lai*, critics have sometimes complained that the final scene of testing and recovery of kingship seems tacked on rather than fully integrated; the happy ending seems trite, as if altered from the classical form to better please audiences; and the characters' motives are often unclear: Why is Heurodis abducted? Why does Orfeo abdicate his throne and go into exile?

As recently as 1986 in his introduction to *King Horn* in *Middle English Verse Romances*, for example, Donald B. Sands writes: "With the tale of Horn and the fair Rymenhild we have the earliest extant English romance. This distinction it can claim; other distinctions, especially technical and esthetic, are hard to come by" (15). Despite Sand's recent defamation of *King Horn*, critics had already long begun to repair *Horn*'s negative reputation. Walter French, for one, in *Essays on Horn* (1940) argues against the nearly century-long "fashion" to consider *Horn* as "rough and primitive," announcing to modern readers that *Horn* is in fact: "an accomplished work on the technical side, with a sure and practiced art behind it" (1, 2). Even as recently as 1988, Anne Scott in "Plans, Predictions, and Promises: Traditional Story Techniques and the Configuration of Word and Deed in King Horn" found the need to illustrate the poem's achievements, stating, "*King Horn* is a fine poem appealing to readers of all levels of sophistication. Its story evokes profound archetypal images, and its style is spare yet beautiful and effective" (38). The current generation of scholars, thankfully, concurs with the view that *Horn* and *Orfeo* are skillfully crafted texts, warranting full critical attention.

Early critics, however, probably came the closest to studying the minstrel disguise entrance trick in *Horn* and *Orfeo*, identifying examples of the motif but tending to grant

them a very surface-level handling. Joseph Hall, in his 1901 edition of the three parallel texts of Horn, for example, lists episodes comparable to “Horn’s disguise as a harper” (174-75). William Henry Schofield, in “The Story of Horn and Rimenhild” (1903), mentions several examples of the minstrel disguise used by a character to “gain access” (61) or “obtain admission” (63) to a place to which he would not otherwise have access. Constance Davies too, in “Notes on the Sources of ‘Sir Orfeo’” (1936), provides a “see also” note: “For the trick by which Orfeo gains his wife” (354). We also find such a note in Morgan Dickson’s much more recent research, “Verbal and Visual Disguise: Society and Identity in Some Twelfth-Century Texts” (2000), where she cites examples of chronicle episodes in which “the hero assumes the role of a harper in order to infiltrate the enemy camp to gain information” (50), perhaps indicating that following Black’s 1998 call for further disguise studies such disguise incidents are developing a new relevance in modern scholarship.

In addition to the “see also” notes, some of the early critics venture an explanation for these disguise episodes, suggesting (rather simplistically) that the hero dresses as a minstrel merely because it is his only option for success. Schofield, for example, writes that the minstrel disguise is Horn’s “only means of penetrating Fikenhild’s castle and gaining access to Rimenhild” (62). Hall provides a note at this point in the texts of Horn explaining: “It was apparently the British custom to admit none but artists after the feast was begun” (175). Likewise, in a discussion of the story of Baldulf, a warrior who dresses as a minstrel to gain access to his brother in a besieged castle, Tatlock states, in The Legendary History Of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* and Its Early Vernacular Versions (1950): “the only way... Baldulfus can gain access to

him is in the disguise of a minstrel” (346-47). In addition to being a very surface-level consideration of these episodes, this argument ignores one of the most important elements of these entrance trick heroes. As we will see in the chapter three study of the King Horn episode, each of the three manuscripts emphasizes Horn's personal resources—including his cunning ability and learned skills. The manuscripts also emphasize that no one can enter Fikenhild's castle through any means; yet Horn finds a way. Therefore rather than illustrating a last chance solution, the trick represents just the opposite, resourceful ingenuity. Horn as well as the other heroes from this motif can devise a trick to solve any problem. The logical extension of this concept means that the next time Horn encounters a situation that stumps all other heroes, he will again find a way to prevail with or without a minstrel disguise.

These early critics were also interested in finding historically accurate elements in these stories. For example, while discussing semi-historical accounts that include reports of disguise, Tatlock states: “The main thing is that obviously in the view of a historian jongleurs were privileged characters who might go anywhere unsuspected” (347), which is, of course, an example of the mobility, security, proximity, anonymity explanation often offered for these disguise episodes. We see a surprising twist on this argument, however, when Tatlock adds one page later, "Some modern writers on medieval romance speak as if it developed in a historical vacuum, and as if picturesque things never really happened.... Disguise was common; for slipping about unnoticed what better disguise than the make-up of such unimportant persons as minstrels, pilgrims and beggars?" (348). Davies, too, makes a similar statement regarding the everyday use of disguise: “the

assumption of minstrel and pilgrim disguises [were] as much a real practice as a favourite literary device” (356).

Hall, one of Tatlock’s sources, states more reservedly: "As minstrels, palmers and beggars moved about freely and without question, men wishing to disguise themselves usually adopted the dress of one of these classes" (154). Here Hall turns the argument of the others slightly, not stating that disguise was a common practice but rather that men who chose to use disguise typically dressed as the type of person who had freedom of movement to avoid calling a great deal of unwanted attention to themselves.

As an example of the use of minstrel and pilgrim disguises as a “real practice” (356), Davies cites Map’s *De Nugis* Dist. V, cap. 6 which relates how Henry V, Emperor of Germany, faked his own death and went into “voluntary exile” presumably dressing and living “poor in garb” (Map 481). Davies also suggests the possibility that the disguise incident in *Sir Orfeo* was actually drawn from “a more explicit and intimate source” (356) and quotes the following passage in Latin from Dugdale’s *Monasticon Anglicanum*, VI, Part I concerning Ela, who having lost her mother two years previously was orphaned by her father, William Fitzpatrick, Earl of Salisbury, in 1196:

She was taken by relatives and acquaintances to Normandy, and there she was brought up in safe and close custody.

At the same time in England there was a certain soldier called William Talbot, who put on foreigner’s clothing and crossed the sea to Normandy. There he stayed for two years. He wandered this way and that to seek out his mistress Ela of Salisbury, and when he had found her he took off his foreign garb, dressed like a minstrel and entered the court where she was staying. Since he was a jovial

fellow, with an excellent knowledge of the exploits of the ancients, he received a popular welcome there, as though he were a close friend. When he found a suitable time he returned to England, taking with him that venerable mistress Ela, the heir of the county of Salisbury, and introduced her to king Richard. He adopted her in a most particular way, and married her to his brother William Lungespe... (Quintus).¹

Here we see an example of the real-life welcome afforded to a skilled minstrel. In this case at least, the disguise-minstrel “received a popular welcome, as though he were a close friend.”

Tatlock too mentions an historical disguise incident from James MacKinnon’s History of Edward the Third: “As late as 1341 John de Montfort, claimant to the duchy of Brittany, escaped from the court of the hostile Philip VI disguised as a minstrel” (347). Instead of asking what these moments mean or why they fascinate the imagination, occurring twice in some tales, these critics simply suggest that the minstrel disguise entrance trick appears and works in literature because of the same practical features that make it work in real-life.

More recent critics have shown even less interest in these disguise episodes than their earlier colleagues. When they do mention them, however, it is most often as an element of plot. Although these more recent critics no longer hold the earlier concern for historical accuracy, they touch on ground similar to the earlier scholars, again noting the practicality of the disguises. For example, Howard Nimchinsky in his comparison of three expulsion-and-return type romances, "Orfeo, Guillaume, and Horn" (1968), cites Tatlock, explaining: "Disguise as a minstrel was a popular device in medieval romance

and history for moving around freely undetected," and adding that in the Horn stories, "the impersonation is merely a way of penetrating the villain's castle. This deception introduces the last climactic scene of the romance, just as it does in Sir Orfeo" (11-12). Thus, Nimchinsky does note the similarity between Horn and Orfeo's minstrel disguises but dismisses them as "merely" a way of getting into the castle.²

Patricia Ellis too, in her dissertation The Journey Motif in Fourteen Non-Cyclical Middle English Verse Romances (1983), explains: "In both instances, first as a palmer and recognized through a ring and then as a harper unrecognized until he attacks, Horn's disguises are those of commonplace travelers, and the welcome afforded them, the easy access they have to people and places, is typical, at least as a literary convention" (39). Likewise, Cropp, though one of the few scholars to dedicate an entire, albeit short, study to the *jongleur* disguise, also notes the mobility, security, and proximity the disguise provides for the hero (43). Thomas Garbáty (1984) too mentions the practicality of such disguises, stating: "The use of this disguise [palmer] as a plot device is common in medieval literature due to the freedom of access for the characters involved, access that might not be available under other circumstances" (quoted in Black 77).

Trickling through the criticism of King Horn, we find critics occasionally turning to the question (or problem) of duplication within the story. Early on for example, Schofield is distressed by the repetition of disguise incidents in King Horn because the second disguise episode "does not impress one as original. There was an abundance of popular stories slightly varying from one another, and if one feature found favor it was often duplicated in the same romance by minstrels who thought thus to increase the effect" (62).³ R. M. Wilson (1939), quoted within Kenneth Gadomski's "Narrative Style

in King Horn and Havelock the Dane" (1985), also takes issue with the duplicated rescue episode, again attacking what he sees as a lack of artistry:

Already, in the double rescue of Rimenhild from unwelcome wooers we see the appearance of that duplication of incident which was to prove a godsend to the later writers of romance and a weariness of the flesh to the modern reader. There can be little doubt that the poem was written for an audience who demanded adventure and incident and little more. (134)

But not all critics have viewed this repetition so disapprovingly. Bruce A. Beatie, for example, in "Patterns of Myth in Medieval Narrative" (1971), explains that the "pervasive patterns" in medieval narrative "are related to patterns of myth" (108). Beatie quotes Northrop Frye's Anatomy of Criticism, showing that if we "stand back" from the literature, we can see its mythic patterns or "archetypal organization" which are obscured when we focus in too minutely on details (104).

Beatie does not mention Horn's minstrel disguise, but he does note Horn's two journeys which both end in bridewinning. Here Beatie builds on the research of Theodor Frings and Maxim Braun (1947), who demonstrate that Hermann Marquardt's 1933 "bride-winning" pattern is common in medieval European narrative. The work of Frings and Braun also showed that each text shares a similar structure, namely that "the bride normally had to be won twice: the initial success in winning the bride was nullified by some outside agent or event with the result that the hero had to win, or rescue, the bride a second time" (105).

Beatie also groups King Horn within a more inclusive pattern called the "Husband's Return," typified by or perhaps originating with Odysseus. He states: "In a

general sense, the whole Trojan epic cycle is parallel to the pattern of Rother and King Horn" (107). A comparison between Horn and Odysseus is particularly fitting as we will discover in the chapter seven analysis of the trickster spirit and creative ingenuity. And although Beatie does not focus on the minstrel disguise episodes in medieval narrative, his approach of identifying archetypal organization will benefit this study within its comparative analysis and mapping of minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes in chapters four through six.

Focusing-in more closely on the details of the Horn text, Judith Weiss, in "Thomas and the Earl: Literary and Historical Contexts for the Romance of Horn" (1999), also notes the duplications apparent in Romance of Horn, King Horn, and Horn Childe but believes they occurred through a complicated process of borrowing between Gesta Herwardi and Romance of Horn.

Mary Hynes-Berry in "Cohesion in King Horn and Sir Orfeo" (1975), on the other hand, asks how the double disguise episodes function within the romance. Hynes-Berry also sees the "double climax" not as a flaw in the text or as a lack of artistry (652) but rather cites D.M. Hill's 1957 argument that "the close similarity [of the two disguise episodes in Horn] should make us look more carefully at the meaning of the romance" (658). Although she has trouble with what she calls Hill's "elaborate" symbolic interpretation of the romance, she does appear to agree with Hill that Horn represents the development of the hero from boyhood to manhood in the realms of love and adventure (658). She argues that the love story has precedence over the adventures in war since the "double climax" occurs within this segment of the tale (658). Hynes-Berry also explains that within Horn's construction: "Emphasis is created through controlled repetition of

events rather than elaboration of an idea. The plot of the romance consists of several sets of analogous situations, varied slightly" (658). When tackling Horn's particular disguises, Hynes-Berry notes that the minstrel disguise "calls up a different set of analogues [than the beggar disguise], and testifies to Horn's skill in courtly as well as martial arts" (662). Although she begins fruitfully here with her reference to a set of analogues, she unfortunately never explains what those analogues might be but instead moves on to a replay of more typical statements of the disguise's practicality (662).

Scott also considers how duplication functions within the text. Scott indicates that the poem's repetitions and doublings are intended to make us see the events as unavoidable, as prediction and fulfillment: "This symmetry, like the poem's frequent folktale-like doubling, fulfills expectations by creating, and resolving, suspense through a predictable pairing of events" (48). Scott's evaluation of the duplications as prediction and fulfillment, like Spearing's 1987 work in "Early medieval narrative style," and Hynes-Berry's recognition that emphasis is created through repetition of events, each makes sense in dealing with Horn as a text, reminding us that poems like King Horn have been sculpted in a manner unfamiliar to the modern reader, requiring different reading techniques and expectations. Such studies have aided in the remediation of King Horn's formerly uncertain literary value. Scott's comments on Horn's personal characteristics within "Plans, Predictions, and Promises," however, will have more specific relevance for this study in chapter three within its exploration of King Horn's theme of deception and fidelity.

Turning specifically to the criticism of Sir Orfeo, which is much more bountiful than that of King Horn, we find several lines of thought focusing on Orfeo's harp, the

harmonizing power of music, and issues of kingship, each one melding slightly into the other. Michael D. Bristol, for example, in "The Structure of the Middle English Sir Orfeo" (1970), describes the traditional analogy between cosmic order and musical harmony emphasized within the poem and explains that the image of the king playing a harp symbolizes the ways he motivates his people to embrace a "hierarchical society" (342). After discussing Orfeo's inability to speak to his wife in the hunting procession, he explains: "In rediscovering the importance of speech and music...Orfeo brings his trials to an end and changes his identity back to its original form, becoming a minstrel in the final section" (346). Here Orfeo's disguise and entrance trick is enveloped into a discussion of the greater meaning of music within the romance.

N.H. Keeble in "The Narrative Achievement of Sir Orfeo" (1975) is "tempted" to see the harp as "a symbol of the integrity he has maintained by his self-imposed exile" (199). He interprets the line 'Where-on was al his gle' to: "suggest not only that in his harp he found pleasure and happiness, but that therein lay his sole comfort and stay; and by his harp, by his fidelity and integrity, he will come to final victory" (199).

Keeble makes special mention of the scene at the gate here: "From the heights of splendour we descend to the porter at the gate" (201), arguing that this moment provides a break for the audience before "an altogether opposite response is evoked" (202). Keeble also calls Orfeo's declaration at the gate that he is nothing but a poor minstrel "dramatically ironic" (202), explaining: "Not only, on the simplest level, is he Orfeo the king, but, in adopting the role of a minstrel, he is in fact declaring his true identity. He appeals now not to ten hundred knights but to his harp—his own true self" (202).

David Lyle Jeffrey, in "The Exiled King: Sir Orfeo's Harp and the Second Death of Eurydice" (1976), weaves his analysis around Orfeo as "both an Adam and a Christ," focusing on the symbolism of the *ympe-tre* and the harp (57). According to Jeffrey's research, the symbolism of the harp is significant, containing both classical and Christian associations. It is "the instrument which heals the soul, which 'makeþ the wit sharp,' which entunes man with natural order, which brings him to know himself, the kingly instrument identified with the tree of Calvary, the sacrifice of Christ and even 'holie Scripture and theologie'" (56).

Lee C. Ramsey in Chivalric Romances: Popular Literature in Medieval England (1983) also touches on music's traditional associations with order and harmony. He states: "From a king skilled in harping, Orfeo is reduced to a poor minstrel...and it is in this role that he comes to the greater court of the other world, begs entrance at the gate, and attempts to win back his wife" (154). For Ramsey, Orfeo's harping represents courtliness "and serves as evidence of the hero's innate nobility and courtly accomplishment" (155). And it is courtliness, according to Ramsey, which overcomes "the threats of the world outside the court" (155).

Robert M. Longworth too in "Sir Orfeo, The Minstrel, and the Minstrel's Art" (1982) focuses on the importance of the harp in Orfeo while at the same time exploring the poem's overall treatment of illusion and reality, treating the theme of disguise but never really digging into the disguise moment itself. He does hit on some of the paradox of these disguise heroes when he explains: "The role Orfeo plays—the wandering minstrel—appears to be a disguise, but it is in fact his true vocation" (10). In chapters six and seven, we will examine how this disguise moment explores identity issues and the

breaking of societal conventions by allowing the hero to assume two incompatible identities at once, becoming for a time the contradictory figure of a minstrel-knight.

In this article, Longworth sees disguise as part of an overall pattern of illusion and reality within the poem—Heurodis's dream of the Fairy King "is a kind of disguise worn by reality" (9); the Fairy King's attendants in the hunting party "have the quality of apparitions" (9).⁴ Likewise, the Biblical allusions in the poem have been handled with a "corresponding method of disguise": Heurodis's sleep in the garden is reminiscent of the Song of Songs which "leads not to the fruition of love but to a nightmare in which love is broken by separation" (9, 10); the Fairy palace appears like the Holy City but in fact holds the gruesome remains of the king's victims (10).

In addition to noting this pattern of disguise in the poem, Longworth also points up the important role music itself plays within the romance, with Orfeo's harp in particular at the center of the poem. Longworth cites Jeffrey, stating: "Orfeo's harp has throughout the poem the power to bring into harmony nature, society, and other temporal powers" (8). He explains that the poem moves from the carefully cultivated royal gardens to the stark wilderness, from the comforts of the court to the emptiness of homelessness, and from the ease of everyday activities to the confusion of otherworldliness (8). From the moment Heurodis wakes in the garden, order crumbles into disorder. The only thing that retains its order, according to Longworth, is the poem itself and the music that symbolizes the poem within the story (8). But, finally, when Orfeo and his harp reach the source of the disorder, resolution is found, and order quickly returns: "Orfeo and Heurodis are reunited, the kingdom is restored, and loyalty is rewarded" (8).

Spearing too finds great significance in the minstrelsy and music represented in the text, noting the traditional link between music and cosmic order, while taking little notice of Orfeo's minstrel disguise. He explains that in Orfeo, as in the stories of Orpheus, music "is presented as a magical harmonizing and civilizing power" (79). Spearing also notes the importance of Orfeo's harp: "The poem implies a minstrel performance.... It is also a story about minstrelsy. The hero is a minstrel king, and his sole weapon is his harp, the one civilized object that he takes with him into the wilderness and that is not thereby subsumed into the realm of nature" (79).

Connections between Orfeo and King David have also frequently been noted by the critics. Both Jeffrey and Spearing provide a discussion of music's healing power, including Orfeo's connection to the story of David's soothing harping for Saul. Patrizia Grimaldi (1981), in "Sir Orfeo as Celtic Folk-Hero, Christian Pilgrim and Medieval King," refers to Pierre Bersuire's discussion of Orpheus as both Christ figure and a "type of David, because both were musician-kings" (155). We too will look into the story of King David but will take a different tack, tracing the pattern of his earlier years, and noting the flaw in his otherwise honorable behavior, as a model for the Noble Fosterling hero and story-formula.

The symbolic associations connected with music, particularly those implying magic, certainly play an important role in stories that make use of the minstrel disguise entrance trick, as we will see in chapter five. Additionally, the king's ability to create and maintain order and harmony within his realm is essential and is likely to be reflected in the image of any good king. Thus portraying the hero as a harper king could indeed help to increase the sense of his control, as well as reinforce the feeling that he has been

divinely chosen to lead his people. However, in the Horn and Orfeo disguise incidents the hero is not merely presented as a king or nobleman who has mastered music. Instead, in these moments this same hero is shown using cunning and deception, developing a tricky strategy, in which part of the truth is hidden, in order to achieve a goal made to seem nearly impossible to attain; yet he is able to snatch it almost effortlessly. So although the use of music may help to reinforce his role as God-appointed, order-bringing, well-rounded ruler, the greater emphasis in these disguise episodes is not on this aspect of music but rather on the hero's cunning and skill and his clever use of strategy, issues not explored by these critics.

Another topic that flows into discussions of kingship in this criticism, often overshadowing any mention of Orfeo's first minstrel disguise, is the beggar minstrel disguise and his testing of the steward. For example, A.J. Bliss's 1954 edition of the three texts of Sir Orfeo, which is the standard text, mentions the "impenetrable disguise" Orfeo uses to test his steward (xliii). But of Orfeo's first use of disguise and his entrance at the gate, Bliss writes only: "The remainder of the section, which tells how Orfeo entered the land of fairy and recovered his wife, is narrated quite straightforwardly, with an effective use of dialogue" (xliii).

Dean R. Baldwin, in "Fairy Lore and the Meaning of Sir Orfeo" (1977), notes Orfeo's disguise as beggar-minstrel upon his return from exile, explaining: "The treacherous steward is Thompson motif K2242, while the disguise-testing motifs are Thompson P14.19, L4.10.4, H384.1.1, and K1817, 3; cf. Bordman K1817.3" (142). Although Baldwin does not mention Orfeo's use of disguise for gaining entrance at the Fairy King's gate, it too should fall under Bordman's K1817.3 "Disguise as harper

(Minstrel,)" not to mention Thompson's K2357.1 "Disguise as musician to enter enemy's camp."

A.S.G. Edwards's only mention of disguise in "Marriage, Harping and Kingship: The Unity of Sir Orfeo" (1981) also refers to Orfeo's testing of the steward: "In his own kingdom disguise becomes a manifestation of statesmanship, of re-discovered kingly acumen, obscured earlier in the poem by his preoccupation with Heurodis to the exclusion of his larger responsibilities" (290).

Although critics are generally more interested in Orfeo's testing of the steward disguised as a beggar minstrel than in the minstrel disguise entrance trick at the gates of the Fairy King, these two episodes share several similarities, as J. Burke Severs shows in "The Antecedents of Sir Orfeo" (1961). Severs illustrates that the loss of Heurodis and the loss of the kingdom are balanced by scenes showing the recovery of both (202):

(1) Both [of the recovery scenes]...are laid in a royal court. (2) In both Orfeo comes to court in the guise of a minstrel. (3). In both his appearance in old and ragged clothing plays a part....(6) In both he plays his harp for the ruler, and the playing leads to the climactic incident. (7) In both he employs a strategy of misrepresentation, or at least a withholding of the whole truth, and it is through this exercise of his wit that he proceeds. (201)

As Severs shows, the second use of disguise by Orfeo carefully reflects the first disguise episode. But is this second disguise episode, in which Orfeo tests his steward's loyalty, also a minstrel disguise entrance trick? In the second episode, we are told that Orfeo arrives at a beggar's lodging "As a minstrel of pour liif," (A 486). Next he goes into the city (A 501) and "gan mete" the steward" to whom he cries: "Icham an harpou of

hepenisse: / Help me now in þis destresse!" (A510, 513-14). Out of love for Orfeo, the steward brings him back to the castle where he plays for the court. In this scene, Orfeo is disguised as a minstrel, hiding his true identity and misrepresenting his intentions (which we will discuss more in a moment) and is brought into the castle. But we are never given the scene where he appears at the gate and tries to gain entrance, though this exact scene may not be indispensable to the motif. Likewise, although he is entering a court that may be hostile, another defining feature of this motif, we don't know the court's mood for certain, hence part of the need for the incognito test.

Another important difference in Orfeo's second disguise episode is that we are not given the impression that the hero must use his cunning here against insurmountable odds by entering a compound that is impossible to enter or one in which he is otherwise likely to encounter a formidable fight. It may have been just as possible that, as in Avowing of King Arthur where a minstrel tests the hospitality of the lord, the doors were open to all, so there would be no need to disguise to gain safe entry. Though this use of minstrel disguise may loosely fall under the heading of entrance trick, the emphasis here appears rather to be on Orfeo's use of clever maneuvering to hide his true identity while testing the waters and specifically—as has been amply considered in the literature—while testing the loyalty of this steward. Here again we have a show of the hero's clever intellect and his use of the minstrel disguise to enter what may be enemy territory, but this use of disguise appears to fit better within a motif called the king-in-disguise.

Elizabeth Walsh in "The King in Disguise" (1975) explains that examples of this motif—in which a king visits one of his common subjects in disguise, accepts his hospitality, and rewards him later—"abound in the folklore and literature of every

people” (3). She lists the following tales and segments of tales as examples of the motif: “The Lord Appeared to Abraham by the terebinths of Mamre,” Odysseus’s return to Ithaka, Rauf Coilyear, ‘Alfred and the Cakes,’ the testing of the watchmen in the *Antapodosis* of Liutprand of Cremona (?922-?972), the story of Karl and Vandrath told by Snorri Sturluson (1179-1241) in *Heimskringla*, *Þorsteins Þattr austfirðings*, “*Der Köhler und Kaiser Maximilian II*,” and others. More directly related to the time period and geographical origin of Horn and Orfeo, Walsh considers “King Edward and the Shepherd,” “The Kyng and the Hermit,” “John the Reeve,” and the “King and the Miller.” She states that in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the “motif of the king-in-disguise became the central theme of several romances and a number of ballads” (11). Joseph Harris in “The King in Disguise: An International Popular Tale in Two Old Icelandic Adaptations” (1979) calls the fourteenth century a period that “accords well with the probable time of the greatest popularity” of these stories (76). Harris also notes that the king-in-disguise motif is central in these tales, qualifying them to be considered international popular tales:

the tale embodies the *Allerweltsmotiv* of an incognito king or god among his people but it is itself not merely a common ‘motif’ or ‘theme’ but an articulated narrative that maintains much of its structural identity and many details from one version to another, in short, an international popular tale. (58)

In Orfeo, however, rather than finding an international popular tale, we find only an instance of this motif within the larger story. And although the king-in-disguise motif has received a great deal of critical attention, “disguise is not a vital element in these [king-in-disguise] stories” (Harris 61). Here “The king is unrecognized but not always in

disguise" (58). So, although the steward-testing episode in Orfeo is constructed to balance and mirror the first example of minstrel disguise at the Fairy King's gate, as Severs has shown, the two minstrel disguise episodes artfully reflect two separate motifs, the entrance trick and the king-in-disguise.

Another theme surrounding the entrance trick episode in Orfeo criticism is the rash boon granted to Orfeo for his harp playing and this episode's connections to the Celtic harp and rote episode. Helaine Newstead, in "The Harp and the Rote: An Episode in the Tristan Legend and its Literary History" (1969), cites Schoepperle's work showing that "the scene of the rescue in Sir Orfeo corresponds to the scene of the abduction in the Tristan legend. In both, a harper appears before the king, wins from him an indefinite boon because of his superlative performance on the harp, demands the queen, and obtains her after persuading the king to keep his promise" (469).

Critics who focus on the rash boon often ignore the minstrel disguise at the gate, noting only that Orfeo gained admittance or entered the Fairy King's realm. For instance, Schoepperle states: "He knocks at the gate of the castle and receives admittance. The king, having listened to his harping, declares that he will reward him with anything he may demand" (542).⁵ Nimchinsky explains: "After O. follows his wife to the underground realm of the fairies, he plays his harp before the Fairy King and succeeds in rescuing Heurodis by claiming her as the unspecified boon granted him by the Fairy King as a reward for his minstrelsy" (2). Newstead too seems to ignore this moment entirely stating: "Entering a luminous realm within, he gained admittance to the king's court" (468).

The harp and rote episode is particularly relevant to a study of Sir Orfeo as well as King Horn, but the most interesting part of this story actually comes after the rash boon, in a minstrel disguise entrance trick by Tristan. Here Tristan appears at the Irish knight's camp with an instrument and is welcomed into his enemy's company to entertain them. Once he has played, in two versions of the story he uses his knowledge of the tides, as the knight intends to sail back to Ireland, to gain the opportunity to steal Isolt back. Although Orfeo critics generally focus on the first half of this story, the second half is just as meaningful in that, Orfeo, like Tristan, is actually stealing back his own beloved from someone who first robbed him.⁶ Likewise, the Fairy King's castle, like the Irish knight's camp is obviously enemy territory; in the eyes of the abductors, both Orfeo and Tristan clearly have a hostile purpose for coming. The harp and rote episode, which we will explore more in chapters three and six, with its use of tides also has specific connections with the entrance trick in Horn.

Schoepperle reviews three of the stories we will consider in this study's comparative analysis, Tristan, Sir Orfeo, and Cornac, in her work on the harp and rote episode but never latches onto the recurring minstrel disguise theme here. The closest she comes is mentioning the "display of skill," such as in chess or harp playing, which sometimes occurs in these stories (536). Newstead too mentions another story containing a minstrel disguise entrance trick, Gerbert de Montreuil's *Continuation de Perceval*, which we will also review, but also does not confront the question of the minstrel disguise as a motif in itself. Newstead does examine Tristan's reputation throughout the tradition as a master musician, stating that this aspect of Tristan's character was "powerful enough to attract the Orfeo version of the Celtic abduction plot" (469). But as

the comparative analysis will show, it is typical for these entrance trick heroes to possess a mastery of musical or minstrelsy skills, with the trick being used for a number of purposes beyond rescuing, such as spying, attacking, and stealing.

While evaluating Orfeo's acts in the Fairy King's realm, critics have also pointed to what they consider the hero's use of magic, his descent from mythological gods and goddesses, or his human attributes. Grimaldi, for example, illustrates what she sees as Orfeo's use of magic in the tale. In her discussion of folktale elements in the poem, she considers Orfeo's departure into exile along with his harp, calling the section: "Departure and the acquisition of magical agent: Orfeo leaves home, with a harp that functions as a magical agent (not acquired, since it belongs to the hero)" (149). To this description we might also be tempted to add: (not magical, since Orfeo's power to tame beasts is based on his musical skills). And again in the section covering Orfeo's use of the harp in Fairyland, Grimaldi lists "Indirect combat of hero and villain: The struggle here assumes its mild form in enchantment through the use of the harp" (149). As we have already briefly explored, music itself does traditionally have magical connotations, but clearly Orfeo possesses no truly magical powers or magical "agents," and the texts give us no real evidence that the court or Fairy King has truly been enchanted by Orfeo's harp playing. In fact, it is specifically because he cannot work magic with his harp that he invokes the rash promise in order to win his wife back. Grimaldi does also note that "Orfeo eventually wins Heurodis back not simply because of the power of his music over the fairy king but because the fairy king has given his word" (160).

When we consider the figure of Hermes in chapter five, along with the magical connotations of music, we will also explore the magic associated with trickery and how

the combination of music plus trickery seems to amplify the sense of magic in these entrance trick moments. But however helpful these underlying magical associations may be, as they were in the performance by Taillefer at the Battle of Hastings, actual magic, even when the hero is capable of performing it, is never used to get in the door.

In addition to the critical focus on music and specifically on Orfeo's harp within the poem, scholars often refer to Orfeo's more obvious mythological associations with Orpheus. Newstead, for example, explains: "Since the hero of the Bretonized version [of the classical Orpheus myth] was Orfeo, his musical skill became the method by which he regained his wife" (469). Like Newstead, many critics have compared Orfeo to Orpheus, assuming that Orfeo appears as a minstrel in imitation of his classical counterpart but missing a crucial variation which Severs calls Orfeo's "strategy of misrepresentation" (201):

In place of his frank revelation of who he is and what he wants, as in Ovid, Orfeo hides his identity, elicits through his music a regal rash promise that he may have whatever he desires, then when the king demurs at his choice of Heurodis wins her back by an appeal to the king's sense of honor. (188)

This acknowledgement of Orfeo's use of deception opens the door to a discussion of ingenuity, cunning or wit. And although Severs touches on the heart of the minstrel disguise episode by noting this deviation from tradition in Orfeo, he does not connect Orfeo's use of deception here to other examples of the minstrel disguise such as we find in Horn or, even more relevant in this case, in Tristan's harp and rote episode. Likewise, Hynes-Berry, who quotes Severs's list of correspondences between the two recovery scenes, touches lightly on this strategy of misrepresentation: "The caution with which

Orfeo never admits his real interest in coming to court and his reliance on his wit rather than the Fairy King's sympathy strike us as very sound" (669). Unfortunately, she does not elaborate here on Orfeo's wit.

The fact that Orfeo, breaking with classical tradition, hides his identity in the Otherworld and misrepresents why he has come is significant. Unlike Orpheus, Orfeo (as well as the other minstrel disguise entrance trick heroes) uses an act of deception, of cunning strategy, to trick his opponent into letting him in the door, an essential first step before he can even begin to consider eliciting a rash boon. There are practical reasons for Orfeo to hide his true identity and purpose for coming. For, although he is descended from classical gods and goddesses, Orfeo is mortal. He can tame wild animals when he plays his harp, but he does not possess the same power to enchant with his music as Orpheus. Most telling in this respect is the scene in which Orfeo fails to protect Heurodis by typical measures, emphasizing his relative powerlessness against the Fairy King. Likewise, after Heurodis's abduction, he does not know the location of Fairy, but rather stumbles upon it after following the ladies' hunting party. Keeble, too, explains that because Orfeo must request admission, we are reminded of Orfeo's "apparent rank in contrast to that of his adversary" (202). We are led, then, to expect the acts of a man, not a god, when he enters the Underworld. Edwards too, points up that compared to Orpheus, Orfeo's "powers" are much more limited:

in contrast to the various sources and analogues of the Underworld episode, Orfeo's prowess as harper is distinctly muted. He executes none of the feats found in most of the major versions of the Orpheus/Eurydice legend at this point:

for example, halting Sisyphus' labors or making rivers cease to flow. (Marriage 288)

Orfeo simply does not have the power to mesmerize the Fairy King into performing his will; instead he must work within the framework of a mortal man. Interestingly, we will find that like Orfeo, Horn too is infused with connotations of divinity while possessing no real godly attributes. And in both cases, nestled into these superhuman associations, we find the overriding emphasis on their use of human skill and cunning.

Like Severs and Hynes-Berry, there have been a few other critics who graze across the importance of Orfeo's human cunning. Doreena Allen in "Orpheus and Orfeo: The Dead and the Taken" (1964), for example, does emphasize these qualities in Orfeo. Allen's article shows that according to Celtic tradition, most people who appear to die, particularly those who die prematurely, are actually taken away to Fairyland. Allen therefore argues that Sir Orfeo is the result of the substitution of "taking for death" and of the "sid for Hades: by that change the myth enters into fairy tradition, and upon it the presence of all Sir Orfeo's strange and marvelous detail depends" (109). Allen does not mention the use of cunning or wit until the final section, where she compares Sir Orfeo to the classical myth and quotes the Fairy King's threat to Heurodis:

Upon this sense of danger and unease the poem relies for its strength, for in its subject it has none of the grave yet passionate dignity of the antique myth—to win back the dead requires a love strong enough to overcome the laws of nature, to win back the taken requires only cunning and resolution. (110)

Just before concluding, Allen states: "In Sir Orfeo resource has taken the place of feeling, and the recovery of Heurodis turns upon a short battle of wits between her captor

and her husband" (111). Although Allen does note the importance of cunning and wit at this point in the romance, she too seems to focus most on the rash promise rather than on the disguise and entrance trick motif. Additionally, her comments here seem based more on emotion than on argument and evidence without further exploration of what significance the use of cunning or a battle of wits could have within the greater context of this piece, such as what the use of cunning portrays about Orfeo's human qualities as a hero, lover, or king in the face of seemingly unconquerable supernatural powers. And, unfortunately, Allen's tone in these two quotes makes Orfeo seem a slightly tarnished reinterpretation next to the deeper and more powerful Orpheus myth.

But even when scholars seem to agree that Orfeo is operating with human powers, arguments ensue over which characteristics are most relevant in the poem. For example, while Allen notes Orfeo's cunning and resolution, Keeble sees "courage, resolution, and integrity" (203) as the keys to Orfeo's success. Keeble explains that "where brute force failed (albeit chivalric force!) individual courage and integrity may succeed" (202). Because he sees the poem revolving as a whole around the concept of integrity, he takes issue with Allen's emphasis on Orfeo's cunning, explaining that this attitude does "less than justice to the import of the scene in the context of the whole narrative" (203).

Edwards, on the other hand, in "'Sir Orfeo,' 458-471" (1972), questions Orfeo's honor in light of his neglected duties as king—his abdication for purely personal, selfish reasons and thus emphasizes the irony of Orfeo's plea that the Fairy King remain true to his kingly honor while we are aware of Orfeo's previous failures as king (198). He states: "In endeavouring to define the duties of king in a way favorable to his role in disguise,

Orfeo provides the audience with criteria for an assessment of his conduct in the past" (198).

Baldwin perhaps does not consider this a full-fledged disguise moment, but he does acknowledge Orfeo's ingenuity here too, noting: "Cleverly, he talks his way past the porter (ll. 379-386) and convinces the fairy king that he is no more than he seems—a poor minstrel seeking employment (ll. 429-434)" (142). Baldwin mentions Orfeo's clever behavior but misses the motif through which it is conferred.

By 1989, however, Spearing brings the discussion back to a more concrete idea of cunning or human ingenuity, explaining: "Sir Orfeo is about a kind of therapy; at the same time it is itself therapeutic, in giving its audience an implicit understanding of how human courage and cunning can suffice to overcome powers and dangers that we do not fully understand" (82). Spearing hits close to the mark here but does not explore the idea of cunning any further than this one comment. And concerning Orfeo's use of disguise, he states only: "He told the porter that he was a minstrel who had come to entertain his lord, and was admitted" (57).

We can see in the different focuses of Sir Orfeo research that there is a mingling of the magical, the divine, and the human within the poem. And in fact, we see a similar interplay in other minstrel disguise entrance trick tales, which in all cases nevertheless maintain their emphasis on the human power of ingenuity. We will follow these threads in chapters five and six to explore the magical and divine associations embedded into this motif.

Cropp's article "The Disguise of '*Jongleur*'" (1986), which is the first of the two studies focusing specifically on the minstrel disguise, also alludes to the use of cunning

or trickery but never notes the minstrel disguise entrance trick although it or a variant appears in six of the stories she discusses. Through her brief analysis of the minstrel disguise in twelfth and thirteenth century texts stemming mainly from the north of France or Anglo-Norman regions, she hopes to "establish the stock features of the *jongleur*-disguise episode and to discern associations with major narratives" (37). We will examine some of Cropp's stock features in chapter four's introduction to the comparative analysis.

Cropp begins by outlining the folk motifs she sees in *jongleur* or minstrel disguise episodes but does not mention K2357.1 "disguise as musician to enter enemy's camp."⁷ She does appear to recognize that the situation is the same in the entrance trick episodes occurring in Romance of Horn and Daurel and Beton: "the stratagem of Daurel and Beton recurs here [in Romance], but without the same preparation of the characters and description," (41) but she does not pick up on the entrance trick motif here. In her search for analogues, she states that the minstrel disguise has certain connections with Orpheus and Tristan tales and even mentions Orfeo in connection with the second half of Tristan's harp and rote episode, where Tristan steals Isolt back from the Irish knight by appearing as a minstrel, but again misses the entrance trick motif. Here she does note the "power of his [Tristan's] harp playing, and his cunning" but explains: "Unarmed but not disguised, Tristan presents himself as a harper and minstrel" (44). A comparison of entrance trick episodes will uncover, however, that sometimes a minstrel disguise can consist of nothing more than a statement by the character calling himself a minstrel, backed up with excellent performing skills.

Cropp does appear, however, to be tuned into the importance of cunning in minstrel disguise episodes when she states that trickery "underlines...the distinct character and function of the *jongleur* disguise as a narrative unit" (44). But she then goes on to minimize its importance by relegating it to a meaningless moment of deception in the case of short, stand-alone episodes or an aspect of plot construction to create or enhance the denouement in longer, closely integrated episodes:

The division of the examples into two groups distinguishable structurally by length (with the exception of [Romance of] Horn), by relation to the overall narrative structure and by retention or dropping of the disguise permits us to conclude that the short episodes are principally a stratagem and a piece of deception, whereas the longer episodes, more closely integrated into the narrative, lead (with the exception of Gerart in the *Roman de la Violette*) to a dramatic revelation of the *jongleur*'s true identity, which surprises, and probably delights, the person who has been deceived. (45)

Although Cropp uses Sir Orfeo as an example of the links these stories have with Orpheus and Tristan tales, Orfeo does not fit this model. In Orfeo, this short episode is closely integrated into the narrative. Yet despite the close integration, there is no dramatic unmasking for the person who has been deceived. And if there had been, I am fairly certain the Fairy King would not have been delighted. Cropp has not taken into consideration what the shorter, non-integrated episodes (as well as the longer, more central ones) contribute to the development of the character's personality traits within the story, specifically what the use of this trick demonstrates about the hero and his abilities. And of course, by missing the minstrel disguise entrance trick motif and minimizing the

importance of the use of cunning in these disguise moments, Cropp misses the opportunity to explore the motif's trickster connections as well as what possible cultural or anthropological significance may be associated with heroes of this special nature, though a deeper analysis than determining stock features and identifying analogues was not her stated purpose in this short article.

As one of her stock features of the *jongleur* disguise, Cropp lists the following statement: "for all the characters, the secrecy and protection furnished by the disguise are important" (43). And she concludes by explaining: "concealment of the real person, who is usually a major character in the work, outweighs ruse and deceit" (46). But we may discover that in cases of the minstrel disguise entrance trick, cunning and trickery are even more central than secrecy and protection.

Marilyn Lawrence's dissertation, "Minstrel Disguise in Medieval French Narrative: Identity, Performance, Authorship," is another study focusing on the French episodes of minstrel disguise, but here the texts span the late-twelfth to the early fifteenth centuries and include *Folie Tristan* (Oxford), Gerbert de Montreuil's *Continuation de Perceval*, branch Ib *Roman de Renart*, *Ysaye le Triste*, and *Le Chevalier du Papegau*. Lawrence, like Cropp, does not mention or discuss the minstrel disguise entrance trick motif. Within each of the four studies, which rather than providing one extended, in-depth study are separated by chapter into four distinct shorter articles, Lawrence considers how the authors use minstrel disguise to "establish a character's identity as a lover or a knight"; to "define a character's true identity as a powerful narrator"; to "construct a character's identity as a writer and to highlight the craft of the author over

that of the performer"; and finally to "exaggerate particular traits and functions of the literary minstrel figure" (11, 12, 13).

In a concept similar to what we will find in Black's work, Lawrence attempts to show authorial intent, explaining: "Gerbert explicitly express [sic.] the danger of play with identity in a culture and society built on strict, hierarchical definitions of and delineation between identities" (59). She states that Perceval, who interacts with a disguised Tristan in *Continuation*, "makes explicit the danger of disguise and the foolish and dishonorable nature of violation of boundaries between identities" (60). But we will find that heroes who disguise as minstrels and perform entrance tricks are most generally portrayed in a favorable light, despite any negative reactions from convention-bound characters such as Perceval.

Within this discussion, Lawrence calls the identity-play in *Folie* and *Continuation* a "blurring" of boundaries (52). In her introduction, she explains: "In minstrel disguise, issues of identity are magnified because a character assumes the mask of the protean minstrel, a shape shifter and boundary crosser who epitomizes ambiguity and plurality of identity" (1). We will explore, however, that rather than a blurring of boundaries or an ambiguity of identity, minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes in general illustrate the intersection of two specific incompatible identities, that of knight and minstrel. The result of this intersection is not a blend; rather, each hero is both fully knight and fully minstrel at the same time—a vexing paradox that does indeed cross societal boundaries but one which most often results in the positive resolution to a considerable problem.

Based on Lawrence's statement invoking the "protean minstrel," the "shape shifter and boundary crosser," it appears that her discussion will connect the minstrel disguise

with a study of the trickster, but that is not the case. Instead, shape shifting here refers to the fact that minstrels lack any exclusive identity signifiers marking them as minstrels: "The conception of the minstrel differs from author to author, and opposing images of the minstrel can even co-exist within a single narrative" (28). In fact, Lawrence finds that "Because no one sign universally identifies the minstrel *qua* minstrel across all narratives, it is ultimately the author's use of the term "menestrel" or "jogleor" that signifies to the reader that the mask a character dons is unquestionably that of a minstrel" (39), but we will explore this idea more in chapter four. And although Lawrence does not consider the differing minstrel traditions, she does determine that the best definition for the medieval minstrel is "professional performer," which we will see does fit minstrels in this motif who perform both musical and non-musical entrance tricks.

Lawrence does note that Tristan is a trickster and that her chapter two, "Disguise and Domination: The Storyteller's Verbal *Jonglerie* in 'Renart jongleur'" will focus on another "well known trickster," Renart the Fox (61). She also mentions the various disguises of Tristan, as well as Fouke and John de Rampayne in *Fouke le Fitz Waryn*, among examples of trickster tale characters, explaining: "Because disguise is by definition a form of dissimulation that in itself enables further deceit, authors of trickster narratives... frequently structure stories of deception around disguise" (62). And yet Lawrence includes no discussion of the trickster or his specific relevance to the minstrel disguise. Instead, echoing Cropp's emphasis on secrecy and protection, and Black's concern for authorial intent, Lawrence states: "The trickster's need to keep his identity secret in order to pursue objectives that political, religious, or social statutes forbid often

leads him to rely on disguise. Trickster narratives tend, therefore, to be rich targets for analysis of authorial construction of and experimentation with identity" (63).

Her almost two-page conclusion can provide only one overall finding for the minstrel disguise—the image of a minstrel has changed throughout time but always seems to portray a performer who brings festivity:

The variety in our authors' use of minstrel disguise as a literary theme and device indeed reflects changing trends in historical minstrelsy and shifts in society's attitude towards the minstrel. However, despite such echoes of the historical and social climate in which our works were composed, our narratives nonetheless persist in representing the minstrel as a performer who brings his fellow characters joy and amusement. (177)

This conclusion that minstrels are bringers of joy is also one of the observations I make when comparing multiple examples of the minstrel disguise entrance trick. In my work, however, it is viewed on one level as one of the many practical features making this disguise effective for its user. On another level, however, the minstrel's role as joy bringer is at the very heart of the motif's paradoxical meaning. Indeed we will see that in these episodes, the enemy's expectation of joy and celebration from these minstrels is very often fulfilled instead with sorrow through his contradictory use of extreme force.

Both Lawrence and Cropp, the two studies most directly related to this research, consider the minstrel disguise in multiple medieval texts but focus mainly on only French or Anglo-Norman literature, examining the disguise broadly in its many forms and uses. These two studies, neither of which handles the minstrel disguise entrance trick, provide

a useful overview but not a great deal of depth to understanding what the minstrel disguise can tell us.

Debra Black's "Anagnorisis: Revealing Didactic Purpose in the Use of Disguise in Middle English Romances" (1998) brings us to our discussion of general studies of disguise. Such disguise research, as we will see, very often focuses on the nature of identity and how disguise is used in this literature to hide, enhance or generally alter identity. Black's study, specifically, considers fifteen Middle English verse romances dating from c. 1225 to c. 1500 to determine the didactic purpose these poets may have had in their use of disguise and incognito. She explains that using disguise in the romances works to move plot, as we have already ascertained, and also to entertain the audience. But her main focus goes beyond the surface level to explore how poets use disguise and incognito to reinforce established class and gender boundaries. She argues that the use of disguise in the romances reflects a society in transition in which the traditional hierarchies are being tested and class boundaries are being crossed, chiefly by the wealthy new merchant class. She demonstrates that during what she considers didactic uses of disguise, a character from the upper class takes on the identity of someone from the lower classes and, importantly, despite the disguise continues to exhibit noble traits—in other words, true inner nobility cannot help but show through the false lower class exterior. In her introduction, Black states decisively: "In all cases [of the fifteen texts selected for closer analysis] the anagnorisis re-affirms the justness of the traditional hierarchies based on class and gender" (6).

Although disguise does appear to allow characters to cross class and gender boundaries, the opposite of Black's thesis concerning the didactic intent of such boundary

crossing cannot entirely be ruled out. She states: "In all of the plots examined that use disguise, the original status is restored as a reaffirmation of the ideology behind the questioned power structure, and the status quo of traditional order is restored" (236). But it may be just as likely or even more likely that the poets are using the safe environment of the romance, with a happy and seemingly appropriate ending, within which to seriously engage issues of change. Black addresses this counter-side briefly in her conclusion, explaining that the poets address society's unrest or anxiety by providing an instance of the carnivalesque, through which characters are allowed to reverse positions in play but that the poets do not allow for a serious look at such reversals. As evidence, she posits the fact that these reversals generally provide the opportunity for social mobility only to the upper class, which indicates that changes in social class are not appropriate for the lower classes. In closing this discussion, Black states: "the verse romance poets are hardly advocates for change" (238).

Attempting to define an author's ideology, however, is a complicated business. Susan Crane underscores the problems associated with this task in her 1997 discussion of medieval selfhood in "Knights in Disguise: Identity and Incognito in Fourteenth-Century Chivalry," which we will consider in a moment. Crane states that chivalric literature seems to define individual identity in a very different way than scholarly, religious writing. She explains that identity or the idea of a selfhood is "ideologically conditioned":

identity might be multiform even in one era, differently configured, for example, in clerical and secular circles or in popular and elite ones. These circles interpenetrate, of course, in chivalric literature itself, where authors' clerical or

reformist impulses cannot be fully disentangled from their representations of an ideology specific to chivalric practice. (65)

And Richard Kaeuper in "The Societal Role of Chivalry in Romance: Northwestern Europe" (2000) even goes so far as to call romance "a literature of debate, criticism, reform" (99):

As the practice and ideal code of the dominant strata of lay society for roughly half a millennium...[chivalry] became the framework for debate about how the dominant laypeople should live, love, govern, fight, and practice piety—real issues with real consequences. Romance literature, one of the major purveyors of chivalric ideals, thus becomes the locus of debate about such basic social issues.... (99)

So Black's declaration that the "original status is restored as a reaffirmation of the ideology behind the questioned power structure, and the status quo of traditional order is restored," (236) appears to be an over-simplification of the matter. One thing is certain, the audience can read its own agenda into any didactic element, regardless of what the author's original intent may have been, if it were even possible to determine authorial intent. But Black does appear to be correct in her assessment that the anxieties of the upper classes during this time are perhaps being played out within the confines of the romances. And instances of disguise do indeed allow for the exploration of these issues, whatever position the individual poets may have supported. We will consider the potential for real change unleashed through the breaking of the societal boundaries later within a discussion of creativity and the trickster.

Susan Crane also explores issues of identity and selfhood in “Knights in Disguise,” dealing specifically with “protagonists [who] adopt plain or fabricated arms in combat, often just for the space of a decisive tournament” (66). Crane focuses here on how during this period renown could be the basis for a type of individual identity, deriving from “public judgment” (65). She explains how disguise plays into the formation of this identity:

The pivotal function of chivalric incognito, then, is to establish or revise the perception of others concerning the disguised knight’s merits. That is, incognito is not significantly self-concealing and self-protecting, but the reverse: the disguised knight draws the curious and judgmental eye and stands clear of his past to be measured anew. Moreover, the full semiosis of incognito requires that the knight complete his adventure by giving up the disguise and incorporating the renown he has won into his earlier identity. (70)

Horn’s use of incognito while he fights in Ireland as Cutberd, as well as when he lands for the first time on the shores of Westernesse, does seem to fit Crane’s thesis. He, in effect, fights under a “plain” shield upon his arrival in Westernesse and a “fabricated” shield when he assumes the fictitious identity of Cutberd. In addition to providing a form of protection for himself, through which he can identify his enemies before they identify him, here Horn wants to make his own name as a man, a warrior, and finally a king, rather than simply relying on his heritage.

Jonna Kjaer’s paper “Disguise and Communication in the French Verse Tradition of the Tristan Legend” (1985-86) also explores issues of identity but more importantly to this study, touches on the role of music in the Tristan corpus. In a secondary set of

Tristan myths, (those Kjaer considers “interpretations of the texts in the primary group”) “*Lai du Chievrefoil* by Marie de France, two interpolations in *Le Donnei dez Amanz*...and Gerbert’s *Continuation de Perceval*,” she identifies the key theme of music. In *Chievrefoil*, Tristan becomes a “harp-playing poet,” in *Donnei* he “sings like a nightingale,” and in *Continuation* he disguises himself as a minstrel (51). Kjaer points out that in all of these episodes, “Isolde either knows his identity beforehand or she recognizes him by his voice or other features despite his disguise,” while Marc never recognizes Tristan’s true identity (51). Kjaer interprets this to mean that “music functions as an exclusive language which permits the lovers to communicate, so to speak, beyond society. In all versions of the myth, music represents Tristan and Isolt’s intimacy and the specific autonomous world of their mutual love” (52).

Is this true of *King Horn* or *Sir Orfeo*? Does music represent a form of intimate communication between the lovers in these texts? When Horn finally reaches Rimenhild in the second rescue episode, all three texts explain that Horn sings, Rimenhild cries, and then she swoons: “He makede Rymenhilde lay, / & heo makede walaway. / Rymenhild feol yfwo3e” (C 1477-79). Schofield argues that Horn, like Tristan in Gottfried's rote and harp episode, reveals his identity to Rimenhild through familiar lays (60). However, these lines in *Horn* are ambiguous. This passage could mean either that Rimenhild recognizes Horn by his song, and the emotion and relief are too much for her, causing her to swoon, or it could mean that she is perhaps merely reminded of Horn. His long absence along with her unwanted marriage to Fikenhild is too much for her to bear, and she swoons. In either case, whether music represents a secret language operating here between the two is possible but not explicit.

But even if not specifically music, some form of an “exclusive language” or means of communication between the lovers may indeed be functioning in Horn. Hynes-Berry also touches on this possibility, drawing on the associations between music and harmony. She says: "Horn's disguise as a minstrel is not used to test Rymenhild's love, but to produce a manifestation of it; music is an appropriate symbol of the harmony between them that will prevail over all treachery" (659).

But even more fruitful areas in Horn to search for an exclusive language may include the ring given to Horn by Rimenhild or the dreams had by both lovers. In fact, Hynes-Berry notes that the ring becomes a "literal symbol of love and recognition" in the Mody and Fikenhild disguise episodes and that its magical powers are downplayed to accentuate it as a symbol of Horn and Rymenhild's love and the power of that love (660-61). Likewise, Hynes-Berry explains that Horn's symbolic dream "results from the close spiritual union between them" (661). But we can also see that images from Rimenhild's fishing dream, along with Horn's name and the ring, become the intimate language through which Horn communicates hints of his identity to Rimenhild at the Mody wedding. The two fishing dreams, as we will explore in the next chapter, are also part of the sea-threat theme running throughout the poem.

Sir Orfeo, on the other hand, does not appear to use an exclusive form of communication between the two, in this case married, lovers. For example, when Orfeo arrives at the castle in the land of Fairy, Heurodis is asleep: “Þer he seiȝe his owen wiif, / Dame Heurodis, his lef liif, / Slepe vnder an ympe-tre: / Bi her cloþes he knewe þat it was he” (A 405-8). The Harley and Ashmole texts uphold this reading. “By her glowes he wȝst it was sche” (H 378). “Be hyr clothys he hyr knew” (B 395). Although he

recognizes her clothes, this cannot be called an exclusive form of communication since anyone who saw her the day of her disappearance would more than likely recognize her gown again. There is no further mention of Heurodis's actions until Orfeo has played, won her back, and they are about to leave: "His wiif he tok bi þe hond / & dede *him* swiþe out of þat lond" (A 473-74).

Heurodis does, however, recognize Orfeo while she is part of the hunting party before he arrives at the castle to rescue her:

3ern he biheld hir, & sche *him* eke,
 Ac noiþer to oþer a word no speke,
 For messais þat sche on *him* seiþe,
 Þat had ben so riche & so heiþe.
 Þe teres fel out of her eiþe. (A 323-27)

At this point in the story, Orfeo has been in exile for ten years and looks like a wildman. He is "barfot" (A 232); his body is "oway duine" (A 261), and his beard has grown to his "girdel-stede" (A 266). When Orfeo approaches the Fairy King, it is this wild appearance coupled with his harp and musical prowess and the fact that he calls himself a "pouer menstrel" (A 430) that constitute his disguise as minstrel. Presumably Heurodis is accustomed to seeing Orfeo with his harp, so for her that is no disguise. It is his appearance as wildman that is alien for her. She is shocked to see how he has changed, fallen from the position of king to that of wretched exile. Yet despite this complete reversal in his position and appearance, she knows him immediately. His subjects and the Fairy King, on the other hand, as in the king-in-disguise tales, do not recognize him at all.

It seems unlikely that Heurodis's recognition of Orfeo is associated with his music or any other token that is exclusive between the two. Instead, the most relevant theme here seems to be his reversal in fortune. The text says she wept to see this man, who had once been so rich and mighty, now in such discomfort, reflecting here the Boethian theme of Fortune's wheel. Heurodis apparently loves Orfeo as a man, not just as a king, since her recognition of him does not depend on his role or position of power. Orfeo and Heurodis, therefore, although very close emotionally, do not seem to use an intimate form of communication.

Morgan Dickson, in "Verbal and Visual Disguise" (2000), also considers the connections between disguise and identity in *Folie Tristan*, *Romance of Horn*, *Ipomedon*, and *Gesta Herwardi* and concludes that "disguise is used to examine the nature and eventually the integrity, of a character's identity" (41). She explains that a character's identity is made up of both exterior and interior facets. In addition to the interior self, the external qualities of physical appearance and social status are important factors determining identity. Dickson asserts, therefore, that disguise allows a character to remove the self from the position he normally holds in society, thus allowing him the freedom to define himself and then reveal this definition to society. Dickson explains that in the pilgrim disguise in *Romance of Horn*,

the adoption of a disguise allows the hero to exist in society without the expectation that he should behave as a knight, which paradoxically allows him to prove conclusively that he belongs essentially and exclusively to the morally rigorous class of knighthood which he claims for his own. By proving, while in disguise, that the interior identity of the self adheres to the social identity that the

knight would like to claim, once he has shed his disguise the knight is able to claim that identity unequivocally. (53)

Although there may indeed be some validity to Dickson's argument concerning the use of disguise in general, in the specific case of these minstrel disguise entrance tricks, the emphasis is rather on the character's internal resources and appears to be one vehicle to illustrate the special qualities these heroes possess which make them superior to other champions. And although Dickson does note several tales in which the hero disguises himself as a harper to enter an enemy camp to spy or to communicate with a princess or queen, she does not explore the idea further.

In this review of the criticism of disguise, including both general studies as well as those focusing specifically on King Horn and Sir Orfeo, we can see that the minstrel disguise entrance trick motif has not yet been investigated. Likewise, the minstrel disguise episodes in Horn and Orfeo have not been seriously reviewed, indicating a need for this study. Additionally, the greater part of the relevant research that has been done focuses on Sir Orfeo rather than on King Horn. And one critic, Spearing, even questions the general validity of much of the existing Sir Orfeo criticism: "There has been much scholarly commentary on Sir Orfeo (far more than on King Horn); some of it illuminating, but much seems to be based on false interpretive premises, and actually to function as a barrier to the reader's response" (66). Although critics may have found Orfeo as the proverbial mirror to their own souls, their discussions have provided us a starting point from which to consider the entrance trick in Orfeo. With Horn, on the other hand, there is simply less critical material in existence to look at and work with. For this

reason, the next chapter will provide a closer look at the entrance trick episode in King Horn, allowing us the necessary entry into this romance.

Notes

¹ As I did not have access to a translation of this text, I had this portion translated by Quintus, P.O. Box 320, Keysoe, BEDFORD MK44 2ZU, United Kingdom.

² Nimchinsky also examines how Horn's beggar disguise episode corresponds with Orfeo's beggar-minstrel disguise scene. In both of these scenes there is an exchange of clothes with a beggar, and each hero uses the disguise to test another's loyalty—Horn tests Rimenhild, and Orfeo tests the steward. Additionally, both heroes make use of a recognition token—Rimenhild's ring and Orfeo's harp (9-11).

³ Although Schofield doesn't say so, he may have been reacting here to the theory by Ward concerning corruption in the text. Hall states in 1901 that "...as Mr. Ward suggests (Catalogue, i. p. 448), [hypothetical version A—a non-extant common original of our three versions may] have added the King Mody episode, and thus duplicated Horn's disguises and rescues of Rimenhild" (xi). The King Mody episode is Horn's disguise number one as beggar. If Schofield believes the appearance of two disguise episodes to be a corruption, not contained in the "original" version, it would explain his irritation. Some careless scribe or poor writer spoiled his thesis, causing us to doubt that King Horn is a true narrative. However, we can work only with the extant texts we possess and not with hypothetical common originals we surmise could have once existed.

⁴ Longworth appears to build on part of an argument made by James F. Knapp in "The Meaning of Sir Orfeo" (1968). Knapp also points out the "theme of illusion and reality" in Orfeo, while chastising Bruce Mitchell for claiming in 1964 that the grim catalogue of Otherworld inhabitants was not part of the original poem (270). He explains

that this description of horrors, coming after the unparalleled beauty of the palace itself, "constitutes a powerful and significant ironic contrast" (271).

⁵ In her defense, Schoepperle apparently did not possess an adequate edition of the poem while performing her study for this 1913 text. She states in a note: "I have had access only to the edition of Ritson, Ancient English Metrical Romances, London 1802, II" (541).

⁶ Newstead notes that in the Tristan harp and rote episode, "the Orfeo theme is attached to the abduction rather than the rescue; but it is echoed in the rescue of Isolt since Tristan wins her back by playing the rote, a similar instrument" (469).

⁷ Cropp finds the following motifs in the *jongleur* disguise:

the lover who assumes a disguise in order to gain access to the lady he loves, the lover or princely suitor masked as a minstrel, the disguise of a woman as a man, and the hero's disguised return as typified by that of Odysseus disguised as a beggar, but it also has connections with the stories of Merlin, Orpheus and Tristan. (36)

We do see elements of these motifs in Horn and Orfeo's uses of the minstrel disguise—each hero dons the disguise "to gain access to the lady he loves." Horn is a "lover... masked as a minstrel" when he goes to save Rimenhild from her second unwanted wedding. Orfeo and Horn both perform "the hero's disguised return." And finally, Orfeo of course has connections with the story of Orpheus.

CHAPTER 3

“WIF NONE GINNE”: HORN'S CUNNING AND THE TIDES OF FIKENHILD'S TOWER

The minstrel disguise episode in King Horn has elicited a variety of critical reactions. From statements of inartistic craftsmanship, visions of true-life nobility slipping about with harp in hand, and images of an overwhelmed hero undertaking his last-chance option, critical commentary later moves to explanations of efficient plot development—mobility, security, proximity and anonymity for the hero. Many critics have noted other tales containing comparable entrance trick disguise scenes. Critics have also identified the second bridal rescue episode as part of typical mythic or folktale patterning. But few scholars have stopped to thoroughly examine this scene, examining its design and function within the poem.

Clearly this second disguise episode in Horn is an example of the minstrel disguise entrance trick motif or Stith Thompson's K2357.1 "Disguise as musician to enter enemy's camp." Chapters four through six will compare multiple examples of such episodes to determine the defining features of this motif. But in the meantime, this chapter will look more closely at this scene in King Horn, beginning with the nature of Horn's challenge, Fikenhild's impossible-to-enter tower. We move next to an exploration of how the description of this castle functions within the poem as a whole, and will then consider the special features of this tower in detail, and finally end with a comparison of another minstrel disguise episode that also makes clever use of the tides.

In this second disguise episode, Horn returns from Suddenne to find Fikenhild's newly constructed tower, which he must access to save Rimenhild. In L and C manuscripts, Apulf's cousin Arnoldin explains that "Ne mai þer come inne / Noman wiþ · none · ginne" (C1455-56). If no one may enter this castle, with *none ginne*, what exactly is a *ginne*? Allen glosses the words *wiþ ginne* as "by means of siege engines (mangonel, arbalast, etc)...[Aphetic form of OF *engin*]" (KH 382). Based on this line, it would seem fairly clear that the castle is formidable, but what do we really know about this structure?

Rather than as a reference to war machines, Dunn and Byrnes gloss *no gynne* as "any stratagem," in their edition of Horn (L text, Harley Miscellany) (148). Joseph Hall, although citing the French origin *engin*, glosses *ginne* as "device, artifice" (207), which appears to imply trickery or ingeniousness. It is important to note that as soon as Arnoldin has finished speaking to Horn in this passage, the C manuscript narrator tells us that Horn is very clever: "Horn cuþe al þe lifte / Þat eni man of wifte" (C1459-60). The University of Michigan's online Middle English Dictionary (MED) provides the following definitions for *list(e)*, with *listes* as the plural:

- (a) Dexterity, adroitness; ability, skill; cleverness, cunning...
- (b) an instance of adroitness or cunning; a skill, an art; trick, stratagem;
- (c) a device, design; token; (McSparran).

As the narrator here is describing Horn's attributes or abilities, definitions (a) and (c) seem the most appropriate. Likewise, Hall glosses C manuscript's *liste* as "cunning, craft" (214). L reads "Horn couþe alle þe liftes" (1479), which according to Hall means "accomplishments" (214). But as the plural to *liste*, we may read *listes* as something like "skills," with the connotation toward mental skill, quickness, clever abilities, or

resourcefulness that we find in the words "dexterity" and "adroitness." We are told early in the tale after all that Horn has the best understanding of the boys: "He was þe faireste / & of wit þe beste" (C173-74).

O text is formulated a little differently, containing the words "herkenede alþe lyfte" (1506). According to Hall this means that Horn "took all the advice that his companions offered" (174), apparently because of the addition of *herkenede*, which implies that Horn listened to the clever ideas of his men. However, if we consider the next line, which is the same in all three manuscripts, "Þat any man of wifte" (O1507), we see that Horn is not taking heed of just the advice of his companions, but rather he takes heed of all possible clever ideas. In other words, he is aware of (has listened, learned and taken in) all the tricky plans or strategies anyone could try. In fact, each text explains that Horn "in herte laȝte" (243), "caught in his heart," all that he was taught.¹ And indeed, by the time Horn arrives at Fikenhild's tower, he has well surpassed the abilities of his teacher—who was instructed to "tech him alle þe lifes / þat þou euer wyfeste" (239-40)—by actually knowing as much as any man could. This announcement of Horn's rich resources signals to the audience that despite the fact that no other man could figure a way to get in, Horn has the cunning ability or creative resourcefulness to come up with a *ginne* for entering the castle.

The MED lists four definitions for the word *ginne* in addition to its use as a surname, noting Old French as the word's origin²:

1. Inventive talent, ingenuity, cleverness, skill; also, skill in magic or occult science....

2. (a) A means of effecting a purpose, an expedient, scheme....
 (b) clever policy, strategy; trickery, treachery....
 (c) a clever scheme, stratagem; a trick, ruse, wile....
3. (a) An ingenious device or contrivance; a ship; a mechanical contrivance, machine; an instrument....a hoist, crane....
4. *Mil.* (a) A machine or structure used in assaulting or defending fortifications, a siege machine or tower....
 (b) a siege machine for throwing missiles....?a weapon of personal combat....
 (McSparran)

Essentially, within this episode *ginne* could mean any of the above. Arnoldin's statement could mean that no one can enter the castle by any means, including ingenuity, scheme, strategy, trickery, an ingenious device, or by siege machine. In other words, according to Arnoldin, there is no way to get in. In chapter five's exploration of the entrance trick, we will learn that the Homeric Greek term for trick is used interchangeably with the word for technical skill and that both have connotations of magic. We see this same three-prong meaning in *ginne*'s first definition, which combines cleverness, skill, and magic.

When we compare the problem and the solution in L and C texts, we find lock and key in the concept of cunning. That is, for the problem of the castle for which no *ginne* (no possible ingenious scheme) is good enough, the poet offers us Horn's possession of the ultimate *list(e)*, (the most ingeniousness possible in a man). Both the problem and the solution focus on the necessity or desirability of clever cunning. But the problem is shown to require in the term *ginne* not only human cunning and skill but also possibly magic. Yet both problem and solution also focus on human ability; we are told

no man may enter there with any kind of clever scheme and then reassured that Horn has the greatest cunning ability of any man. But will the best powers of a man be enough to enter where no man apparently can? Almost in answer to this question, the very next line has Horn bringing out his harp, and the disguise episode begins. Horn and his men are welcomed into the castle, without the violence of his attempt as palmer. His immediate success then leads us to wonder if perhaps the minstrel disguise offers its hero something that pushes beyond human ability? In chapters five and six, we will consider the human, magical and divine associations contained in the minstrel disguise entrance trick and perhaps learn how this archetypal moment could contain the extra boast necessary for Horn to enter where no man can. For now, however, let us return to Horn's impossible challenge.

As we discussed, in L and C manuscripts Arnoldin warns Horn that no man may enter Fikenhild's tower with no *ginne*. And in each of the texts, Horn appears with his ultimate *liftes*, *lyfte*, or *lifte* to do the job. But in O text, rather than pointing to the inadequacy of all possible *ginne*, Arnoldin focuses on exactly why no one may enter the tower, explaining: "Þer may no man on legge / By paþe ne by brigge" (O1502-03), meaning that the tower is not possible to approach by path or by bridge. In Weiss's translation of an earlier variant of the Horn story, Thomas's 1170 Romance of Horn, Wikele's castle is "very fine and strong; he made it of stone and cement in an impregnable spot" (115). In King Horn, however, what was earlier merely an impregnable spot has now become a position surrounded by the sea: "Strong caftel he let fette, / Mid féé him biflette" (C1395-96). Each of the three manuscripts gives a

corresponding description of the tower's construction and positioning:

Ston he dude lede
 Þer he hopede fpede.
 Strong caftel he let fette,
 Mid féé him biflette. (C1393-1396)

Although each of the texts confirms the castle's stone construction, L and O manuscripts actually omit the word "strong," emphasizing water as the castle's main defensive feature: "Caftel he made fette / wiþ water by flette" (L1411-12); "A kafel he dude fefte / Wit water alby fette" (O1444-45)

The narrator continues in C and L by explaining that the tower is reachable only by bird in flight: "Þer ne miȝte liȝte / Bute foȝel wiþ fliȝte" (C1397-98).³ In the first of two such references, O explains more concretely that the tower is not reachable by path or by bridge: "Miȝt no man hon on legge / By paþe ne by brigge" (1446-47), occurring once in the initial castle description and then again later in Arnoldin's speech with Horn (1502-03).

Logically, though, the tower must be accessible somehow; Fikenhild must have a way in and a way out, after all. And indeed we learn from the final two lines of the description in all three texts that the castle is not merely surrounded by a moat, rather this water is also affected by tidal movements: "But whanne þe fe wiþ droȝe / Miȝte come men ynoȝe" (C1399-1400). Therefore, the main feature making the castle inaccessible by any clever scheme is its positioning: surrounded not just by water but by tidal waters. When the tide is low, a path or bridge is apparently revealed which leads to the castle.

During periods of high tide, that path or bridge is presumably hidden below the waterline, making entrance impossible.

By enhancing the castle's defenses to include the danger of surging tidal waters, the King Horn poet has raised the level of Horn's challenge. No longer is he merely attempting to access a strong enemy fortress. Now he has the additional problem of time, as he races the clock—or rather the next tide—in order to reach Rimenhild. And indeed, if we examine this section of the poem, particularly in Fikenhild's preparations for the marriage, we notice a fairly intense awareness of the passage of time:

ffikenhild or þe dai gan fpringe

Al riȝt he ferde to þe kinge,

After Rymenhild þe briȝte,

To wedden hire biniȝte.

He ladde hure bi þe derke

In to his nywe werke;

Þe feſte hi bigunne

Er þat ros þe funne.

Er þane horn hit wifte,

Tofore þe funne vpreifte,

His ſchup ſtod vnder ture

At Rymenhilde bure. (1427-38)

Spearing too points out that in this passage "the verse becomes full of indications of time: 'or the dai gan springe' (1427), 'bi nighte' (1430), 'bi the derke' (1431), 'Er that ros the sunne' (1434), 'Tofore the sunne upriste' (1436). All these phrases emphasize the passing

of time, the inevitable coming of the critical dawn" (42). This awareness of time, however, does more than just heighten the suspense and the anticipation of dawn's arrival, which will decide the outcome of the race between Fikenhild's preparations and Horn's return. This catalogue of time references also recounts the timing of the characters' actions, which the audience knows must fit into the appropriate tidal movements if anyone is to safely enter or leave this tower. These tidal defenses are not just a random detail added by the poet, however, but actually form part of a series of deliberate water-threat references appearing throughout the poem. We'll leave this discussion of the tower for the moment to explore how these recurring water images carry the theme of faithfulness and betrayal throughout the poem.

According to Hynes-Berry, within the story of Horn's journey to manhood "emphasis is created through controlled repetition of events rather than elaboration of an idea" (658). But this poet also creates emphasis by repetition of images. In this case, images depicting the sea's ability to derail human plans and intentions. Anne Scott explains: "the bulk of the poem concerns itself with Horn's deeds, the promises or predictions foreshadowing them, and the statements recounting them" (42). And indeed, we find that sea-threat images appear throughout the poem, connecting characters' promises, actions and their consequences, like pearls on a string. Each of these images or pearls is coupled with a reminder of one of Horn's vows or a statement indicating deception or both. These images also enable us to track Fikenhild's vows, his obvious treacheries, and their consequences. But most importantly, they allow us to follow the developments between Horn's carefully made promises, his delayed returns, and his last-

minute rescues, highlighting these pivotal moments and guiding the audience from one to the next throughout the poem.

The heart of this poet's exploration into faithfulness and betrayal lies in the poem's two rescue episode sections, which share a very specific repeated pattern, each built around a vivid drowning scene. In both sections, we are shown how Horn and Fikenhild each honor or possibly compromise their promises. In the first section, the emphasis falls on Horn's possible misdeeds. In the second, the focus is on Fikenhild. But in both we are encouraged to compare how each handles possible breeches of fidelity. We will examine this pattern in detail after considering each of the poem's guiding pearls.

King Horn includes numerous allusions to the sea. In addition to eight sea-voyages, Saracen ships, and natural references to the sea which surrounds these characters, we find a rudderless boat ride,⁴ two fishing metaphors and an additional reference to Rimenhild's fishing dream, Horn's fabricated sea death, the drowning of the messenger, Horn's dream of Rimenhild's drowning, and of course, the tidal floods surrounding Fikenhild's castle. The earlier Romance of Horn also includes sea references; in fact Rosamund Allen explains that "the sea is a prominent feature in the tale of Horn" (Date 123). However, the King Horn poet builds even further on this "inherited narrative feature... by highlighting the perils of navigation, pirates, sickness at sea, and drowning" (Date 123).⁵ With "highlighting" here, Allen appears to refer to this poet's enhancement of existing scenes and addition of new references which include danger or threat from the sea, as we have seen in the protective tidal waters. Of the poem's eight existing sea-threat references, five were added by the King Horn poet himself: Rimenhild's fishing dream, Horn's reference to the dream before departing to

Ireland, the drowning of the messenger, Horn's story of his own death by sickness at sea, and the tower's tidal defenses. Each of these references plus the existing dream of Rimenhild's drowning becomes a guiding pearl on the string of this narrative.

King Horn has been criticized as offering flat or dichotomous characterizations. Spearing says: "The world represented in King Horn is highly stylized; it is a world of extremes with no middle ground between them" (33). Scott states: "King Horn is replete with characters who are clearly good or clearly bad but never both simultaneously" (44). And in this type of world, Horn is obviously one of the clearly good characters. Hynes-Berry, for example, praises Horn's ability to harmonize love and duty: "as each episode progressively shows how fair and perfect a hero Horn is, and how he himself integrates his love with his heroic deeds, we close the romance impressed by how decisively heroic and fair this lover is" (663). But the world of Horn is not quite so dichotomous as we may at first believe: Fikenhild's treacheries are clear, but Horn is a more complicated case. For example, Scott argues that the poet "sketches out a kind of grey area that exists between absolute promise and expected fulfillment" in Horn's use of conditional statements in his promises to Rimenhild (62). She explains: "the syntax and wording of Horn's promises contribute to their indeterminate nature, and to our impression of Horn's cleverness" (60). Scott sees Horn's use and honoring of conditional statements while maintaining a "conventional valour" as an indication of his individuality (64). She goes on to note, however, that there is "something calculating in the expression of Horn's words and deeds that provokes, in however gentle a way, our own calculations about Horn's motivations, and about the degree to which the poem's language extends beyond a codified framework to support an individualism of style and character" (64).

The sense of Horn's open-ended formulation of promises as "something calculating" is communicated to the audience subtly, through Horn's own words, which stand on their own for the audience's assessment. Throughout the poem, in fact, the author allows the characters to speak and relate the story themselves wherever possible: "Nearly half of King Horn -- almost 700 lines -- consists of direct speech by the characters; and the poet sometimes converts narrative into direct speech by having one of the characters tell another about some of the poem's events" (Spearing 31). There is, in fact, a relative absence of narrator interference throughout the poem. Spearing shows: "there are none of the devices by means of which later medieval poets...make us aware of a narrator distinct from the material of the narrative, who is consciously aiming to present that material to us in one way rather than another" (31).⁶ Despite this absence of obvious narratorial intervention, however, we can see that the King Horn poet is still very much in control of his material and his audience. And although Scott suggests that the poet uses Horn's conditional promises to make a range of possible actions seem appropriate (64), we will see rather that through controlled water-threat imagery and the repeated rescue scene pattern, the poet has created a type of silent moral compass which causes us to reconsider the integrity of Horn's words and actions. Whenever Horn is wavering morally (either by misleading, honoring his conditions legalistically, or delaying) a water-threat image appears together with a reference to deception / betrayal or with a reminder of one of Horn's promises to Rimenhild or both. In addition to reminding the audience of Horn's promises and possible failure to keep them, in two specific instances (the drowning of the messenger and the tidal defenses) water-threat images actually prove a hindrance to Horn's success, complicating the situation and

making him work harder to set things right again. Thus without heavy-handed narratorial comments, the water-threat images allow us to glimpse Horn's possible missteps in love or honor on his path to maturity, like an early Lancelot as he hesitates to board the cart or Gawain as he flinches at the Green Knight's first axe blow. The text assures us that in all kingdoms "Nas non his iliche" (C 18), and indeed his continued success despite enhanced obstacles maintains our impression of his superiority to all other heroes. And although Horn may commonly be labeled a stereotypically "good" character, this study's comparative analysis of entrance trick episodes will show that this negative touch in Horn's otherwise peerless makeup is representative of a typical class of cunning entrance trick hero, who despite their obvious traits of inherent nobility generally demonstrate some type of flaw. We will investigate the implications as well as the possible origins of this type of hero later, focusing here on an examination of the Horn poet's use of imagery and repetition to explore the concepts of honor and fidelity in how Horn constructs and honors vows when confronted with a conflict between his heroic and romantic goals.

King Horn's string of pearls, or the poet's series of water-threat images which help to reveal Horn's missteps, begins with Rimenhild's distressing dream of the broken net.⁷ But to understand this first water-threat / deception image, we must rewind the action to before the images begin appearing and look at Horn's request to be knighted:

Help me to kni3te
 Bi al pine mi3te,
 To my lord þe king,
 Þat he me 3iue dubbing.
 Þanne is mi þralhod,

Iwent in to kni3thod,
 & ifchal wexe more
 & do, lemman, þi lore. (C435-42)

In all three manuscripts, Horn promises that after he is knighted and elevated to knighthood he will continue to grow and do Rimenhild's will. Once the knighting is completed, Rimenhild asks Horn to honor his promise: "Do nu þat þu er of fpake, / To þi wif þume take" (C535-36). Two of the manuscripts even sharpen her request to include a direct challenge of his honor: "Ef þu art trewe of dedes, / Do nu afe þu fedes" (C537-38). But Horn is blameless here because as Scott illustrates, he built room into his promise for further growth by stating: "ifchal wexe more" (C441). And in each text, Horn reminds Rimenhild of this stipulation: "Mid fpere ifchal furft ride, / & mi knifthod proue, / Ar ihc þe ginne to wo3e" (C544-46). Horn then goes on to make another promise that should he survive this proving, he'll marry Rimenhild:

Today, fo crift me bleffe,
 Ihc wulle do prueffe
 Fo þi luue in þe felde
 Mid fpere & mid fchelde:
 If ihc come to lyue
 Ihc fchal þe take to wyue. (C555-60)

By including the word "today" in his request for Christ's blessings as he goes out with spear and shield, he implies that he will marry Rimenhild immediately if he is successful today.

The problems begin, then, after Horn returns with the head of a Saracen king on his sword, illustrating his success and growth as a knight, and his safe return shows he has obviously survived his adventures. But before Rimenhild gets the opportunity to press him on honoring his word, which seemed to indicate immediate compliance, she dreams of the burst net. The nature of Horn's formulation does not stipulate how much growth need occur before Horn will do Rimenhild's will, but at this point, Horn begins to tread on shaky ground morally. And it is in this moment that we encounter the fishing dream, our first pearl, which is combined with a statement of deception, two such statements in L and O, and marks the occurrence of Horn's next vow. Rimenhild describes her dream in C as follows:

To þe fe my net icaſte,
 & hit nolde noȝt ilaſte;
 A gret fiſſ at þe furſte
 Minet he gan to berſte.
 Ihc wene þat ihc ſchal leoſe
 Þe fiſſ þat ihc wolde cheoſe. (659-664).

Horn's response in each of the texts includes a reference to deception: "Ne ſchal iþe biſwike, / Ne do þat þe miſlike" (C667-68). Here he promises not to deceive her or do anything that would displease her. In L and O texts, the dream description itself contains an additional, more poetic reference to deception: "þat fyflh me ſo bycahte / þat y nout ne lahte" (L 663-64).⁸ Although there is a variant wording in O, Hall explains that this passage in O and L means "the fiſh ſo beguiled, deceived, me, that I failed to catch it....These lines contain the central idea of the dream; Horn is the fiſh that Rimenhild

would fain catch, but he will prove false” (136). Thus the first pearl appears where Horn has arguably fulfilled the growth stipulation in his vow to Rimenhild. But had the dream not interceded, he would likely have pointed out the careful wording of his promise to her like the small print on a contract, further delaying the marriage. And importantly, at this moment he adds a much more binding and determinate vow to this contract by promising he will not displease her.

Horn's reference to the fishing dream just before leaving for Ireland is the second pearl. Horn tells Rimenhild, "Þe fiſſ þat þe net rente, Fram þe he me fente" (C725-26). Here Horn shifts the meaning of the dream from the possibility of his betrayal to Fikenhild's treachery, though we know the marriage would most likely have been delayed until after he regained Suddenne—with or without Fikenhild's interference. In a way, this shifting of blame makes Horn appear unwilling to take responsibility for his own promises, but it also reminds us that when Horn was knighted, Fikenhild also took a vow to serve Horn. In fact, the poet makes much of this moment by mentioning three times that Horn himself, not Aylmer, knights his companions. First, in C and L the king plans to have Horn knight his own men (C487; L491). In O the king plans to knight them himself. But in each of the texts, Apulf requests that Horn knight the men because it is his or their right (C515-16; L515-16; O535-36). And finally, Horn himself does actually knight his companions (C519-20; L521-22; O539-40).

In addition to noting Fikenhild's promise to Horn and its violation, Horn's reference here to the fishing dream is another guiding pearl, reminding the reader of the vow he made when the dream was first described—not to deceive her or do anything that would displease her. But it also occurs together with his next promise to Rimenhild, the

length of time he will be away, in which he instructs her how long to wait for him: "Ifchal wune þer / Full feue 3ere. / At feue 3eres ende, / 3ef ine come ne fende, / Tak þe hufebonde" (C732-35).

The third pearl, the messenger's vivid drowning—like the later dream of Rimenhild's drowning—is more prominent than the others both because of the violent nature of the images and because of the length and detail of the descriptions. The drowning of the messenger is presented in an ironic way, first leading us to expect a happy conclusion as the messenger hurries to Rimenhild with news of Horn's return from Ireland, then ending in tragedy. All three texts explain that the messenger was very cheerful and quickly boarded his ship or hurried back: "þe page wes wel blyþe / & shipeþe wel fuyþe" (L977-78). Abruptly the mood changes, and the next lines begin to describe his death, which is actually detailed twice in all three texts. On the first mention, the narrator in each manuscript describes the drowning. Two texts, L and O, provide a morbid description of the sea tossing him about: "Þe fe hym gan op þrowe / Honder hire boures wowe" (O1016-17). L manuscript even adds that he was already dead at this point (981). And then a few lines later, the narrator in each text describes Rimenhild's discovery of the drowned man (C977-78, L987-88, O1022-23).

This pearl occurs within the first instance of the repeated rescue pattern, which begins with the statement of a possible misstep by Horn, his lingering too long in Ireland without contacting Rimenhild, and continues through the Modi wedding rescue. The pearl itself, the messenger's drowning, is coupled with a statement of deception, which though not formulated in fishing terms causes us to recall Rimenhild's dream of being deceived and Horn's promise not to deceive her. Believing he has failed to find Horn, the

messenger cries out: "Nu wurþ Rymenild bigiled" (C958). 'Now Rimenhild is' or 'will be' 'betrayed' or 'deceived.' The violent nature of this more prominent pearl, the messenger's drowning, indicates that this is where things really begin to go wrong.

We know that Horn promises he will be gone seven full years, but does Horn actually overstay his own time limit, breaking this vow? To answer this question, a closer look at the manuscript variations here is in order. In each of the texts, this section opens with a reminder of Horn's last promise to Rimenhild and the indication of a possible broken vow: "Cutberd wonede þere / Fulle feue 3ere, / Þat to Rymenild he ne fente / Ne him felf ne wente. / Rymenild was in Westernesse / Wiþ wel muchel forineffe" (C917-22). But L and O have slight variations here: "godmod wonede þere / fulle six 3ere / ant þe feueþe 3er bygon" (L925-27). In O, Horn has remained in Ireland "Fulle fixe yere / Þe feuenþe þat cam þe nexte / After þe fext / To Reymyld, he ne wende" (O959-962). To this length of time we must also add the time it took to assemble his force and set sail. Although the time limit had probably not yet passed when the messenger finds Horn, we are given the impression that it is rapidly approaching. In fact we see the clock ticking when following Rimenhild's engagement to Modi, the narrator explains: "Þe daies were fchorte" (C927); presumably the wedding is scheduled for just after Horn's deadline. But Horn tells the messenger he will return in time: "For ifchal beo þer bitime" (C965). And when Horn does arrive back in Westernesse, the narrator tells us, "Ne mi3te he come no latere" (C1020). Additionally, in his fishing metaphor at the Modi wedding, Horn tells Rimenhild his net has been set for "Fulle feue 3ere" (C1140); "Al þis feue 3ere" (O1175); or "nou is þis þe feueþe 3ere" (L1140). Therefore, the chances are good that Horn does arrive just at the final hour, but only through Rimenhild's actions in devising a

writ and sending a messenger to remind Horn of his promise. Even with Rimenhild's intervention here, Horn still arrives at the very last moment.

Horn was on shaky ground with his further-growth stipulation after gaining a first success in battle, especially since he made the promise using the word "today," which encouraged Rimenhild to expect a short rather than an extended waiting period. But here he is on even shakier ground with the length of his stay in Ireland. In fact, in an overt move which also occurs in the second rescue section, the narrator's opening statement in this section implies failure and blameworthiness on Horn's part: "Cutberd wonede pere / Fulle feue 3ere, / Ðat to Rymenild he ne fente / Ne him felf ne wente. / Rymenild was in Wefterneffe / Wiþ wel muchel forineffe" (C917-22). Horn's behavior causes Rimenhild pain and allows her father to set up an alternate marriage at the end of what would be Horn's broken deadline. Thus, by the end of the sixth line of this section, we have been reminded of two of Horn's possibly violated vows, the time limit and his promise not to do anything that displeases her. But the poet intensifies the indictment through the messenger's cry that Rimenhild is deceived, pointing out a third possibly broken promise, Horn's vow not to deceive her (C958). This is apparently all too much for Horn. When he hears the messenger's distressed proclamation here, he seems to recognize his own culpability and breaks down in tears: "Horn iherde wiþ his ires, / & fpak wiþ bidere tires" (C959-60). In L the tears are "wete" (970); in O they are "bloody" (1005). Next the messenger happily returns with Horn's reply but drowns just before completing his task. Horn does not cause the messenger's death, but his safe return would have set Horn's possible missteps right without effort on Horn's part. Instead fate, in the form of a

senseless water death, steps in and re-complicates the situation for Horn, highlighting the possibly broken vows and making him work a little harder to correct the situation.

The fourth pearl also appears within the first rescue scene pattern, during the Modi wedding. Here Horn repeats the fishing theme of Rimenhild's dream, calling himself a fisherman come to check his net. Up to this point, the other pearls were each images newly added by the King Horn poet. And here too, although the fishing metaphor is repeated from Romance, our poet incorporates a new sea-threat image into this existing scene: Horn's fabricated death at sea. In this scene Horn the fisherman claims to have known Rimenhild's Horn, explaining that Horn became sick and died after their ship took to the sea (C1183-85; L1189-91; O1224-26). And in fact, Horn's sea death as the guiding pearl here is combined with both a reminder of Horn's vows, the net's seven year service, and the question of deception, Horn's testing of Rimenhild's fidelity. Horn explains of the net: "Hit haþ ileie þere / Fulle feue 3ere. /Ihc am icome to loke / Ef eni fiþf hit toke" (C1139-42). Although the fishing dream originally indicated Horn's possible future betrayal of Rimenhild, Horn turns its meaning twice, once to point out Fikenhild's treachery and later to check Rimenhild's fidelity.

The remaining pearls, the dream of Rimenhild's drowning and the tidal defenses appear during the second rescue section, which begins at the statement of Horn's lingering too long in Suddenne while Rimenhild pays the price and continues through the Fikenhild wedding rescue. Again as with the earlier pearls, these last two are also paired with statements of deception, but in this second episode something has changed because both statements now point to Fikenhild's treachery rather than to the possibility of Horn's broken vows. This is perhaps because Horn has already finally honored his word and

married Rimenhild after rescuing her from Modi. The wedding appears in each manuscript but comes through most clearly in O: "He rongen þe bellen / Þe wedding for to fullen / Of horn þat was fo hende / And of reymyld þe 3onge" (1294-97). It just remained for the marriage to be consummated, which Horn vows he will do after becoming king: "Ifchal beo king of tune / & bere kinges crune, / Þanne ſchal Rymenhilde / Ligge bi þe kinge" (C1285-88).⁹ It is interesting to note that at the same time that Horn finally fulfils his vows of marriage to Rimenhild, his men swear oaths of allegiance to Horn: "Hi sworn opes holde / Þat neure ne ſcholde / Horn neure bitraie, / Þe3 he at diþe laie" (C1249-1252), shifting the focus of the deception theme now to Fikenhild. Despite this transfer of emphasis onto Fikenhild's blatant treachery, the poet still does not let Horn completely off the hook and in the second section points to further possible missteps which have caused the need for a second rescue episode.

At the opening of the second rescue section, as in the first section, we are reminded of Horn's vow, here that Rimenhild would lie with Horn after he becomes "king of tune" (C1285) and his disregard of this promise or at the very least its delayed fulfillment—leading once again to Rimenhild's displeasure, the breaking of another vow. As in the opening of the first section, the narrator moves more overtly here, his words again implying a deficiency in Horn: while he recklessly enjoyed his success, Rimenhild suffered. The opening lines of the section proclaim: "Corn he let ferie / & makede fefte merie. / Murie lif he wrote: / Rymenhild hit dere bo3te" (C1385-88), meaning possibly, "He caused corn to be distributed" or "He caused corn to be brought" (Hall 171). Hall is not certain here, explaining: "*serie* is difficult" (171). Although the verb *serie* may still remain a mystery, we do know that corn, according to the MED, could refer to "a species

or variety of cereal plant or grain" (McSparran). But it could also designate "the seed or fruit of any of various plants; a pip (of an apple), a corn (of pepper), a berry (of juniper), a date (of a palm), a grape (in a cluster), a bean (of a castor-oil plant)" (McSparran).

Thus rather than indicating that corn was supplied, this formulation could mean that grains or fruits were fermented, producing alcohol. Wine, ale and beer are served in C text at the Modi wedding (1108, 1112), and this reference to letting corn *serie* may have suggested the making of a specific type of alcohol. A reference to producing alcohol here would enhance the sense of festivities and of Horn's frivolous behavior while Rimenhild again suffered. Additionally, the mention of brewing beer or ale or the making of other alcoholic beverages may also have indicated a specific length of time which the audience would be aware of, perhaps explaining how long Horn lingered before returning to Rimenhild. In any case, this passage in C will benefit from further research.

Whether the merry festivities included alcohol or not, in each of the manuscripts Horn becomes king, but instead of returning to Rimenhild as he promised, he remains in Suddenne celebrating his success. In L and O, rather than referencing corn, the word is "crown," further emphasizing Horn's assuming the position of king: "Croune he gan werie / ant make fefte merye / Murie he þer wrohte / ah Rimenhild hit abohte" (L1399). Thus in L and O particularly, the poet directly combines a reminder of Horn's promise to Rimenhild, that she will lie with Horn the king, with an indication that this has not occurred in a timely manner, which leads again to her displeasure, the breaking of another promise.

The fifth pearl, Horn's dream of Rimenhild's drowning, appears after the statement of Horn's possible mistake and the description of Rimenhild's new match, like

its counterpart the messenger's drowning scene. Horn's dream is not a newly added reference as the other pearls but is instead carried over from Romance; however this dream was perhaps the poet's starting point to which he added the messenger's scene, balancing the two sections. But unlike in the messenger's scene, in Horn's dream the danger comes both from the water and from Fikenhild, who holds Rimenhild down with the hilt of his sword as she attempts to swim ashore (C1415-16, L1433-44, O1470-71). This pearl too is combined with a statement of deception. But as earlier noted, here it is not Horn's possible misstep but Fikenhild's treachery that is named. As soon as Horn wakes from his dream he tells Apulf: "ffikenhild me hap idon vnder" (C1421). Hall glosses *idon vnder* as 'subjected' (231). L and O include similar phrasing, *gon vnder* 'beguiled' (L1439); *gon onder* 'in subjection' (O1474) (231). Hall provides a note here: "The reading of LO gives a good sense," emphasizing "beguile, deceive" as the best reading here (173).

The dream, of course, physically depicts Rimenhild's need for Horn's protection and Fikenhild's treacherous act. But it also depicts a sense of shared guilt. Horn is delayed in returning and Fikenhild takes advantage of this fact, betraying his liege lord. Here the important concept of treachery reigns as strongly or even stronger than Horn's misdeed, and Rimenhild is drowning not just through the power of the sea or fate, indicating Horn's error. After her boat tips in the stormy water, she is held under the water by the hands of a traitor. By combining Horn and Fikenhild's misdeeds in this section, the poet allows a comparison between how these two men handle honor and fidelity to vows—Fikenhild's brazen act of treachery counters Horn's remorse for the possible infraction of his vows to Rimenhild. And as in the first section when Horn cries

at the statement of deception, here he sweats in each text at the start of this intense dream:

"Þat niȝt horn gan fwete, / & heuie forto mete" (C1407-08). Spearing too suggests that Horn's sweating is a visual representation of internal moral anguish or debate (41).

But this dream also fulfils another interesting prophetic function beyond warning Horn to return with haste to Rimenhild. As we have already discussed, the tidal defenses of Fikenhild's tower are an enlargement of the earlier Romance castle description. This added detail then creates a reality that echoes the dream. In the dream, both Fikenhild's treachery and the sea's power threaten Rimenhild. When Horn arrives to stop the wedding, he finds a concrete version of the dream where Fikenhild's treachery takes the form of the new tower and the sea's threatening power appears as the surging tides that impede Horn.

The sixth and final pearl is of course the tidal defenses of Fikenhild's castle, and again this pearl appears near a statement of deception. In this instance, Horn arrives to find the surprising new tower, and Arnoldin meets him, remarking mournfully: "Ne fchal iþe lie / He haþ giled þe twie" (C1451-52). In L he says: "he haueþ do þe gyle" (1472). Arnoldin then goes on to point out the castle's inaccessibility due to the water (C1455-6; L1475; O1502-03), calling on Christ to help Horn; and the minstrel disguise entrance trick begins. In the first rescue scene, when Horn dressed as a palmer he was refused entry and had to kick the wicket in and then break the gatekeeper's ribs to proceed. In this second rescue scene, however, despite the enhanced obstacles caused by the tides, Horn is immediately successful and is actually welcomed into the tower. We will continue to consider the details of this scene, but first let us conclude this discussion of the guiding water-threat images by outlining the repeated rescue scene pattern.

This pattern, which includes the duplicated rescue scenes, begins at the statement of a possible misstep by Horn and continues through each disguise and wedding rescue scene. The pattern appears as follows:

1. Reminder of Horn's Promises / Statement of Possible Misstep or Missteps
2. Rimenhild's Suffering
3. New Match—Modi and Fikenhild
4. Warning of Rimenhild's Distress—Messenger and Dream

Statement of Deception or Betrayal—#1 Before Drowning / #2 After

5. Indication of Horn's Remorse—Tears and Sweating
6. Vivid Depiction of Drowning—Messenger and Rimenhild
7. Horn Returns to Rimenhild
8. Meets Informant and Gathers Information—Palmer and Arnoldin
9. Dons a Disguise—Palmer and Minstrel
10. Enters Wedding—Force and Welcome

In the first episode, the narrator states that Horn lingered too long in Ireland without sending word to Rimenhild while Rimenhild suffers. In the second, Rimenhild pays dearly while Horn makes merry. Thus in both we are shown Rimenhild's pain as a result of Horn's actions.

After the statement of Rimenhild's suffering, we are told of her new match. In the first episode, Modi arrives and makes an agreement with the king to marry Rimenhild. In the second, we are told of Fikenhild's move to build the castle and pressure the king for Rimenhild's hand. Next, in each episode we are given a warning connected with a

drowning or the threat of drowning. In the first episode, Horn is warned of Rimenhild's distress by a messenger who promptly drowns in a vivid and surprising scene below Rimenhild's wall. In the second episode, the warning and drowning are combined in an intense dream that depicts Rimenhild herself drowning. In both there is an outward indication of Horn's inner struggle. In the first episode Horn cries when he hears the outcome of his actions. In the second, he sweats at the start of the dream.

Within each of these warning/ drowning scenes, there is a statement of deception or betrayal. In the first episode it comes before the drowning. In the second, it comes after. Next Horn returns in both episodes to Rimenhild. And upon arrival in each, he meets someone and is given information about the situation. In the first it is a palmer. In the second it is Arnoldin. Next, in each episode Horn dons a disguise and then enters the weddings. The first entrance must be achieved through force. But in the second instance he is welcomed in.

As we have explored, the water-threat images encourage the audience to reevaluate Horn's actions based on his earlier promises. And the dual rescue sections seem to form the center point of this exploration into honor and deception, containing the two most prominent sea-threat images, the two drowning scenes. Although the two rescue sections do mirror one another, following the same pattern and highlighting the promises and actions of both Fikenhild and Horn, the focus of this exploration shifts between the first and the second rescue sections. In the first Horn's honor is most in question but then after fulfilling his most vital promise to Rimenhild, their marriage, the focus slides over to Fikenhild's treachery. Yet, even in the second section, the poet

continues to highlight Horn's more complex moral issues, encouraging a comparison between how each character handles fidelity and honor.

In the criticism of King Horn, Schofield and Wilson both object to the poem's double disguise episodes. Schofield felt it was an inartistic repetition undertaken by a minstrel hoping to benefit from the duplication of a popular romance feature (62). Yet as their careful patterning reveals, the two disguise scenes have been deliberately crafted to echo one another. This could simply be an example of mythic patterning, as Beatie illustrates from the work of Frings and Braun, in which the bride must be won two times because of interference by some "outside agent or event" (105). However, in addition to Fikenhild as the outside agent, we see that the series of water images is constructed to illustrate what Scott has shown to be Horn's internal conflict between heroic and romantic goals and how he constructs and honors indeterminate vows. We might call Horn's ability to create vows with wiggle room "skill at the oath." Brown defines this term in reference to Odysseus's father, Autolycus who received "stealthiness and skill at the oath" as a gift from Hermes: "'Skill at the oath' means guile or cunning in the use of the oath and derives from the primitive idea that an oath was binding only in its literal sense; a cunning person might legitimately manipulate it in order to deceive" (8). The Horn poet appears to question whether "skill at the oath" is actually honorable or not. And the narrator's indictment of Horn's actions at the opening of each section as well as Horn's own outward signs of internal anguish indicates that it is not. Additionally, Horn appears doomed to repeat the loop represented in this pattern indefinitely until he finally honors his word to Rimenhild in total. After the second time through the loop, Horn finally does so, bringing a positive resolution to the story. It is unclear, however, if Horn's "skill at

the oath" is a childhood trait which he grows out of or if it is simply part of his cunning nature which he simply learns to bring under control. In a later chapter, when we explore creativity and the trickster we will see that tricksterish behaviors like this skillful use of deception, in real-life individuals at least, can be engaged or suppressed at will according to necessity. In the end, despite his instances of human foible, both through his use of "skill at the oath" in making promises to Rimenhild and his imperfect honoring of these vows, Horn still proves himself superior to other heroes—in particular Fikenhild and Arnoldin.

In fact, when Horn arrives back in Westernesse, the poet places him alongside Arnoldin to illustrate Horn's extra-ordinary qualities. Arnoldin has already allowed the sea to thwart them and seemingly as a last ditch effort, calls on Christ to help Horn find a way: "Horn, nu crift þe wiffe / Of Rymenhild þat þu ne miffe" (C1457-58). Horn, however, remains undaunted by the situation and acts immediately. This is where the texts remind us of Horn's many resources, and then Horn dons his disguise (C1459-64, L1479-86, O1506-13). And this brings us back to a discussion of the tides.

As we discovered earlier, since Fikenhild's tower is protected by tidal waters, Horn must determine how to enter the fortress during the short amount of time when the tide is low or be forced to begin his attempt again when the water recedes and the path and/ or bridge reappears, thus enhancing the level of Horn's challenge and better demonstrating his cunning talents. This section of the poem, as we saw, includes a careful cataloguing of the timing of events, pointing to an acute awareness of the movement of the tides which would be necessary for Fikenhild, Horn, and of course the

audience. The poet goes to some length to communicate this timing, which appears to be based on actual tidal cycles, so it deserves a more careful look.

The time cycle for this section of the poem must have gone something like the following: Fikenhild leaves the fortress before sunrise: “ffikenhild or þe dai gan fþringe / Al riȝt he ferde to þe kinge, / After Rymenhild þe briȝte” (1427-29). In order for him to leave the tower, the water must be low enough before the sunrise to reveal the path. He returns to the tower with his bride to wed her, and they enter the structure again by dark: “To wedden hire biniȝte. / He ladde hure bi þe derke / In to his nywe werke” (1430-32), again a period of low water by the time dark sets in. The wedding festivities begin before the next sunrise: “Þe feſte hi bigunne / Er þat ros þe funne” (1433-34).

The timing of Fikenhild's movements in and out of his tower do appear to fit the low tides in a typical tidal cycle, suggesting that this portion of the poem was composed using real tides as a guide. To test this conjecture, we will compare Fikenhild's movements with a modern tide chart and Sunrise Sunset calendar. A typical tidal cycle, which remains unchanged since the Middle Ages, lasts just over twenty-four hours, (twenty-four hours, fifty minutes) and contains two high and two low tides, alternating and roughly divided by six hours.

Schofield's analysis of the Horn texts indicated that the real-life location of Westernesse is the Wirral Peninsula, a finger of land surrounded by the Irish Sea, with the mouth of the Mersey on the East, and the mouth of the Dee on the West: “It was then, it appears, in the district about Chester and the Mersey that Aylmar of Westerness formerly ruled. The name of Aylmar's land guides us to the exact location. The

Western-Ness seems pretty certainly the peninsula of the Wirral” (24). Schofield quotes Vogt on the Viking use of the area:

That Wirral must have exerted a strong attraction for the Norwegian vikings we may well believe, not only because of the excellent harbors of the peninsula (among them Birkenhead, the present suburb of Liverpool), but also because of its desirable situation between the mouths of two rivers by which it seemed as if created to provide a temporary encampment for a great host of colonizing vikings. (24)

There is, of course, a distinct possibility that Schofield was mistaken about the location of Westernesse, and indeed, the poet may not have had a specific location in mind at all for the setting of this story. And if he had, we are given no other hints in the texts to determine the exact location of this tower except that it is within a half day’s ride of Rimenhild’s home. But as it happens, knowing the tower’s exact location may not be necessary to test if his movements correspond with periods of low tide or not. For example, matching the predictability of global tidal cycles with day lengths during different times of the year, a tower located on the Isle of Man (Schofield’s argued location of Suddenne) would indeed have been accessible with Fikenhild’s schedule.¹⁰

The Wirral Peninsula area fits particularly well with the conditions described in the poem, however. This location, connected as it is with the River Mersey and the Dee, requires close attention to the tides. The Proudman Oceanographic Laboratory, located on the University Liverpool campus, reports that Mersey, on which Liverpool is located, “has the second highest tidal range in the UK, varying from 4 m at neaps to 10 m at

spring tides.” Similarly, the Dee Estuary website warns bird watchers: “The tide comes in with frightening speed—so be warned!”

The Wirral is also perhaps oddly appropriate, as we will explore in a moment, because the remains of a remarkable stronghold called Flint Castle, with properties similar to those described in King Horn, still stands at the edge of the Dee Estuary on the bank opposite the peninsula, built beginning in 1277 as part of Edward I's campaign in Wales on the Wirral.

Cities in the Wirral region direct the public to consult Liverpool tide tables and then add or subtract a specific amount of time to determine the accurate times for tidal movements in specific locations. For example, the Dee Estuary website notes:

Tide times on the Dee Estuary are the same as for Liverpool except that the high tide at the mouth of the estuary (e.g. Hoylake, West Kirby, Hilbre and Point of Ayr) are about 20 minutes earlier. High tides further in to the estuary (e.g. Parkgate, Neston, Flint and Connah's Quay) are about 20 minutes later than Liverpool.

We can add this extra 20 minutes to high tides for locations further down the Dee to the Liverpool chart; however, much silting of the Dee has occurred over the centuries, which would presumably slow the progression of the tides now as compared to in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Although the manuscript does not provide specific details such as the elevation of the path to the tower, the specific weather conditions on that day, and/ or specific time of year, as we will see, the information we do have matches up rather well with the tidal cycle in the Wirral area.

According to a Liverpool tide table, available through the Centre for Applied Oceanography, for March 23, 2001, low tide occurs at 4:43 am and high tide by 10:22 am.¹¹ According to a Sunrise Sunset calendar for the same place and date, sunrise would not occur until 6:07 am, making it low tide when Fikenhild left the tower before sunrise.

The next low tide on that day would occur at 5:04 pm, and a final high tide for the day would return by 10:42 pm. Depending on how the poet defines dark, Fikenhild would probably be in the tower sometime between sunset at 6:29 pm and astronomical twilight at 8:29 pm, both of which occur during a period of low tide. If Fikenhild did not enter the tower until as late as astronomical twilight, that would still be almost two hours and fifteen minutes, plus or minus twenty minutes, before the next high tide.

The next question we must ask is when in the tidal cycle did Horn arrive at Fikenhild's tower? His arrival is described in the lines immediately following information about the beginning of the wedding feast.

Þe fefte hi bigunne

Er þat ros þe funne;

Er þane horn hit wifte,

Tofore þe funne vprifte,

His fchup ftod vnder ture

At Rymenhilde bure. (C1433-38)

Horn arrives in the morning presumably after the wedding feast has begun but before sunrise. According to the chart for this day, sunrise would occur at 6:05 am. Low tide on our sample chart would occur on this morning at 5:17 am. In this case, if the water is still high, prompting Arnoldin's comment in O: "Þer may no man on legge / By pape ne by

brigge” (1502-03), then it is before 5:17 am. This would also explain his comment in C and L texts: “Ne mai þer come inne / Noman wiþ · none · ginne” (C1455-56).

However, it may not be long before the 5:17 am low tide because we are given some interesting lines in L and O manuscripts, not found in C, that tell us the tide is just beginning to go out again when Horn arrives. L reads:

Hornes ſhip atftod in ftoure
 vnder fykenildes boure
 Nufte Horn alyue
 wher he wes aryue
 þene caſtel hue ne knewe
 for he was ſo newe
 þe fee bigon to wiþ drawe
 þo feh horn his felawe
 þe feyre knyht arnoldyn. (1455-1463)

Here in L we learn that as Horn was arriving, the tide was beginning to go out again, which does not contradict the sample tide chart for this morning. Likewise, O provides similar information concerning the state of the tides:

Hys ſchip ftod in ftore
 Honder fikenildef boure
 Ne wiſte horn on liue
 Whare he waf a Ryue
 Þe keſtel he ne knewe
 For he waf fo newe

Þe fond by gan to drye

And hyt hym makede weye

He fond ftonde arnoldyn. (1482-1490)

In this passage, though the tide and the water level are not mentioned directly, the text more poetically describes the sand beginning to dry and that making way for Horn. Thus, L and O both show Horn arriving just as the tide is going out, (as well as referring to Fikenhild's rather than Rimenhild's *boure*). It is unclear why L and O should offer more information than C concerning the state of the tides following Horn's arrival, one through direct statement and the other through poetic description, except that L and O texts in general seem to better reflect the author's poetic nuances.¹² Nonetheless, although some manuscripts provide information not given in others, none of them includes information about the characters' comings and goings which would contradict the presence of or timing of a typical tidal cycle.

Within this short section of the text we are told of Fikenhild's new tower, and in all three manuscripts that castle is protected by the tidal flow. Then in each of the manuscripts, the timing of Fikenhild's movements with Rimenhild is described. Next we are told of Horn's arrival. In L and O we are informed that the tide is beginning to withdraw, which according to the narrator's description in all manuscripts, indicates that the castle will soon be reachable by visitors. After Horn arrives and discovers the castle, he notices Arnoldin waiting for him. In L and O, the change of the tide is mentioned immediately before Horn sees Arnoldin:

Þe fond by gan to drye

And hyt hym makede weye

He fond ftonde arnoldyn

Þat was ayolles cofyn

Þat was þere in tyde

Horn for to abyde. (O 1488-93)

All three manuscripts mention Arnoldin waiting there in that tide: “þat þer fet in þat tyde”(L1465); “Þat was þere in tyde” (O1492); “Þat þer was in þat tide”(C1445). Hall glosses *tide* from C as “hour, time” (229). And *tyde* from LO as “fitting time” (229). Allen glosses tide from text C as “at that time” (KH 407). And Dunn and Byrnes do not gloss it, presumably considering it self-explanatory. Yet according to the University of Michigan’s on-line MED, in addition to the meanings associated with time, which are here in Horn wholly appropriate, we find two additional meanings applicable in this context. Entries six and seven under *tide* refer to water tides: “The time of a tidal phenomenon, the hour of ebb, flood, etc”; and “The tide of the sea; also, the flow of the tide, a tidal current; also, a maximum of the tide, full tide” (McSparran).

Either of these two additional definitions not mentioned by Hall and Allen is also appropriate at this point in Horn, given the particular emphases on and importance of the changing tides for the success of Horn’s rescue attempt. Not including the idea of the ocean tide in an understanding of the poet’s description of Arnoldin here would deny part of the essential meaning of this passage as well as one of the narrator’s attempts to heighten suspense by reminding the audience of Horn’s greatest challenge in saving Rimenhild—getting into the castle before the tide rises again. In fact, it is just after this point that Horn gets his harp and his men together, following the newly revealed gravel

path (C1465), and begins his *gleowing*e outside the gate to gain Fikenhild or Rimenhild's attention.

As the above analysis indicates, this portion of the poem may indeed have been composed based on the movement of real tidal cycles and is not merely a part of fictional description. It is unclear, however, whether or not the special features of Fikenhild's castle were invented or if they were intended to echo the nature of a particular castle in use at that time.

Fikenhild's stronghold is described in C text using several different terms including castle three times and tower twice: *caſtel* (1395, 1441, 1466); *nywe werke* (1432); *ture* (1437); and *tur* (1453). Whether that means that Fikenhild's stronghold consisted of just a tower that functioned as his castle or if it was a castle structure which included a great tower or keep is uncertain, as the terms appear to be used interchangeably. But when Horn arrives, he is able to sail right up to what the poet calls a tower: "His ſchip ftod vnder ture / At Rymenhilde bure" (C1437-38). In L and O we get an added piece of information here: "Hys ſchip ftod in ftore / Honder fikenildef boure" (O1482-83). These lines are interesting because they contain potentially two details about the positioning of this castle. One: it was located in a place accessible by a sea-faring ship. Two: that location was likely in a river. Allen outlines what critics have made of the term *ftore* (O 1483) or *ftoure* (L 1455), the general consensus being that this word indicates either the proper name of a particular river or is used as a "generic term for 'river'" (KH 298). In either case, it appears that Fikenhild's castle was located on a river that could accommodate larger vessels, such as would have been the case with Flint Castle, Edward I's stronghold in the Wirral. Yet it was also surrounded by the sea "Mid

fée him biflette," (C1396) though *fée* too may be a general term for water, as L and O both read "water" here. However, as this water was affected by tidal currents, the texts seem to specifically indicate a river estuary where the sea's tide flows into a river's current.

Like the tower described in King Horn, Flint Castle is located on the banks of a river in its estuary and was at one time regularly surrounded by tidal waters: "During the medieval period, the waters of the Dee came right up to the foot of the castle walls at high tides" (Renn and Avent 17). Evidence of docks where ships may have been able to load and unload cargo has also been found in the castle's remains (22, 23). Additionally, an outer moat, which was an artificial ditch dug in 1277, existed beyond the outer ward and outer gatehouse and "was originally filled by salt water at high tides," (18) which presumably obscured access to the castle.

Flint is essentially square, consisting of four curtain walls with towers in the north-west, north-east, and south-west corners and a free-standing Great Tower on the south-east end. This Great Tower, which may even have been encircled by a separate tidally-affected moat was the castle's most remarkable feature (Renn and Avent 24). Sidney Toy calls this "cylindrical keep" Flint's "ultimate stronghold" (155). It would have been accessible only after gaining entrance to the castle itself: "It was approached from the inner bailey by means of a drawbridge over the moat" (Toy 157). In fact, the defensive position of this Great Tower was so strong that "the entrance into the tower itself may only have been defended by a door, with no evidence for a portcullis. As designed, however, part—at least—of the timber bridge across the moat would have been

movable, so that it could be drawn up against the door by chains pulled from the upper part of the tower" (Renn and Avent 24).

The interior design of Flint's Great Tower was also remarkable, including a layout of rooms which "radiate like the spokes of a wheel" and an unusual basement (Renn and Avent 26). "We know of no exact parallel, not only amongst British sites but also in any of the other principal castle countries of the Continent" (Taylor 26). The tower's one-of-a-kind basement is comprised of two rings. The outer ring is a narrow, tunnel-like passage with a low vaulted-ceiling. It circles a round earthen-floored room. This round room is at the center point of the tower and is entered from the outer ring by several openings, arranged around the center. The round center room does not have its own ceiling but is open to the floors above.

James Forde-Johnston explains that although a visitor or intruder may choose between two routes upon entering the keep, one leading upwards to the first floor and one downwards into the basement, "the obvious way to continue was down the flight of steps directly in front. This looks like the main means of access to the tower as a whole" (252). He notes the observation that such an arrangement would trap attackers where they "could then be assailed by defenders issuing from the surrounding gallery via the three doors" (252).

Regardless of the particulars of the Great Tower's basement, it is clear that this castle, like that described in King Horn, was designed to take advantage of the tides as an additional defensive strategy. But in case it seems impossible for Fikenhild to celebrate a wedding in such a tower, it is well documented that Flint's Great Tower also included an east-facing chapel, a possible kitchen, and was well-equipped with latrines.

Flint Castle was built between 1277 and approximately 1284, for Edward I, who as we have seen, was a firm patron of minstrels and minstrelsy. We also recall that of the ten harpers employed by Edward I for his daughter's wedding in 1296, "most had probably been engaged" in Edward's recent raid on Scotland most likely as poets recording the "prowess" of individual warriors (87). If Edward's minstrels had accompanied him into Scotland, others probably also followed him or his son, King Edward II (1307-27) who took possession of Flint in 1301, into Wales, observing Flint's features first-hand. Although experts estimate that King Horn was composed circa 1225, the extant manuscripts date from approximately 1290-1330, which allows time enough for the renown of this unique castle to enter the tale before its copying. But Rosamund Allen provides interesting and persuasive evidence that the Middle English story of King Horn may actually date later than has previously been assumed. In fact, she surmises that King Horn originates from London during the 1270's before being copied into the manuscripts we know (Date 125). As Flint Castle's construction began in 1277, and its unique plan would have made it noteworthy, knowledge of this unusual castle may have fuelled the King Horn composer's imagination at the outset, thereby introducing the new feature of the castle protected by tides during the poem's composition.

Regardless of whether Flint castle was the model for Fikenhild's tower or not, internal evidence suggests that this water protection detail was indeed added to King Horn in the poem's earliest stages—evidenced by its full integration into the tale in all three manuscripts as one of the poem's theme carrying water-threat images. Additionally, the tower description appears in each of the texts in consistent form with only minor variations. And as we determined earlier, each of the three texts represent Fikenhild's

movements in a way that fits within a particular real-life tidal cycle. Although some of the manuscripts add details not given in others, none includes information about the tower that is contradictory or that represents Fikenhild's activities in a way that would conflict with this particular tidal cycle.

As we will see in the next few chapters, the problem of beating the tides is not a typical feature of minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes. But the composer of King Horn skillfully adds this complication to the motif's basic features, increasing the level of Horn's challenge, while at the same time integrating this motif into the poem's new overall theme. Although this use of tides is not typical, tides also play an important role in the earlier minstrel disguise entrance trick found in the second half of the harp and rote episode in Thomas's Tristan from the Old Norse Saga, as we have already briefly explored in chapter two.¹³

In the harp and rote episode of this tale, when the Irish knight reaches his pavilion after winning Isolt from King Mark, we are told the ship was on “dry sand, and though the tide began to rise, yet it was far from the dromond” (Loomis 143). Tristan arrives at the pavilion with a rote. The knight recognizes Tristan as a minstrel and asks him to play for Isolt, and “Ysolt hearkened through the night” (143). When Tristan had finished playing, the “dromond was afloat,” and the knight is advised by one of his men that they should depart because Tristan would soon be coming after Isolt (144). The Irishman refuses to go and instead asks Tristan to play another lay. The text says, “Long he made the playing....In the mean while (sic.) the tide had so flowed that one might not come to the bridge, and the bridge stood under water nigh the ship” (144). The knight suggests waiting to enter the ship until the ebb-tide again revealed the bridge, but Tristan instead

offers the use of his horse to board. Tristan promises to “deal courteously” with the lady, and after she is lifted onto the horse, he taunts the traitorous knight and rides away with Isolt (145).¹⁴

Thus, in the Saga as in Horn, the hero arrives on the scene to rescue his beloved. In both cases this hero is not the lady’s wedded husband. The lady’s new forced match is in both cases semi-legitimate—while Horn “makede fefte merie” in Suddenne, Fikenhild got the king’s consent to his marriage “Þe kyng ne dorfte him werne” (C1386, 1404); the minstrel knight wins Isolt from King Mark. In both stories, the king does not stand up to the suitor. Likewise, in both cases the hero disguises as a minstrel and plays a moving song for the woman. In Horn, it is the tides surrounding the strong castle that offer additional protection for Fikenhild. No one can enter his castle when the tide is up. In Tristan, the hero waits, watching the tides until they are too high to cross by foot and offers to take the lady across by horse, escaping with her instead. Therefore in both tales, the tides are an integral part of the rescue. In the first story, Horn must beat the tides to win his lady back. In the second, Tristan uses the tides to his favor to perform his rescue. Yet, in King Horn the tidal defenses are better integrated into the poem than in the harp and rote episode, part of a poem-wide series of sea-threat images guiding the audience to reexamine the nature of Horn’s vows, judge the integrity of his actions in light of these earlier promises, and measure his honor against that of his treacherous liegeman.

In King Horn, in addition to forming part of the poem’s exploration of honor and deception, we find that by enlarging Romance’s description of the castle’s impregnable spot to include water defenses, a new conflict is also introduced into the second rescue attempt. Added to Horn’s late arrival, the need to conceal his identity and surprise his

enemy, and the problem of entering a sturdy enemy castle, he must now also beat the tides, increasing the difficulty of Horn's task and decreasing the likelihood of his success. This new feature also adds a time constraint that heightens the suspense. But most importantly, while this added pressure increases the hopelessness of the situation, it also increases the measure of Horn's ingenuity and thereby the level of his effectiveness as hero, when he immediately finds a peaceful and quick *ginne* for getting in the door.

Notes

¹ Hall glosses this word under '*Lache*,' to "catch," from the Anglo-Saxon *læccan*, but writes "comprehended" for this instance with Horn's lessons.

² The word *ginne* may also have associations with the OE *onginnan*, which according to J.R. Clark Hall means "to begin, attempt, endeavour, try hard" (264). Clark Hall lists the following shortened form: "ginnan = *onginnan*" in his Anglo-Saxon Dictionary (155).

³ Compare this episode in King Horn with the Anglo-Saxon poem, The Battle of Maldon, in which the Vikings trick the Saxons into allowing them to cross the River Panta while the tide is still high, resulting in a total Saxon defeat. In both texts, the tides pose a tactical challenge and are connected with clever strategy. In Maldon, however, cunning is used by the enemy, rather than by the hero, and thereby transformed into the more sinister "guile."

Additionally, we see similarities in the description of the area cut off by the tides. In Horn, we find the following passage: "Þer ne miȝte liȝte / Bute foȝel wiȝ fliȝte. / Bute whanne þe fe wiȝ droȝe / Miȝte come men ynoȝe" (C1397-1400). Likewise, in Maldon,

Ne meahte hira æniġ ōðrum derian

būtan hwā þurh flānes flyht fiell genāme.

Se flōd ūt ġewāt. Þā flotan stōdon ġearwe,

wīcinga fela, wīġes ġeorne. (Pope 70-73)

'Nor might any one of them harm another unless someone through arrow's flight fell.

The flood went out. The sailors stood ready, many Vikings, eager for war.'

In both texts nothing may cross over the waters except through flight. In the case of Maldon it is the flight of an arrow. In Horn texts C and L it is the flight of a bird. Both Maldon and Horn next mention the withdrawing of the waters and those who might then come across.

⁴ To the existing rudderless boat ride, the poet adds new details showing the children's fear. In this early scene, although the Saracens decide Horn and his companions must die, Horn's God-given beauty prevents them from killing the children directly. Instead they plan to set the children adrift, putting them at the mercy of the sea, but certain they will drown: "To fchupe fchulle 3e funde / & sinke to þe grunde, / Þe se 3ou fchal adrenche" (C103-5). The King Horn poet adds new details here to emphasize the seriousness of this threat, including the emotion of the children and their expectation of impending death. For example, we are shown the children wringing their hands (C112, L116, O118), which Spearing describes in film terms as "a close-up shot of hands being wrung, and this stands in place of a possible more comprehensive description of the boys' grief" (35). This poet also adds that Horn was never worse off than at that moment: "Ofte hadde horn beo wo / At neure wurs þan him was þo" (115-16) and that they all expected to lose their lives then (C121-122, L125-26, O129-30). Through this new emphasis on the children's fear, we know that the rudderless boat ride should have ended in their deaths, giving us the impression it was only through God's will that they survive. In this instance it is clear that the children are innocent, Horn a favorite of God, given extra-ordinary beauty and talents, and the Saracens are God's enemy. However, as we will see in later scenes with Horn, the moral distinctions are not always so clear cut.

⁵ Allen explains: "in KH the sea-voyage motif is used to mark narrative divisions which chart the stages in the hero's self-realization" (Date 123). Spearing notes that as a narrative device the eight sea-voyages "transport us along with the characters, without the narrator's seeming to be involved" (31). And further, "the sea seems to symbolize the dangerous realm of chance, the source both of death and of new life, that lies outside the walls of civilization" (29).

⁶ Spearing points out: "The story appears to tell itself," including no "explicit narratorial transitions," no references to source materials, "no modesty *topoi*," and "no examples of *occupatio* (the listing of what is not going to be recounted)" (30-31).

⁷ Rimenhild's dream of the broken net and Horn's fishing metaphor at the Modi wedding are probably the most memorable and most commented on images in the poem. Allen points out that in Romance Horn's fishing metaphor "lacks point"; it stands alone, without any prior reference point (Date 123). Thus, the King Horn poet "showed intelligence in providing Rimenhild with a dream to match the disclosure episode" (123). Weiss notes that the fish and net images "are put to more frequent and effective use" in King Horn than in Romance (93). Hall notes: "It is the merit of the composer of King Horn to have turned it to an artistic purpose by linking it on to Rimenhild's dream and using it to stir her memory" (162).

⁸ This passage, "þat fyflh me so bycahte / þat y nout ne lahte" (L 663-64), also contains a word play. *Bycahte* is the past tense of *Bikeche* 'to deceive, trick' (Hall 198) and is perhaps related to *Cacche* 'to catch, chase,' making this a play on the idea "to catch." In other words, through its deception, the fish actually caught Rimenhild rather than her catching the fish.

O makes the same wordplay but uses a different root word here, *Bylaucte*, ‘deluded, took in’ (Hall 200) not used anywhere else in any of the three texts: “Þe fyf me fo by laucte / Þat ich nawt ne kaucte” (681-82). Hall glosses *Bylaucte* as “deluded, took in” from the Anglo-Saxon word *læccan*. *Læccan*, according to Clark Hall, means “to seize, grasp, comprehend,...capture, catch” (208). So again, the fish has captured or caught Rimenhild through its deception. The unusual part about this word play is that the word for deception used in L “*bycahte*”—from *Bikeche* has perhaps the same root word as the word for caught “*kaucte*”—from *Cacche/ keche* in O. And the word for deception in O “*by laucte*” has the same root word as the word for caught “*lahte*” in L—the Anglo-Saxon *læccan*. If so, then the two texts use the same play on words, the fish caught Rimenhild, just reversing the words.

⁹ In L an O texts, rather than bearing a king's crown, Horn says he will: “lerne kynges rounne” (L1294) and “wite of kynges owne” (O1329). Hall explains: “The variant in L 1294 appears to mean, and learn (or, teach) king's counsel; that of O 1329, and know of king's rights” (167). Although C manuscript here reads “& bere kinges crune” (1286), oddly it is the only text not to mention the crown, inserting instead corn, after Horn becomes king of Suddenne and makes “feste merie” (C1388).

¹⁰ Based on an Isle of Man—Port St. Mary tidal predictions chart and Sunrise Sunset calendar for 12 August 2000.

¹¹ Proudman Oceanographic Laboratory states the following on its website under “Insight into marine science”: “During earlier times, the tides and gales of the Merseyside winters would probably have been too severe for Roman and Anglo-Norman ships, but a hamlet, Liverpool, developed around the pool for spring and summer use”—indicating

that a late March crossing between the Isle of Man and the Wirral would have been a possibility, though Fikenhild's schedule would also fit dates in late summer / early autumn months.

¹² L and O often show a better understanding of the poet's creative touches, which are sometimes lost in C. For example, the description of Rimenhild's fishing dream contains a wordplay in L and O that does not appear in C. L and O also include another reference to deception within this wordplay that we don't find in C. On another occasion, where Horn and Rimenhild's marriage is described, the event is portrayed much more clearly in L and O than in C. The word "bridal" '*brudale*' (L1267) and '*brydale*' (O1300) becomes "bread and ale" '*brid & ale*' in C (1257), almost as though the C transcriber was not sure that a wedding occurs here so instead chose to emphasize the festivities following Rimenhild's rescue. Or perhaps through an acoustical problem, he misheard the original lines. This type of manuscript variation occurs again in the lines following Horn's success in Suddenne. L and O note that Horn begins to wear a "crown" '*croune*' (L1399, O1430), reminding the audience of his promise to Rimenhild that she will lie with a king. C manuscript, however, reads *corn* (1385) here.

¹³ Roger Loomis, in his translation of Thomas's Tristan based on the fragments and the Norse Saga, notes that the Saga is the 1226 Old Norse version of Tristan by Brother Robert for Haakon of Norway. Although we have extant only fragments of Thomas's original text, scholars are able to reconstruct most of the story because fortunately the Saga "furnishes in considerable measure a word for word translation of Thomas" (Loomis xxvi). Being unfamiliar with Old Norse, I rely here on Loomis's translation.

¹⁴ Gottfried's version of this episode also includes this use of the tides by Tristan, but here the Irish knight offers to take him back to Ireland with them. In the Middle English Sir Tristrem, the tides are not mentioned. Instead, Isolt leaves the ship, going ashore to listen to the harp player. Here again, the Irishman offers to take the minstrel back to Ireland with them. As they begin to re-embark and Tristan jumps onto his horse, the queen asks him to take her aboard. He lifts her onto the horse and after taunting the Irish knight, they escape into the woods.

CHAPTER 4
THE MINSTREL DISGUISE ENTRANCE TRICK IN
NORTHERN EUROPEAN LITERATURE
PART I ARCHETYPE AND MOTIF: ANALYSIS EXPLANATION AND
CHRONICLE TALES

In order to truly understand how the minstrel disguise entrance trick is employed and reshaped within the Horn and Orfeo disguise episodes, it is necessary to explore other examples of this motif, establishing what features are typically found in its use.¹ Unfortunately, up to this point a comprehensive catalogue of tales containing K2357.1 “Disguise as musician to enter enemy’s camp” has yet to be compiled.

The place we would most expect to find a complete listing of this motif, Thompson's Motif-Index Of Folk Literature, lists just three examples of it: Paul Herrmann's Erläuterungen zu den ersten neun Büchern der dänischen Geschichte des Saxo Grammaticus ‘Explanatory Comments on the First Nine Books of the Danish History of Saxo Grammaticus,’ referring to the disguise episode in Hother's tale from The Danish History of Saxo Grammaticus; Tom Peete Cross's Motif-Index of Early Irish Literature, referring to the story of Baldulf in Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae; and the Collingwood Sagabook of the Viking Society, referring to the Collingwood and Stefansson translation of The Life and Death of Cormac the Skald.

Another index, Gerald Bordman's 1972 Motif-Index of the English Metrical

Romances was written, as Bordman explains, to “fill a gap” in Stith Thompson’s Motif Index (8). Thompson relied on Wells’s 1916 Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050-1400, which Bordman calls inadequate because it was incomplete and inaccurate, creating both holes and errors in Thompson’s index. Bordman’s index is narrower than Thompson’s, focusing on just the English metrical romances. Yet, although Bordman lists K2357 “Disguise to enter enemy’s camp,” he drops sub-category K2357.1 “Disguise as musician to enter enemy’s camp,” instead grouping Bevis, Horn, Orfeo, and Tristrem together under the less precise heading K1817.3 “Disguise as harper (minstrel),” dulling rather than sharpening the focus of this new index. Perhaps he finds the sub-category K2357.1 “Disguise as musician to enter enemy’s camp,” redundant. But if so, why does he make the inconsistent move of listing K1817.2 “Disguise as Palmer” along with K2357.2 “Disguise as Pilgrim (palmer) to enter enemy’s camp”?

In addition to this motif’s incomplete listing in Thompson’s Motif Index and its absence from Bordman’s, scattered critics’ “see also” notes direct the reader to other stories containing similar episodes. Schofield mentions several examples of the minstrel disguise used by a character to “gain access” (61) or “obtain admission” (63) to a place he would not otherwise have access to, noting for example: Gottfried von Strassburg’s Tristan, King Horn, Horn et Rimenild, Sir Orfeo, Geoffrey of Monmouth’s Balduph episode, the stories of how Alfred accessed the Dane’s camp and how Olaf entered Athelstan’s camp from William of Malmesbury (60-63).

Joseph Hall, too, lists episodes comparable to “Horn’s disguise as a harper,” mentioning the following characters and tales: Baldulf in Geoffrey, Wace, Layamon and R. of Brunne; Anlaf (or Olaf) as he spies out Athelstan’s camp in William of Malmesbury

and in R. of Gloucester; "Johan de Raunpaygne" in "Fulk Fitz-Warine"; Eustace the Monk in "*Wistasse le Moine*" and also the story of *Daurel et Beton* (174-75). Constance Davies notes: "For the trick by which Orfeo gains his wife, cf. Welsh *Gwydion and Pryderi*, *Math mab Mathonwy* (*Mabinogion*)" (354).

Among the thirteen stories Cropp discusses in "The Disguise of the 'Jongleur'" (1986), I find the entrance trick or its variant in four: Wace's *Brut*, *La Continuation de Perceval*, *Daurel et Beton*, and *The Romance of Horn*. And though not counted in her original thirteen, Cropp also briefly discusses *Sir Orfeo*.

Morgan Dickson, too, in "Verbal and Visual Disguise: Society and Identity in Some Twelfth-Century Texts" (2000) notes the similarity between Hereward's disguise as potter in *Gesta Herwardi* to enter an enemy camp to spy and the stories of Aldhelm in Malmesbury's *De gestis pontificum Anglorum*, Olaf in *Gesta regum*, and the Baldulf story in Geoffrey and Wace (50-51). She explains: "This episode draws on both romance and chronicle material; in the chronicles, the hero assumes the role of a harper in order to infiltrate the enemy camp to gain information; in the Tristan and Horn episodes, the hero disguises himself to speak with the queen or princess" (50).

As we can see, some of these critics' lists overlap one another, but no one critic has compiled a list containing all of these examples. And because no comprehensive catalogue of minstrel disguise entrance trick tales exists, it follows that no in-depth, cross-cultural comparison or analysis of this motif in medieval literature has been undertaken to solidly establish its common defining features. Yet, without this wider understanding of how this motif most often manifests itself, undertaking a serious study of its use and individualized refiguring in *King Horn* and *Sir Orfeo* would be dubious at

best. To that end, chapters four, five, and six will begin the work of cataloguing and comparing examples of the minstrel disguise entrance trick in Northern European literature between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, including of course Horn and Orfeo, to form a description of the motif's typical features. Within this discussion we will also examine the archetype captured in this motif, its mythological and Biblical associations, its representations of creative thinking processes and identity-play, and finally the possible cultural appeal of this type of hero. Through this analysis, we will also see the emergence of another related but previously unrecorded motif, namely the "noble fosterling excels in music."

This study will compare twenty-one tales or versions of tales, containing twenty-three minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes. Though some overlapping occurs, I have grouped the stories under three headings—Chronicle Tales, Tales of Enchantment and the Trickster, and Noble Fosterling Tales, breaking the discussion into separate chapters according to these groups. The Chronicle Tales, which we will consider in this chapter, include the story of William Talbot in Dugdale's *Monasticon Anglicanum*; the tale of Alfred in Malmesbury's *Gesta regum Anglorum*; the account of Baldulf in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*, Wace's *Le roman de Brut*, Layamon's *Brut*, and Robert Manning of Brunne's *Chronicle*; and the story of Anlaf in William of Malmesbury's *Gesta regum* and Robert of Gloucester's *Metrical Chronicle*. Although Dickson likens Malmesbury's account of Aldhelm to chronicle accounts such as these, it is not an example of this motif and has not been included in this comparison.

The next chapter will focus on Tales of Enchantment and the Trickster, including The Tale of Thorleif the Earl's Poet; Sir Orfeo; the stories of Gwydion and Prideri and

Gwydion and Lleu in *Math mab Mathonwy*; two John de Rampaigne episodes in *Fouke Le Fitz Waryn*; *La Folie Tristan* (Oxford); and "Tristan menestrel" from Gerbert de Montreuil's *La Continuation de Perceval* (Fourth Continuation). Again, although Hall notes *Eustache the Monk* among stories containing an episode comparable to Horn's minstrel disguise, it is also not a true example of this motif. Where true entrance trick heroes use the disguise to bravely enter enemy territory, Eustache uses the disguise as a wanted man to safely flee enemy jurisdiction. Therefore *Eustache* has not been included in this catalogue. *Cormac* too will not be considered in this study; however, we will discuss it briefly to demonstrate why it should be dropped as an example of K2357.1.

And finally, chapter six will cover the Noble Fosterling Tales, including the story of Hother in *The Danish History* of Saxo Grammaticus; *Daurel et Beton*; *King Horn*; *Horn et Rimenhild* (Romance); and the harp and rote episode in the Norse Saga of Tristram and Isond, Gottfried von Strassburg, and the Middle English *Sir Tristrem*.

Before jumping into a discussion of the Chronicle Tales, I will first outline the methodology for this analysis and give a brief overview of some of the findings. I begin this introductory section with a description of the six main categories used to compare these episodes: costume details, disguise type, performing skills, ability-level, reaction at the gate, and purpose of the trick. Here I will also discuss how violence and magic figure into this motif, even though violent actions and the use of magic do not appear in every episode. Likewise, in this section we will also consider the negative details or character traits that surface in these tales in varying degrees. We begin with an explanation of these six categories.

Costume Details—For each episode, I will list the ways in which the hero transforms himself or his group into minstrels, including anything he adds, takes away, or alters in his outward appearance or if a costume is used at all. Cropp's study lists jongleur disguise component features that may be of use to us in this more focused examination of entrance trick minstrel disguise episodes, including: "character puts on clothes which are usually referred to as the dress of a jongleur" (43). "A cloak is the essential garment" (43). One character has "shaved off half his hair, beard and moustache, with the result that he appears...like a characteristically scurrilous jongleur" (43). Several characters "stain their faces or skin, usually making them dark or yellow" (43). In all of Cropp's texts except one, the characters have a harp or a viol/ "*vielle* which they know how to play, with the possible exception of Eustache" (43).

Lawrence too lists a number of costume features in her discussion of minstrel identity in *Folie Tristan* (Oxford) and Gerbert de Montreuil's *Continuation*, such as poor garments, tonsure, a stick, skin coloring, absurd behavior, possession of a harp or other instrument, and musical performance (24-35). She finds, however, that these indicators do not apply solely to minstrels but rather could also represent a number of other characters. For example, a stick signifies not only "minstrel-fool" but also "wild man, shepherd, peasant and giant" (26). As we discussed in chapter two, because of the ambiguity of identity signs representing the minstrel, Lawrence concludes that it is finally the author's use of defining labels that tells the reader for certain that the disguise is that of minstrel (39).

In the entrance trick episodes considered here, we will also find varied depictions of minstrels, who among hair changes (growing it long, shaving portions, or dying it),

skin color and face shape alterations, and putting on clothes, poor clothes, fine clothes, colorful clothes, badly cut clothes, cloaks, baggy leggings, a jester's habit, a sclauin, a wool tunic, ugly hats, and enormous hoods or taking off royal garments, they also use spiky crutches, a food bag, juggling equipment, old equestrian gear, staffs, and a variety of musical instruments such as harps, a lyre, viols, a rote, a tabor, giges, a horn, pipes, a shawm, a cornemuse, a hurdy-gurdy, a reed pipe, a psaltery, an armonie, a flute, hornpipes and fiddles. Here too, physical actions sometimes help to convey the minstrel identity. For example, disguise minstrels behave as minstrels, as in King Horn, playing music or singing at the gate to catch attention or enhance the sense that they are indeed minstrels.

In some of the tales the hero disguises alone; sometimes he brings a companion, and sometimes he brings a whole band. But in the case of Tristan's harp and rote episodes, Tristan's disguise is created by appearing alone with an instrument. In two versions, he is then recognized by the enemy as a minstrel and asked to play. And in two other cases, the disguises are nothing more than a statement by the character indicating his identity, as a "lutantist" in the case of Hother and as bards in the case of Gwydion and Lleu, confirmed by outstanding performance skills. So although an author's use of a minstrel label does allow the audience to definitively identify the disguise as that of a minstrel as Lawrence shows, the more important factor here may be how other characters recognize him as a minstrel. And the answer appears to be—if he looks like a minstrel, acts like a minstrel, or says he's a minstrel, he's probably a minstrel.

Disguise Type—As we just saw, because part or all of the disguise can be created by a statement of identity, through which the hero tells the gatekeeper or tester that he is a

minstrel, I will point out how the narrator defines the disguise or how characters refer to themselves or to other characters within each text.

Thompson's Motif Index identifies this motif as "Disguise as musician to enter enemy's camp"; however, a review of stories reflecting this motif will show that the term "musician" is too narrow to encompass all of its examples. In fact, we will find a variety of different performer types in these episodes including: bard, poet, juggler, fool, mad fool, entertainer, harper, watchman, minstrel and so forth. Lawrence's attempt to define the minstrel leads her to call them all professional performers: "We may, for practical purposes, generally define the minstrel as a professional performer. To do so, however, we must conceive of performance in broad terms as entertainment that embraces a wide range of arts that extend beyond music" (35). This definition also applies to the performers in our catalogue, some of whom possess non-musical skills such as juggling, recitation of poetry, or storytelling.

Southworth too shows that a variety of different types of medieval performers were considered minstrels:

All those professional performers known (in Latin) as *mimi et histriones*, or (in French) as *jugleurs* or *jongleurs*, or (in Old English) *gleemen*, are now [from 1266] embraced by this one word, 'minstrel.' They included musicians—composers, instrumentalists and singers—oral poets and tellers of tales (often to a musical accompaniment), fools, jugglers, acrobats and dancers; actors, mimes; and mimics; conjurors, puppeteers, and exhibitors of performing animals. (3)

For the purpose of more accurately identifying the motif known as K2357.1 "Disguise as musician to enter enemy's camp," the professional entertainers represented in this

collection of entrance trick tales, though not all musicians, could all be termed minstrels. Thus, a more appropriate title for K2357.1 would include the word "minstrel" in the same way as in K1817.3 "Disguise as harper <Minstrel>." The new enlarged category would become K2357.1 "Disguise as musician <minstrel> to enter enemy's camp <castle>," under which we could immediately include all twenty-one of the stories reviewed in this study. I also include the word "castle" in this altered title as is done with the parent entry K2357 since both camp and castle apply to examples of this motif. As noted earlier, I have not included The Life and Death of Cormac the Skald, one of Thompson's original three under this listing because it is not a true example of this motif and should be removed from this classification. Additionally, stories which contain two minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes such as Math mab Mathonwy and Fouke Le Fitz Waryn should be marked as such, bringing the total number of entrance trick episodes at this time to twenty-three.

Performing Skills—Within the discussion of each episode, I will list the various skills exhibited by each performer. In this catalogue, even when the hero depicts a beggar-minstrel, the usual entrance trick performance consists of skills such as playing the harp, lyre or other instruments, storytelling, singing, recitation of poetry, juggling, gleowing, and so forth, all of which have been associated with what Southworth calls the northern tradition of the Germanic scop, the Celtic bard, and the Anglo-Saxon "gleomen" (21). The three possible exceptions to this include Folie Tristan who disguises and behaves as a mad fool, Baldulf who dresses and in some versions behaves as a fool, and John in Fouke whose ugly appearance makes people take him for and treat him as a fool. Despite their costumes, however, all three of these characters are able to play the harp.

Baldulf does so within the episode; Tristan declares this ability during the trick; and John demonstrates his instrumental skills in his second disguise episode.

Ability Level—For each episode, I will note any descriptions provided of the quality of the hero's performance. Cropp's study shows that nearly all of the disguise minstrels in her sample knew how to play their instruments. But we will find that in entrance trick episodes, the performers are generally more than just proficient. In fact, often the author indicates more than once that the hero possesses superior skills in his craft. For example in Math, Gwydion is a "good teller of tales" and "the best teller of tales in the world" (Jones 67, 57). And in noble fosterling tales, including the stories of Horn, in King Horn and Romance, Hother, Beton and in the Tristan tradition, these heroes generally excel above their peers in all areas in addition to musical skills.

Reaction at the Gate—In each of the episodes, I will discuss the reaction the hero gets at the gate or in front of his enemy, which is most generally positive, including preparation of or allowance to enhance a celebration, a joyful, friendship-like welcome, or more simply immediate admittance or audience to perform. As we discovered in our review of criticism, the minstrel disguise is useful in literature (and possibly in real life too) because it offers several benefits to its user, namely mobility, security, proximity and anonymity. As minstrels were often itinerant, the disguise offers a hero the opportunity to move about safely without attracting enemy attention or causing suspicion, thus also granting him a sense of anonymity as we will see in the Baldulf account. Proximity is also a built-in component of the minstrel disguise, bringing the hero in front of his enemy to perform. As we will see, proximity is particularly important to Thorleif—his beggar-

poet disguise allows him to directly approach his enemy, Hakon, to deliver a curse incantation.

But we will also see through this comparison that the minstrel disguise offers three additional benefits to the hero—a celebratory mood, a distraction, and a sense of trust. Each of these benefits is interconnected: the celebratory mood fosters trust; celebratory excitement together with trust leads to distraction; and all three together make the trick particularly effective on a narrative level.

As we saw in chapter two, Lawrence's study concludes that the minstrel is a bringer of joy. And indeed we see this clearly in the positive reactions of gatekeepers and courtiers when approached by the disguised musicians in these episodes. Often the narrator will indicate that the minstrels are joyfully received, a celebration is prepared or the performers are made welcome. This celebratory mood is in stark contrast to the way the hero would normally be received at his enemy's gate, enhancing our sense of the hero's clever victory over his unwitting foe. In thirteen out of the twenty-one stories, the author even includes a statement calling the hero or the act cunning.

The sense of trust engendered by this disguise shows in the way porters open up the gates immediately or how would-be minstrels are called over or invited in. And trust is certainly involved in the disguise's proximity advantage in that the minstrel must be a trusted individual or he would never be welcomed in the gate, not to mention into the innermost chambers. But this trust is also connected with the minstrel's duties as a bringer of joy and celebration, which makes him seem like a friend or companion. For example, in *Folie* Mark greets Tristan the fool, exclaiming: "Welcome friend" (Weiss 125). Dugdale's Talbot too as we recall is welcomed "as though he were a close friend."

This joy and trust creates a natural distraction, causing characters to let down their guards. And when coupled with the additional distraction and reassurance of a skillful performance, it not only gets the hero in the door but also, in at least five cases, helps him maintain his proximity for a more extended period without suspicion in order to gain another objective. For example, in the two William of Malmesbury accounts, Alfred and Anlaf are admitted as minstrels and then proceed to gather information against the enemy. In Math, Gwydion stays overnight before tricking his enemies into trading away pigs in the first episode and into reversing a curse in the second. And in Fouke's wealthy minstrel episode in particular, mood, trust, and distraction all work together, allowing John to administer a sleeping drug during the performance to rescue one of his comrades.

But in addition to the trust fostered by a celebratory mood and an excellent performance, these episodes contain another level of trust that is intertwined with the chivalric role played by the minstrel. As we saw by the reaction to Taillefer's antics in the Battle of Hastings, although a professional minstrel may appear on the battlefield, he does not normally engage in battle and in fact would generally make an unworthy, ill prepared opponent. Thus no knight should ever fear having a minstrel nearby. In Continuation too, Tristan and his men gain the advantage in a tournament dressed as minstrels, confusing and angering their opponents. In the story of Beton also, though the hero is not dressed as a minstrel, he taunts two enemy knights, telling them "'You're quite right to tumble!... It was a minstrel who struck you!'" The narrator explains: "The man's comrade saw him fall and was angry and ashamed" (Shirley 78). This vexing contradiction, a minstrel-knight, takes advantage of the enemy's understanding that minstrels are no one to fear and above all no one to fight. Therefore, Lawrence's

identification of the minstrel as a bringer of joy actually only tells half the story in these disguise episodes because here the enemy's expectations of celebration are instead often fulfilled by sorrow through the hero's violent attack. But we will explore this minstrel-warrior contradiction further in chapters six and seven.

Purpose of the Trick—In each of these stories, the minstrel disguise is used to enter enemy territory, such as an enemy camp, castle, or compound peacefully. But there are numerous reasons why a hero might want to do this. In the stories included here, heroes disguise in order to spy, rescue, gain an advantage in battle, gain safe passage, provide aid, steal, enable a romantic liaison, rescue, regain birthright, obtain revenge, or cause humiliation. In some cases, the purpose is mixed. For example, in Horn and Romance, a rescue also provides the opportunity for the hero to avenge himself against his treacherous liegeman. In Beton, while regaining his birthright, he naturally avenges his father's death. Or in the Baldulf tale, safe passage is required so he can bring aid to his brother who is under siege. And in the case of Hother, though his original intention is to spy, he then hopes to obtain the magic food that gives his enemy strength thus gaining an advantage in battle, but finally he seizes the unexpected opportunity to kill him.

Violence—As I point out the purpose of each trick, we will see that although the trick enables the hero to enter an enemy compound peacefully, violence commonly follows, vividly depicting the minstrel-warrior paradox. In nine of the tales, however, no violence at all is performed during the trick, including Talbot's story, Orfeo, Geoffrey's, Wace's, and Manning's Baldulf accounts, Math, and the three Tristan harp and rote episodes. We may also be able to add Layamon's Baldulf, *Folie Tristan*, and Continuation here. In Layamon's Baldulf, the only violence is directed against him. In

Folie, Tristan is playfully attacked by boys and retaliates but without real force. And in Continuation, violence occurs but only within the framework of knightly challenges and a tournament. Although these characters commit either no act or minimal acts of violence during or as a result of the trick in these stories, all of these character are warriors. Thus even without violent actions, the image of the minstrel-warrior appears in each episode.

When discussing violence, I will refer only to incidents that occur during the trick or as a result of it. Typical acts of violence can include sudden or vivid brutality against the enemy and his company, but this violence is generally made to seem appropriate given the circumstances. Hother plunges his sword into his enemy's side. Alfred cuts the enemy to pieces. Horn decapitates Fikenhild, kills his men and then in two manuscripts has Fikenhild torn apart. In Romance, Horn cleaves his enemy's head in two and has him hung at the crossroads. Thorleif, dressed as an ornery old beggar-poet, hits other beggars with his crutch and kills part of the enemy company with his incantations. Beton cuts off his enemy's right arm, slashes off heads in battle, drags the enemy behind a horse, has a wicked fisherman skinned alive and then rounds things up by dragging his enemy again and throwing him in a ditch for ravens and vultures to eat. The minstrel is a bringer of joy as Lawrence points out; yet as we can see, many of these entrance trick episodes interrupt the celebration with acts of brutal violence. This contrast is important and quite distinct in some of the stories, creating a visual illustration of the minstrel-warrior contradiction.

Negative Details or Character Traits—In addition to the generally favorable portrayal of these heroes or their clever acts as the means to achieving a difficult goal, most of these heroes also display negative touches in their character in varying degrees.

Horn, for example, shows questionable integrity in how he makes and honors his promises to Rimenhild. Gwydion paves the way for his brother to commit a crime. John de Rampaigne spatters someone's head for mocking him. And Anlaf makes a terrible mistake, cutting an innocent bishop and his household to pieces. We will explore these negative details in both chapters five and six within discussions of the trickster and King David.

Magic—"Real" magic is another feature occurring in some of these episodes. We find magic or otherworldly power in Math, Hother, Thorleif, and Orfeo. But as we will investigate more in the next chapter, there appears to be a type of magic in human creative cunning as well as in the minstrel's technical skills and performance of music or spoken words. Therefore, the presence of real magic in some of these episodes seems fitting. But most interesting is the fact that this "real" magic is never used to get in the door. Rather the heroes prefer to use the magic of cunning to do this job and in the process win not only entrance but also a moral victory over their foe.

Chronicle Tales

In chapter two, we discussed the early critics who pointed to semi-historical accounts to illustrate disguise as a real-life activity, including the story of William Talbot, from Dugdale's *Monasticon Anglicanum*, who found and returned Ela Fitzpatrick by disguising as a minstrel. To this story, we can also add the chronicle accounts of Baldulf, Alfred, and Anlaf, which appear in similar documents. Although Dickson refers to the story of Aldhelm as an example of a chronicle tale in which the hero dresses as a minstrel to "infiltrate the enemy camp to gain information" (50), it isn't. Aldhelm does not enter

enemy territory dressed as a minstrel, unless you can call the midst of an apathetic congregation an enemy compound. This tale, rather, tells the story of how he coaxes the people into listening to his sermon by first dressing and performing as a minstrel. So as noted earlier, this tale has not been included in a consideration of the motif's defining features. Whether we can call these chronicle stories true historical accounts remains to be argued. As we will see in the story of Balduf particularly, the versions vary widely, having received individual fictional touches by each of the authors. If there is truth at the core of these reports, they seem to have captured an archetypal image that fascinates authors and most likely audiences too.

Although we considered the story of William Talbot already in chapter two, let us examine its basic features here as an example of this minstrel disguise archetype. The passage is relatively short, so I will quote it again here:

At the same time in England there was a certain soldier called William Talbot, who put on foreigner's clothing and crossed the sea to Normandy. There he stayed for two years. He wandered this way and that to seek out his mistress Ela of Salisbury, and when he had found her he took off his foreign garb, dressed like a minstrel and entered the court where she was staying. Since he was a jovial fellow, with an excellent knowledge of the exploits of the ancients, he received a popular welcome there, as though he were a close friend. When he found a suitable time he returned to England, taking with him that venerable mistress Ela, the heir of the county of Salisbury, and introduced her to king Richard. He adopted her in a most particular way, and married her to his brother William Lungespe.... (Quintus)

In this story, circa 1200, a soldier named Talbot determines to rescue Ela of Salisbury from the "safe and close custody" of her relatives in Normandy, making this act actually something between rescue and abduction. The account leans toward rescue, however, with Ela's return to claim her heritage, her "adoption" by King Richard, and marriage to his brother. Once Talbot finds Ela, he gains access to her by "dressing as a minstrel." Though no particular type of clothing is mentioned, it appears his costume is created by putting on garments others would interpret as minstrel's garb. His skills are not specifically outlined, but he was a "jovial fellow" who had an "excellent knowledge of the exploits of the ancients," indicating an outstanding performance including perhaps story-telling, poetry recitation, or singing *chansons de geste* or lays. Regardless of his particular skills, his knowledge of ancient exploits suggests a minstrel in the northern tradition. The reaction to his arrival and/ or performance is positive: "he received a popular welcome there, as though he were a close friend." This spare report of Talbot is plausible as fact and may indeed have occurred. But it still contains an interesting archetype. A soldier dressed as a minstrel enters an enemy compound secretly with hidden intentions. He is openly welcomed and trusted. His well executed performance involves respectable skills. In the end, he achieves a purpose he could never have obtained openly without a fight.

The next account we will consider is the story of how Alfred disguises himself as a minstrel to spy on the Danes and then defeats them with this intelligence, found in William of Malmesbury's Latin chronicle *Gesta regum Anglorum* (History of the English Kings) circa 1125. Here Alfred

hazarded a most cunning trick. Dressed as a minstrel he entered the Danish king's

camp, supported by one most faithful companion who knew the secret. There, gaining entry as a professional entertainer, even to the innermost quarters, there was no secret that he did not learn with both eyes and ears. After spending several days there and finding out to his heart's content all that he wanted to know, he returned to Athelney, collected his chief men together, and explained how idle the enemy were and how easy it would be to defeat them. (Mynors ii. 121.5)

After this, Alfred gathered together his forces against the Danes and with precise information from scouts "fell upon them suddenly and cut them to pieces with incredible slaughter" (ll.121.5).

Malmesbury defines Alfred's disguise type as "professional performer." But he also mentions that Alfred "dressed as a minstrel," again implying he put on garments others would interpret as belonging to a minstrel. Alfred is likely accompanied, though Mynors's translation reads "supported," by one of his men. It is common in these episodes for the hero to be joined in the disguise by some of his men. In fact, in Romance Horn "took a hundred companions, all dressed as musicians" (Weiss 118), which would seem complicated logistically if not somewhat suspicious. Alfred's skills and ability-level are not mentioned, but the text does say he spent "several days" there, so we must assume he was skilled enough to pass as a professional musician or they would have tossed him out long before that. In this entrance trick episode, Malmesbury himself points out the proximity benefit inherent in this disguise, stating he gained entry "even to the innermost quarters." But he also gives us a statement of cunning by calling Alfred's actions "a most cunning trick."

This account provides an interesting backdrop to the study of King Horn. In Horn, as in Malmesbury, the hero dresses as a minstrel to gain access to his enemy. Horn attacks immediately, whereas Alfred uses his cover to carefully gather intelligence. Beyond the use of this specific motif in both texts, we find that the episodes in Horn and Alfred's story share another interesting feature, a miraculous fishing dream. If we back up in Alfred's tale to just before he dons his disguise, we learn of a vision he receives. St. Cuthbert, "sometime bishop of Lindesfarne," came to Alfred in a dream explaining that God would have mercy on England and restore his kingdom to him (ii.121.3). As proof of this vision, he is told his men would return with "a great catch of big fish" (ii.121.3), which they do. Because of this encouragement, Alfred adopts his minstrel disguise. Like Alfred's dream promising an extraordinary catch of fish, as we saw in chapter three Horn contains a similar fishing dream not found in Romance, Rimenhild's dream of the broken net. But in Horn the dream is reversed. While Alfred takes an extra large catch, Rimenhild loses the one fish she desires.

The King Horn poet also gives Horn the surprising pseudonym "Cuberd, Cubert" in O text (796, 808, 936) or "Cutberd" in C (767, 917) during his seven years in Ireland, which of course appears to recall the author of Alfred's distinctive dream, St. Cuthbert. In Schofield's study of name origins in the Horn stories, he seems puzzled by the substitution in C and O manuscripts of Horn's Irish pseudonym and gives Gudmod precedence, stating:

Inasmuch as there appears no particular reason why the Anglo-Norman poet should give a Scandinavian name to his hero if it was not in the original, while an Englishman might easily (forgetfully or deliberately) have substituted for it the

name of a well-known British saint, *Gudmod* seems to have the best authority.

(29)

If "Gudmod" was Horn's original pseudonym, did a later transcriber notice the similarity and substitute "Cutberd"?

Even more striking is that according to Malmesbury's account, Horn and Alfred share similar experiences with their tales sharing similar themes. In Alfred's dream, St. Cuthbert explains: "You too, who are now so pitifully driven from your kingdom, shall in short time be restored in glory to your throne....But you, when you are restored to prosperity, will act as a king should, if you show your gratitude to God who helps you and to me His messenger by suitable devotion" (ii.121.3). Alfred's mother, too, is comforted by the same message, and after Alfred conquers his enemy, most of the pagan survivors are converted to Christianity. Likewise in King Horn, when Horn regains his homeland Suddenne from the Saracens and liberates his faithful mother, he begins the work of rebuilding churches and reinstating masses.

The unusual fishing dreams, the distinct pseudonym, and the similar theme and plot points suggest that the Horn poet or a later transcriber recognized similarities between the two stories and made references to the earlier Alfred tale within the poem. This comparison of Horn to the image of Alfred is also appropriate as Alfred was associated with the image of the harper king. Southworth explains: "Alfred himself was a key figure in the process whereby the gleomen came to terms with Christianity and found a new role" (25). Additionally, with the help of scholars from the continent, Alfred translated among other texts the Psalms of David and Boethius's The Consolation of Philosophy, extending the verses on Orpheus "to nearly twice their original length" (25).

And most telling are the images of Alfred in tenth and eleventh-century manuscripts depicted as David, including one in his English Psalter where "he appears as a divinely-inspired harper accompanied by three musicians and a juggler" (25).

We also find a harper in the next chronicle tale we will examine, the story of Baldulf, but here the main character also takes on the less commonly seen disguise type and costume characteristics of the fool. The story of Baldulf is found in four sources: Geoffrey of Monmouth, Wace, Layamon, and Robert Manning of Brunne. Geoffrey's version, the second entry in Thompson's Folk-Motif Index, is found in the 1136 Latin Legendary History of Britain, (*Historia regum Britanniae*). This episode shows the hero entering not a castle or a stronghold, but rather an enemy camp. Here Baldulf, a Saxon, disguises himself as a minstrel to pass safely through enemy territory in order to provide aid to his brother, Colgrin, who is under siege in York by Arthur and his army. Baldulf and his army of six thousand men are attacked and defeated by night while they are camped near York planning to surprise Arthur and his men. After this defeat, Baldulf decides that if he could just reach his brother, they might be able to work out a new plan together. Baldulf strategizes about how to gain access to his brother, and that they might "concert measures together for their safety" (Giles 150), implying some measure of creative cunning in Baldulf. But he also states that Baldulf "had no other way for it," but to disguise as a jester, (150) which may have contributed to Schofield's attitude that disguising as a minstrel is Horn's "only means of penetrating Fikenhild's castle and gaining access to Rimenhild" (62).

Geoffrey describes the incident as follows:

And since he had no other way for it, he shaved his head and beard, and put on the

habit of a jester with a harp, and in this disguise walked up and down in the camp, playing upon his instrument as if he had been a harper. He thus passed unsuspected, and by a little and little went up to the walls of the city, where he was at last discovered by the besieged, who thereupon drew him up with cords, and conducted him to his brother. (Giles 150)

Geoffrey does not directly name the type of minstrel Baldulf portrays or describe his ability-level, but we are told Baldulf plays on his instrument "as if he had been a harper." The reaction at the gate is also not specifically mentioned except that Baldulf progresses slowly toward the castle, "unsuspected." His costume is created by shaving his hair, carrying a harp, and putting on the "habit of a jester." Hair shaving is a less common feature occurring in only the Baldulf accounts and *Folie Tristan*. And the outfit of a jester is mentioned only in the Baldulf episodes. Yet we will see in the next chapter how the less heroic image of the fool is associated with this archetype in both of its two main traditions.

The next version of this tale comes from *Le roman de Brut* by the Norman poet Wace, and is the 1155 French translation of Geoffrey's *Historia*. Newstead explains that Wace "follows his source faithfully, expanding it chiefly with descriptive detail" (Arthurian 42). Here the purpose of the disguise is the same, but Wace adds new details about Baldulf's musical ability, the way in which he shaves his hair, and how he conducts himself while in disguise:

Baldulph devised to seek the besiegers' camp in the guise of a jongleur. He arrayed himself in all points as a harper, for he knew well how to chant songs and lays, and to touch the strings tunably. For his brother's sake he made himself as a

fool. He shaved off one half of his beard and moustache, and caused the half of his head to be polled likewise. He hung a harp about his neck, and showed in every respect as a lewd fellow and a jester. Baldulph presently went forth from his abode, being known again of none. He went to and fro harping on his harp, till he stood beneath the walls of the city. The warders on the towers hearkened to his speech, so that they drew him up by cords upon the wall. (Mason 47)

Baldulf no longer dons a specific garment but instead "arrays" himself as a harper, again including a harp. Here Baldulf not only shaves his hair and beard but more specifically he shaves off only half of his head, beard, and now moustache, creating the look of a fool. Baldulf's skills here are increased to include not just harping but also chanting songs and lays, accentuating the northern minstrelsy tradition skills combined with this jester's costume. And in this more embellished account, we are told that he is able to play well or "tunably." Wace calls Baldulf a jongleur, but he also uses the words harper, fool, lewd fellow and jester in reference to his attire and deportment.

If we jump ahead to the "last decade of the twelfth century or shortly thereafter," we come to Layamon's Brut, found in two manuscripts, Cotton Caligula A.IX and Cotton Otho C.XIII, which is an "expanded paraphrase of Wace in alliterative verse" (Newstead Arthurian 42). But as Newstead goes on to explain, Brut is also much more than just an English paraphrase:

Layamon's dramatic imagination transforms his material into a fresh and original narrative that reflects little of the courtly refinement of its source. Most of his expansions introduce concrete detail, direct address, and specific localizations lacking in Wace. (Arthurian 43)

The Baldulf disguise episode is a good example of Layamon taking a passage from Wace and making it his own. It is indeed expanded with more detail and feeling, now including information about Baldulf's childhood musical abilities which as we will see is one of the noble fosterling tale traits. In this version, we are also shown how Baldulf is treated in his disguise as fool by the people he passes.

After the surprise attack on his men in the forest where nine hundred are killed by Arthur, Balduf leaves his remaining men behind to go to his brother:

Colgrim wes wið-innen. mid Sæxisce monnen.
 Baldulf hine biþohte; what he don mihte.
 mid wulches cunnes ginne; he mihte cumen binnen.
 in-to þere burh³e; to Colgrime his broðere;
 þe wes him on lieu; leofest alre monne.
 Baldulf lette striken; to þan bare lichen.
 his bærd and his chinne; & makede hine to crosse.
 he lette sceren half his hæfd; and nom him ane harpe an hond.
 He cuðen harpien wel; an his child-haden.
 & mid his harpe he ferde; to þas kinges hirede.
 & gon þær to gleowien; & mucche gome to makien.
 Ofte me hine smæt; mid smærte ȝerden.
 ofte me hine culde; swa me deð crosce.
 ælc mon þe hine imette; mid bismare hine igratte.
 Swa nauere na mon nuste; of Baldulfes custe.
 buten hit weore crosse; icumen to þan hirede.

Swa he eode longe up-ward; swa longe he eode a-dun-ward.

þæt heo weoren warre; þe weoren þær wið-innen.

þæt hit wes Baldulf; Colgrimes broðer.

Heo wurpen ut enne rap; & Baldulf hine faste igrap.

and brud / den up Baldolf; þat he binnen com.

mid swulches cunnes ginnes; Baldulf com wið-innen. (Caligula 10127-148)

Note that twice in this passage Baldulf's cunning is mentioned when he, like Horn, seeks a *ginne* to aid him in this seemingly hopeless situation.

In this account, all specific references to garments or array are gone. Rather this costume is composed of a haircut and a harp. Baldulf's hair here is again one tick more specific than in the prior account as he shaves off his beard, which is possibly his moustache, and his chin completely but only half his head. His minstrelsy skills include harping, gleowing and making revelry or "*gome*." Concerning ability-level, we are told Baldulf could harp "wel" already in his childhood.

Within the description of the hair, we find the phrase, "& makede hine to crosse" (10133). Among numerous definitions for *crosse*, which Layamon uses twice in this passage, we find "a madman, a fool" (MED). Thus Layamon defines the disguise as that of fool and also notes that others took him as a fool, which causes onlookers to strike out physically at him. The reaction at the gate, therefore, is very different between Wace where Baldulf passes unsuspected and Layamon where he is struck with sticks and "greeted with derision" (Madden 75). Yet, despite the mocking behavior and his appearance as a fool, Baldulf's skills as a harper are emphasized here as in each of the accounts.

Ridicule and violence is an unusual reaction to the minstrel in these episodes, as they are normally greeted joyfully or are at the very least allowed to perform in peace. In two other instances, however, we see a similarly aggressive reaction from on lookers. In the case of Baldulf, Layamon's version overall paints Baldulf, an adversary of Arthur, as a less sympathetic and heroic character than we find in Wace and Geoffrey's accounts. Newstead notes: "Layamon is less intellectual than his model, but more passionate and emotionally identified with his hero Arthur" (Arthurian 43). For example, in addition to being struck and mocked by those around him while in disguise, Layamon has Baldulf leave his own men, though with sorrow, to save his own brother. In Geoffrey's account, on the other hand, it appears that Baldulf has been deserted by his forces but refuses to give up. And in Wace we are given the impression that despite the loss of his forces, Baldulf "the cunning captain" (Mason 47) will sacrifice himself and go alone to end the siege and save his brother. Thus in Geoffrey and Wace's versions, Baldulf appears to be a clever hero, unwilling to give up. He employs a creative strategy and tricks his foe. In Wace, Baldulf is actually called cunning. And in Layamon's version, too, despite his tarnished reputation, the term *ginne* is twice applied to this trick.

The final version of Baldulf's story is Robert Manning of Brunne's 1338 Chronicle, a Middle English verse translation of Wace's *Brut*, from Lamberth Palace, Library MS 491. The Baldulf tale is contained in part II, The Story of England. Here again as in Wace, we return to a more heroic Baldulf who finds a way in an impossible situation. In this version, after more than half of Baldulf's forces are slain and the remaining men flee, he is left alone to find some means of helping his brother. He knows

he can't rescue him, but he wants to speak with him:

He coupe of notes & of layes,
 & of harpe he knew þasayes;
 He feyned hym as a iogelour,
 & cam to þe ost of kyng Arþour;
 Hi hed, his berd, he dide al schauē;
 Men wend a were a folted knaue;
 Als a gleman gan he synge,
 & coupe a party of harpyng.
 Longe he ȝede þus aboute,
 Non ne wende of gyle ne doute;
 Bot he was boþe wyly & sley. (9839-9849)

Here we are told Baldulf disguises himself as a "*iogelour*," since he "coupe of notes & of layes, / & of harpe he knew þasayes" (9839-40) (9841). As we saw in the other examples, Manning also uses a variety of terms to describe Baldulf's disguise, including "*gleman*" (9845) and "*folted*" knave" (9844), which Furnivall glosses as "stupid, foolish" (791). Again Baldulf makes changes to his hair, but here Manning appears to go back to Geoffrey because Baldulf shaves "al" his head and beard (9843). In this account, Baldulf again sings as a *gleman* and harps, though here the text reads he knew "a party of harpyng," (9846) which glosses as "a part, partly, a little, somewhat" (814). This word could have been added to complete the verse line. If not, then this is the only entrance trick example in which the hero had only passable musical skills. In all of the other examples, he is either outstanding, good, or the ability-level is not specifically mentioned.

But we must remember that each of the Baldulf accounts is contained within the story of how Arthur defeats and besieges Colgrin, Baldulf's brother. Though he is dealt with sympathetically in this episode, Baldulf isn't technically the hero of the story. And in fact, as Baldulf lies in wait to ambush Cador, before losing his men, Cador describes Baldulf's ambush attempt as an act of guile. Manning uses the word "gyle" again when Baldulf walks about, harping in the enemy camp. None suspected guile or feared him (9848). But in this interesting account, Manning combines the sense of the enemy using guile with admiration for a clever hero, stating that Baldulf "was boþe wyly & sley" (9848) 'skilful, cunning' (827). Regardless of the level of heroism each author confers on Baldulf, there appears to be an intrigue associated with his entrance trick in each of the accounts, though Geoffrey's version is the most like an historical report. The other versions, Wace, Layamon and Manning each call Baldulf or his act cunning.

We find another chronicle entrance trick episode in the story of how Anlaf entered the tents of Æthelstan dressed as a minstrel to spy. Anlaf's tale is found in two sources, Malmesbury's 1125 The History of the English Kings and Robert of Gloucester's 1297 Metrical Chronicle. Here again, Anlaf is not the story's hero but his opponent.

The account in Malmesbury is as follows:

...great skill in generalship and great numbers of troops confronted him at *Brunefeld*. Anlaf, perceiving the impending danger, cunningly assumed the office of a spy and, laying aside his royal garments, equipped himself with a harp and made his way to our king's tent. There he stood singing at the door and from time to time 'in sweet confusion struck the vocal strings' and easily secured admission, pretending to be an entertainer who won his daily bread by this kind of skill. For

some time he entertained the king and his guests with tuneful music, and while playing surveyed the whole scene. (ii.131.4-5)

Anlaf is recognized after he leaves the tent by a man who had once sworn allegiance to him. Although the man does not alert Æthelstan to Anlaf's presence until he has gone, he does suggest they move their camp to thwart any attack by Anlaf and his men. They do so, and when Anlaf returns, he mistakenly falls upon a bishop who had set up his camp in that same position: "Anlaf cut him and his whole household to pieces" (ll.131.6).

In this account, Anlaf's costume is created by removing royal garments and taking a harp. While in costume, he sings and accompanies himself on harp. His disguise type as a professional performer is less specific than some—he is simply a performer who lives by this work. Anlaf too is a capable musician, producing "tuneful music." His reception is not jubilant, but we are told he "easily secured admission."

In this example, the minstrel disguise is used to enter an enemy compound and spy, gathering information on the enemy as in the stories of Hother, Alfred, and John's disguise as diseased beggar-juggler in Fouke. Although the spying is accomplished peacefully, each of these stories ends in violence. In the tales of Anlaf and John that violence is surprising: John's is unexpected and extreme, and Anlaf's is wrongly directed. Although violence is often a part of these entrance trick episodes, this is the only tale in which the character makes such a bungling mistake. This unheroic detail may be an historical fact. The real Anlaf may have actually made this mistake. Or the mistake may have adhered itself to the story as an amusing detail, belittling the enemy. In either case, Malmesbury nonetheless appears to be intrigued by this act of disguise because he

explains that Anlaf behaves "cunningly" with the use of this trick, despite its unfortunate outcome.

The second version of Anlaf's story is Gloucester's Middle English Chronicle from Huntington Library manuscript HM126, dating from the end of the fourteenth century. In this account, Anlaf is again described as "quoynte" which Wright glosses as 'cunning, curious, skilful' (945). Here Anlaf is more specifically referred to by the terms minstrel and harper: "Menestral he was god ynou · & harpare in eche poynte" (5509). Again, Anlaf goes with his harp to Æthelstan's camp to spy, but no other costume details are mentioned in this version. Here in Gloucester, unlike in Malmesbury, Anlaf plays outside until they send for him. In fact it is the quality of his harping that gains him admission: "& so wel wipoute harpede · þat me after him sende" (5511). His ability-level is mentioned again in the next line, where he harps so well that he pleased the whole crowd: "þere he harpede so wel · þat he payde al þe route" (5512). When the people have enjoyed enough of his "*gle*," they send him on his way (5514). Still, Anlaf is the enemy, not the hero of this story. He and his men are described as "bad, evil" '*luper*' (5527) men when they come by night and fall upon what they think is Æthelstan's camp (932). Even so, Gloucester blames no one for the mistake: "þat gult nadde non" (5528). Overall, in both Gloucester and Malmesbury's accounts, Anlaf's clever act is acknowledged even though he is the enemy and makes a bungling mistake.

In the Baldulf stories and the tales of Anlaf, we find six different entrance trick accounts (with the possible exception of Geoffrey and Wace) in which the actor or "hero" is actually the enemy in the story. More often, the enemy is depicted as using guile, and this is a negative trait. But in each of the Baldulf and Anlaf episodes except Geoffrey,

the disguise-minstrel or his act is referred to as cunning. We do still see negative associations in these tales, however. In the Baldulf tales, for example, Baldulf although strongly associated with harping in each version also assumes the disguise of fool, which is a less respectable disguise than we will see undertaken by most of the true heroes in this motif. In Layamon's version, Baldulf is portrayed unheroically, as a deserter who is mocked and struck by on-lookers while in disguise, but his clever act is still acknowledged. Manning mentions the term guile in connection with Baldulf's act and perhaps decreases his musical skills but also notes that he is "boþe wyly & sley." In both of the Anlaf tales, Anlaf's brutal mistake itself causes him to appear unheroic. But again, both authors still refer to him as cunning, and Gloucester even excuses his bloody mistake.

Thus in these chronicle accounts, the minstrel disguise entrance trick archetype seems to interest the authors, regardless of whether its instigator was the hero or not. And in the tales of Talbot, Alfred, Baldulf and Anlaf we see certain features which will also play strongly in the fully fictional episodes, including a character of noble or higher rank who is also a soldier, a harp (or skills indicating a northern minstrelsy tradition), a cunning nature, excellent performing skills, and an overwhelming problem. The incident itself begins peacefully but often ends in the hero carrying out extreme violence against his enemy. As we look into the next two groups of episodes, Tales of Enchantment and the Trickster and Noble Fosterling Tales in the next two chapters, we will find that if these chronicle reports are really based on fact, they reflect not only the image of the cunning harper king but also the mythological tradition of Hermes through the trick's unlikely combination of signature attributes. We will also find a Greek and Roman

version of the minstrel disguise entrance trick in the story of how Hermes defeats Argus. And finally, this trickster tradition helps to explain the less positive features appearing in entrance trick heroes. Thus, rather than saying this disguise is used in romances because it happened in real life, we might suggest that this trick was possibly performed in real life, transformed in chronicle accounts, and copied in fully fictional tales because it represents an intriguing, persistent, and effective archetype. And as we investigate the vexing paradox of the warrior-minstrel and the creative thinking processes it depicts, we will discover a character-type who is a leader, a warrior, and a creative thinker, undaunted by extreme challenges and forging new paths. Such a character may be considered a valuable problem-solver or a dangerous troublemaker. The characters represented in these episodes, particularly in the fully fictional romance and saga depictions, are generally portrayed as the former, but occasionally hints of the other side also pop up. These we will consider next in *Tales Enchantment and the Trickster*.

Notes

¹ I present here international texts containing minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes for the purpose of compiling a catalogue for future scholars and as a means of examining the motif. I will refer to the original texts when they appeared in Old or Middle English. In all other cases, I must rely on the translations of the experts in that literature.

CHAPTER 5

PART II THE MYTHOLOGICAL TRICKSTER TRADITION OF HERMES:

SIR ORFEO AMONG THE TALES OF ENCHANTMENT AND THE TRICKSTER

It is at well-guarded barriers that these figures are especially tricksters, for here they must be masters of deceit if they are to proceed. (Hyde 7)

In the last chapter, our review of semi-historical chronicle accounts revealed a number of common features in the minstrel disguise entrance trick archetype, including a noble or higher ranking hero with a cunning nature who is also a soldier and a talented performer on harp or in other minstrelsy skills from the northern tradition, faced with a formidable problem. With this understanding of the typical entrance trick hero characteristics, let us now take a step back and look at the trick itself. The entrance trick is by definition a trick of disguise and border crossing. And when we encounter a border or boundary, we find ourselves in what Lewis Hyde calls trickster territory. In his 1999 Trickster Makes This World, Hyde explains: “the best way to describe trickster is to say simply that the boundary is where he will be found—sometimes drawing the line, sometimes crossing it, sometimes erasing or moving it, but always there” (7-8). Trickster is also a “master of camouflage and disguise” (Hyers 176). Hyde explains that the trickster: “can encrypt his own image, distort it, cover it up. In particular, tricksters are known for changing their skin” (51). Therefore in the simplest terms, we can see that

motif K2357.1 "Disguise as musician to enter enemy's camp," with its components of disguise and border crossing must have trickster associations.

But beyond disguise and entry into enemy territory, the trick itself is an act of cunning, designed not only to achieve a practical purpose but also for the humorous or mischievous effect of "putting one over on," subordinating, or humiliating the enemy. In other words, the hero establishes his intellectual superiority over his enemy in not only finding a way to overcome obstacles thrown in his path but by actually turning the situation to his advantage. With the trick, he controls the actions of the enemy without his knowledge, causing him to admit the one person he would most like to keep out and not even grudgingly. Instead the hero is welcomed by the foe, treated like a friend, and sometimes a celebration is even prepared in honor of his coming. Thus the trick, as well as clever cunning, is associated with both intelligence and mischievousness.

In the last chapter, we looked again at the variety of narrative advantages provided by the trick and also at why the trick is so effective, including the celebratory mood, the distraction, and the sense of trust it provides. Nestled into the core of this interconnected mix we found the vexing contradiction of the minstrel-warrior. This paradox of celebration versus sorrow, innocence versus intent, confuses the standard mode of perception and understanding, allowing the hero to take control of the situation. We will see in chapter seven's discussion of cunning that creative thinkers consciously bring together contradictory ideas to find insight whereas uncreative thinkers are stumped by such opposition, guided instead by conventional patterns. Thus the enemy in these episodes sees the conventional pattern and accepts it fully, never even suspecting the paradox.

When we combine disguise, border crossing, trickery, and paradox, we are certainly entering into trickster territory and specifically the domain of the Greek and Roman trickster god Hermes, who represents each of these qualities plus music. Thus, Hermes proves a particularly apt prototype for the minstrel disguise entrance trick hero. Hermes is “the ‘god of roads,’ the ‘god of doors,’ the ‘guide’ who presides over all comings-in and goings-out” (Brown 33). As a boundary god, his symbol the “herm”—a phallic-like stone block, topped with a head—was placed at natural boundaries such as doorways, entrances, crossroads, and hilltops (Brown 32). But more importantly, as Doty points out in Mythical Trickster Figures (1993), Hermes is the Trickster, causing “laughter at others’ expense” (60). He also represents paradoxes, polarizations, and multiplicity (Doty 48-49), making him both a trickster and a “culture hero and ‘giver of good things’” (Brown 36). Part of this paradoxical nature was played out in carnival-like festivals called *Hermaia* in which the roles of master and servant were exchanged (Doty 58)—much like the exchange of roles in romance disguise moments, as Black notes, when members of the nobility dress as members of the lower classes. Hermes also “loves the mystery of appearing and disappearing, as well as the incognito” (61). And of course, Hermes is well-known for his musical associations which we will explore further into this chapter. But most significantly, as Norman O. Brown explains in Hermes the Thief (1947): “the whole emphasis in the mythology of Hermes is on mental skill or cunning, as opposed to physical prowess” (7), which is exactly the emphasis in these minstrel disguise moments. As we saw, in six out of the eight chronicle reports the author specifically calls either the hero or the act itself cunning. Throughout the entire catalog, thirteen out of twenty-one stories contain such a statement of cunning. Hermes is also

associated with creativity and the lucky find, but these aspects of his character we will save for chapter seven.

Oddly Hermes has connections to the entrance trick on many levels. Beyond the characteristics we have already discussed, Hermes is also closely associated with theft, trade, magic, marriage and love, heralds, and craftsmen. At least one of our disguise musicians uses the entrance trick in order to steal—Gwydyon enters Pryderi's court to steal his pigs in a tricky way in Math, reminiscent of Hermes's cattle theft in the Homeric Hymn to Hermes. And as a god of love and marriage, it is appropriate that in some of the entrance trick episodes, in Horn, Orfeo, and Tristan's harp and rote episodes for example, the hero uses the entrance trick to rescue his beloved. Brown also notes that there are still traces of "Bride-seizure" or stealing a bride in the customs of Greek marriage, an area where Hermes held domain. Horn, Orfeo, and Tristan must all steal back the woman they love. It is also appropriate that one of Hermes's duties was to bring together "both deities and mortals by transporting them for the explicit purpose of erotic conjunctions" (Doty 54). We'll see an example of this in both of the Tristan entrance tricks in this chapter, "*Tristan ménestrel*" from Continuation and Folie Tristan, as well as a violent example in Math.

A hero could also disguise as a merchant or a craftsman to undertake an entrance trick producing a similar combination of Hermean qualities as we see in the minstrel disguise entrance trick. However, when we mix music and trickery something magical happens that goes beyond what we see in a mix of merchant or craftsman and trickery. But first let us begin with craftsmanship and trickery because this combination too has special associations that also play into the minstrel disguise version of the trick. In fact,

as we saw in the first chapter, the trickster Cei disguises as a sword furbisher to enter Wnatch the Giant's castle to acquire his sword—what should have been an impossible task. But these disguise-minstrels too have a craft or a technical skill whether that be composing and/ or performing stories, poetry, lays, playing instruments or even juggling.

In keeping with Hermes's curious intermingling of elements, we find that trickery is related to craftsmanship, and both are related to magic. We can see the connection between "trick" and "skill" in the Middle English word *lift(e)*: "Horn cupe alle þe lifte / þat eni man of wifte" (C1459-60). As we saw, MED's first definition for *lift(e)* includes "ability, skill; cleverness, cunning." Like the modern German word *List* and the modern English "craft," the Anglo-Saxon word *list* also incorporates both meanings: "art, cleverness, cunning, experience, skill, craft" (Clark Hall 220). And in fact, in Hother, the hero is described as being "skilful on lyre or harp; and he was cunning on the timbrel" (Elton 89). In an equation, Trick = Technical Skill.

In Homeric Greek, the words also carried magical connotations, just as we find in the modern words "craft" and "cunning." Brown notes that "The word δόλος, 'trick,' which in Homeric Greek has connotations of magical action, is also used interchangeably with the usual word for 'technical skill' τέχνη to denote Hephaestus's magic skill at craftsmanship as well as the products of that skill" (21-22). Trick = Magical action = Technical skill? We see this same connection between trick, technical skill, and magic in the word *ginne*, which is used in both the Horn and Layamon entrance trick episodes. As we recall, the first entry in MED under *ginne* is "inventive talent, ingenuity, cleverness, skill; also, skill in magic or occult science," thus combining trickiness, technical skill and magic. In fact, Brown states: "A review of the mythology of Hermes the Trickster shows

that his trickery is never represented as a rational device, but as a manifestation of magical power" (11). Likewise, Trick = Magic.

In addition to the connection between the Greek words *δόλος* and *τέχνη*, which connote magical action and have been used interchangeably to mean both "trick" and "technical skill," Brown further traces word origins to show that "the words connoting magical action in the classical period are derived from roots whose original meaning is just as close to the notion of trickery as it is to that of magic" (17). Trick=Magic. But we have already noted that none of our medieval heroes uses magic to get in the gate, even when, like Gwydion or Thorleif, he does appear to possess magical powers or, like Hother and possibly Horn, he is given helpful magical items. Horn and Orfeo, moreover, are not able to perform real magic, relying instead on their human skills to produce a *ginne* or clever scheme when faced with a situation in which physical prowess is ineffective. And yet, those human skills seem to produce a special kind of magic. Their *ginne*, their clever schemes, then have magical connotations. Therefore, within these episodes, not only do the disguise-minstrels possess creative trickiness, which connotes magic, but they also possess a technical skill or a craft in harping, storytelling, juggling, and so forth, which also connotes magic. In Romance of Horn we are told that Horn was "clever and brave" and "in all ways he was the most accomplished, for such was his God-given intelligence that there was no master craftsman he could not surpass in skill" (Weiss 9-10). And what of music? It too connotes magic.

Patrizia Grimaldi classifies Orfeo's harp as a "magical agent" (149). And students of Orfeo may be inclined to describe Orfeo's harping using words like charming, enchanting, or mesmerizing, whether they consider the harp or Orfeo himself a magical

agent or not. As with the archetypal connections between magic and skill or magic and trickery, music is also connected with magic, making those who can skillfully produce it also appear to possess special powers. Music = Magic? Brown argues that there is an inherent connection between spoken or sung words and magic:

In the Indo-European languages words meaning 'song,' as well as words meaning 'speech,' are commonly derived from roots meaning 'loud sound';...

Furthermore, these roots commonly have connotations of magic. Philologists have therefore concluded that the origins of song and poetry lie in the intoned formulae of magical incantations. (29-30)

This connection between song as well as speech to magic, implies that not just musicians but also poets and storytellers also carry magical connotations. And one of our heroes, Thorleif, actually combines poetry with "real magic," producing an incantation.

Richard Kieckhefer in Magic in the Middle Ages (1989) highlights the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century interest in the magic of music. During this time, Marsilio Ficino, a Neoplatonist, wrote of the cosmic spirit found in stars and planets. One of the methods he describes for channeling these powers is by using words and songs (147). Ficino's writings also describe his using Orphic hymns for this purpose and accompanying himself in these songs on an Orphic lyre (147). Another figure from this period, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-94), "spoke of Orphic hymns as a uniquely efficacious form of magic" (147). Kieckhefer also describes the work of Lodovico Lazarelli and a contemporary of his, Johannes Reuchlin (1455-1522), as demonstrating a "reverence for the magical power of music" (147-48). Reuchlin's work "depicts an initiation into mystical knowledge through liturgical ceremony that involves preparatory

hymns" (148). Although these scholars wrote in a period slightly later than that of our entrance trick stories, we can see surfacing in their work the ever-present underlying connection between music and magic.

Hermes, too, combines music and magic. As a patron god of musicians, Hermes is often hailed as the inventor of the turtle shell lyre and the shepherd's pipes. And in the Hymn to Hermes, it is Hermes who gives Apollo the lyre and teaches him to play.

Hermes has also been credited with the "invention or discovery" of the musical scale (Doty 54-55). In Ovid, Hermes uses music, words, and magic together to defeat Argus. He "mesmerized Argus with song and story, then sealed the giant's sleeping eyes with a magic wand" (Hyde 208).

Hermes was also the patron god of heralds, a position that combined duties of music, ceremony, and service to the king (Brown 25-26). And our fictional Middle English kings, in addition to being disguise-minstrels, are as we have already seen generally outstanding musicians or performers in their own right, Horn and Orfeo particularly. Horn performs lays on his harp: "Hyf harpe he gan clenche / He makede Reymyld a lay" (O1525-26). But Orfeo's music, as far as we can tell, is instrumental alone, including no "speech," thus perhaps pointing to Brown's "loud sound" definition. Although Orfeo possess no true magical powers, he can tame animals and appears also to affect people with his music. The Auchinleck manuscript states that when Orfeo begins to play his harp, the people in the palace lay at his feet to listen:

Þat al þat in þe palays were

Com to him forto here,

& liggeþ adoun to his fete,

Hem þenkeþ his melody so swete.

Þe king herkneþ & sitt ful stille. (A439-43)

In each manuscript, the king sits "ful styll" (H407) or "wele styll" (B426), as if he's being hypnotized. But in A text, the people come up when Orfeo begins to play and lay down, rather than sit, at his feet, as though they might go to sleep.

In the story of Hermes and Argus, Hermes uses a magic wand. The rod, staff, or magic wand is the "most ancient and commonest attribute" of Hermes and came to be a symbol of the trickster in general (Brown 15). Doty also points out that Hermes was considered a peacemaker and that the staff also functioned as the 'blameless tool of peace' (Doty 52). According to Brown, the staff carried by Hermes signifies his roles as herald, magician, and bard: "the two crafts of the herald and the bard seem to have been derived from the single craft of the leader in magic ritual" (30). Interestingly, in fourteenth century England we still see a connection between the positions of musician and herald. The herald was a minstrel who, in addition to any duties associated with announcing or calling together groups of people, maintained genealogical and military knowledge and arranged pageantry and tournaments (Southworth 65). The Homeric herald in Greece was the "ceremonial expert in the rituals that center around the royal palace, the public assembly place, and the like" (Brown 26). Brown also notes: "The [Homeric] herald's badge of office is a staff, which is respected as magically potent: oaths are taken on it; it imposes an armistice on fighting warriors when placed between them; in the hands of judges 'sitting in the sacred circle' it gives binding force to their judgments; with the staff the proceedings of the assembly are regulated" (26).

Like Hermes, Orfeo, Horn, *Folie* Tristan, and John in *Fouke* are seen at one point in their stories carrying a staff. When Orfeo chooses to exile himself, although two of the manuscripts explain that other than the mantle or *sclauin* he takes to cover himself, Orfeo took "no noþer gode, / Bot his harp . . .," (A 230-31) the later Bodleian text has him carry a staff: "A staff to hym he gan take" (B230-34). Orfeo still has the staff when he meets Heurodis and follows her to the Land of Fairy: "He toke a staff as he spake / And threw an herpe at hys bake" (B345-46). Horn likewise takes a staff to complete his disguise as pilgrim during his first tricky rescue attempt. All three manuscripts state that: "Horn tok burdon & scrippe" (A1061) 'pilgrim's staff' (Hall 199) and 'bag.' And Tristan breaks a stick off a bush before approaching the gate: "He took a stake from a hedge and held it on his shoulder" (Weiss 124). In *Fouke*, for John's first disguise as diseased beggar-juggler, he "carried a great staff in his hand" (6).

If we keep in mind the underlying connection between the minstrel/ bard, the herald, and the magician, we may better understand the English reaction to the minstrel Taillefer's juggling and singing antics at the Battle of Hastings. Brown reports that according to anthropologists, "primitive magic has three essential ingredients: certain words spoken or chanted, certain ceremonial actions, and an officiating minister of the ceremony" (30). At this battle Taillefer performed certain seemingly ceremonial actions. He threw his lance up in the air and caught it three times and then threw it into the enemy ranks, injuring a soldier. Next he threw his sword into the air and caught it three times before charging into the English line. Wace declares that Taillefer sang during this display. Why did the English not charge Taillefer after he threw his lance? Certainly they were unaccustomed to seeing a minstrel attack, but they also apparently believed

they were witnessing the performance of magic. Taillefer sitting on horseback, seemed to be officiating in the casting of a spell, complete with lance and sword (suitable stand-ins for the staff), sung words, and ceremonial actions performed in threes. Gaimar writes: "Before the English he did wonders...One said to the other, who saw this, / That this was enchantment / Which he did before the folk" (Southworth 31). How much more surprising this moment becomes if the staff appears to function as Hermes's "tool of peace" before being flung into the ranks.

None of these minstrel tricksters use overt magic to get into an enemy stronghold. Rather, they overcome a formidable problem using a very human form of magic that relies on creative cunning and performing skills and the added oomph of music or spoken words, all of which appear to have magical qualities. Trick = Technical Skill = Magic. Song or Speech = Magic. The only exception to this in our catalogue may possibly be John's first disguise in Fouke, where although we know he additionally possesses musical skills, he appears to present only juggling in his performance. But again, this technical skill combined with his staff, like the tool of peace, also connotes magic. And as we saw in King Horn, the greater the difficulty, the greater the hero who overcomes it with his own personal magic. Trick + Technical Skill + Song or Speech = Human Magic.

With this view of the archetypal connections between song/ speech, magic, and the trickster, let us return to Ovid's story of Hermes and Argus, or more correctly, "Mercury relates the transformation of Syrinx, and slays Argus,"¹ where we see a prime example of the trickster at work. Here Zeus has gotten himself into a pickle with Hera by taking Io as a lover, and he changes Io into a cow to protect her. Hera is suspicious and requests the cow as a gift; Zeus reluctantly agrees and hands her over. Hera appoints

Argus, who has one hundred eyes, to watch over Io. Hyde explains: “When Zeus discovers that he can’t sneak past the guard to see his girlfriend, he sends Hermes to kill the giant” (166), though Ovid actually says in the Modern English translation that Zeus “could not any longer bear that Io should suffer so” (Innes 47). When Hermes came down to earth to trick Argus, “he removed his cap and laid aside his wings, retaining only his staff,” (47) something like Orfeo in the Bodleian text, and thus disguises himself as a goatherd, gathering up a flock of goats and playing on reed-pipes. Like the gatekeeper or even the enemy himself in several of our tales, Argus sees Hermes and calls him over: “Juno’s watchman, charmed by the novel sound and by this new accomplishment, hailed him: ‘You there, whoever you are, you could sit here beside me on this rock’” (Innes 47). Hermes did so and spent the day playing his pipes for Argus and talking while Argus fought off sleep: “although some of his eyes slumbered, yet some remained awake” (47). He begins to tell the story of Syrinx, and during the story all of Argus’s eyes finally close.

At once he stopped speaking, and deepened Argus’ slumbers, gently touching those drowsy eyes with his magic wand. Without delay, as the watchman sat nodding, he struck him with his crescent-shaped sword, just where his head joined his neck; then he flung the body down the cliff, all dripping with blood, and splattering the precipitous rocks as it fell. (Innes 48)

In keeping with Hermes's paradoxical nature, despite his violent action here he was still considered the peacemaker and was "never markedly associated with warfare or military activities" (Doty 53). Like the image of a minstrel on the battlefield or John's disguise as juggler where he spatters a scoundrel's head, such violence coming from a peacemaker

appearing as a harmless musician/ goatherd is contradictory and confounding and in the narrative makes the trick almost fool-proof.

Appropriately, this tale contains many of the features we find in these entrance trick episodes. First of all, Hermes uses a disguise as goatherd—but this goatherd is also a musician—to enter enemy territory. Hermes is noble, a god even. He is by nature clever and cunning. Here he plays on the pipes and tells a story. The trick is constructed to overcome a substantial challenge. And while the incident begins peacefully, it concludes with extreme violence. Hermes is not known as a warrior, whereas the heroes in our tales are all warriors with the possible exception of Thorleif. Yet Hermes creates a paradox here by presenting himself as a peaceful, gentle goatherd and musician and then slicing Argus and dumping him over a cliff. Hermes, unlike most of our disguised heroes, possesses magic. But if we look closely at this tale, we see that the largest part of even Hermes's minstrel disguise entrance trick is achieved not through his real magical skills but rather through the magic of cunning through his disguise, coupled with music, much like the human magic used by our mortal disguise-minstrels. Only after he wins Argus's trust as a harmless goatherd and musician and all of Argus's eyes close through music and story, does he bring out the magic.

Let us look more closely now at those disguise-minstrels who can use "real" magic and see how they handle the entrance trick. As I've noted, Thorleif avenges himself on Earl Hakon or as the story describes it, "abuses" Earl Hakon by delivering a frightful incantation combining poetry and magic, while disguised as a beggar-poet. The incantation, an example of "real" magic, has painful but also humorous effects, which is also appropriate since "Hermes is the playful Greek god" and is associated with humor

and laughter (Doty 58). The Tale of Thorleif the Earl's Poet is from the Icelandic *Flateyjarbók*,² circa 1380-90.

Thorleif also contains elements that we will see in the noble fosterling tales. For example, Thorleif is the son of a "powerful man from a great family," raised by his uncle/foster-father, and he was: "fully capable at an early age, skillful and especially talented" (362). As the story goes, at age 18, after killing a man he is exiled from his home in Iceland. With the help of his parents, he buys a ship, outfits it with goods and sails to Norway. Upon arrival, he meets Hakon, Earl of Lade, who would like to trade with him. Thorleif insults Hakon by requesting to choose his own trading partners, and Hakon responds by burning Thorleif's ship, hanging his companions, and stealing all their money.

After this loss, Thorleif travels to Denmark where he is taken in by King Svein and becomes the court poet. While in Denmark, he composes what he calls the "Woman Verses" about Earl Hakon and begs Svein's leave to return to Norway to perform the poems for Hakon. He is allowed to go but must promise to return quickly because the King explains: "we can't do without your skills" (364).

In preparation for his journey, Thorleif disguises himself as an old beggar, donning a goat's beard and hiding a leather bag inside his garments with an opening up under his chin. He arrives unrecognized in Hakon's court the night before a festival and joins the gathering in the hall. The enemy doesn't discover his identity as minstrel until he is called forward for unruly behavior, hitting people with his spiked crutches in the beggar's row, and questioned. Thorleif flatters the earl and explains he has "travelled widely and visited many chieftains" and that he once gained "honour and a life of

enjoyment from the most glorious chieftains but is now hated by every worthless peasant" (365). The earl asks him if he has any special skills since he had been with chieftains. Thorleif agrees that he may have some but requests food and drink before he can perform for him. Despite Thorleif's beggar disguise and clowning that causes laughter in the hall, the servants notice that he is "both tall and broad" (365). As we will see in the noble fosterling stories, traits of nobility do often show through even the best disguises.

After shoveling plate upon plate of food into the bag under his clothes so that he appeared to be eating voraciously, a trick which also provided provisions for his return trip, Thorleif asks to recite his poem. He is granted permission because Hakon believes the proverb, "that which an old man recites is often good" (365). Thus, Thorleif like Hermes convinces his enemy he is an innocent fellow prepared to perform for him. The earl listens to the poem and thinks he is being praised, but at the midpoint, he begins to feel an uncontrollable itching throughout his body and particularly around his thighs, which he has scratched by servants with combs and a coarse cloth with three knots pulled back and forth between his thighs. Thorleif's three-part poem next creates darkness in the hall, makes weapons move by themselves (killing many of Hakon's men), and causes Hakon to fall unconscious. Finally, at the end of the poem, Thorleif disappears mysteriously through "closed doors and undone locks" and light returns to the hall (366). (Hermes "transforms himself into a mist and passes through a keyhole" in Homeric Hymn (Brown 9.)) The earl reawakens and discovers that much of his hair has fallen out. We are told that it did not regrow, and Hakon spent "all that winter and much of the summer" recovering; though "some people say that he was never the same again" (366,

367). Thorleif returns to Denmark and is renamed Thorleif the Earl's Poet by King Svein in honor of how he abused Earl Hakon.

Thorleif's disguise type is beggar-poet, but the author calls him beggar, old man, and old fellow. For Thorleif's costume, he clothes himself in "beggar's gear," under which he hides a large leather bag (364). He ties on a goat's beard and carries two crutches "with spiked ends" (364). Physical actions are also a part of the disguise. To portray the sense that he is an old man, he uses the crutches, stumbling. He also behaves rudely, hitting other beggars. Finally, he plays up his beggar status with the comic eating scene. His minstrelsy skills include composing and reciting poetry, which he claims to have done for great chieftains, implying the role of *scōp*. Although his skill-level is not mentioned within the entrance trick scene, we are told earlier that in his childhood already, "he was a good poet" (362). And when he recites a poem for Svein: "The king was very complimentary about the poem, and everyone who heard it said it was both well composed and excellently performed" (364). The reaction at the gate in this story occurs when the earl discovers that the disguised Thorleif is not just a beggar but a beggar who has been with chieftains and has a special talent which he can't "show off" before eating and drinking (365). The earl is intrigued enough to provide a proper meal at the table for the beggar even before he learns what the special performing skills are.

It is clear that Thorleif's curse is intended to humiliate the earl, stripping him of his dignity with the itching in his thighs and the hair loss. Interestingly, the description of his hair loss resembles the jongleur disguise described in Layamon: "Baldulf lette stricken; to pan bare lichen. / His bærd and his chinne; & made hine to crosse. / He lette screen half his hæfd" (Caligula 10132-34). In Thorleif, Hakon's: "beard had fallen out, along

with the hair on one side of his parting, and they never grew again" (366). Tatlock explains: "The jongleur-disguise involves shaven pate and shaven beard, which disclose not only a plebeian but a man who to entertain made himself look ridiculous and would conceal no laughable facial expression" (348). And one can imagine that Hakon made plenty of such facial expressions while trying in contorted positions to scratch between his thighs. So in Hermean fashion, Thorleif turns the situation upside down and draws laughter at his enemy's eternal expense—because although Thorleif appeared in court claiming to be a performer, the permanent hair loss he caused in Hakon made the earl, forever after, into a fool.

In an unusual ending for a hero in this motif, the earl later takes revenge on Thorleif sending a magically conjured man to stab him: "Then Thorleif threw off his tunic and his guts spilled out." The hero's death by revenge also appears in Hother's story, also of Nordic origin, where Hother is killed by his enemy's half-brother, but here it is described less graphically. In both tales, this variation is not a part of the disguise episode itself but rather follows it after an interlude. In Hother, it appears after a long interceding passage describing how Odin conceives the son who should carry out this revenge and then is punished for these deeds by the other gods. As Thorleif is an independent saga and is thus more compact than Hother's story, which is part of a much longer text, the Thorlief revenge section comes more immediately after the disguise episode following Thorleif's renaming and marriage. In both cases, although not directly a part of the disguise episode, the death of the hero is a result of the trick. Yet despite this fact, the trick is still portrayed in a positive light in both stories.

As I noted earlier, in this tale Thorleif's skill in the magic arts is combined with his poetic skill, making his poems incantations with real magical workings, and we are told several times that Thorleif was very capable in both areas. Similar to Horn's knowledge of tricky strategies, the narrator in Thorleif explains: "People said that Skeggi would teach Thorleif more about the magic arts than others could even know" (362). Additionally Thorleif "learned many magic arts from his father who knew many things" (362). Thus in the story of Thorleif, the hero's cunning nature appears to be replaced with skills in magic, which is also appropriate. Magic = Trickery. But naturally Thorleif also shows creative cunning in addition to his magical cunning, with his clever use of the entrance trick.

Despite the positive portrayal we find of Thorleif's magic skills, according to the story's preface his enemy Hakon is condemned because he practiced black magic. Earl Hakon "was shamed, and quite rightly, for magic arts, witchcraft and sorcery, because his wickedness and apostasy were both a great burden to many, and irreparably harmful to their body and soul" (Jesch 362). In fact, the preface declares that the devil deceives men like Hakon: "He first puts him to shame with the crooked guile of his accursed cunning, causing him to live a hideous life" (362). With this passage's references to "crooked guile" and "accursed cunning," we see that clever acts inspired by the wrong source or used by the wrong party can become "guile" or are "accursed." Yet Thorleif's acts of magical cunning are praised. In the end, Thorleif dictates a poem from his burial mound to the shepherd, Tail, describing himself as "the best of all poets. I hear the skillful man / crafted abuse of Hakon. / No other man, before / or after, got to pay / him back for his thieving; / that's well known everywhere" (369). As a humorous note to Hermes,

although he is also patron saint of thieves, "on a herm by a field an inscription reads: 'Hermes [the thief!] has made a new law against stealing!' (Doty, addition his, 57), paradoxically making even the censure of thievery a Hermean trait.

The tale of The Life and Death of Cormac the Skald also contains magic, but as noted, it is not a true example of this motif. Cormac, an Icelandic tale from 1250-1300 AD, containing parts possibly based on a non-extant twelfth century saga, is listed as Collingwood Sagabook of the Viking Society in the final entry in Thompson's Motif-Index. Although it doesn't exactly fit under this motif, the minstrel portrayed is a vagrant beggar like Orfeo; yet he is still given entrance and allowed to perform a song. While there is no magic involved in the entrance trick scene, witches figure strongly throughout the story, and there are two magic swords.

Cormac the Skald is an Icelandic Viking and the grandson of a "great man of high birth," who falls in love with a woman named Steingerd (Collingwood Ch 1). He wins her through gifts, and a date for the marriage is set. But before the wedding day, Cormac is cursed by a witch for killing her two sons. She promises Cormac, "Never shalt thou have Steingerd" (Ch 5). Subsequently, the date passes, and Cormac never appears for the ceremony. Steingerd marries someone else, divorces him, and marries again.

Throughout this time, he never gives up his hopes for winning Steingerd back and visits her often. On one of these occasions, he appears at her husband's home and sits with her, talking. This angers her husband's brother, Thorvard, who conspires with his companions to pay Cormac back for this dishonorable behavior.

The episode is so short that I will include it here in total:

So this was the next thing,- that Thorvard came to Svinadal, and the Skiding

brothers and Narfi paid a gangrel-beggar-man to sing a song in the hearing of Steingerd, and to say that Cormac had made it, - which was a lie. They said that Cormac had taught this song to one called Eylaug, a kinswoman of his; and these were the words:

I wish an old witch that I know of,
 So wealthy and proud of her havings,
 Were turned to a steed in the stable
 - Called Steingerd – and I were the rider!
 I'd bit her, and bridle, and saddle,
 I'd back her and drive her and tame her;
 So many she owns for her masters,
 But mine she will never become!

Then Steingerd grew exceedingly angry, so that she would not so much as hear Cormac named. (Chp 20)

Although Stith Thompson lists this tale as one of his three under “Disguise as musician to enter enemy’s camp,” it doesn’t really fit the pattern. It is more an example of “disguise as enemy musician to enter friendly camp.” The musician is not actually a member of the enemy party. He is actually entering a friendly camp, disguised as the enemy to make the woman hate the enemy more. This is perhaps one author's clever turn-around of this familiar motif because at the core we still have a seemingly innocent minstrel who in actuality hides his true identity and intentions requesting entrance at the gate to deliver a song. In this tale as we will see in Hother, although the minstrel announces he is part of "the enemy," he is still allowed to enter and perform. Additionally, this episode differs

from other examples of this entrance trick in that delivery of the song itself and the resulting anger is the main objective here. The woman is to be insulted and her anger directed toward the song's supposed author. Thus the disguise as beggar-singer is a minor point with Steingerd's anger and rejection of Cormac at the heart of the episode. Additionally, very few details about the disguise itself are included. Since the disguise-minstrel is already a beggar-man and not a warrior in disguise, there is perhaps no need to disguise at all.

We also find bawdy details within the entrance trick itself here, which would be very unusual within this motif. In the two tales that do contain bawdiness or lewd acts, Hother's story and Math, none of these details appear within the entrance trick episode itself. Finally, although this story may be a twist on the motif and shares some of its basic features, it cannot officially be included under this heading, and I have not included it in my analysis of the motif's defining features.

Sir Orfeo, on the other hand, is a true example of this motif, additionally including otherworldly characters and magic, though Orfeo himself has only human magic at his disposal. Orfeo has obvious connections with Greek and Roman mythology in its remaking of the Orpheus story. Yet this tale is still something of the odd man out among entrance trick episodes, containing a colorful mix of influences and resisting easy classification. I group the story of Orfeo among Tales of Enchantment because of its otherworld characters, apparitions, magic and setting, but unlike the other tales in this chapter, it cannot be called a Trickster Tale. And in fact, in the next chapter's discussion of Noble Fosterling Tales, we will see that Orfeo himself shares what could be termed a "fosterling feeling," in which his character effectively takes on the noble fosterling role

through its close association with King David and the cunning harper king archetype even though the tale does not share the typical fosterling story features. Thus although the poem itself does not fit the pattern, the character of Orfeo is more appropriately placed alongside the noble fosterlings than among the tricksters. For that reason, Orfeo will be discussed both here and with the noble fosterling heroes.

Within the poem's particular combination of influences, we find, as we saw in chapter two's review of criticism, that Orfeo is related to Celtic abduction myths by its plotline and otherworld features. It also naturally echoes its mythological source tale's basic outline, with notable exceptions including Orfeo's "distinctly muted" powers on the harp (Edwards Marriage 288), his "strategy of misrepresentation" (Severs 201), and of course his successful return with Heurodis. Additionally, by resetting the story in medieval England, the poet is able to include courtly and chivalric details and conventions such as the rash boon, the king in disguise, and the testing of the steward. Orfeo, as a harper king, has also been associated with King David as we have seen. But with this tale's adoption of the entrance trick—combining paradox, trickery, music, border crossing and disguise—we see that Orfeo also has connections to the Hermes tradition. There is something tricksterish in Orfeo's character, as there is in the nature of each of the entrance trick heroes, and this comes through in his calculated deceit with the Fairy King and in testing his steward.

His namesake, Orpheus, is also loosely associated with Hermes. In some stories, it is Hermes who gives Orpheus his lyre. And like Orpheus, Hermes too makes trips to the underworld. For example, Hermes was tasked with leading the souls of the dead into

the underworld. And as Hyde points out, it is Hermes who leads the suitors in The Odyssey to Hades and Hermes who conducts Persephone out of Hades (208).

Among the vital differences between Orpheus and Orfeo, we see that the Orfeo poet replaces the mythological hero's real magic on the harp with fully human magic. As Orpheus's likeness, he is naturally an excellent harper. Music = Magic & Technical Skill = Magic. But the human magic of music and skill alone are not enough for a rescue against an immortal foe this powerful. In fact, as we remember, even Orpheus fails to return with Eurydice, glancing back at her and breaking the one stipulation for her return. But as Spearing and Doreena Allen both note, in Orfeo his successful return hinges on cunning, (82, 110) both in his entrance trick which allows him an anonymous audience with the Fairy King and in his clever handling of the situation after earning a rash boon. But cunning is not one of Orpheus's notable features. It is, however, associated with the figure of the harper king, an archetype that slides easily into this tale. Whatever its source, the addition of creative cunning in Orfeo's character gives him the extra boost necessary to complete an impossible task. Music + Technical Skill + Cunning = Magic.

The story of Sir Orfeo begins after a short prologue about the Breton lay. In A manuscript, even before we learn he is a king, we are told that he is a harper: "Orfeo mest of ani þing / Loued þe gle of harping" (A25-6), and that he concentrated on his music lessons, perhaps even teaching himself to play: "Him-self he learned for-to harp, / & leyde þer-on his wittes scharp" (29-30). And finally, we learn that his musical skill-level nears the divine: "In al þe world was no man bore / þat ones Orfeo sat bifor / (& he miȝt of his harping here) / Bot he schult þenche þat he were / In on of þe ioies of Paradis, / Swiche melody in his harping is" (33-38). H and B texts rearrange things slightly, first

mentioning his status as king but retaining this extended focus on his love of music and exceptional skill. Thus, Orfeo is associated more closely with his harping skill than any other entrance trick hero, including Horn and Tristan.

The story itself really begins when Orfeo's queen, Heurodis, falls asleep under an ympe tree in their orchard at noontime and wakes in a state of extreme agitation. When she recovers enough to speak, she explains she was visited by a Fairy king, shown his kingdom and warned to return again the next day to the orchard and go with him forever to Fairy or be torn to pieces and then taken to Fairy forever. Just as King Mark will do in the Sir Tristrem harp and rote episode, Orfeo consults his council but receives no help. Orfeo decides to station his army in the orchard to protect Heurodis, but the Fairy King steals her away nonetheless. Following her abduction, Orfeo places his steward in charge of the kingdom until his own death, at which point a new king should be chosen. And as Hother will do before undertaking his entrance trick, Orfeo chooses exile, as he explains in each of the three texts, because he wants to avoid seeing any woman at all since he has lost his wife: "For now ichaue mi quen y-lore, / þe fairest leuedi þat euer was bore, / Neuer eft y nil no woman se. / In-to wilderness ichil te" (A209-12). Orfeo leaves his kingdom with only a sclauin, and his harp. B text mentions the staff, but "he had neþer gowne ne hode, / Shert, ne non oþer gode, / Bot an harpe he toke algate" (230-33)—thus it is unclear in this manuscript what covering he takes for his body, if any.

Orfeo stays in the wilderness over ten years, sleeping in leaves and grass and during winter in moss. Depending on the season, he eats roots, wild fruit and berries, grasses and rinds. During this time his body wastes away: "Al his bodi was oway duine" (A261). And like Daurel from Beton, his hair grows long: "His here of his berd, blac &

rowe, / To his gridel-stede was growe" (A265-66). During good weather, he takes his harp from its hiding place in a hollow tree and plays. Within this description of how his music, like Orpheus's affects wild animals, drawing birds and animals, we are given another statement of Orfeo's musical ability-level. The animals came "to here his harping a-fine / —So miche melody was þer-in" (277-78). His worn, dirty appearance, his harp, and his sclauin (in B text a staff and his harp), coupled with a statement of identity form his costume when he reaches the castle gate.

While living in the forest, during hot noontimes Orfeo often saw the apparition of fairy hunting parties, with dancers and minstrel music. But one day he sees a group of live women hunting with birds among whom he spots Heurodis. They don't speak to one another, but she recognizes him and weeps. The ladies ride on, and he follows them into a mountain cave, emerging in the Fairy kingdom. After a description of the castle, Orfeo approaches the gate announcing his identity as a minstrel, later he also calls himself a "pouer menstrel" (A430), and explains he has come "To solas þi lord wiþ mi gle" (A383), though we know his true purpose is to bring Heurodis back. Although the porter says nothing, he opens the gates up immediately for the minstrel: "Þe porter vndede þe 3ate anon / & lete him in-to þe castel gon" (A385-86). Before entering the king's hall, Orfeo observes the eerie residents of Fairy among whom he sees Heurodis asleep under an ympe tree. Next he approaches the king and offers to play for him. Naturally, the king's first reaction is dismay that someone should willingly enter his kingdom. Orfeo responds by assuring him that it is the way of minstrels to seek out noble houses without invitation to offer their services. And truly, even in the foreboding land of Fairy where they never get visitors, the minstrel is received immediately at the gate and given audience. With

this performance, we get yet another description of Orfeo's outstanding ability including in A text the audience lying at his feet. He pleases the Fairy King so well that he offers Orfeo anything he would like. Orfeo requests Heurodis and is refused because she is lovely, and he is "lene, rowe & blac" (A459). Orfeo responds by chastising the Fairy King for not remaining true to his word, actually accusing him of lying:

'O, Sir!' he seyde, 'Gentil King!'
 3ete were it a wele fouler þing
 To here a lesing of þi mouþe:
 So, Sir, as 3e seyde nouþe
 What ich wold aski haue y schold,
 & nedes þou most þi word hold.' (A463-68)

Several critics have mentioned that Orfeo's success in recovering Heurodis hinges on the Fairy King's willingness to remain true to his word. Edwards in particular argues that this exchange between Orfeo and the Fairy King uses irony to highlight the "complex nature" of a king's roles and responsibilities (Marriage 283). For example, when Orfeo presses the Fairy King to honor his word as a king, regardless of how this may affect his personal feelings, the audience has already witnessed Orfeo's behavior when faced with a similar conflict. And, according to Edwards, Orfeo, unlike the Fairy King, chose to put his own grief before his duties as king (288-89).

But what Edwards does not comment on is the simpler irony of Orfeo's insistence that it would be a foul thing to hear a lie issue from the mouth of a king while he himself at that very moment is a king, standing in the middle of a big lie.³ Orfeo is so effective, or rather his character seems so justified in his actions, that rather than blaming Orfeo for

his dishonesty, one critic, Longworth, has been moved to accuse the Fairy King of deceit too: "the Fairy King, after all, had first practiced deceit by snatching Herodis away from Orfeo" (10). Ironically, although the Fairy King has performed a cruel deed by abducting Heurodis, he has not been deceitful. He straightforwardly appears to Heurodis, shows her his kingdom in a dream, explains his intentions, and warns her of the consequences should she fail to return the next day.

After returning from the Fairy Kingdom, Orfeo lies again while testing the steward, crying: "Icham an harpour of hepenisse" (A513). After playing for his own court in disguise, he is asked where and how he got his harp. His response is a concocted tale about his own death in the wilderness, much like Horn's story about his own death at sea. Longworth notes the irony between Orfeo's censure of the Fairy King's conduct and Orfeo's outright lie while testing the steward, stating: "The artist, then, is apparently not bound to the strict code of verity that binds the ruler and the court" (9). But it might be more appropriate to say that the trickster is not bound to the same codes that bind the rest of society. The trickster counts on this and is always prepared to use this to his own advantage. According to Hynes and Steele, for the trickster: "lying, cheating, and stealing from forbidden sectors seem to occur within a perpetual bubble of immunity" (161). Both Horn and Orfeo deceive others when they perceive it to be necessary. And when they do, it somehow seems just, considering the situation each of the heroes finds himself in. We have already discussed how the sea-threat theme in Horn highlights the questionable nature of how Horn makes and keeps vows to Rimenhild. And despite the author's system of repetition and imagery highlighting Horn's promises and subsequent acts, Hynes-Berry is still compelled to praise Horn's ability to fairly integrate heroic

deeds with love. But both Horn's questionable choices in love and honor on his path to maturity as well as Orfeo's insistence on the Fairy King honoring his word while he himself is a king guilty of lying are only minor smudges. Other entrance trick heroes, in fact, such as Gwydion and John in Fouke show more serious flaws.

Tricksters outside the Hermes tradition generally have a prominent negative side, displaying traits such as ignorance, foolishness, gluttony, and sexual appetite. For example, many ancient cultures possess trickster myths which include a character with enormous appetites, who feeds out of all proportion or has super-sized sexual organs. The trickster of the Winnebago cycle has "such a long penis that he keeps it coiled up in a box which he carries over his shoulder" (Hyers 179). These tales also often include episodes where trickster falls into gigantic piles of excrement or throws his own at other characters. Such extreme negative elements obviously do not exist in these entrance trick episodes. And indeed in the Hermes tradition, although he is closely associated with the phallus, "scatological elements are not as prominent in the stories about Hermes as they are in other trickster collections" (Doty 58). Likewise, although traditional trickster figures are often duped by other characters, Doty states that "Unlike the North American trickster, Hermes does not often get tricked in return" (57). Trickster's negative side does still exist in Hermes in some measure, particularly in his lying, stealing, cheating, and in his facilitation of erotic encounters, and while minimized in comparison to other trickster traditions, it occasionally peeks through in some of these disguise episodes. In the chronicle accounts of Anlaf and Layamon's Baldulf especially, each of whom is a cunning enemy, the authors allow more of this negative side to show. Baldulf costumes himself and behaves as a fool, drawing violence and insults from the crowd. Anlaf,

although excused of his mistake by Gloucester, foolishly cuts up the wrong party, and to make matters worse his victim is a bishop. Of the tales included in this chapter, *Folie* Tristan also disguises and behaves as a fool, receiving a reaction similar to Layamon's Baldulf. Thorleif, as we saw, turns his enemy into a perpetual fool and appears to eat copiously. John in *Fouke*, while being mocked and tugged at as a fool because of his ugly appearance as a diseased-juggler acts out in sudden, extreme violence. And finally, Gwydion attempts to help his love-sick brother by arranging an erotic encounter against the maiden's wishes and is given a lewd and shameful punishment.

The first half of Gwydion's tale includes the most obvious examples of negative trickster traits in our catalogue. This tale, which as we have seen includes "real" magic, is interesting because it is one of only two tales that contain two entrance trick episodes. The story's first episode echoes the familiar Hermean characteristics of thievery, deceit, the organization of an intimate encounter, in this case forced, and its subsequent obscene punishment. But in the second episode, which shares noble fosterling features, Gwydion is rehabilitated, acting as a responsible and loving foster-father. The fourteenth-century manuscript story of Gwydion is found within *Math mab Mathonwy* out of *Y Mabinogi*. Constance Davies notes that the story of Gwydion and Pryderi within *Math* contains a trick similar to *Orfeo*'s but does not mention the second entrance trick found later within the tale of Gwydion and Lleu.

The first entrance trick episode is part of a larger trick, but the main purpose of the entrance trick itself is to steal pigs. The larger trick involves Gwydion's brother, Gilfaethwy, who has fallen in love with the virgin Goewin. It is Goewin's duty to hold the feet of Gilfaethwy's uncle, Math son of Mathonwy. Math could not live unless his

feet were in a virgin's lap, that is unless he were on a military campaign. Gwydion decides to help his brother get the chance to be alone with Goewin by starting a war. He begins by telling Math about some delicious pigs owned by Pryderi, promising to obtain them for him. Gwydion, Gilfaethwy, and ten companions disguise themselves and go to Pryderi's court. The narrator explains: "In the guise of bards they came inside" (Jones 56). Thus it is not specified what types of costumes they used or if they even wore costumes. Their reaction at the gate is positive. We are told, "They made them welcome" (56). Once they are inside, Gwydion's ability-level and his performing skills are described: "Gwydion was the best teller of tales in the world. And that night he entertained the court with pleasant tales and story-telling till he was praised by everyone in the court" (56). They win Pryderi's trust and try to bargain for the pigs. Pryderi will not part with them since he has promised his people he will keep the animals there until they have doubled their number. So Gwydion devises another plan, conjuring up twelve horses with saddles and bridles, twelve greyhounds with collars and leashes, and twelve shields out of toadstools to trade for the pigs. The magic only lasts a day, giving them time to escape, but when the trick is discovered a war indeed ensues. Math joins the battle, leaving the virgin Goewin unprotected, and Gilfaethwy rapes her. After this crime is discovered, Math marries the maiden giving her authority over his domain. He punishes his nephews by turning them into three sets of animal pairs: a stag and hind, a wild boar and sow, and then a wolf and she-wolf, forcing them to spend a year in each form, mate and return with young. Each time they return, Math takes their offspring as a foster-child and has it baptized. At the end of three years, Math restores their former shapes and tells the brothers: "great shame have you had, that each one of you has had

young by the other" (63). Directly following Gwydion's punishment, however, the author begins to redeem the hero. And we find that in the second entrance trick episode, these more negative associations are washed away.

In this second entrance trick, Gwydion becomes the protector and foster-father of his nephew, Lleu. (We will see another pair like this, a minstrel foster-father to an outstanding child, in Beton's story in the noble fosterling section.) As this story continues, because of Gilfaethwy's treachery, Math must find a new virgin to hold his feet. He interviews Gilfaethwy's sister, Aranrhod, testing her purity. She fails the test by spontaneously giving birth to two children. After the first baby cries, the mother "made for the door, and thereupon dropped a small something, and before any one could get a second glimpse of it, Gwydion took it and wrapped a sheet of silk around it, and hid it" (63). He raises the boy, but the mother, Aranrhod, refuses to acknowledge him, placing a series of curses over him instead. Although Gwydion is the bard in this story, the description of Lleu's childhood abilities is reminiscent of the hero himself in several other stories. He is large for his size, at four years old, "it had been remarkable for a boy eight years old to be as big as he" (64). He "was reared till he could ride every horse and till he was perfected in feature, growth and stature" (66).

When Gwydion sees he is ready to possess arms, they travel to Lleu's mother to lift the second curse in which she swore: "he shall never bear arms till I myself equip him therewith" (66). In this second disguise episode, they call themselves bards, are welcomed into her fortress, and magically make it appear that the fortress is being assaulted so that she herself arms the boy. Their purpose, therefore, is to steal the right for Lleu to carry arms. Before they approach the gate, Gwydion magically changes their

appearances and Gwydion's age so they will not be recognized: "And then they changed their semblance and made towards the gate in the guise of two young men, save that Gwydion's mien was more staid than the lad's" (66). Once their identities are concealed through magic, they become bards simply by declaring it, and their claim is later verified with a skillful performance. They tell the porter: "go in and say we are bards" (66). The lady responds: "God's welcome to them. Let them in" (67). They are received gladly and a celebration is prepared: "There was great joy at their coming, the hall was made ready, and they went to meat" (67). Here again, as in the first episode, Gwydion's ability-level is described: he "was a good teller of tales" (67).

Uncharacteristically, in both of the Math episodes the entrance trick is part of, though not necessarily essential to, a much larger trick. More often the entrance trick is the trick itself and not stage one in a two-stage trick. In both of the Math episodes, the entrance tricks function as a form of introduction for the tricksters, opening doors, so to speak. The disguises provide a pretext for their arrival, a welcome, and the opportunity to win the dupes' trust, and they are able to begin their trick in an atmosphere of excitement, joy, and frivolity, instead of one discolored by pleading, distrust, and having to spin the larger trick to a wary eye through the keyhole. In the first instance, with the pig theft, the bards were made "welcome" (56). In the second, "there was great joy at their coming" (67). In both cases, those tricked are distracted by the bards' stories and antics and do not suspect anything else is behind their arrival. And the disguise-minstrels retain this trust and maintain the distraction by performing masterfully.

The story of John de Rampaigne, found in the Anglo-Norman prose tale, Fouke Le Fitz Waryn, circa 1325-40 is the other tale containing two entrance trick episodes.

Although Fouke is partly based on historical fact, there is a "layer of fairy romance involving battles with giants, serpents, and dragons" (Ohlgren xxi). In Fouke as in Math, we see a change between the first and second episodes. But this time, rather than the character himself changing as we saw with Gwydion, John simply chooses vastly different disguise types for each of the episodes—a diseased-juggler and a wealthy Ethiopian minstrel. Fouke is also an unusual story for several reasons. First, this is the only story containing an episode in which the hero's main skill is juggling. Though according to Southworth, juggling swords and knives was also associated with the northern minstrelsy tradition (35). Fouke is also one of only two stories in which the hero colors his skin, and he does so in both episodes. And this is the only story in which a hero dyes his hair. Additionally, although Schofield, Wilson, and Ward objected to the double disguise rescue attempts in Horn, this tale actually contains a particularly charming three-fold disguise series in which John disguises twice as a minstrel and once as a merchant, undertaking these three entrance tricks to win his way into the castles of Moris Fitz-Roger and King John, once to spy, gathering information and twice to rescue captured comrades. Also the complexity of John's disguises, like that of Tristan's in Folie, goes beyond the realms of typical disguise and what is necessary for the narrative, illustrating a colorful celebration of Hermean trickery, wiliness, and play in these moments. But the most unusual feature of this story is John's unexpected and brutal violence, which appears hasty and unnecessary, giving him a villainous quality not present in any of the other entrance trick heroes. Even Gwydion's enabling of his brother's crime does not appear this malicious, as he is portrayed as attempting to help him gain the object of his intense love sickness.

In this story Fouke, the rightful owner of Whittington, is deprived of his inheritance by King John of England because of a boyhood grudge John held against him. Fouke and his men turn outlaw, directing their vengeance against the king and those faithful to him. During Fouke's struggle to regain his birthright, he asks John de Rampaigne to dress as a minstrel-juggler and spy on his enemy, Moris Fitz-Roger. Fouke says, "John, you know a lot about minstrelsy and juggling. Do you have the courage to go to Whittington and perform before Moris Fitz-Roger to discover just what they are up to?" (Kelly 207). Fouke implies that John will perform as a minstrel, though throughout the episode he is specifically referred to as a juggler. Next we are told

He prepared himself by first crushing an herb and putting it into his mouth. As a result, his face began to swell so badly that it puffed out. His whole face became so discolored that his own companions scarcely knew him. John dressed himself in poor clothes, and he took his box with his juggling equipment and carried a great staff in his hand. (207)

His costume then is created by staining and disfiguring his face, putting on poor clothes and carrying both a staff and juggling equipment. Although not joyfully, John is immediately admitted despite his diseased appearance, and led directly to the lord of the castle: "When he arrived in Whittington he told the porter that he was a juggler. The porter brought him before Sir Moris Fitz-Roger" (207). Moris asks John for news from Scotland, and John relates that Fouke has been killed while committing a robbery, which is untrue. While in Whittington, John learns of a trip planned by Moris, allowing Fouke to ambush Moris and kill him the next morning. But during his visit, his unpleasant appearance causes him to be mistreated, and he repays one of the "scoundrels" sorely:

John de Rampaigne was very ugly of face and body, and consequently the scoundrels of the household mocked him. They treated him like a fool, and pulled him by his hair and his feet. He raised his staff, and gave one of the scoundrels such a blow on the head that his brains flew into the middle of the room. (208)

Despite this criminal act, Moris allows John to leave safely after he pleads that his physical malady takes control over him, but Moris "swore that, were it not for the good news that John had brought with him, he would have him beheaded forthwith" (208).

Alison Williams in Tricksters and Pranksters: Roguery in French and German Literature of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (2000) explains that although Fouke himself is a trickster "demonstrating his own wit and skill at disguise," John takes the disguise roles that "require significant physical transformation and a prolonged adoption of a different persona" (131). She also notes that the inclusion of John's character allows Fouke to maintain his dignity: "It would detract from the noble dignity of Fouke Fitz Waryn were he to undergo such a metamorphosis and suffer the mockery of his apparent affliction which John receives at Morys's court" (131). It is true that none of the other minstrel disguise heroes stoops to such an act as John's. Their violence, with the exception of Anlaf, is directed against true enemies or treacherous liegeman and seems just. But in Fouke, as Williams illustrates, it appears that the author splits the trickster's duties between two characters, allowing one to get down and dirty without detracting from the nobility of the main character. Brown describes a trickster story found in North America and Australia which shows a similar, though more extreme, version of this technique in which the contradictory aspects of trickster, his image as cultural benefactor while at the same time despicable figure, have been separated into two distinct characters:

"the two aspects are dissociated and projected into a pair of brothers, one of whom is wise and benevolent, the other mischievous and foolish" (24). Despite this apparent splitting of the trickster figure in this first Fouke episode, we still see a more gratuitously brutal image here than in any of the other episodes. For even Anlaf didn't mean to cut the bishop to pieces. His act was a foolish accident, whereas John meant his fully.

In John's second disguise episode in Fouke, he makes himself into a wealthy Ethiopian minstrel to visit King John's castle and rescue their ally, Sir Audulph de Bracy, again taking great pains to hide his identity and create a lively character. The episode begins with a statement by the narrator of John's ability-level as well as a description of his disguise type: he "was a fairly skillful musician and juggler" (214). In addition to these terms, John calls himself an Ethiopian minstrel (214). We are then told his skills: "He could play the harp and vielle, as well as the psaltery" (214). Later in the episode there is also singing, but it is not clear if John also sings or not (214). His costume is described next: "He dressed himself in fine clothes worthy of any earl or baron, and stained his hair and the whole of his body jet black. In fact, there was nothing left white except his teeth. Around his neck he hung a beautiful tabor, before mounting a handsome palfrey" (214). Thus John's disguise consists of fine clothing, dyed hair and skin, and a tabor. I have not included the horse as a minstrel disguise detail, though it does indicate the disguise-minstrel's affluence-level.⁴ His reception at the gate is not described, but the narrator does say he rode through town "as far as the gate of the castle, and was stared at by many as he rode along" (214). Apparently he was admitted without trouble, because the next line has him kneeling before the king. And the king tells the minstrel, "you are very welcome" (214). John spends the rest of the day "playing his tabor and other

instruments" (214). Once the king has gone to bed, John is called to Henry de Audley's chamber where there was talking, singing and drinking. The condemned prisoner, Audulph de Bracy, is brought in to enjoy his final hours, recognizing John through his music like Isolt in Continuation and possibly Rimenhild in Horn.

During the celebration, John drugs Henry de Audley and his company with sleeping powder. We are told: he "acted very cunningly, sprinkling a powder into the cup in such manner that no one perceived him. He was, after all, an excellent juggler" (214), thereby combining a statement of cunning with a second statement of ability-level. Once all are asleep, John flees with his ally, Sir Audulph.

In the end, it doesn't matter that John spatters someone's head into the middle of the room. This shocking act is pardoned, and John is free to disguise again. Although much darker than other examples, this juggler disguise episode in which John is both a bringer of joy and sorrow creates a particularly vivid visual representation of the minstrel-warrior contradiction. Thorleif presents a similar comparison by contrasting the deaths of the hero's men, the enemy's men and finally of the hero himself against humorous details of the hero's beggar disguise, his clowning, and the embarrassing workings of his avenging incantation.

As we saw earlier, John is one of two characters who dye their skin in these disguise episodes. The other character is Folie Tristan. Tristan is an interesting figure, appearing in our entrance trick catalog in three separate stories, one of those stories occurring in three separate versions. Tristan, like other characters in the Arthurian tradition, retains his identity apart from individual tales. Regardless of the author, Tristan is associated with certain characteristics and a particular predestined course. Tristan,

nephew to King Mark, is the clever trickster, gifted harper, able hunter, powerful knight, and lover to Isolt destined to a life of sorrow because of his unlawful love. Already in the earliest forms of the Tristan tradition, Tristan is known as a tricky individual. He "appears in the Welsh triads as Drystan map Tallwch, renowned as a master of tricks and machines and as a lover, the lover of Essylt, wife of March. Tristram's character as a cunning schemer is easily recognizable in the earliest forms of the romances..." (Loomis Introduction xii). Newstead, too, notes: "Such traditions must have been potent, to judge from the number of episodes in the Tristan legend that demonstrate the hero's prodigious talents for devising tricks, stratagems, and ruses" (466).

In the two Tristan tales we will consider in this chapter, *Folie* and *Continuation*, Tristan illustrates this cunning by disguising as a minstrel to reach Isolt while in exile. In the *Folie* text, Tristan disguises as a fool. This short Anglo-Norman tale, known as *La Folie Tristan* (Oxford) exists in one thirteenth-century manuscript, dated approximately 1290. The story opens with Tristan in exile, longing to die until he determines to visit Isolt in disguise. He sets out on foot and then sails with merchants to England. Once he arrives, we are given details of the castle that are reminiscent of Wikele's tower in *Romance*: "Tintagel was a very fine, strong castle, impervious to attack or siege-engine..." (Weiss 122). This description may have originally continued on further, but according to Weiss "here there is a gap in the text of a line and a half" (122). As we see in *King Horn*, there was apparently no *ginne* good enough for entry into Tintagel: "He knew well there was no device to be found to enable him to talk to her. Prowess, knowledge, intelligence, skill—all were of no avail, for King Mark, he well knew, hated him above all things, and if he could catch him alive, he was convinced he would kill

him" (123). Thus as in King Horn, Tristan's situation appears hopeless. But Tristan is then inspired to disguise himself as a fool and to "behave as if mad" (124). Here we get a statement of clever action from the hero himself in monologue: "Isn't that clever and a stroke of cunning? That's shrewd" (124).

Tristan assembles his costume as "fool," "mad fool," or "madman" (125, 128) by first trading clothes with a fisherman, putting on a "tunic of coarse wool, with open sides, and a hood" (124). Next, using scissors he always kept with him, he shaves the top of his head and then cuts-in a "cross-shaped tonsure" which the narrator explains made him look "idiotic and crazy" (124). Lawrence reports in her discussion of *Folie* that a cross tonsure at this time was "a theological and medical ritual performed on the possessed or insane and a juridical punishment for thieves" (25) which would explain why "everyone who saw him was afraid" (Weiss 124). He completes the physical transformation by smearing his face with an herb to darken the skin and then carries a stick gleaned from a shrub over his shoulder as his staff. Unlike any other character in this catalog, Tristan also disguises his voice. Whether the feigned voice also enhanced the minstrel costume or was meant mainly to disguise his identity is unclear. For this reason, I have not included it in the description of minstrel costume details.⁵

The porter sees him and takes him for the "mad fool" they had been expecting and calls him over: "Come here! Where have you been so long?" (125). Likewise, Daurel and Beton, Tristan in two of the harp and rote episodes, Horn and his men in King Horn, and Gloucester's Anlaf are all invited in without requesting admission, either because they appear to be minstrels or because of the sound of their music. Here in *Folie*, Tristan next makes up a story about where he has been, and when he finishes, the porter invites him

in: "Come in, Urgan the Hairy's son" (125). Once inside, he receives a reaction like John in his juggler disguise and Layamon's Baldulf:

The young men ran up to him, shouting at him as men do to a wolf: 'Look at the fool! Hu ! hu ! hu ! hu!' The young men and the squires were intent on attacking him with branches of boxwood. They accompanied him across the courtyard, following the mad boy. He turned on them many times, pelting them at will. If one attacked him on the right, he turned and struck towards the left. (125)

Despite the people's fear of him and the boys' taunting and violence toward him, the porter calls him over and sends him in the gate. Once inside, he is noticed immediately by the king, called forward and warmly welcomed: "Welcome, friend. Where are you from? What do you seek here?" (125). After giving some fantastical answers, he introduces himself as Trantris and relates story after story of his affairs with Isolt, which sounds like nonsense to the king but confuses, angers, and frightens Isolt who does not recognize him. Eventually, after the king leaves with his knights and squires, Tristan is brought into Isolt's chamber where he apparently attempts to convince her of his true identity, while still disguising his voice. When she finally breaks down, fearing his death, he determines she has been true and speaks again in his normal tone. She recognizes him immediately, and they are reconciled.

During this performance as fool, in addition to acting insane, Tristan explains that he can "tune both harp and rote, and then sing to the melody" and also reminds Isolt of when he taught her to harp Breton lays (131, 127), but he does not demonstrate these skills during the episode. Although the fool infuriates the queen with his knowledge of her secrets with Tristan, the king enjoys his fooling and remarks: "This is a good fool, he

talks well. He can speak on anything" (126). The narrator likewise describes the ability-level of Tristan's performance explaining Tristan plays the madman "to perfection" (128). And later we are told: "The king laughed at every word, delighted with the fool" (131).

Even this madman-fool entrance trick, though containing less common costume features and behavior, also contains some very familiar components. Here a nobleman with a cunning nature encounters an impossible situation for which no *ginne* is good enough—the need to enter the strong castle of someone who wishes him killed in order to reach the woman he loves. After a statement of cunning, he disguises himself as a performer and is welcomed in the gate, entertaining the guests skillfully before achieving his purpose. Yet we also see a few trickster traits mixed into this heroic picture. Tristan's purpose for entering the castle is not quite so noble as Horn's. Rather than rescuing a woman in distress, he hopes to enjoy an illicit romantic encounter with her. His performance skills, which contain echoes of the northern tradition, consist mainly of foolishness and talking nonsense. And his costume details as fool make him look humorous, "idiotic and crazy" but also somewhat frightening. In the next chapter, we will see that along with a trickster connection for the madman disguise, King David too feigns madness as a tactic of self-protection. So although the disguises as fool or madman may at first seem out of place among entrance tricks which illustrate a stricter northern-style minstrel, they are actually a valid part of this motif, reflected in both the trickster tradition as well as the Biblical harper king image.

The second Tristan disguise episode in this chapter "*Tristan menestrel*," on the other hand, includes the humorous depiction of fourteen knights dressed as musicians who are anything but frightening. This episode is from Gerbert de Montreuil's Fourth

Continuation, circa 1230. This disguise episode begins after Tristan, again in exile, pines for Isolt and hatches a plan to see her. He and twelve of Arthur's knights outfit themselves as minstrels by putting on badly made clothes. The clothing details in this tale are the most elaborate of any entrance trick episode:

Each one got a badly cut set of clothes
 that Tristan had had made up
 in miniver and cloth of green and blue,
 while Tristan himself, who was quite clever,
 had a new outfit of scarlet;
 on both sides the surcoat covered
 his arms by more than a palm's width;
 cloth was used freely
 to make these outfits.

Each of them got a round hat,
 ugly and ill made, to tell the truth;
 they got baggy leggings, black headgear
 that made them look like quail hunters...
 and each one also got a great
 hood that covered him completely. (Fresco 495-513)

In addition to their garments, their horses also get costumes consisting of old saddles, bridles, "stirrup-leathers" and spurs (510). Finally, to complete their look as minstrels,

Each knight was given a different instrument,
 a horn or pipes or a shawm,

or cornemuse,
 one got a harp, another a hurdy-gurdy,
 a reed pipe, psaltery or armonie,
 one got a tabor or a flute,
 another hornpipes;
 and Tristan carried a fiddle,
 for no one fiddled better than he. (514-522)

But the description of Tristan's costume continues when he reaches Lancien, "a city of strong, high walls" (536-37). He rides with his fiddle strung around his neck. And "his coiffe was torn in two places / so that his hair showed through / and its flaps hung down, / one in the front and the other behind. / He kept one eye closed" (573-78).

Their disguise type is not named until Tristan comes before the king, requesting employment. Additionally, there is also no specific gate scene. Because of an upcoming tournament, busy preparations were underway, with an influx of knights come to test their prowess; therefore the king "sat before his citadel / with the queen at his right" (554-55). Tristan leads his men riding through town directly before the king. A second statement of Tristan's cunning nature, the phrase "Tristan, who was wily...", is slipped into these lines to compliment the one hidden in the disguise details (570). He asks to be hired, stating "we would guard / you and your citadel if necessary. We are ready / to do what we know how to do" (596-97). Next they take out their instruments, tune them and play skillfully: "They played so harmoniously / that no one spoke, / so sweet was the melody they played, / not a knight but said / that he had never heard such a sweet air" (605-610). Along with containing no true gate scene, the immediate reaction to Tristan

and his men among people who don't know their identities is not described. However after they provide a sampling of their skills, the king kindly takes them into his employment: "My lords,' said the king, 'you shall / guard my household, for I agree to hire you'" (610-11). Only then is their disguise type named, when the king instructs Dinas: "Take these watchmen upstairs" (613). In addition to the term watchmen, they are also later called minstrels. As such, Tristan's skills include playing instruments, fiddle and reed pipe, and composing songs at Mark's request for the festival entertainment.

According to Southworth, during this period the royal watchmen or later "waits" were minstrels who "were required to blow or pipe the hour four times during the long winter nights, and three times in summer. As well as guarding against thieves and other malefactors, they had to keep a careful look-out for fire....They played a variety of instruments," including the oboe-like schawm, known for its piecing, alarm-like sound (74). Southworth also mentions that watchmen also played at feasts (74), which Tristan does later in the story. With this understanding of the position they desired, Mark's musical auditioning of the men makes perfect sense.

During the first evening meal, Tristan takes up the reed pipe and plays a lay he and Isolt composed together. This song, together with the sound of his true voice when he first greeted the king, makes Isolt certain of Tristan's identity, even though the costume and his closed eye make her recognition difficult. At the end of a second losing day for Mark's men in the tournament, Tristan and Isolt finally seize their opportunity to meet privately. Were the story to end here, despite the much more elaborate disguise descriptions, this entrance trick would be fairly typical, including an enemy's strong-walled city, statements of cunning, and noblemen / soldiers dressing as frumpy-looking

minstrels but possessing outstanding instrumental skills, who are gladly received by the king. In this version of the trick, it is uncertain whether all of Tristan's men know the true purpose of their visit or not; either way they play along willingly. What comes next throws a new twist into the entrance trick that appears in none of the other examples of this motif but helps us to better understand the chivalric role of the minstrel. This latter portion of the story includes a supplemental minstrel disguise scene in which Tristan and his men perform as knights while still carrying their musical instruments. In later chapters we will also discuss a scene in Gottfried's harp and rote episode where a character does just the opposite—dresses as a knight and performs as a minstrel.

This atypical portion of the entrance trick begins after the second day of tournament losses, when Gawain pleads with Tristan to let the men enter the tournament to aid Mark's side. He agrees, and the queen provides them each with new horses, equipment, and tunics: "The queen and her maidens armed them magnificently. / Each knight received a fleet horse / and a brand new shield and lance" (918-21), so that they once again appear to be knights. However, they enter the sport with their instruments still hanging around their necks. There is no real explanation in the text for the use of this tactic. But after Perceval discovers who the minstrels are, he presses Gawain for an explanation: "Now tell me right away why / you are carrying that instrument" (1403-04). The narrator doesn't give an explicit answer but says, "Then Gawain told him / the truth, from the beginning, / about how Tristan had brought them / before the king, / pretending they were watchmen" (1405-09). Thus they apparently needed to maintain the disguise both to protect Tristan who should be in exile and to avoid revealing their deceit to the king, at least until they had saved the tournament and reconciled Tristan with Mark. But

their entrance into the tournament as known minstrels, since they have provided entertainment for at least two days, has a humorous as well as a beneficial effect. We will consider the humor of this scene in greater detail in the next chapter alongside a discussion of how the minstrel-warrior figure represents the intersection of two incongruous identities.

With power and skill, Tristan and his minstrels turn the course of the games. When the rival knights notice instruments hanging around the necks of their opponents, "each of them was bewildered / and they considered it a humiliation / to be routed in this fashion / by minstrels, as they believed" (972-75). Midway into the action, Perceval returns from his search for the Grail, exhausted and looking almost as shabby as the disguise-minstrels on their arrival. He is ridiculed by Kay for his appearance until Perceval finally responds with anger: "If I were to / fight a minstrel, / I would give you such a blow / that your shield / would not protect you, / and nothing could prevent me / from making you fall down / head over heels. / But, by God who made the world, / be assured that I would not / put my hand on a minstrel, / not for a thousand marks: / I would debase myself to do so..." (1125-36). A statement like this within an actual minstrel disguise episode, and coming from Perceval who best knows the honorable behavior for a knight, clearly illustrates the chivalric code concerning minstrels. Knights do not fight minstrels, for a minstrel is an unworthy opponent. When the disguised Kay charges, Perceval is so certain a minstrel is no threat to him, that he turns his lance around backward to avoid injuring him. The narrator explains:

Perceval, who had been in many
jousts, was not afraid of him;

but he was ashamed:
 he was convinced
 that a minstrel was attacking him
 and challenging him willy-nilly.
 Perceval did not know what to do:
 he would regret it if he harmed this individual.
 He put his butt of his lance foremost
 and the lance-tip behind
 and waited for him in this way
 not moving at all. (1156-)

As the superior knight, Perceval naturally unseats Kay. He then takes Kay's horse, entering the competition himself against Mark's men to help the losing side. When he encounters Tristan and spots the fiddle around his neck, the narrator explains that Perceval is puzzled at first, thinking a minstrel had entered the field to make people laugh. But Tristan attacks him, and he defends himself, knocking Tristan from his horse. When Perceval eventually discovers Gawain's identity, "he trembled with anger / at the sight of the instrument hanging from his neck" (1344-45). When confronted with a minstrel-knight, Mark's knights do not know how to respond: they experience anger, humiliation, and confusion, giving Tristan and his men an advantage in the fight. Considering this reaction, particularly the fact that Perceval interpreted the minstrel-knight not as a threat but as some type of humorous act, it is easy to understand why entrance trick minstrels are welcomed without fear, and any subsequent attack comes as a shock.

After the tournament, Gawain, Yvain and Perceval sue the king for a boon, which he grants them. Gawain asks the king to forgive Tristan. He does so, not knowing the real truth about Tristan's relationship with Isolt, and grants him free access to all places throughout the kingdom except the queen's chamber. Tristan explains away the disguises by claiming they were undertaken after they received news of the tournament and wanted to aid his side, which was partially true. Tristan obviously does not mention his primary purpose of reconnecting with Isolt though. Here, in typical trickster fashion, Tristan lies when he feels it necessary. Along with showing us the heroic reaction to a minstrel in battle, these scenes also present a visual illustration of the minstrel-warrior contradiction found in every example of the minstrel disguise entrance trick.

Likewise, every minstrel disguise entrance trick episode represents characteristic Hermean features, but the trickster comes through more strongly in some examples than in others. In the *Tales of Enchantment and the Trickster*, the trickster rears his head in the form of magic, theft, illicit romantic liaisons, outright deceit, extreme unexpected violence, complicity to crime with lewd punishment, humor, and buffoonery. In the next chapter, we will explore the other side of this equation in the *Noble Fosterling Tales*, looking more closely at the figure of King David as a model including his defining traits and the early years of his life, and examine the split between these two categories of entrance trick tales. And finally we will begin a consideration of cunning itself.

Notes

¹ In trickster literature, the Hermes/ Mercury figure is referred to by his Greek name. Although Ovid is Roman, I have continued to use Greek names for continuity when they differ in the two traditions.

² Simpson notes that the *Flateyjarbók* includes a Saga of Olaf Tryggvason. This is intriguing because of Olaf's connections with the Anglo-Saxon poem The Battle of Maldon. John Pope notes that the 991 battle of Maldon was between Byrhtnoþ, the ealdorman of Essex, and a band of "mainly Norwegian" Vikings, under the direction of Anlaf (Olaf) Tryggvason, who was later King of Norway (71). Whether Maldon can be relied on or not for factual accuracy, it is interesting that in the Anglo-Saxon perspective here, the Vikings used guile, tricking them and taking advantage of their honor and bravery to get a leg up in the battle.

³ Orfeo's self-representation here as nothing but a poor minstrel is on one level certainly a lie. But on another level, he does actually become a poor minstrel during the trick. See chapters six and seven for a discussion of minstrel identity in these entrance trick episodes.

⁴ See Lawrence pp. 28-29 for a discussion of the horse as an indicator of minstrel identity in Folie and Continuation.

⁵ See Lawrence pp. 36-39 on vocal change and minstrel disguise in Folie and Continuation.

CHAPTER 6

PART III THE CUNNING HARPER KING:

KING HORN, KING DAVID, AND THE NOBLE FOSTERLING TALES

The Old Testament figure King David is the quintessential cunning, harper king. After he kills Goliath, we are told "David behaved wisely in all his ways, and the Lord was with him. And Saul saw that he was exceeding prudent, and began to beware of him" (D-R 1 Kings 18:14-15).¹ David was also incredibly multi-talented: he was a musician, poet, athlete, capable general, and also "displayed unusual wisdom in the administration of government" (F. Thompson 1644). But most interestingly, like some of these entrance trick heroes or even like Hermes himself, King David was dual natured: "his life was a strange admixture of good and evil. It was filled with noble deeds, fine aspirations and splendid accomplishments; yet was stained with gross sins" (1644). His greatest sin was taking another man's wife, conceiving a child with her and then having her husband, Uriah the Hittite, killed so he could marry her. But on the other hand, he is also known as the "greatest of the kings of Israel" and is the "most famous ancestor of Christ" (1644). So while the sense of paradox is still there in David, just as in Hermes, with David the negative associations tend to melt away, leaving us the archetype of a great hero, a man of God, a warrior, a musician, and a poet, clever and capable. But if we look closely, we still see the hint of this flaw: "David had done that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and had not turned aside from any thing that he commanded him,

all the days of his life, except the matter of Urias, the Hethite" (3 Kings 15:5). It is this positive, heroic image, lightly touched with a flaw that the noble fosterlings appear to reflect.

This final category, the Noble Fosterling Tales, includes the stories of Horn, Hother, Beton and the Tristan harp and rote episode. Although every minstrel disguise entrance trick episode represents characteristic Hermean features, as we saw in the last chapter, we find no fool disguises or clownery in the Noble Fosterling category. The noble fosterlings are indeed cunning; however, as the flip-side to the Tales of Enchantment and the Trickster, the Noble Fosterling Tales emphasize the heroic and more respectable side of the cunning hero. In fact, the noble fosterlings appear to have evolved somewhat above their more blatantly tricksterish fellows, their clever natures fortified with the addition of inherently noble features. But for the most part they still can't entirely hide their trickster heritage.

As we explore the Noble Fosterling Tales, we will see that each story follows a similar formula, including at least one Foster-Father section, one Welcoming King section, and a Minstrel Disguise Episode. Each noble fosterling is born noble but raised below his actual rank by a foster-father after his own father is killed. In each tale, the hero's childhood education and noble traits are described, including his musical instruction and excellence. Since a noble hero excels above others in general, it is not so surprising that he should also excel in music. Yet the noble fosterling hero is defined in some measure by his superior musical ability, with his entrance trick performance conforming strictly to the northern minstrelsy tradition.

In this chapter, after a review of the remaining minstrel disguise episodes in the stories of Horn, Hother, Beton, and Tristan, I will detail the defining features of the "noble fosterling excels in music" motif, look at the typical three-part formula found in Noble Fosterling Tales, and compare how this formula is realized in each tale. With this understanding of the motif's use in these medieval examples, we will consider David's early years as a prototype of the cunning harper king and then consider the differences in characterization between various entrance trick heroes, examining the development from trickster to fosterling. Finally, we will begin a more in-depth look at the paradoxical nature of cunning in both the Biblical and mythological traditions to evaluate how its magical and divine associations play-out in the noble fosterling heroes.

Our first noble fosterling is Horn. Since we examined this entrance trick episode in chapter three, here I will just briefly review Horn's basic features for comparison with those of other episodes. In King Horn, the purpose of the disguise is rescue; Rimenhild must be saved from a treacherous vassal. But along with the rescue, Horn uses this opportunity to take vengeance on his unfaithful companion. Horn's costume is created in each manuscript by first taking a harp and companions. In C and L, the number of men is undefined: "felazes fewe" (C1462); and "felawe" (L 1482). In O he takes two companions: "hyf tweye felawe" (1509). Next, in O and C the men clothe themselves. In O those garments are *pelle* (1511) 'garments of rich cloth' (Hall 219). L text does not mention their garments, but it does have them gird swords over their shirts. In each of the texts, they sang and made *gleowing* outside the gate to call attention to themselves. In L and O, Fikenhild hears the music, asking who it is (L) or what they were (O). In C, it is Rimenhild who asks what they were. In L and O, they call themselves harpers, *iogelers*,

(L 1494) or *Jogelours* (O1521) and fiddlers. Hall glosses the two variations of *Jogelours* as "jugglers, entertainers" (Hall 212). In C they call themselves harpers "& fume were gigours" (1472) 'players of the gigue' (Hall 207). After they identify themselves as musicians, they are immediately admitted. Next Horn joins the feast and begins to perform a lay on his harp. Thus the minstrels' skills in Horn consist of instrumental music and song, specifically including a lay. Rimenhild swoons at the sound of Horn's music. After an emotional moment, Horn looks at his ring and then fells Fikenhild's crown, presumably along with his head. Then he casts down all Fikenhild's men. In O and C, after the men are slain, Horn tears Fikenhild "asunder" (Hall 230).

We see another version of this story in Mestre Thomas's (ca. 1170-80) Anglo-Norman romance *Horn et Rimenild* or *The Romance of Horn*. Romance exists in three manuscripts in "substantial length...and in the fragments of two more" (Weiss xiv). Dunn notes that the plot of the later Middle English King Horn "closely follows" the plot of Thomas's but that "no common source of the two works has been discovered" (Romances 19). Ramsey asserts, on the other hand, that King Horn "derives from a different and probably earlier tradition than that on which its Anglo-Norman predecessor is based" (27). In Romance, as in Horn, the purpose of the disguise is to rescue Rigmel, and again vengeance is also achieved.

In Romance, Horn's costume is created when he and one hundred companions carry harps or fiddles and slip "cloaks of different colours" over their hauberks and swords (Weiss 118). The narrator explains that Horn "wanted them to seem like minstrels" and has Horn himself proclaim his desire to attend the wedding as a "minstrel" (118). The group approaches the gate and requests entrance so they can "enhance the

entertainment with their playing” (Weiss 118). We are told that their skills include harping, playing the rote, and singing, but we should also probably add fiddling since "most" of them carried fiddles (118). In this episode, too, the minstrels are excellent performers, and they receive a warm welcome from the porter:

Some knew how to harp, some played the *rote*, some were good singers of songs;
no one about to hear them would hold back their tears. ‘My word!’ said the porter
‘even the emperor hasn’t got such people. There’s no nobleman alive not
honoured by such as these. Enter then, my fair friends, I shan’t stand in your way.
(118-19)

Here again the minstrels are referred to as "friends," even though the porter believes he has never met them before.

Throughout this episode, the poet plays ironically with the idea of Horn’s gift and his performance of service and entertainment at the wedding, weaving language play and humor into this scene of destruction. In this instance, similar to the tournament scene in Continuation where knights appear on the field with instruments hanging around their necks, humor is created when the author emphasizes the coexistence of conflicting or contradictory identities in these characters. In Romance, for example, Thomas announces Horn's contradictory dual role just before the disguise scene opens with Horn's boast: as Wikele's minstrel, "I'll play him a Breton lay with my steel sword" (118). And as they enter the wedding, the narrator says Horn and his men make Wikele “such a present that they would all consider themselves miserable, angry and sad: there would never be worse entertainment at a wedding” (119). Finally, after the disguise musicians throw their cloaks and instruments hastily to the ground, they provide unconventional service for the

guests with their swords, going around to all the tables and “giving them bad service, quite different from dishes or dispensing the best wine, for no one they touched escaped unbloodied” (119). Horn completes his service at the feast by striking Wikele on the head, cleaving it in two, and then “had him dragged out like a stinking cur and hung at the cross-roads as a spectacle” (119). The author's language play in this scene, in which he equates the hero's violent acts with an exceedingly bad minstrel performance, creates a product that echoes the minstrel-warrior contradiction: here we experience the humor and playfulness we would expect from a minstrel, but it is delivered through the extreme violence of a battle scene.

The humor of this language play is produced when the two incompatible roles of minstrel and knight are brought together with both remaining equally true: Horn and his companions perform both as minstrels and as knights, integrating these conflicting roles in an unexpected and surprising way. In “Creativity and Humor: Integration and Incongruity,” Mary Murdock and Rita Ganim identify “incongruity/ unexpected relationships” as one of three basic humor categories along with “play/spontaneity,” and “release/relief” (66). In humor created by incongruity, “The creative act of the humorist consists in bringing about a momentary fusion between two incompatible frames of reference” (Koestler qtd. in Ziv). We find this type of fusion in each of these entrance trick episodes, when, in the act of performing as a minstrel, the character assumes the identity of minstrel without relinquishing his identity as knight.

The defining criteria for minstrel identity, as the comparative analysis of these episodes indicates, is conveyed to fellow characters within the narrative through one or in varying combinations of the following four indicators: alteration of physical appearance

(clothing, skin, or hair changes); use of props (musical instrument, staff, or other items); actions and behaviors (playing music, singing, clowning); or a statement of identity (backed up later with evidence of performance excellence).² Or in other words, as we saw in chapter four—if he looks like a minstrel, acts like a minstrel, or says he's a minstrel, he's probably a minstrel. By fulfilling any of these expectations of minstrel identity, the character assumes the identity of a minstrel for other characters. Yet, generally only the audience, the character himself, and any companions know that he is also a knight. The hero's contradictory dual identity is not normally apparent to other characters because the evidence of his knighthood is hidden, clothing is discarded or exchanged, weapons are covered, etc., for obvious reasons, while performing the entrance trick.³

The humor tends to appear in these disguise moments when the poet emphasizes or gives outward evidence of this conjoining of two generally mutually exclusive roles. In the culminating scenes of Continuation, for example, as well as in the character of Gandin, who though not an entrance trick hero does appear attired as a knight with a rote in Gottfried's harp and rote episode, the poet illustrates this intersection of incongruous identities for other characters by presenting physical evidence of both identities in one individual at one time. In Romance, this emphasis is created through language play for the audience, in which both realities, Horn's performance as minstrel and as warrior, are each expressed as true in the same moment through metaphor—Horn will play a lay with his sword. Though again, although the same incongruous intersection of identities occurs in each of these entrance trick episodes, the hero normally suppresses evidence of his identity as knight or warrior while assuming the identity of minstrel. In the next chapter,

we will explore how such unexpected or surprising conjunctions between incongruous or contradictory concepts are not only capable of creating humor but also illustrate creative thinking processes.

Our next noble fosterling tale is the story of Hother. This is Thompson's first entry under K2357.1, listed as Paul Herrmann's *Erläuterungen*, which refers to The Danish History of Saxo Grammaticus, written in Latin by a Danish historian in the late 12th to early 13th century. Within Book Three of Saxo's history we find the story of Hother, son of Hodbrodd and King of Sweden and Denmark. Although this text is called a history, I have not included it with the Chronicle Tales because of its largely legendary nature, including magical objects and otherworldly characters. Despite these features, I have also not grouped it with the Tales of Enchantment, as it is a clear example of the noble fosterling motif.

Hother, like Horn, was the fosterling of a king, here King Gewar. Like Horn, Hother also outshined his companions, earning him the love of the king's daughter, Nanna. But he is at first impeded from marrying her by another suitor, Balder, the demi-god son of Odin. Unlike Horn, however, Hother seizes his opportunity after an initial win against Balder and marries Nanna immediately, taking her back to Sweden. Balder and Hother continue to battle back and forth over the sovereignty of Denmark. Finally, after two defeats by Balder, Hother sequesters himself to the wilderness but still rules in some measure from his place of exile: "he had been wont to give out from the top of a hill decrees to the people when they came to consult him" (Elton 93). Hother's self-exile is criticized by the people, creating a smudge in his otherwise noble characterization: "hence when they came they upbraided the sloth of the king for hiding himself, and his

absence was railed at by all with the bitterest complaints" (93). While in the wilderness, however, Hother learns from wood maidens that he must get hold of the magic food which increases Balder's strength in order to defeat him.

During the night after a massive battle in which "the carnage of the opposing parties was nearly equal," Hother sneaks into the enemy's camp (94). His initial purpose is to "spy upon the enemy," but he then follows three maidens who are about to prepare Balder's food (94). They ask who he is, and he replies he is a lutanist and one of Hother's company. Like Horn's promises to Rimenhild, Hother's statement is not a lie, but it also isn't the whole truth. As we saw in the Gwydion and Lleu episode, Hother's entire costume consists only of this statement of identity which is confirmed by his ability as a performer. Indeed, the maidens do not distrust him because "when the lyre was offered him, he tuned its strings, ordered and governed the chords with his quill, and with ready modulation poured forth a melody pleasant to the ear" (94). At the start of the story, Hother is described as possessing outstanding skills on lyre or harp, timbrel, and lute, though within the entrance trick episode he plays only the lyre. As for his reception, the maidens do not raise the alarm but rather invite him to play and even allow him to remain in the camp despite the fact that he belongs to the enemy. The maidens refuse to give him Balder's food when he requests it but do give him "a belt of perfect sheen and a girdle which assured victory" (94). Next Hother follows the path back, meets Balder and "plunged his sword into his side" (94). Balder dies three days later of his wounds. Thus Hother's spying expedition turns into an attempt to obtain something off-limits to aid him in battle and ends in his killing the enemy.

As we saw in Thorleif, Hother also dies through revenge by an agent of the enemy he tricks. In Hother, the hero is killed later in battle by Balder's half-brother, Odin's son Boe, who then dies of his own wounds. Between the trick and Hother's death, the author interjects the story of how Odin fulfills the prophecy for vengeance on Hother by conceiving Boe through a bawdily described rape. In his attempts to win Boe's mother, Odin assumes four separate disguises: soldier, foreign smith, soldier again, and finally female physician. This interlude combines violence, humor, and disguise but is not an example of an entrance trick. Odin, who is later punished for his disgraceful behavior, is described by the narrator as having "persistent guile" in his continued use of disguise to achieve his will (97). Thus here the enemy, or more correctly the enemy's father, also undertakes clever acts but in his case they are used to cause harm against two innocent parties, Boe's mother and Hother. The inclusion of this interesting side-story within the tale allows the comparison between two contrasting examples of clever disguise, one positive, performed by the cunning harper king and the other negative, undertaken by his guileful foe.

Another example of a Noble Fosterling Tale is the Old Provençal epic, Daurel et Beton, dated after 1170. After the murder of his father, Duke Bevis, by the treacherous Count Guy, young Beton is protected and fostered by Bevis's minstrel, Daurel, in an emir's court in Babylon. Beton is known as the minstrel's son, but because he excels early and in many areas, exuding inherent nobility, the court suspects his true identity has been concealed. At age six, Beton is taught to play the harp and the viol. When Beton is thirteen years old, he and Daurel return with an army from the Emir to avenge Duke Bevis. Upon coming ashore, they find Daurel's castle under siege by Duke Guy, with his

army encamped outside. Daurel signals his and Beton's return to those in the castle by flashing his shield, and the two arm themselves for battle. The poet tells us here that Daurel's beard has grown long for seven years. The soldiers are told to hold their places until given the order, and the disguise episode begins.

Daurel and Beton each draped themselves in a "great cloak" and "carried viols, like minstrels," keeping their swords hidden (84). Daurel explains to Beton: "My lord, so that you know what to do: I shall sing and you must listen. I shall use words that will make him angry, and I think he'll attack me." "And I'll take vengeance!" said Beton" (84). The two enter Guy's tent and find him at the table. Rather than declaring their identities, the heroes are identified as minstrels by the enemy when he sees them approach wearing cloaks and carrying instruments. The enemy then calls them to join him: "'Minstrels,' he called, 'come and eat!'" (84). Daurel explains that they have come to entertain him. Beton begins to play a "pleasant tune" (84), and Daurel sings an insulting song about how the treacherous Guy killed Beton's father, Duke Bevis. Next we are told: "Guy had a knife in his hand; he went to throw it at Daurel, but Beton tossed viol and cloak aside, drew his sword and with one blow sent Guy's right arm flying to the ground" (85). Here again, we see the surprisingly violent act of a warrior in contrast to the expected joviality of a minstrel's performance.

Although the set-up is different, the situation surrounding the actual disguise episode in Beton contains several features resembling the Baldulf story. For example both disguise episodes take place in the encampment area outside a besieged castle. In both stories, the heroes make themselves known secretly to the friendly forces inside the castle: in Beton it is the sight of Daurel's shield which reveals his identity; in Baldulf it is

the sound of his voice or, in Layamon's version, possibly his minstrelsy. And in both stories the disguise minstrel's hair is mentioned, though in Beton rather than cutting it to look ridiculous and hide his identity, Daurel has gone many years without cutting it, growing it long, "longer than one could imagine," (84) which apparently made him unrecognizable.

The entrance trick in Beton is a somewhat unusual example in that Beton is still a child when disguising as a minstrel and does not devise the plan himself. Although Beton excels in music and has been thoroughly trained in minstrelsy skills, it is Daurel, the true minstrel, who comes up with the disguise idea and explains it to Beton. Beton understands and embraces the plan readily and carries out the vengeance himself, thus moving from boy to man during the space of the entrance trick.

The last Noble Fosterling Tale we will review is Tristan's harp and rote episode in Thomas's Tristan (ca. 1160) from the 1226 Norse Saga of Tristram and Isond, Gottfried von Strassburg's Tristan (1210), and the Middle English Sir Tristrem (circa 1330). Since we considered this tale already in chapters two and three, I will run through the episode's basic features in each of these versions only briefly. When discussing the Tristan tradition's noble fosterling traits later, however, to avoid complication I will focus only on the Saga version.

As we discussed in the Trickster Tales, among other more typical heroic traits, Tristan is known for his musical talent and wily nature. Such a character should feel right at home using a minstrel disguise entrance trick. In fact, in the harp and rote episode the hero's moral victory is even greater because Tristan tricks a trickster, outsmarting a would-be cunning hero by turning his own trick back on him. I say would-

be here because rather than a true example of the entrance trick motif, this first minstrel disguise, undertaken by a not quite clever enough hero, appears to be designed as a foil to Tristan's real entrance trick, illustrating Tristan's superiority as a lover and a clever schemer against both Mark and the Irish Knight. Additionally, although the Irish knight carries a harp, he is not actually disguised. In both the Saga and Gottfried, he is known well by Isolt, who tells Mark his identity. In Sir Tristrem, the harper knows Isolt but it is not stated whether she too knows him or not. Nonetheless, the Irish harper does not hide his identity and/ or his ill intentions by arriving as a seemingly innocent and anonymous minstrel in any of the three versions. In fact, in the two cases in which he is well-known by the court, he is received as an honored guest. When he arrives in the Saga and Isolt recognizes him, "she bade the King do him honor and worship," and Mark does, allowing him to eat from his own dish (140). Similarly in Gottfried, after learning the visiting knight's identity, "Mark was at great pains to honour Gandin, as much for his own good name as to meet Isolde's wishes; for she begged and entreated Mark to show him honour, as a fellow countryman of hers" (214). In Tristrem, the details are so few that we go straight from his arrival and description to the rash boon. In any case, for these reasons I have not classified the first musical trick in this episode as a minstrel disguise entrance trick. Nor have I included any of its details in my analysis of the motif's basic features.

Brother Robert's Tristremssaga or the Norse Saga of Tristram and Isond, according to A.T. Hatto, is based "entirely on Thomas's poem, though he judged that his northern audience would miss the finer points and accordingly suppressed them" (358). In the Saga, an Irish baron, chief "of all those that were in Ireland," appears in King Mark's court dressed as a minstrel. He enters "on a horse fair and well arrayed, and he

had under his cloak a harp all dight with gold" (R.S. Loomis 140). After the meal, Mark asks if he "knew aught of harping, and if he would play the King a lay for love" (141). The baron asks what boon he will receive for his performance, and the king responds, "ye shall have whatsoever ye list" (141). The Irish baron agrees and proceeds with the entertainment, which included playing his harp and singing lays. And he too is more than competent: first he plays a lay that was "right pleasant unto all" (141). And his second is "better by half so that it rejoiced them to listen" (141). When he finishes, he demands Isolt as his reward. The king objects but finally keeps his word when no one will defend his honor for him, and the baron leaves with Isolt, bringing her to his pavilion to wait for high tide.

When Tristan returns from hunting, he learns what has happened and races to the tent on horseback with his rote, with the obvious purpose of rescuing his lady. The text does not mention any form of costume other than the rote, but the baron immediately recognizes Tristan as a minstrel and asks him to play a lay for the lady. The narrator explains: "When the man of Ireland saw the minstrel as he came into the pavilion, he said: 'Fellow play us a fair lay on they rote'" (143). The baron's intention is to comfort the lady by having the minstrel play, though he himself had skills enough to conceivably do the job. But we see that Tristan's reception is positive, and as in Beton, he is welcomed into the tent to perform. He plays the rote and sings; and naturally he is talented. The text first explains: he "made them good disport with a fair song" (143).

Tristan plays "through the night," and when he finishes, the tide is high enough to float the ship (143). One of the baron's men warns him that they should depart before Tristan returns from hunting, but the knight refuses to be intimidated and asks the

minstrel to play more lays to comfort Isolt. Here Tristan's ability-level is mentioned a second time: he plays and sings a "matchless song and wondrous to hear" until the tide rises above the bridge, and they can no longer enter the ship on foot and remain dry (144). The baron is prepared to wait until the tide recedes, but Tristan kindly offers the use of his horse, promising to "deal courteously" with Isolt (145). Instead of delivering her safe and dry on-board ship, after lifting her onto the horse Tristan taunts the knight, shouting: "With craft thou hadst her of the King, and with craft have I her again from thee" and then races away with her (145). The next day, Tristan returns Isolt to Mark chastising him: "Now keep her another time better for only by great cunning is she bought again" (145).

The harp and rote episode also appears in Gottfried von Strassburg's Tristan. Gottfried's work is earlier than the Saga version of Thomas's Tristan but is likewise based on Thomas. Hatto notes: Gottfried kept "closely to his [Thomas's] narrative despite subtle changes" (358). In this version, the Irish baron is called Gandin and although he carries a rote, he is never referred to as a minstrel. In the Saga, the baron is described as "passing orgulous and proud" (R.S. Loomis 140), but in Gottfried he becomes something closer to a noble fosterling-type hero: "courteous, handsome, rich in possessions, and so valiant in his person that all Ireland spoke of his exploits" (Hatto 214). As we saw earlier, in this scene Gottfried also emphasizes the junction of knight and minstrel identities intrinsic to the minstrel disguise entrance trick by adding a slight twist that resembles the tournament scene in Continuation. Here the Irish baron is richly dressed, but this time he looks like a knight, except without the weapons: "He came riding up to Mark's court, elegantly dressed in all the fine trappings of knighthood..., though

unattended and carrying no shield or spear" (214). Gandin too is carrying a golden instrument, but this time it is a rote with "precious stones" (214). After dressing Gandin as a properly attired knight on horseback and stringing an instrument around his neck, Gottfried then shows us the court's reaction to his two incompatible identities. Isolt tells Mark who the knight is: "Mark was much puzzled as to why he wore the rote and thought it absurd, and indeed they were all wondering and thinking about it intently" (214). Gandin refuses to put the rote down during dinner, which causes "laughing and scoffing" amongst the others, and they name him "The Knight of the Rote" and his "Lordship of the Burden" (215).

After the meal, the king asks Gandin to play for him if he can. They agree on the stipulation of the rash boon as in the Saga, and Gandin plays his rote. Like the Saga's Irish baron, Gandin is an accomplished musician. His first lay "gratified them all" (Hatto 215). And the second was played "twice as well" (215). Here too Gandin claims Isolt as his reward, and Mark, failing other options, hands her over. Gandin again takes Isolt to his pavilion to wait for the tide. Tristan returns, hears the news and goes after them taking only a harp. When he arrives, he leaves his horse and sword out of sight, hiding the signs of his knighthood, and approaches the tent with his harp. Gandin spots him and calls out a greeting: "'God save you, good harper!'" (216). Unlike in the Saga, here Tristan asks Gandin to take him with them back to Ireland, and Gandin agrees to, referring to the minstrel as friend. "'You have my word on it, my friend'" (216). Next Gandin asks Tristan to play for them, offering him fine clothes as a reward. Tristan plays a lay of "surpassing sweetness," and when he had finished the boat was afloat (217). Here too Gandin is warned about Tristan, and he refuses to go, requesting another lay

instead, again calling the minstrel "my friend" (217). Next we are given additional statements of Tristan's outstanding musical ability. Gandin remarks: "You play your harp so well that I am greatly obliged to you for it" (217). And further, Tristan "drew such sweet sounds from the strings that Gandin hearkened to his playing most attentively" (217).

In this account too, when Tristan has finished playing the water is too high to board without getting wet. So Tristan offers to take Isolt over since he wants to bring his horse aboard for the trip to Ireland anyway. After some back and forth quibbling about who will bring her over on the horse, Gandin finally allows her to mount with Tristan. Once she is safely up Tristan starts off, and Gandin demands to know what the fool is doing with Isolt. Tristan calls back his retort: "You are the fool, Gandin! You are the one who has been fooled! Since what you tricked from Mark with your rote, I now take away with my harp! Deceiver that you are, you have now been duped in return. Tristan followed after you till now he has outwitted you!" (218). Tristan returns Isolt to court reprimanding Mark for his negligence. Tristan's final words to Gandin are a nice illustration of how the entrance trick allows the cunning hero not only to overcome his challenge but also to win a moral victory over his enemy. And as we saw, Gottfried specially tailors this version of the episode, giving Gandin outward evidence of both knight and minstrel identities, providing an explicit exploration of the minstrel-knight identity conflict happening behind the scenes in each of the true entrance trick episodes.

The Middle English Sir Tristrem harp and rote episode from the Auchinleck MS circa 1330, though more sparsely detailed, follows a pattern similar to the Saga or Gottfried with a few noteworthy exceptions. In Tristrem, the visitor is no longer an Irish

baron but rather an Irish harper, later called an earl, who loves Isolt "in an honorable way" (Lupack 14). After he requests Isolt as his reward for harping, Mark asks his council for advice, finally yielding Isolt to the harper. When Tristan learns that the queen has been given away, he "chidde with the King," takes his rote and follows Isolt, who has been brought aboard ship, and begins to play for her from shore (1850). Thus in this version too Tristan's musical ability and instrument, here an ivory rote, are his only costume.

Isolt becomes emotional after hearing Tristan's music and wants to return to shore to listen, explaining the music consoles her. Because of Isolt's reaction, the earl offers to pay Tristan a hundred pounds if he will go with them. Isolt goes ashore to listen, and Tristan plays: "Mirie notes he fand / Opon his rote of yvere" (1887-8). Through Tristan's music, Isolt is made "hole and sounde" (1889). They begin to reboard, and when Tristan mounts his horse, Isolt asks him to take her to the ship. As soon as she is on the horse, Tristan rides towards the woods, taunting the earl for losing by Tristan's rote what he had won with his harp.

As we can see already from their plot summaries, the tales of Horn, Hother, Beton, and Thomas's Tristan share a number of other traits beyond their inclusion of the entrance trick episode. In fact, the following characteristics and basic formula appear, with some variation in timing or extension of sections, in each of these Noble Fosterling Tales. To avoid overcomplicating this discussion, when considering the stories of Horn and Tristan, I will refer only to King Horn and the Norse Saga versions of these tales.

Noble Fosterling Tale Formula

Foster-Father Section (containing the "noble fosterling excels in music" motif)

(Hero may be raised in his native land or an adoptive land)

- Hero is born a member of the nobility
- Hero's real father is killed
- Hero is taken in by a foster-father
- Hero's education and noble traits are described
- Hero has been educated in and highly excels in music

(Hero's first battle and proving)

Welcoming King Section

- Hero undertakes a journey and is welcomed by a foreign king
- Hero proves himself in battle
- Hero is offered a bride and/ or arranges a marriage

Minstrel Disguise Episode

- Hero disguises as a minstrel, gains peaceful entry into enemy territory, and resolves a difficult challenge

Foster-Father Section

What I call the "noble fosterling excels in music" motif is found in the Foster-Father Section of this formula and is made up of the following elements: a noble-born hero is taken in and raised by a foster-father after his own father is killed; the hero's education and outstanding noble traits are described; he is educated in and particularly excels in music. In fact, each of these heroes is in some measure defined by his musical

skill. This motif could possibly appear in any story, with or without a minstrel disguise, but when it is coupled with the other two components in this formula, we find a Noble Fosterling Tale.

In each of these stories, the hero—Horn, Hother, Tristan, and Beton—is born noble. Horn and Hother are kings' sons; Tristan is the son of Rivalon, a knight who "surmounted all other in all conditions that long to noble men" and Blanchefleur, king Mark's sister (R.S. Loomis 10); and Beton is the son of Duke Bevis and the sister of Charlemagne.

The father of each is killed, and each hero is taken-in by a foster-father: Horn by King Aylmer; Hother by King Gewar; Tristan by Roald, Rivalon's Seneschal; and Beton by the minstrel Daurel. We are given a description of each youth's childhood education. Each education includes musical training—in which each child excels. Each hero possesses a combination of noble qualities above the level of his companions including such characteristics as natural ability, trained skill, diverse talents, beauty, or charisma (in the form of love or admiration from others).

The first of these heroes, Horn, is known for his beauty, his harping and song, his physical prowess, his wit, and his possession of immense *list(e)*, "dexterity, adroitness; ability, skill; cleverness, cunning" (McSparran). Additionally he is loved everywhere he goes including Suddenne, Westernesse, Ireland, and even makes an impression on the Saracens who cannot bring themselves to kill him. In fact we learn in the opening lines of the poem that Horn has no peer anywhere: "In none kinge riche / Nas non his iliche" (C17-18). When King Aylmer meets Horn and his companions for the first time, Horn's inborn nobility is at once apparent. Although they were "Alle riche mannes fones / & all

hi were faire gomes" (C21-22), "He was þe faireste / & of wit þe beste" (C173-74). After living in Westernesse for a time, everyone loved him, including Rimenhild: "In þe curt & vte / & elles al abute / Luuede men horn child, / & meft him louede Rymenhild, / Þe kynges oþene dofter" (C245-49). He proves his prowess as a newly-made knight, by slaying one hundred Saracens alone and bringing home their leader's head on his sword.

We are also given a list of the areas in which Horn will be educated (C227-40). Importantly in all three manuscripts, of all skills listed only harping is mentioned twice. Horn's companions will be instructed in other areas, with Horn receiving the superior education. And it is very clear that regardless of what the others learn, Horn will be taught of harp and song. And as we saw in chapter three, Horn caught his lessons in his heart (C243-44). In Horn there is also a brief mention of Horn singing in each of the manuscripts as he goes out on his horse after being knighted: "Þe fole bigan to fþringe, / & horn murie to finge" (C593-4).

Likewise, the story of Hother describes the hero's diverse areas of instruction while under the "tutelage" of King Gewar as well as his extensive natural talents including strength, intelligence, physical prowess, agility, and maturity. Hother

excelled in strength of body all his foster-brethren and compeers. Moreover, he was gifted with many accomplishments of mind. He was very skilled in swimming and archery, and also with the gloves; and further was as nimble as such a youth could be, his training being equal to his strength. Though his years were unripe, his richly-dowered spirit surpassed them. (Elton 89)

But Saxo lingers on the description of Hother's musical talent, showing us his complete

mastery over the subject:

None was more skilfull (sic.) on lyre or harp; and he was cunning on the timbrel, on the lute, and in every modulation of string instruments. With his changing measures he could sway the feelings of men to what passions he would; he knew how to fill human hearts with joy or sadness, with pity or with hatred, and used to enwrap the soul with the delight or terror of the ear. (89)

Although Hother's beauty and charisma are not mentioned, his many talents do gain him the eye of the king's daughter: "All these accomplishments of youth pleased Nanna, the daughter of Gewar, mightily, and she began to seek his embraces" (89).

Beton too is multi-talented, handsome, intelligent, mature beyond his years, physically strong and agile, and also charismatic: "When he was five, Beton was well grown, well educated and valiant. He could ride horses and gallop them; he could talk well and converse intelligently, he played chess, backgammon and dice, and everyone in the emir's court loved him dearly" (Shirley 60-61). When he is seven years old, suspecting his true identity has been concealed, the court devises a test of his nobility and determine "he's the son of a duke, a king or an emir" (71). At age nine, he is already the king's squire: "handsome, well made and well spoken" (71). By eleven Beton "knew how to fight and use weapons" (72). At twelve he "had excellent judgment," was "well grown and handsome, fit to bear arms" (74). When he was thirteen, "he was strong and well respected" (76). And naturally, he too is an outstanding musician. Although his musical instruction only begins at age six, by seven "Beton could play the viol well, also the citole, and was a fine harpist. He could sing songs and compose them himself too" (Shirley 66). As a young squire, "he was happy to play the viol and sing for them" (71).

Tristan too is handsome, charismatic, intelligent, multi-talented, and physically agile. In the Saga, Tristan's foster-father "made him to learn book knowledge, and he was passing witty, and he perfected himself by this study in the VII chief arts, and he was cunning in all manner of tongues....And of meekness and mercy and gentle taches, in wisdom and counsel and prowess he was found peerless" (R.S. Loomis 19). As a boy, while playing chess with Norwegian merchants who abduct him, they "had marvel of the young man and praised his knowledge and meekness and beauty and subtlety, for he overcame them all" (23). Like Horn and Beton, after finding his way to Mark's court Tristan is "dear unto all men, and renowned in that castle and over all that realm" (36). And, like each of the noble fosterling heroes, one of Tristan's defining traits is of course his musical ability. In the Saga, as a fosterling of Rivalon's Seneschal, Tristan learned "the VII kinds of music so that there was none had more renown nor more skill" (19). When he plays for Mark, he

gave the King and all his men so fair harping that full well it pleased him and all that heard, and all praised him for that he had well learned and was nourished in courtesy and was adorned of much meekness and cunning in divers games. He shone with seemly knowledge: never tofore heard they harp struck so fairly in their lifedays. (36)

Later, after an interlude of battle and proving, each hero is welcomed by a foreign king. In Horn this is King Thurston of Ireland; in Hother it is Helgi, King of Halogaland; in Tristan it is the King of Ireland; in Beton it is the Emir of Babylon. Here we see some variation in Tristan and Beton. In Beton, the hero is still an infant when the journey must be undertaken, and he does not part from his foster-father but instead travels with him to

the welcoming king, the Emir of Babylon. Therefore, Beton grows and is educated by his foster-father while in the care of the king of a foreign land, melding these two sections, Foster-father and Welcoming King, into one section although they are separate in Horn, Hother, and Tristan.

In Tristan, on the other hand, we find a second Foster-Father section before the official Welcoming King section. After being stolen from his first foster-father by the merchants, Tristan finds himself in King Mark's court. The character of Mark is at first glance difficult to categorize. He seems at first to function as the welcoming king of a foreign land, since Tristan himself is unaware of his true identity when he arrives in England. Yet Mark actually functions more as a second foster-father, considering Tristan is an orphan and Mark is perhaps his closest living relative. Thus Tristan appears to contain a double or extended Foster-Father section and is fostered in both of his native lands, first by Roald in Brittany, where his father held castles and lands, and later by Mark in England, homeland of his mother and where Tristan was conceived, before entering his Welcoming King section in Ireland.

First Battle and Proving

If we look at the pattern of Horn and Hother, we find the hero's first real battle and proving comes at the end of the Foster-Father section, before the Welcoming King section. Here in Horn and Hother, Horn fights the Saracens single-handedly in Westernesse after being knighted; Hother conquers Gelder, King of Saxony, in battle, sparing his life. In Beton, since the Foster-Father section and the Welcoming King sections seem to be merged and occurring simultaneously, the first battle and proving

occurs at the end of this combined section when he rides boldly into battle alone against a force of twelve thousand. In Tristan, the hero's first battle occurs at the end of the extended Foster-Father section and before the Irish Welcoming King section. Here Tristan's first foster-father, Roald, discovers Tristan in Mark's court and reveals his true identity. Tristan asks Mark to knight him and then returns to Brittany, beheading the man who killed his father. He then returns and saves England from paying a hefty tribute to Ireland by destroying their champion—thereby battling and proving himself as a man for the first time in both of his native lands before moving on to the welcoming king in Ireland.

Welcoming King Section

In the Welcoming King section, the hero again proves himself in battle and is offered a king's daughter in marriage and/ or arranges a marriage: Horn defeats and kills the giant who murdered his father and is offered King Thurston's daughter, whom he declines but promises her Apulf instead; Hother arranges King Helgi's marriage with Thora and then bands together with Helgi to defeat Hother's rival Balder in war, winning King Gewar's daughter, Nanna, in marriage; Tristan kills a dragon, technically winning the right to marry Isolt, daughter of the Irish king, but instead arranges a marriage between Isolt and King Mark. Beton's deed of proving, placed as it is at the close of the two melded sections, wins him the King of Babylon's daughter after she agrees to convert to Christianity, though Beton, like Horn, chooses to first win back his kingdom before marrying. Unlike with Horn, however, this union does not take many years and two rescue attempts to secure.

Minstrel Disguise Episode

The final distinguishing feature in this formula is the use of a minstrel disguise entrance trick. In Horn, this occurs after Horn has performed a rescue disguised as a beggar and returned to Suddenne to win back his crown. In Hother it occurs after drawn-out battles with Balder. In Beton, the two heroes go directly back to France from Babylon to avenge Duke Bevis's death and win Beton back his birthright. In the Saga, Tristan uses the disguise to rescue Isolt from the Irish knight after returning from Ireland with Isolt for Mark. Because they drink the love potion on the journey and begin a relationship, Isolt needs Bringvain's help to consummate the marriage without revealing the loss of her virginity and repays the girl by ordering her death. Immediately after Isolt demands Bringvain's retrieval and the two are reconciled, we are told the story of the harp and the rote. Newstead was struck by the way this episode "is not connected with the preceding or following events in the narrative sequence, and the abductor disappears from the story as suddenly as he appears" (463). Yet if we look at the pattern of the Saga up to the end of the harp and rote episode, it is clear that this episode in Tristan is not disconnected at all but rather conforms to this Noble Fosterling Tale formula.

The tales of Orfeo and Alfred also take advantage of the noble fosterling feeling but without going back and filling in the motif's details. In fact, although Orfeo is grouped with the Tales of Enchantment because of the story's mythological and otherworldly associations, its sense is actually closer to that of the Noble Fosterling Tales, with Orfeo belonging alongside characters like Horn and Tristan. The author does not provide the signature fosterling features, but he does repeatedly emphasize Orfeo's skill in harping, tapping into the cunning harper king archetype typified by David to more

gracefully communicate the sense of inherent nobility, multifaceted talent, resourcefulness, and cunning. And indeed, many critics have noted similarities between King David and Sir Orfeo. Longworth, as we recall, notes that the description of Heurodis beneath the tree reflects aspects of the Song of Songs and mentions: "Like David, too, who was able to soothe King Saul by playing the harp..., Orfeo is able to charm the Fairy King by the *gle* of his minstrelsy" (10). Spearing also compares "the healing power embodied in music" (80) he sees alluded to in Sir Orfeo with David's harping, noting: "David and Saul are sometimes compared as harpist-kings in medieval commentaries on the Orpheus myth" (81). Likewise in the Horn story, we see a similar though more muted connection between the hero and King David, which also draws on Solomon's association with great intelligence, in Romance's mention of a gift offered to Horn. Here Queen Gudborc's daughter, Lenburc, has a cup brought to Horn with the message: "'Take this cup, of African gold, engraved in the manner of the goldsmiths of Solomon, powerful David's son'" (Weiss 56).

Alfred, too as we explored in chapter four, was associated with David, translating his Psalms and appearing in his likeness in tenth and eleventh-century manuscript illustrations (Southworth 25). Asser, his contemporary biographer, likens him to David's son Solomon in his search for wisdom (Giles 3). Asser's ninth-century Life of King Alfred also describes the king's childhood development, which includes some of the typical noble fosterling details. At age five, for example, two years before he is orphaned by the death of his father, King Ethelwulf, Alfred is "anointed" by Pope Leo the fourth in Rome who "adopted him as his spiritual son" (2). Alfred was also charismatic, multi-

talented, intelligent, and nobler than his brothers. Alfred, however, had the disadvantage of inadequate teachers in his youth and learned only later to read and write:

He was loved by his father and mother, and even by all the people, above all his brothers, and was educated altogether at the court of the king. As he advanced through the years of infancy and youth, his form appeared more comely than that of his brothers; in look, in speech, and in manners he was more graceful than they. His noble nature implanted in him from his cradle a love of wisdom above all things; but, with shame be it spoken, by the unworthy neglect of his parents and nurses, he remained illiterate even till he was twelve years old or more; but, he listened with serious attention to the Saxon poems which he often heard recited, and easily retained them in his docile memory. He was a zealous practiser of hunting in all its branches, and hunted with great assiduity and success. (5)

As this passage shows, Alfred was historically attributed with many of the typical noble fosterling traits, minus the flaw. And although Southworth credits him in the development of the role of gleoman and its movement toward acceptance in the church, and Alfred was also associated with King David, he was not known as a harper king. But Alfred's minstrel disguise account in Malmesbury emphasizing his cunning and musical ability fills the gap, perfecting the comparison between Alfred and David. Yet Alfred's chronicle portrayal, much like what we will see in the fully fictional tale of Beton, appears to reflect only the good side of David, without including the characteristic flaw. Our later examination of the trickster's move toward dichotomy to meet individual societal needs will help to illustrate why this might be so.

King David As Noble Fosterling

As a forerunner to our medieval literary harper kings, the Biblical King David, selected by God and anointed to lead his chosen people, is a powerful image. David may have been especially attractive to the English in particular because of the migration myth in which the Anglo-Saxons likened themselves to the Israelites as God's new chosen people and considered England their promised land, their migration from the continent portrayed as a reenactment of the Exodus (Howe 180). Nicholas Howe in Migration and Mythmaking in Anglo-Saxon England (1989) traces this myth between the sixth and eleventh centuries through, among other sources, the writings of Gildas (c.540), Bede (731), Alcuin (793), and Wulfstan (1014). Although active in a period earlier than that of our disguise minstrels, this myth represents a cultural view rehearsed for over 500 years. Considering this foundation, and the tenth and eleventh-century manuscript depictions of Alfred as King David, an attraction to David in twelfth to fourteenth century England would perhaps still seem natural and appropriate, particularly considering that the Malmesbury portrayal of Alfred's entrance trick episode appears already in 1125. If so, a tradition of harper kings mirroring traits found in King David would not be surprising.

But what of the pattern of David's early life? Is it too a template for the Noble Fosterling Tale? Although connections between Orfeo and David have been well covered by the critics, and it is obvious that David is a harper king, what critics haven't commented on is the similarity between the pattern of David's early years and the Noble Fosterling Tale formula found in several minstrel disguise entrance trick tales.

As we consider David's early life, one of the first issues we confront is the nature of nobility. In Horn, the Norse Saga, and Beton, the hero was a member of the nobility,

but this fact was hidden from others, and in the case of Beton and Tristan, even from the hero himself during childhood to protect him from enemies. As Black points out in her study of the didactic purpose of disguise in medieval romances, although it appears that the hero is being raised from the lower classes to become royalty, he was always in fact noble. In his chapter on "The Child Exile," Ramsey too points out that the "social climbing" in the Horn-Havelok romances "takes place in appearance only; the heroes are born to the state that they eventually achieve" (29).

But the story of David, on the other hand, appears to do just the opposite—David begins as a member of the lower classes and is raised up into the nobility. David was not a king or nobleman's son and had not lost his father but rather worked as a shepherd, tending his father's flocks. However, although David was born into a low position, according to the text he was chosen by God to become King of Israel. What, in the medieval mind, could be more noble than a man chosen and anointed by God as king of his chosen people? In that mode of thinking, David could be considered truly noble from the start. In order to replicate this type of character—one who is innately noble rising up to claim a role of leadership without having to somehow prove God's will—the medieval examples begin securely in the world of the upper classes. Each hero has already been born into his God-given position, but through fate or the intervention of dishonorable figures, these heroes find themselves in a substantially lower position, like David's starting point, and must graduate into manhood and regain their birthrights by performing acts of prowess, often avenging the murder of their fathers. Along the way to reclaiming their true positions in the ruling classes, each character demonstrates innately noble traits.

Within this scheme, in David's story, his father Jesse fulfills a sort of foster-father role for David, such as we see in the medieval examples. He cares for David while David occupies a place in the lower classes. After Samuel anoints David for God, Saul asks for someone to be brought to him who could skillfully play the harp. One of his servants suggests David, relating his many positive qualities. Much like our medieval heroes, David is described as: "a skilful player, and one of great strength, and a man fit for war, and prudent in his words, and a comely person: and the Lord is with him" (1 Kings 16:18). In the King James Version, the phrase "a skilful player" is translated as "cunning in playing" (1 Sam. 16:18). So Saul sends for David: "And David came to Saul, and stood before him: and he loved him exceedingly, and made him his armourbearer" (D-R 1 Kings 16:21). David is taken into the king's service within the Foster-Father section, but as we will see, Saul embraces him even further, adopting him into his home after his first proving.

David's first proving, when he kills Goliath, signals his development into manhood. In a situation similar to Horn in Ireland and Tristan when he kills the Irish champion for the English, David goes into battle single-handedly against the champion of a foreign power. In this episode, David fights against a giant. Likewise, Tristan fights Morhaut who is "big and orgulous and of great stature (R.S. Loomis 71). Horn, too fights "A geaunt suþe kene" (C852).

In David's story, when no one stands up against this champion, David insists he will fight for Israel. Since he is still a boy, Saul tells him he is not able to defeat this man of war. David argues he can do it, and the king finally consents: "And Saul clothed David with his garments, and put a helmet of brass upon his head, and armed him with a

coat of mail. And David having girded his sword upon his armour, began to try if he could walk in armour" (17:38-39). David abandons this unproven gear, however, opting instead for stones and a slingshot. Beton, too, is just thirteen when he has his first proving in battle, and like David, he goes out against heathens. Beton secretly arms himself with the king's own gear after the king refuses to engage Gormon's "massive attack," and goes out alone (Shirley 76): "He remembered his ancestry, flung on the king's own mailshirt, girded on his sword, crossed himself three times, laced on the gold-rimmed helmet and from the ground where he stood, leapt onto the horse" (76). Unlike David, Beton keeps the armor and weapons in his fight. In David's story, when the Philistine saw David: "he despised him. For he was a young man, ruddy, and of a comely countenance" (17:42). And Goliath spoke to David: "Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with a staff?" (17:43). Beton does not approach the enemy with sticks or stones, but perhaps even more shamefully announces he is a minstrel, which made his opponent "angry and ashamed" (78).

After David defeats Goliath, the Foster-Father section appears to come to an end: "And Saul took him that day, and would not let him return to his father's house" (18:2). Saul, then is our Welcoming King, though David does not undertake a journey, and Saul is not the king of a foreign land. Within the Welcoming King section, David continues to develop, winning again and again in battle and securing the approval of the people: "And David went out to whatsoever business Saul sent him, and he behaved himself prudently: and Saul set him over the soldiers, and he was acceptable in the eyes of all the people, and especially in the eyes of Saul's servants" (18:5). The text also says that "all Israel and Juda loved David" (18:16). Like David, Beton was adored by all: "Great ladies, young

noblemen and knights, everyone loved him" (Shirley 70). Horn also in each of the manuscripts is loved by everyone: "In þe curt & vte / & elles al abute / Luuede men horn child" (C245-247). Tristan as well, after finding his way to Mark's court is "dear unto all men, and renowned in that castle and over all that realm" (R.S. Loomis 36). And Alfred too was "loved by his father and mother, and even by all the people, above all his brothers" (5).

Again as we see in the medieval examples, after David has won acclaim in battle, he is offered a king's daughter in marriage: Saul offers David his elder daughter, but David refuses because he feels he is too low-born to wed the daughter of a king. Eventually he does agree to marry the king's younger daughter, after paying her dowry. We see echoes of this sentiment in both Horn and Beton when both heroes refuse to marry their eventual brides until they have matured as warriors and regained their rightful positions within the nobility.

After David experiences such great success, Saul begins to fear and envy him and attempts to have him killed. David must flee Saul, and a series of adventures follows. In one, David goes to Gath and seeks asylum from the Philistine King Achish. Because David normally fought against the Philistines, he is taunted by some of the king's men. Wishing to escape, David feigns madness: "And he changed his countenance before them, and slipt down between their hands: and he stumbled against the doors of the gate, and his spittle ran down upon his beard" (21:13). Here we see David using the guise of madman to escape the clutches of an enemy. Thus a fool or madman disguise may be appropriate in both the trickster and Biblical traditions. However, with the exception of Tristan, this particular disguise is not used by noble fosterling heroes. Authors perhaps

avoided this image in tales which emphasize inherent nobility as it might also bring up the more negative trickster associations.

But does David actually perform an entrance trick, or is he merely an archetypal cunning harper king? Interestingly, while David flees Saul and before he becomes king himself, we are presented with a set-up similar to those found in the entrance trick episodes. Here David sends ten of his men to the home of Nabal, a "very great" man but "churlish, and very bad and ill natured," on a feast day (25:2, 3). They arrive and ask in David's name to be provided for but are refused: "So the servants of David went back their way, and returning came and told him all the words that he said" (25:12). After being denied entrance at the gate, unlike the medieval heroes who find a peaceful means of entering, David prepares to do battle against Nabal. But before David has time to commence, Nabal's wife, Abigail, who was "a prudent and very comely woman" (25:3), hears of the visitors and comes down to David with provisions for his men, begging for forgiveness. David allows himself to be restrained, as he explains "from coming to blood, and revenging me with my own hand" (25:33). He accepts her gifts, and Abigail returns to her husband.

Although David wanted to cut down all the males in Nabal's household, he is restrained by Abigail. He and his men do not, however, dress as minstrels to sneak in and kill Nabal. But oddly, after David leaves, the rest of the story unfolds by God's hand with much the same result as we find in many of the entrance trick stories. The text explains that when Abigail returned, Nabal was very drunk at his feast, which was "like the feast of a king" (25:36). She waited until morning and told him what she had done. After hearing this: "his heart died within him, and he became as a stone. And after ten days

had passed, the Lord struck Nabal, and he died" (25:37-38). When David hears this news, he thanks God: "Blessed be the Lord, who hath judged the cause of my reproach, at the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from evil, and the Lord hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his head" (25:39). Next, David sends for Abigail, and they are married.

Therefore in the end, we have a moment where men approach the gate of a powerful and wealthy man in the hero's name on a feast day and are turned away. The hero avoids an open attack on his household. The evil man who is keeping a beautiful and virtuous wife is killed after his feast, and his wife marries her rescuer. In David's story, the minstrel disguise does not appear, but many of the other components which are a part of the entrance trick do. Perhaps without the direct intervention of God, the medieval hero is forced to rely on his own human skills for the resolution of his conflicts. But it is interesting to note that these talents were recognized as stemming from God. Asser, for example, accounts Alfred's gifts to God: "for skill and good fortune in this art [hunting], as in all others, are among the gifts of God" (5). In Romance, the specific ideas of intelligence, craftsmanship, and cleverness are intermingled as we saw in chapter five's discussion of human magic, and are credited as a gift from God: "in all ways he [Horn] was the most accomplished, for such was his God-given intelligence that there was no master craftsman he could not surpass in skill. Throughout the land he was famous for this, his great cleverness and great beauty" (Weiss 9-10). We will explore the concept of cunning intelligence further in a moment to see how it is associated with the divine in both the mythological and Biblical traditions.

With or without the entrance trick itself, the medieval noble fosterling kings show a surprising likeness to David and the pattern of his early years. The hero begins with a type of inherent nobility but is generally reared at a position below this rank with a foster-father figure. He is multi-talented and successful in his undertakings, generally performing above all others. He is a skillful musician. Each hero outside of Hother appears to have a high level of charisma and is loved by the people.

As each hero develops, he has a first battle which signals a new phase in his life. At this point, the hero generally finds a new protector, mentor, or friend, who is usually a king, who welcomes him in. Next he continues to excel in battle and is either offered a bride or arranges a marriage. The bride is not only noble but is usually a king's daughter. After an interlude of activities, the hero avoids open attack against his enemy. In David's story, although David is in his own right skilled in music and clever strategies, God intervenes, directly resolving the conflict. In the medieval stories, the hero uses his perhaps God-granted musical skills and cunning to trick an enemy—he disguises as a minstrel to avoid armed conflict and win his objectives.

A closer study of King David's early years is in order as he appears to function as a model for the "noble fosterling excels in music" motif and the Noble Fosterling Tale formula, as well as for the cunning, harper king figure. Yet as an archetypal figure, rather than originating the paradoxical harper king image, David too may be a representation of a much deeper human understanding.

From Trickster to Noble Fosterling and Back Again

All of the minstrel disguise entrance trick heroes have a connection to the

trickster, the trick itself representing an amalgam of characteristic Hermean features. The Tales of Enchantment and the Trickster, as we saw in chapter five, lean toward this tricky heritage, allowing more of the trickster's darker nature to surface. In the Noble Fosterling Tales, on the other hand, the hero is virtually gleaned of his negative trickster traits and at the same time elevated so that he is not only noble and heroic but without peer. Still, even with the author's assurances of the hero's unparalleled nobility, education, talent, and musical aptitude, hints of the trickster do occasionally show in his actions. The differences in characterization between the Trickster and the Noble Fosterling hero are reminiscent of the split pointed out by Williams between Fouke and John. Both characters as she notes are tricksters, but the dirty work has been delegated to John in order to maintain Fouke's dignity. In our catalogue, trickster heroes such as Thorleif, Gwydion, John, and Tristan from *Folie* and *Continuation* have been allowed to do the dirty work, whether that be dressing and behaving as a fool, carrying out illicit rendezvous, committing extreme and unnecessary violence, aiding in crime, or reveling in the humiliation of an enemy. On the flipside, the noble fosterlings Horn, Hother, Beton and harp and rote Tristan all appear as the cleaned-up, more respectable version of their trickster cousins, now great and noble cunning heroes.

Interestingly, Brown points out that Hermes himself also underwent an image transformation. He explains: "When the *nouveaux riches* of the archaic age broke the aristocracy's monopoly of the arts of cultured leisure, they installed their own god [Hermes] as patron of these arts, on a par with Apollo" (97). The resulting change in Hermes resembles some of the features we see in the noble fosterling heroes: "In early archaic art Hermes is a bearded, muscular, and rather comical figure—a stylized picture

of a man who must work for a living. In the sixth century Hermes begins to lose his beard, and becomes, as Apollo had been before him, the image of the perfect young gentleman, the ideal ephebe, the flower of physical and mental culture, refined by the leisure arts of music and gymnastic" (96).

The shift we see between trickster and noble fosterling heroes is not surprising, however, when we consider the changes identified in the development of the trickster figure in different cultures. Brown explains what happens to the trickster as it reacts and adapts to the cultural needs of different societies:

Depending on the historical circumstances, the trickster may evolve into any one of such contrasting figures as a benevolent culture hero nearly indistinguishable from the Supreme God, a demiurge in strong opposition to the heavenly powers, a kind of devil counteracting the creator in every possible way, a messenger and mediator between gods and men, or merely a Puckish figure, the hero of comical stories. (46)

Conrad Hyers too in The Spirituality of Comedy (1996) describes what occurs with the trickster character as cultures changed:

When more systematic mythologies came to insist on impeccable creators who created more agreeable and intelligible worlds, or developed idealized culture heroes from whom weaknesses and fumbings had been culled away, the appeal of the trickster was diminished. He tended either to be refashioned in these terms as a more orderly fellow, or turned into a more devilish individual. If the former...he became a straight and stereo-typed figure (high god, divine assistant,

or great hero), gaining in reverence and predictability but losing in color and complexity. (187)

As Brown and Hyers illustrate, through time the trickster tended to evolve in one of two directions, on one end becoming "a benevolent culture hero nearly indistinguishable from the Supreme God," a "high god, divine assistant, or great hero."

Within the Noble Fosterling move toward great hero, we do see traces of the divine in some of these human heroes. Hother, for example, battles the demi-god Balder, "Odin and Thor and the holy array of the gods" and wins (92). Orfeo, who shares the fosterling feeling, claims a divine heritage, and his harping is like that found in paradise. And Horn's heroism and noble features are amplified to the point of verging on the divine. His beauty, for example, affects people everywhere he goes, causing them to spare his life, adopt him as a foundling or fall madly in love with him: "There are indications that Horn's beauty was thought of as supernatural, for in both the Romance and King Horn, when he comes to speak with the heroine, he glows so that he lights up the room" (Ramsey 36). Horn also has super-human strength, easily killing a hundred pagans by himself on his first adventure (C616). And in a specifically Christian sense, he is accompanied by twelve companions, one of whom will betray him. Yet the poet also goes to great pains, constructing an entire system of imagery and repetition to point out Horn's foibles during his maturation process, which may or may not "clear up" during adulthood. Similarly, there are also defects in the noble bearing of both Orfeo and Hother, despite their hints of the divine. Beton, on the other hand, is the possible exception. Although he possesses the typical noble fosterling traits, he does not appear to have a flaw.

Tristan, however, is an unusual case, riding the fence with one foot firmly in each camp. Although in other portions of the Saga Tristan is found planning tricks to enjoy secret liaisons with Isolt, in the harp and rote episodes he plays the much nobler position of rescuer, forced into his trick to correct the slow-witted actions of her husband. As the only hero to appear in both the Trickster and Noble Fosterling Tales, Tristan is probably the most extreme example of dual-nature in this catalogue, best reflecting the paradox of both Hermes and David. And it is interesting to note that all three of these characters find their dark side in association with illicit sexual desire. Although Tristan is cursed with a sorrow-filled existence, he is pardoned somewhat of his fault with Isolt because in most versions of the tale the two fall in love by accidentally drinking a love potion. Likewise, King David is pardoned by God though punished with a curse and the loss of the illegitimate child he conceived with Bathsheba but still goes on to produce Solomon with her, whom God loved (2 Kings 12:24). And Solomon, the son of a cunning harper king, as we will see was later blessed with "the wisdom of God... to do judgment" (3 Kings 3:28).

As an opposite to Tristan, the young Beton is the best example of trickster's shift toward dichotomy. Young Beton possesses all the typical noble fosterling traits as an aspiring great hero and does not appear to have the typical tricksterish flaw. In fact, in the story of Beton as we recall, it is Daurel, the true minstrel, who devises their clever plan and instructs Beton in how to proceed. And while Beton is portrayed as intelligent, he is not specifically called clever. However, Beton also appears to be the youngest of the heroes when he undertakes his entrance trick, still under the wing of his foster-father and mentor. Yet the scene shows him as a fast learner and perhaps later, like Horn, Beton

will also have surpassed the abilities of his teacher. But at the point of Beton's entrance trick at least, his cunning has not yet come into full-bloom. Thus in Beton, along with his reduced or not yet fully realized cunning, we find that his flaw too disappears. As we will continue to explore, the flaw or rather the mix of positive and negative features in these characters appears to be directly related to cunning.

We also see aspects of trickster's evolutionary process at work in some of the Trickster Tale heroes. Gwydion and Thorleif, for example, "borrow" noble fosterling traits, enhancing their respectability while still maintaining their stronger trickster-like qualities. In Thorleif, for example, while still very much a trickster whose entrance trick is designed to forever humiliate his enemy, Thorleif is made the son of a "powerful man from a great family," who shows noble physical traits being "both tall and broad" (Jesch 365), and is raised by his uncle / foster-father, although his own father is not killed. Though not educated in music, he excels overall at an early age, is talented, and a good poet. Like Beton, Tristan, and Horn, he is taken in by the king of another realm when he leaves his native land and delights the people there with his poetry so much so that they "can't do without" his skills. Thorleif, however, does not prove himself in battle, nor does he win a bride or arrange a marriage. After disguising as a minstrel poet, however, his marriage to Aud, "a woman of firm character" and the daughter of a "successful and wealthy farmer," is mentioned (Jesch 367).

The tale of Gwydion in Math is another interesting example of borrowed noble fosterling traits. But here, rather than mixing noble traits into the trickster's profile, the portrayal is more dichotomous, with the two characterizations divided into two separate episodes. Gwydion appears in both episodes as a character who uses his tricky talents to

help others, but the first episode leans to the trickster-side with Gwydion's complicity in crime and shameful punishment. In the second episode, noble fosterling traits are introduced for Gwydion's new foster-son, Lleu, and Gwydion himself evolves into a caring, protective but still tricky foster-father.

In a highly mixed representation from the Chronicle Tales, Baldulf is a hero's opponent who is honored for his clever cunning, and in Geoffrey's version puts on the "habit of a jester" in the Greek and Roman minstrelsy tradition but displays skills of the northern tradition in his harping. Layamon takes this already blended characterization and intensifies it by giving Baldulf questionable heroism and increasing his foolish appearance and behavior on the trickster side. On the noble fosterling side, he adds the detail of Baldulf's childhood musical education: "He cuðen harpien wel; an his child-haden" (Caligula 10135).

Overall, despite trickster's process of polarization which we see evidenced in the noble fosterlings' shift toward great cunning hero, the entrance trick heroes tend to maintain their mixed nature. Some of the Trickster Tale heroes, who already show stronger signs of the trickster, take on positive noble fosterling traits while the Noble Fosterlings generally retain some type of flaw.

Clever Cunning: The Magical, The Divine, The Ambivalent

As Beton's flawless yet less cunning nature suggests, the key to the entrance trick hero's mixed nature appears to rest in his talent for clever cunning. And as we saw in Romance, Horn's clever cunning was considered a gift from God. In the mythological tradition, too, Hermes is a paradoxical magician and god who wields cunning trickery for

both positive and negative purposes. As we continue this exploration into the nature of cunning, however, we will see that in both traditions cunning intelligence has even deeper divine associations and that divine power looks like magical skill when possessed by humans, sometimes making the distinction between the magical and the divine a matter of perspective, and making creative cunning appear to be a powerful and dangerous trait.

In the mythological tradition, cunning itself was actually embodied by the Greek goddess Metis in Hesiod's *Theogony*:

As an attribute of the culture hero *metis* is hardly distinguishable in meaning from the 'trickery' which implies skilled expertness. In fact the root usually has the connotation of 'guile,' and should therefore be added to the list of words which show the interpenetration of the notions of 'trickery' and 'skill.' *Metis*, however, has other denotations than intelligence in craftsmanship. Homer uses the root to refer not only to the technical skill of Hephaestus, but also to the shrewdness of Odysseus and the sagacity of Zeus: as applied to Odysseus or Zeus, it is an attribute of kings. (Brown 64)

As Brown shows here, the goddess Metis herself, who represents cunning intelligence, combines the traits of trickery, technical skill, and divinity, which of course resembles the blend of associations we find in human cunning—though in Metis divinity stands in for magic.

According to Hesiod's myth, Zeus marries Metis but just before she gives birth to Athena whose children were prophesied to possibly take his kingdom from him, he swallows Metis and she "remains in Zeus's belly, giving him knowledge of good and

evil" (Brown 62). As Brown explains, "Metis, Intelligence, is represented as ambivalent, like Pandora: on the one hand she is an asset that Zeus retains in his belly; on the other hand her progeny constitutes a potential threat to Zeus" (63). In fact, Brown refers to Metis as "the dangerous Metis" (63). In the Biblical tradition, David's son Solomon is granted "the wisdom of God...to do judgment" after he requests the ability to "discern between good and evil" (3 Kings 3:28, 3:9). Thus in both traditions, wisdom or intelligence is associated with the divine. But this intelligence is of a special nature. In Metis it is cunning intelligence, combining the sense of trickery and skill. And remember that in Romance, Horn's "God-given intelligence" too was an intermingling of cleverness and craftsmanship (Weiss 9-10).

In the Christian tradition, rather than forming an ambivalent mix in a single figure such as Metis or Hermes, cunning is depicted as issuing from two separate sources, good and evil. The prologue to Thorleif for example attributes the enemy's magical cunning to diabolical sources, with the devil using "the crooked guile of his accursed cunning" for destructive purposes (Jesch 362). Romance Horn's clever intelligence, on the other hand, like Solomon's wisdom, is God-given. Despite this dichotomy, however, God's cunning intelligence, while always good, is also paradoxical—it can be creative, destructive, or both at the same time. And like magic, divine power appears to work through the word. "And God said: Be light made. And light was made" (Gen. 1:3), making God's power look to us a little like Trick + Technical Skill + Song or Speech = Divine Power, the same combination of elements we see representing human magic in the entrance trick. God's actions in Creation, for example, appear to be a trick, conjuring something out of nothing.

But it is also a technical skill. God is a craftsman, skillfully crafting a product. And through speech or The Word, it happens.

Christ too "is seen healing people...merely by his word, with a simple command such as 'be clean,' 'arise,' or 'rise, take up your pallet, and walk.'...some Jewish opponents even argued that Christ was a magician specifically because his words themselves had such power" (Kieckhefer 35). In fact, in Magic in the Middle Ages Kieckhefer shows that whether Christ and his adherents performed magic or not "was a common theme in controversy between Christians and pagans as early as the second century" (34). For early Christians, the distinction between magic and divine power was clear: "magic is the work of demons, while miracles are the work of God" (35).

This Christian distinction between God's power and diabolical magic is perhaps one reason noble fosterlings tend to be associated in some form with God. Some do God's work. For example, Horn quells pagans and restores Christianity, and Beton insists his bride first convert to Christ before they marry. Hother, too, though in a Norse tradition, is shown defeating a host of gods whom Saxo explains are called gods "in a superstitious rather than in a real sense" (Elton 92). Likewise, these heroes' noble talents as well are sometimes attributed as gifts of God as we saw, and at least Horn is also given Christian godlike attributes. Such associations align these heroes firmly with divine power rather than diabolical magic. From the Christian perspective, "whatever the apostles accomplished, even if outwardly it resembled magic, was in fact a manifestation of God's power working through them" (Kieckhefer 36).

This sense of "good" in the Noble Fosterling heroes is also typically underscored by balancing them against a clearly wrong-doing or evil adversary. In the cases of

Hother and Thorleif, both from a Scandinavian tradition, that adversary specifically uses cunning for destructive purposes, creating a direct comparison between the hero and his enemy. Odin's appearance as the hero's adversary after the introduction of Christianity in Hother's story deserves further consideration as he too is an ambivalent figure who has been associated with Hermes and who among other epithets is considered the Norse god of wisdom. Though each of the tales in this catalogue contains the minstrel disguise entrance trick motif, specific cultural influences, particularly Celtic and Scandinavian, may affect how much of the trickster is tolerated and how magic or divine power is viewed in each story. I leave these future culture-specific directions, in-depth explorations of all non-English texts, as well as identification of additional entrance trick episodes to the experts in each of these literatures.

Despite trickster's shift, the fosterlings tend to retain their characteristic blemish. Although we may explain this fault as a symptom of man's flawed nature—even these extraordinary heroes can't help but exhibit touches of the negative side from time to time—more fundamentally we must acknowledge that cunning which possesses both magical and divine associations in both the mythological and Biblical traditions is intensely dual-natured. Even within the more dichotomous Christian view, God uses his positive cunning intelligence to destroy as well as create. And destruction is ultimately creative; death results in fertility which nourishes new life and growth. Thus, with the possible exception of Beton, the noble fosterlings still represent a paradoxical mix of noble and trickster features, blurring the lines between naughty and noble but in doing so remaining closer to the figures of both King David and Hermes.

Notes

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all Biblical quotes are taken from the Douay-Rheims version which is based on the Latin Vulgate. In this version, I and II Samuel are referred to as 1 and 2 Kings. Further, what the King James Version calls I and II Kings are called 3 and 4 Kings in D-R.

² See Appendix A for specific details on the comparative analysis findings.

³ Lawrence discusses what she sees as the blurring of "boundaries between identity and disguise" that occurs in both *Folie* and *Continuation*, explaining: "In our texts, the definition of disguise as a temporary donning of a mask of another breaks down; distinction between true and false identities becomes difficult to establish" (48, 40).

CHAPTER 7

SURPRISING APPROACHES TO IMPOSSIBLE PROBLEMS:

HORN, ORFEO, AND CREATIVE CUNNING

Each of these human entrance trick heroes, whether Chronicle figure, Trickster, or Noble Fosterling, embodies a mix of the magical and the divine in his possession of the dangerous substance of cunning with its positive or negative possibilities. And put to use in the form of the entrance trick, these heroes enact what appears to be a powerful form of human magic. In practical use, cunning allows the hero to step outside of conventional boundaries to create something new. In the case of the entrance trick it is a surprising approach to an impossible-seeming problem. And as we will discover, the entrance trick hero's clever cunning and ability to generate a *ginne* involves the same divergent thinking skills found in creativity.

Within this chapter's discussion of creativity, we will explore how in addition to each hero's possession of divergent thinking skills, the entrance trick itself represents two particular creative thinking processes. We will also investigate another cunning king, Odysseus, and the Ulysses Factor, the real-life character trait named for him, to see how the exploring instinct in man which involves the desire to solve unsolvable puzzles resulting in development and discovery compares to the archetype illustrated in our entrance trick heroes' clever and capable cunning. Finally, we will also consider why the

potentially dangerous attribute of cunning actually has a positive cultural appeal in the medieval literature of Northern Europe and particularly in England.

Boundary Crossing

In each of our entrance trick episodes, the hero crosses two sets of boundaries. The first is physical—the gate or dividing line marking the entrance to enemy territory. The second border is symbolic, representing the boundary between society's acceptable and inappropriate behaviors. In fact, the entrance trick only works because the hero's approach is unexpected, surprising, and contradictory to typical patterns of action, crossing societal boundaries which regulate appropriate and expected roles and actions.

But the trickster, and Hermes in particular, is both mischief maker and culture hero. While breaking the rules, figures with a trickster-spirit or a cunning nature can open the way for change and new approaches: "frequently the breaching and upending process initiated by tricksters in their challenges to the accepted ways of doing things highlights the possibilities within a society for creative reflection on and change of the society's meanings" (Hynes and Doty 8). And such a breaking of societal norms can have a range of possible effects:

At the one end of a scale of social consequences, the trickster offers ritual rebellion in lieu of actual rebellion—briefly reminding adherents of a belief system of its own inherent relativity may make it more bearable. But at the other end of this scale of social consequences, however, trickster may prepare the way for adaptation, change, or even total replacement of the belief system.... (Hynes 212-13)

The fact that cunning has the capacity to engender real change may also have contributed to the development of the Noble Fosterling class of entrance trick hero. Remember that cunning or *metis*, "as applied to [the shrewdness of] Odysseus or [the sagacity of] Zeus... is an attribute of kings" (Brown 64). The inherent nobility of these heroes places this divine trait in capable and responsible hands. But even outside of the Noble Fosterling Tales, minstrel disguise entrance trick heroes of all categories or their tricky actions are most generally portrayed positively in these stories, as enabling a successful conclusion to a formidable problem. Thus despite any discomfort their rule breaking may cause others, characters such as Horn, Orfeo and their fellow entrance trick heroes appear to function as culture heroes.

The Ulysses Factor

The anthropological work of J.R.L. Anderson, named for the character of Odysseus with his wandering spirit and tricky ways, has identified an interesting quality in real-life individuals called the Ulysses Factor which resembles the mix of culture hero and mischief maker found in these fictional entrance trick heroes. Anderson explains:

Every now and again..., something so novel that its existence could not even be guessed has been brought into communities to give them a wholly new rung on the ladder of development. Someone has looked at a range of mountains regarded as an absolute barrier to the territory of his tribe and decided to climb them, to find out what is on the far side. Someone has looked at a sea known to everyone as marking the end of the world and set out with a raft or log of wood to discover if it really is the end of the world. (15-16)

Odysseus, after whom this trait was named, has obvious connections to the entrance trick heroes. For starters, Odysseus was the grandson of Autolycus. Autolycus was favored by Hermes, and in some accounts, he is the son of Hermes and Chione. According to Brown, in Homer Hermes gives Autolycus the gift of "Skill at the oath," as we saw in Horn (8). Because of Odysseus's relationship to Autolycus, W.B. Stanford states in The Ulysses Theme (1963) that: "wiliness was in his blood: he was doomed to cleverness at his birth" (12).

Odysseus did also perform perhaps the best known entrance trick in history: entering Troy in a wooden horse. And among other epithets, Homer describes Odysseus using the following phrases: "'man of many resources', 'of the nimble wits', 'crafty' , shrewd', 'of the many wiles', 'wise', 'who knew all the tricks'" (Anderson 26). These epithets should also remind us of the narrator's description of Horn: "Horn cupe al þe liþte / ꝥat eni man of wiþte" (C1459-60).¹

Despite Odysseus's infamous wiliness, Stanford points out that this quality is not always apparent in his actions. Outside of the incident with Dolon and an "apparently legitimate" wrestling trick against Ajax, Odysseus "never exploits a single ruse or deceit in the Iliad" (Stanford 13). But Stanford points out that Odysseus's reputation as a clever schemer is already in place in the Iliad (13). For example, Helen describes him in the Iliad as "adept in all kinds of devices and toils" (13). And regardless of whether or not the Iliad and the Odyssey are products of the same poet or represent the visions of two different individuals, Stanford asserts that Odysseus's reputation remains consistent in both. The differences in Odysseus's behavior between the two books, however, he accounts in part to "changes in his environment" (13). In the Odyssey, he is surrounded

by "monsters, magicians, and usurpers"; therefore, he "needs every atom of his inherited cunning merely to survive" (14). Stanford goes on to suggest that through Odysseus's conduct in the Iliad, the poet perhaps "intended his hearers to enjoy the spectacle of a wily, sensitive, and self-controlled man disciplining his personality to fit into a rigid code of heroic conduct" (14). Does this indicate, then, that in tricksterish individuals such as Odysseus, the trickster can be consciously called up or suppressed whenever necessary?

Since Odysseus possesses *metis* or clever cunning it is not surprising that he, as well as people manifesting the Ulysses factor, exhibit both positive and negative characteristics. Anderson credits Ulysses factor individuals with varying degrees of the following qualities: "Courage, Selfishness, Practical competence, Physical strength, Powerful imagination, Ability to lead, Self-discipline, Endurance, Self-sufficiency, Cunning, Unscrupulousness, [and] Strong sexual attraction" (31). Both Orfeo and Horn, seem to have most of the Ulysses factor traits to some degree, including courage, practical competence, physical strength, powerful imagination, ability to lead, self-discipline, endurance, self-sufficiency, and of course cunning. Selfishness, may not be that apparent in the two heroes at first glance, but Anderson qualifies the type of selfishness indicated by the Ulysses factor:

Selfishness was not quite the ordinary form of selfishness. Ulysses was ready enough to leave his wife and abandon administrative duties to go off on an expedition; but when some of his men were in danger he let no thoughts of his own safety stand in the way of going off to rescue them. (32)

Horn behaves in a similar way, putting his own need to achieve glory and regain his rightful position at the recurring expense of Rimenhild. But like Odysseus, Horn is also

prepared to come to the aid of those in need even at great risk to himself, such as when he fights the pagan champion in Ireland. Likewise, Edwards faults Orfeo for succumbing to his own personal grief and exiling himself rather than remaining faithful to his duties as king. We are not shown a scene in Orfeo in which he risks his own safety to save someone he does not have a personal interest in, but he does risk his life by entering the Fairy King's palace to bring Heurodis back.

Illustrating the next trait, sexual attraction, in Sir Orfeo is more complicated. Orfeo, has the marital love of Heurodis, to whom he is devoted. Their bond is strong, but sexual attraction is not mentioned. Within the context of this romance, however, evidencing Orfeo's sexual attraction would undermine their love story. As we saw, after Orfeo loses Heurodis he exiles himself, unwilling to look upon any other woman. The noble fosterlings in particular, however, tend to be charismatic, which can include sexual attraction. In King Horn, for example, Rimenhild falls deeply in love with him before ever even speaking with him, and his beauty affects most everyone he encounters.

The final trait, unscrupulousness, is of a special variety. Anderson explains:

Unscrupulousness in one breath can be called determination in another.... The Ulysses type is self-centered, convinced of the rightness of the task in hand. What may assist that task must be obtained somehow: if somebody gets hurt it's a pity, but it can't be helped. (33)

In Horn, one might call it unscrupulous when he asks Rimenhild to have him knighted so they can marry but without stipulating his intended delay in fulfilling this promise. More basically, however, in heroic terms, the entrance trick itself or using cunning to trick an enemy rather than engaging in face-to-face battle may also be considered unscrupulous

behavior. For instance, in the Old English poem The Battle of Maldon, the Anglo-Saxons say that their enemy, uses guile to trick them. But what actually appears to be at issue is the perception that the Vikings took advantage of their honor and bravery to gain an advantage against them in battle. In King Horn, despite the many terms used to indicate deception in the text, when Horn disguises to trick Fikenhild, this act is not referred to as guile or deceit. Instead it is portrayed as a positive use of ingeniousness. Likewise, despite Orfeo's ironic warning to the Fairy King against lying, Orfeo appears justified in his use of deceit. And it is exactly these lies which allow Orfeo to succeed.

If we look in the research of education and specifically of creativity, we find a clue as to why something like the Ulysses factor enables extremely novel, life-changing discoveries and achievements. Part of being driven to scale mountains others perceive as absolute boundaries or to cross oceans in a rowboat is the desire to solve impossible problems. These people want to see if they can do something no one has ever done before. Along with this drive, people with the Ulysses factor seem to be able to approach a problem from different unconventional angles in order to generate a solution, which is one definition of creativity or divergent thinking.

Creativity and the Trickster

Odysseus, though a tricksterish character by nature, does not always display his trickster qualities. Likewise, in the realm of human psychology, John Beebe in "The Trickster in the Arts" (1992) explains that regular people can become the trickster during times of transition or crisis. He explains: "I accept Jung's idea that the archetype is constellated [or evinced] when it is needed, and not otherwise" (305). The trickster can

appear "in order to help one combat adversity at times when one is forced to deal with an evil from outside one's own nature. He is especially liable to be constellated when someone is in a state of disappointment that attends upon a loss, a failure, or a betrayal" (Beebe 306). Like Odysseus, both Horn and Orfeo are faced with external crises that seem impossible to resolve—Horn's betrayal by Fikenhild, the loss or endangerment of each hero's beloved, and the recovery of their rightful positions.

In addition to the need for trickster caused by external pressures, there are typical periods when individuals may exhibit trickster-like behavior: in times of transition such as the terrible twos, preadolescence, mid-life crisis, and again before death (Beebe 305-6). When there is a questioning of authority or testing of limits, trickster "appears to give that extra bit of energy needed in order to step outside of one's frame and see one's life from a radically new perspective. He also provides the amount of treachery necessary to being disloyal to an old pattern and finding one's way into a new one" (Beebe 306).

Likewise in creativity research, creativity or divergent thinking can most effectively be encouraged during particular developmental periods: "the first five years of life; the early years of adolescence; early adulthood (around 20); from 29-31; the early forties; and 65-70" (Dacey 268). These periods rich for encouragement of creativity are much the same as the normal periods of transition or crisis described by Beebe in which the trickster often appears and are moments in life when conventions are questioned and the rules of accepted behavior are often violated.

Based on research comparing "highly creative children with uncreative children," Dudek and Verreault contend that "the child who develops a capacity for high divergent thinking has retained contact with the chaotic process that follows no rules and no

conventions" (qtd. in Runco 20). Strikingly, it appears to be the need, ability, or desire to challenge conventional rule systems or modes of perception which both enhances creative thinking as well as calls out the trickster. So in order to create inventive strategies and cunning tricks, the creative individual, as well as the trickster, will not be fettered by the confines of conventional systems of right and wrong answers or right and wrong conduct. Such individuals will no doubt also exhibit what will be considered negative traits by those remaining within the confines of conventional thinking.

Conventional or convergent thinkers who remain inside the lines, as it were, are stumped when faced with "impossible" situations, like Arnoldin as he sits hopelessly in the tide, awaiting Horn's return or Orfeo's counselors when Heurodis is taken away by Fairy magic.

Hyde emphasizes the blurred line between right and wrong approaches we find in the trickster figure which enables him solve problems and create new ways:

Where someone's sense of honorable behavior has left him unable to act, trickster will appear to suggest an amoral action, something right/wrong that will get life going again. (7)

Horn's unconventional plan when faced with Rimenhild's forced marriage is to disguise himself and his men as minstrels. Orfeo too approaches the Fairy gate as a simple minstrel, misrepresenting himself and his intentions. But before discovering the location of the Fairy Kingdom, he makes the first unconventional decision of exiling himself.

This right/wrong decision, as we saw in chapter two, has been interpreted as a failure to perform his expected kingly duties. In Hother's story, the people "upbraided the sloth of the king for hiding himself, and his absence was railed at by all with the bitterest

complaints" (Elton 93). However, when society cannot offer Orfeo a reasonable plan for recovering the queen, he simply chooses to leave its confines, entering a wilderness without rules. It is not until he exists outside society's boundaries that he serendipitously spots Heurodis among the women's hunting party.

One of Hermes's characteristics is "his creative and artistic application of the lucky find" (Doty 53), which can bring either positive or negative results. Hyde explains that "In classical Greece the lucky find is a *hermaion*, which means a "gift-of-Hermes" (129). Hermes inspires "the 'Eureka!' experience of the inventor, poet, initiate," but that discovery may "brings riches or failure" (Doty 63). Hyde also explains that "Accidental loss, accidental gain—both flow from these figures, the single constant being accident.... with the right kind of attention it is the happy accident, the creative accident, that Hermes ...engenders" (129). In the language of creative cunning, this eureka moment is the moment of inspiration or illumination. It may work to solve the problem or it may be a dead end, leading you back to the same problem, or the inspiration may be useless but lead you to a better answer. For Orfeo, he encounters his gift of Hermes or his eureka moment in the no-man's-land outside the boundaries of society's expected behaviors, this opportunity coupled with his personal use of cunning allow him to win back his wife.

Orfeo's application of cunning or creative thinking results in the entrance trick. And the entrance trick itself remarkably represents the intersection of two creative thinking processes. Albert Rothenberg in Creativity and Madness (1990) describes two creative processes called janusian and homospatial. The first process is named for Janus, the Roman god of doorways and beginnings. Images of Janus represent his faces, which can number between two and six, looking in opposite directions—though Rothenberg

could also have named it after Hermes who exemplifies contradiction and paradox.

Rothenberg describes this process as operating during the initial stages of the creative process.

Similar to what we saw in examples of humor created using incongruity, in the janusian thinking process the creative individual consciously selects and brings together two opposite or contradictory concepts and imagines that both are equally true or valid and "then develops those formulations into integrated entities and creations" (15).

Rothenberg explains that "what emerges is no mere combination or blending of elements: the conception contains not only different entities, but also opposing and antagonistic elements that are experienced and understood as coexistent" (15). Trying to bring black and white together to create "black whiteness" or visually imagining a person falling who is both in motion and in a state of rest are examples of this process (33, 29).

The other creative process identified by Rothenberg is called homospatial. Here the creative individual imagines two disparate but not necessarily opposite things as occupying the same space at the same time. For example, the thinker imagines a monkey and a computer superimposed. In our moments of minstrel disguise, both of these aspects of creative thinking are occurring at the same time—opposing elements are brought together and they occupy the same space at the same time. In the entrance trick, the contradictory concepts of minstrel and warrior, one representing life and celebration and the other death and sorrow merge to form the idea of a minstrel-warrior, with both concepts being equally valid and true. This contradictory concept is brought to life when minstrel and warrior occupy the same space at the same time as the hero approaches his enemy's gate. This confusing paradox, the vexing contradiction of the warrior-minstrel

represented in these entrance tricks, in which creation is coupled with destruction; joy with sorrow; innocence with intent; harmlessness with threat, is a concrete representation of these two divergent thinking processes.

In addition to this junction of contradictory concepts exemplified in the minstrel-warrior (celebration versus sorrow), as we saw in chapter six a minstrel-knight also represents the coexistence of two contradictory sets of societal expectations. Beton, Continuation, Gottfried's Tristan, and even Romance each illustrate that the roles of knight and minstrel were considered incompatible or mutually exclusive. As the defining criteria for minstrel identity in this catalogue of entrance trick episodes indicates, if the hero adopts what fellow characters judge to be the physical appearance of a minstrel, if he behaves or performs as a minstrel, or claims to be a minstrel, he assumes the identity of minstrel for the other characters. And in that moment, these disguises actually cease to be a disguise.² Thus, as the hero does not relinquish his identity as knight, but only hides it, he possesses for a time two distinct identities. Here minstrel identity does not merely conceal the identity of knight or even mix with it but rather, during these entrance trick episodes, coexists with it.³

Normally, as we have seen, this dual identity goes unseen by other characters until the trick is complete. But when these fellow characters are confronted with outward evidence of a character's actual possession of two conflicting identities, which happens only three times in this catalogue in scenes supplemental to the entrance trick proper, a variety of reactions occur. In Gottfried, when Gandin appears as a knight with a rote, Mark is "puzzled," finding it "absurd" (Hatto 214). The others "were all wondering and thinking about it intently" (215). In Continuation, the conventional knights are confused

and humiliated during Mark's tournament when the heroes carry musical instruments though outfitted and acting as knights. Likewise, when Beton identifies himself as a minstrel while fighting as a knight, his opponents are ashamed and angry. Unable to make sense of this incongruous dual identity, the opposing knights in Beton, as well as those in Continuation, assume they have indeed fought and, in some cases, been defeated by particularly presumptuous minstrels.

Scenes such as these in which both of the hero's identities are evident at the same time illustrate and emphasize for the audience the boundary crossing that is implicit in each of the more typical entrance trick disguise moments. And although evidence of the two incompatible identities is upsetting to convergent-thinking characters, like Perceval who upon learning the whole truth condemns this infraction of chivalric code, these entrance trick heroes or their tricks generally provide the resolution to seemingly impossible problems and thus most often perform a positive function in these episodes. Additionally, the special emphasis in these unusual scenes on societal boundary crossing while maintaining the positive outcome produced by such infractions suggests that at least some of the authors were indeed very aware of the rich incongruities represented by this motif's mischief-making culture heroes.

Cultural Appeal of the Cunning Captain

While discussing instances of the minstrel disguise used to “gain access” (61) or “obtain admission” (63) to an otherwise inaccessible place, Schofield remarks: “The incident itself, it should be added, was of a sort favored in England” (62). This may be true, especially if we group Welsh, Anglo-Norman, Middle English, and British Latin

texts together. But why might this motif with its cunning captains appeal particularly to the medieval English Culture? Wilfred Guerin tells us in "Mythological and Archetypal Approaches" that myths "are the symbolic projections of a people's hopes, values, fears, and aspirations" (159). And in fact, a motif may function as a national or cultural myth when its archetypal associations resonate strongly with a particular national self-image or cultural experience, thus making it attractive in the literature of a specific time, a specific people, or of a particular geographical area.

Part of the answer to this puzzle therefore may lie in England's early history of conquest and migration. In addition to the possibility for plunder and settlement, Anderson suggests that some of the early raiders must have approached the island with goals beyond mere plunder. He asks: "Why sail up unknown rivers into hostile country when there were slaves and grain and sometimes gold to be had nearer the coast?" (47). He explains that although the later Vikings had the incentive of knowing what they would encounter, the Saxons of the fifth and early sixth centuries did not:

The impetus that took early Saxon crews up the Thames, the powers of leadership that held men together and persuaded them to go on when navigation became harder and harder and there was no apparent hope of plunder can have derived only from the Ulysses Factor in individual chiefs. (47)

The inventive qualities we see in Horn and Orfeo are the same traits which encouraged and enabled the exploration, discovery, and settlement of new lands and led to the innovations and adaptations necessary to thrive in new environments with never-before encountered challenges. In these situations, a hero like Horn or Orfeo, who could lead his men, commanding their love and respect, was strong and brave, apparently virtuous

and could devise a plan for every unexpected eventuality, bending the code of virtuous behavior slightly if necessary in the name of a greater good, would be the best asset a people could ask for, enlarging their territories or ensuring their survival. Horn particularly, with his many wanderings, his quick cunning, and finally his acts of nation building by securing friendly parties in critical positions reflects the activities of early explorers and conquerors.

Anderson states: "The Ulysses factor has been exceptionally manifest in different peoples at different times in history, profoundly influencing history" (18). Among these specific intersections of times and peoples, he notes the Saxons of the fifth and early sixth centuries and the Scandinavians of the eighth to eleventh centuries (18), which could help to explain the large percentage of minstrel disguise entrance trick stories stemming from British (Welsh, Anglo-Norman, Middle English, and British Latin) sources, which number fifteen out of the twenty-one, eight of which are presented as historical accounts within chronicles.

As a new frontier, England likely attracted numerous Ulysses type explorers, raiders, and settlers. It could be that during its centuries of invasion and settlement by Romans, Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Vikings, and Normans, the image of a bold and cunningly inventive hero became a part of the English national history, culture, and consciousness. Or perhaps the trickster figure, who is found abundantly in Greek and Roman, Celtic, and Scandinavian mythologies simply pops up in trickster-like fashion when these cultures integrate into one another in such close quarters. But we did also see the migration myth that Howe illustrates, active between the sixth and eleventh centuries, likening the English to the Israelites as God's new chosen people, which could easily

create a natural attraction to the cunning, harper king David. In fact, this affection is evidenced in the tenth and eleventh-century manuscript depictions of King Alfred as David described by Southworth. And appropriately, the Alfred entrance trick episode by Malmesbury, along with the Anlaf account, are the earliest in this catalogue dating from 1125. So once again, in these three possible influences contributing to the appeal of the minstrel disguise entrance trick in British literature, we see an intersection between creative ingenuity, the trickster, and the cunning harper king, just as we see in the episodes themselves.

In addition to these underlying influences, roughly half of the entrance trick episodes in this catalogue, English as well as international, find their current manuscript form somewhere in the time stretching from the reign of Henry III (1216-72) to that of Edward III (1327-1377), which as we saw was a time that particularly valued the services of the minstrel, perhaps making this type of tale especially attractive to audiences (as well as to the minstrel himself), during this period.

A poet obviously will not have considered his character a trickster, a Ulysses type, or a divergent thinker. He probably just knew that extraordinary heroes possess a special set of internal resources which allow them to succeed where lesser heroes fail. And despite the potential danger for change represented in the trait of clever cunning, we have seen that these clever heroes or their crafty tricks are most generally portrayed in a favorable light, providing an unexpected solution to an overwhelming problem. Whether magic, miracle, or simply human creativity, the clever cunning of these human heroes appears to make the impossible possible, as we see in Horn when he succeeds where no one else can: "Noman wiþ · none ginne" C1456).

Notes

¹ As has been often noted, in the Odyssey we also see the model for the "Hero's disguised return" motif, in which Odysseus returns to Ithaca disguised as a beggar—reflected in both Horn's pilgrim disguise as well as Orfeo's beggar-minstrel disguise episode.

² Several Orfeo critics tend to speak of Orfeo's minstrel disguise at the Fairy King's gate in terms that imply or assert that Orfeo indeed assumes the role or identity of minstrel during that time—or that his close association with the harp makes him a minstrel by nature. For example, Dean R. Baldwin states: "Cleverly, he talks his way past the porter (ll. 379-386) and convinces the fairy king that he is no more than he seems—a poor minstrel seeking employment (ll. 429-434)" (142). Michael D. Bristol, too, states: "In rediscovering the importance of speech and music...Orfeo brings his trials to an end and changes his identity back to its original form, becoming a minstrel in the final section" (346). Likewise, Robert M. Longworth explains: "The role Orfeo plays—the wandering minstrel—appears to be a disguise, but it is in fact his true vocation" (10).

³ Lawrence explains that in Continuation: "The trickster Tristan's unstable and ambiguous identity challenges medieval society's foundation of fixed identity. Their mix of chivalric identity and minstrel disguise upsets the knights at the tournament" (60). But rather than unstable identity, these knights appear to be confused by the indication of two separate and irreconcilable identities appearing together in one individual: a knight would never be a minstrel, and a minstrel is surely not a knight.

CHAPTER 8

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Up till now, critics have largely ignored the minstrel disguise episodes in King Horn and Sir Orfeo. The work that has been undertaken, in addition to "see also" notes pointing out similar episodes, tends to focus on the practicality of the minstrel disguise as a plot device, illustrating how the disguise offers characters mobility, security, proximity, and anonymity. Early critics also noted what they saw in these episodes as an historically accurate reflection of the medieval use of disguise, offering its real-life users the same practical advantages found in fiction. A few critics, such as A.C. Spearing, Doreena Allen, Glynnis Cropp, and J. Burke Severs touch on the true heart of the matter by emphasizing the importance of human cunning or wit in singular examples of these disguise episodes but do not pursue this line of thought.

Within the criticism of disguise, the two individual studies of Marilyn Lawrence and Glynnis Cropp both provide limited initial findings over general minstrel disguise episodes in chiefly French and Anglo-Norman texts spanning four centuries and are a helpful starting point. But though Cropp alludes to the role of cunning or trickery in the use of the minstrel disguise, and Lawrence tackles questions of minstrel identity in Folie and Continuation, neither Cropp nor Lawrence considers the entrance trick motif in these disguise episodes. My work enlarges the general findings of these two disguise studies by examining a larger sample of minstrel disguise episodes from a more varied

background and most importantly by providing a sharper focus through narrowing the study to one specific use of this disguise, the minstrel disguise entrance trick.

This narrowing is particularly valuable because the minstrel disguise entrance trick motif itself, Thompson's K2357.1 "Disguise as musician to enter enemy's camp," found in both Horn and Orfeo's minstrel disguise episodes, has never been studied. Meaning that until this study there was no critical context in which to place the Horn and Orfeo entrance trick episodes. And despite the scattered "see also" notes, no comprehensive catalogue of minstrel disguise entrance tricks had ever been compiled. In fact, only three stories currently appear under this designation in Thompson's Motif-Index.

Therefore, the first objective of this study was to compile a comprehensive catalogue of medieval texts containing minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes for future scholars and as a means of examining and defining this motif. Finding this baseline of the motif's typical formulations then allows us to identify the individual nuances crafted by each poet, how the motif has been shaped or manipulated in King Horn and Sir Orfeo—or further, how these texts indeed reshape our understanding of this motif.

This collection and cataloguing process has revealed twenty-one tales or versions of tales from separate authors in British Latin, Anglo-Norman, Middle English, Welsh, Danish Latin, Icelandic, Norse, Old Provençal, Old French, and Middle High German—with the largest number of these tales, fifteen out of twenty-one, stemming from what could be called a British source (British Latin, Anglo-Norman, Middle English, and Welsh). In total, these twenty-one stories contain twenty-three distinct minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes which should be included under K2357.1. This study has also

shown that one of Thompson's original three entries, Cormac, is incorrectly catalogued and should be removed from under this heading. This catalogue of minstrel disguise entrance trick episodes is the most comprehensive yet to be compiled, but as specialists address this motif in each text's original language the number of tales under this heading will likely grow.

Additionally, a comparative analysis of these episodes shows that the motif K2357.1 "Disguise as musician to enter enemy's camp," is currently labeled inaccurately. Comparison of these episodes and their defining features shows that while each hero disguises as a professional performer, in many cases these performances are made up of non-musical skills such as juggling, recitation of poetry, or storytelling. Southworth illustrates that the term "minstrel" was used during the medieval period to refer to all of the various types of professional performers we find represented in this catalogue of entrance trick episodes, making "minstrel" an appropriately inclusive defining term for the motif. Thus, in order to more accurately represent this motif's essential qualities, its current title should be enlarged to K2357.1 "Disguise as musician <minstrel> to enter enemy's camp <castle>," adding the term "minstrel" as is done with K1817.3 "Disguise as harper <Minstrel>." I have also added "castle" as is done with the parent heading K2357 "Disguise to enter enemy's camp <castle>," as both camp and castle applies to stories under this heading.

If we narrow the scope to consider only the English metrical romances, we find that Bordman's Motif Index eliminates Thompson's K2357.1 for "Disguise as musician to enter enemy's camp" altogether, combining all minstrel disguises including Bevis, King Horn, Sir Orfeo, and Tristrem under K1817.3 "Disguise as harper (minstrel)." By

eliminating K2357.1, Bordman loses some of the accuracy and specificity of Thompson's system while actually intending to correct and enlarge Thompson's work in the English metrical romances. That Bordman excludes K2357.1 while including K2357.2 "Disguise as Pilgrim (palmer) to enter enemy's camp" is regrettable as well as inconsistent.

Myth, and by extension cultural or national myths in particular, are "the symbolic projections of a people's hopes, values, fears, and aspirations" (Guerin 159). As the minstrel disguise entrance trick motif appears to have been particularly resonant in English culture between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, understanding its archetypal foundations could potentially enrich our understanding of this time and place. Therefore, the second objective of this study was to provide an investigation of this motif's mythic and archetypal associations. Additionally, this information together with the comparative analysis results showing typical formulations of the motif has aided in the development of an appropriate system of classification for its many examples and guided how each story should be placed.

The third aim of this study was to provide an in-depth investigation of the minstrel disguise entrance trick in the multiple manuscript versions of King Horn and Sir Orfeo, locating both poems within an understanding of the motif's spectrum of manifestations. This analysis of each focal poem takes place within the chapter three individual analysis of Horn, in the chapter four, five and six catalogue comparison among its companion tales, and in the culminating chapter on creative ingenuity. Additionally, a more condensed and explicit review of the analysis findings as well as specific details on how Horn and Orfeo's minstrel disguise episodes compare with the other examples from

this catalogue can be found in Appendix A: Comparative Analysis Findings and Notable Features of the King Horn and Sir Orfeo Episodes.

Overall, this study has found that every minstrel disguise entrance trick is influenced by two main traditions, one deriving from Hermes and another from the cunning harper king figure. Outside of the semi-historical Chronicle Tales, the remaining episodes find a natural dividing line in these two figures, resulting in the (1) Tales of Enchantment and the Trickster and (2) Noble Fosterling Tales.

From the trickster tradition, every example of this motif represents a specific combination of five characteristic Hermean features, including border crossing, disguise, trickery, paradox, and music or the bard, firmly associating this motif with the figure of Hermes. On the cunning harper king side, a review of the Chronicle Tales reveals the following set of features appearing in almost every example of the trick: a noble or higher-ranking hero with a cunning nature who is also a soldier and a talented performer on harp or in other minstrelsy skills from the heroic northern tradition, who faces a serious challenge. These features appear to stem from the cunning harper king image represented in the Biblical King David.

But more surprisingly, King David and the pattern of his early life also appear to provide a model for the more specific noble fosterling hero and story-type formula. Like the fosterlings, David is known as a cunning, multi-talented individual—an athlete, musician, poet, capable general, wise leader, and a man faithful to God, anointed to lead the chosen people but who also has a flaw. The Noble Fosterling Tales, therefore, emphasize the heroic and more respectable side of the cunning hero. In addition to shedding the more negative trickster associations, the fosterlings have been enhanced

with inherent nobility, but like David they generally still retain a flaw. The Tales of Enchantment and the Trickster, on the other hand, outside of Sir Orfeo which is classified only as a Tale of Enchantment, include more obvious or negative trickster traits such as theft, illicit romantic liaisons, outright deceit, extreme unexpected violence, complicity to crime with lewd punishment, humor, magic, or buffoonery.

The categorization of these stories also reveals a previously unlisted motif associated with K2357.1 which I call "noble fosterling excels in music." Here a character of high rank who has been taken in as a fosterling after his own father is killed shows inherently noble traits, but most especially he excels in music. This motif, which could conceivably appear in any story, forms the Foster-Father Section of the three-part Noble Fosterling Tale formula, followed by a Welcoming King Section and a Minstrel Disguise Episode. This study discusses four examples of this story-type, including King Horn, Hother's story, Daurel and Beton, and Thomas's Tristan from the Norse Saga. Individual features of the noble fosterling motif or story formula are occasionally borrowed within Chronicle Tales and Tales of Enchantment and the Trickster and integrated into the hero's character, enhancing his sense of respectability.

This split between trickster and noble fosterling echoes what researchers have identified as the trickster's general move toward dichotomy to meet changing societal needs in which the traditionally dual-natured trickster develops into either a good or evil figure. And while the Trickster Tale heroes do not appear to become more devilish, the noble fosterlings do appear to move toward the great hero end of the spectrum, with Beton as the best example of honorable fosterling hero. Additionally, it is also not uncommon for noble fosterlings to possess divine associations, although they are fully

human, such as Orfeo's mythological heritage and near-divine harping skills and Horn's beauty, his glowing noted by Ramsey, his super-human strength, and his twelve companions, one of whom betrays him. But in the end, with the exception of Alfred and Talbot in the Chronicle Tales and Beton, each of the entrance trick heroes still evidences some type of negative characteristic.

Most importantly, the feature that both of these traditions have in common is clever cunning. In fact, although some of the heroes can perform magic and some have divine associations, none of them uses magic or supernatural power to enter an enemy compound. The humans skills they do use, however, cunning (which implies trickiness, technical skill, and magic) together with a performance of technical skill and the extra magic-like boost of music or words, all combine to create a potent form of what appears to be a powerful type of human magic: (Trick + Technical Skill + Song or Speech = Human Magic).

In addition to each episode's focus on the power of ingenious thinking, the entrance trick itself represents the intersection of two different creative thinking strategies—janusian and homospatial—described by Albert Rothenberg. During the entrance trick, both of these processes occur at the same time—contradictory concepts are brought together and they occupy the same place at the same time.

Creative thinkers are known to find insight by consciously bringing contradictory ideas together, like warrior and minstrel, whereas uncreative thinkers are stumped by such incongruity, guided instead by conventional patterns. Thus in the entrance trick, the enemy, generally made up of conventional thinkers, never suspects anything outside the typical pattern; they never guess that the minstrel is also a knight. The contrast between

the creative and uncreative thinker is illustrated nicely in both King Horn and Sir Orfeo. In Horn's minstrel disguise episode, when confronted with the extreme problem of Fikenhild's tidal defenses, Arnoldin is the conventional thinker. He is stumped by the problem and waits forlornly for Horn in the tides, announcing on his arrival that the situation is impossible. But Horn immediately comes up with a *ginne* to solve the unsolvable by breaking with conventions and creating a paradoxical situation that no conventional thinker sees coming—the minstrel-warrior.

Orfeo too is surrounded in his court by conventional thinkers who can offer no solutions after Heurodis is abducted. Thus he leaves societal boundaries and conventions to enter a wilderness, stumbling across his lucky find, which though likely not intentional is an accurate representation of the process of creativity. Once the thinker leaves conventional thought patterns and the confines of right and wrong answers, allowing himself to break the rules in a no-man's-land of possibilities, he is able to find creative inspiration which leads to an innovative solution to his problem.

Importantly, however, the entrance trick represents not only an intersection of the contradictory concepts of minstrel and warrior but also the intersection of mutually exclusive societal expectations when the hero takes on the identity of minstrel without relinquishing his identity as knight. Four of the texts from this catalogue emphasize the minstrel-knight's contradictory dual role by including unusual supplemental scenes (in Continuation, Beton and Gottfried's Tristan) in which evidence of both identities at once is presented to other characters or (in the case of Romance) through metaphoric language play for the audience. This study's identification of the hero's coexistent though contradictory identities in these disguise episodes, based on the comparative analysis

findings on how minstrel identity is determined within the narrative, may additionally have wider implications in how we define or view disguise and identity in general, coming into conversation with theories such as Judith Butler's concept of performativity and inviting further consideration.¹

In typical trickster fashion, the minstrel disguise entrance trick breaks chivalric norms by joining the incompatible identities of minstrel and knight. But as the trickster is both mischief maker and culture hero, we see that such boundary-crossing—here both physical and symbolic—which causes discomfort in conventional-thinking characters when they are confronted with evidence of the minstrel-knight's contradictory dual identity, could actually open the way for real social change. Debra Black's study of disguise in Middle English romance, however, argues: "In all of the plots examined that use disguise, the original status is restored as a reaffirmation of the ideology behind the questioned power structure, and the status quo of traditional order is restored (236). Yet, we must acknowledge that Horn, Orfeo, and the other entrance trick heroes, while a part of the power structure as higher ranking or noble heroes, also represent innovation and a breaking with, rather than a reaffirmation of, traditional and accepted ideology. Likewise, Marilyn Lawrence argues that in Continuation, "Gerbert explicitly express [sic.] the danger of play with identity in a culture and society built on strict, hierarchical definitions of and delineations between identities," concluding with the statement: "Perceval makes explicit the danger of disguise and the foolish and dishonorable nature of violation of boundaries between identities" (59-60). We do indeed see a form of identity-play in entrance trick episodes, which all implicitly (and in four cases also explicitly) ask what would happen if a person could play two completely incompatible

roles at once? What if a person could be a minstrel and a knight at the same time? And although three of these episodes, including Continuation to which Lawrence refers, do show the negative reactions likely to result from such an infraction of societal norms, the result of this identity experiment, that is the outcome of the hero's clever trick, is generally portrayed as positive, as the welcome and celebrated resolution to a substantial problem, and thus most often performs a positive function in these episodes. Further, many of these authors provide direct statements, found in thirteen of the twenty-one stories, praising these heroes or their tricks as cunning. Thus a hero or even better a leader with this type of human magic, though potentially dangerous, represents the possibility for beneficial innovation.

Overall, this generally positive portrayal of the entrance trick hero's use of a tricky, boundary-crossing strategy in these twelfth through fourteenth century manuscript texts suggests that human inventiveness—in other words resourcefulness, innovative cunning, flexibility, new approaches—though possibly a rare as well as potentially dangerous trait was valued (as well as valuable) in leaders within the Northern European medieval period and also appears to have been of particular interest within the English culture, where the motif's roots of human inventiveness, the cunning harper king, and the trickster tradition have grafted together in the rich soil of an eclectic culture.

Notes

¹ See Gender Trouble (1990) and Bodies That Matter (1993) on Butler's theories concerning speech act theory and performativity of identity.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

KING HORN AND SIR ORFEO WITHIN THE
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS FINDINGS AND
NOTABLE FEATURES OF THE HORN AND ORFEO EPISODES

Within the comparative analysis, this study examines six basic components found in of each of the twenty-three entrance trick episodes, including costume details, disguise type, performing skills, ability-level, reaction at the gate, and purpose of the trick.

Costume details vary greatly among the stories, sometimes including clothing, hair, or skin alterations, the use of musical instruments, or the possession of other props such as a staff or juggling equipment, but as Lawrence points out, there is no particular sign which definitively designates the identity of minstrel. And indeed this catalogue's varied costume details, which represent a range in social-level from beggar to nobleman between Orfeo's wildman and John's Ethiopian minstrel disguises, indicate that while clothing type or perceived social rank may help to portray the sense of minstrel identity, it does not disqualify any individual from possessing the identity of minstrel. Thus potentially any type of dress could indicate a minstrel. In fact, in two cases from this catalogue, Hother and Gwydion, the costume consists only of a statement of identity confirmed by outstanding performing skills. And in two other cases, Tristan's harp and rote episode and Beton, there is no statement of identity. The heroes are identified by the enemy as minstrels and called over—Tristan is dressed normally but carries a harp or rote

and Daurel and Beton are wrapped in cloaks, carrying viols. While Lawrence's study concludes that it is the author's use of defining labels that tells the reader for certain that the character is a minstrel, the more important factor may actually be how other characters within the story identify the disguised hero as a minstrel. In this catalogue, minstrel identity is conveyed to other characters by the following indicators in varying combinations: alteration of physical appearance (clothing, skin, or hair changes); use of props (musical instrument, staff, or other items); actions and behaviors (playing music, singing, clowning); or a statement of identity (backed up later with evidence of performance excellence). Thus, for characters within the narrative, minstrel identity appears to be defined with the following adage: if he looks like a minstrel, acts like a minstrel or says he's a minstrel, he's probably a minstrel.

Both Orfeo and Horn alter their physical appearance in some measure during their disguise episodes. Orfeo as wildman/ beggar minstrel wears a *sclauin* in two manuscripts and in one is possibly without covering. Horn and his men pull on garments in C and O. In C the clothing is not described, but in O these garments are *pelle* (1511) 'garments of rich cloth' (Hall 219). L text does not mention the addition of clothing.

Hair and skin changes too are sometimes used in the minstrel disguise. Cropp mentions Baldulf's shaving, and Lawrence notes Tristan's tonsure in *Folie*. But in Beton's episode, Daurel has extra long hair which hadn't been cut in seven years, much like Orfeo's beard which "To his girdel-stede was growe" (A266). Horn's hair remains unchanged, and though two heroes in this catalogue do alter their skin, three times with color, one of which also had swelling effects, neither Horn nor Orfeo color their skin or disfigure their face shape in any way. In fact, skin changes and cutting or shaving of the

hair are generally associated with the jester or fool disguise, appearing in Chronicle or Trickster Tales, but such physical changes do not occur in the Noble Fosterling Tale episodes.

Among possible minstrel disguise props, Orfeo carries a staff in one manuscript, and both Horn and Orfeo carry and play the harp. Cropp's research indicates it is common for a disguise-minstrel to carry an instrument, specifically a harp or viol. And indeed of the instruments described in musical entrance trick episodes, string instruments are the most common, with harp appearing in some form in sixteen out of twenty-three episodes, but viol, lyre, rote, gigue, and fiddle are also used or mentioned. Beyond string instruments, as Continuation illustrates, any conceivable musical instrument could potentially be used to convey the disguise.

The minstrel disguise may also extend to other characters in addition to the story's hero. Within this catalogue the disguised hero may appear alone, with a companion, or as part of a group of up to one hundred members. Orfeo, for example, arrives at the Fairy King's gate alone after ten years of self-exile, but Horn arrives with companions. In C and L texts, the exact number is undefined, but O specifies two.

Overall, Horn and Orfeo's costumes differ greatly from one another. Horn's is very typical: he appears with companions; in two texts he puts on garments; some or all of the men appear to carry instruments; they sing and make glowing outside the gates to catch attention; they identify themselves as musicians of various types and possibly jugglers or entertainers; and Horn demonstrates his skill by performing a lay. Orfeo's costume, on the other hand, is somewhat unusual. The harp, of course, is particularly associated with the cunning harper king and is therefore quite common and appropriate.

But in terms of physical appearance, if we take Orfeo's B text literally, and Orfeo does appear unclothed at the Fairy King's gate, then his costume in this manuscript becomes highly unusual. For while both A and H state that he wears a sclauin when he leaves the kingdom and both texts mention this garment again when he prepares to enter the land of Fairy, B omits both references. In B he leaves his kingdom barefoot with harp and staff and no other good (230-34). It seems most likely, however, that the pilgrim's mantle is intended, though not specifically mentioned. Thus his worn, dirty appearance, his harp, and his sclauin (in B text a staff and his harp) coupled with a statement of identity form his costume when he reaches the castle gate. Even with a pilgrim's mantle, Orfeo's appearance is still unusual because he is emaciated and covered in ten years of dirt. In fact, this is the Fairy King's specific objection to Orfeo's leaving with Heurodis: "For þou art lene, rowe & blac / & sche is louesum, wiþ-outen lac" (A459-60). Smudging dirt on the face may be a common disguise procedure in general, but dirt is not a common minstrel disguise attribute. And although Hother also exiles himself, his departure is not a part of the disguise episode. Even among beggar-minstrel disguises, no other character in this catalogue has Orfeo's type of look. The closest comparison is Daurel's unexplained extra-long hair.

The disguise type in these entrance tricks falls under the general heading of minstrel or professional performer. More specifically, however, we find designations such as bard, poet, juggler, fool, mad fool, entertainer, harper, watchman, minstrel and so forth applied to the disguised heroes. Among Horn's men, in the various manuscripts we find harpers, gigue players, fiddlers and "jugglers, entertainers" (Hall 212). But both Horn and Orfeo themselves reflect the musical-side of the minstrel. Horn is never

directly referred to by any term while in disguise but logically falls within the term "harper" which is provided in the group's statement of identity at the gate. Orfeo calls himself a minstrel (C382) and a poor minstrel (C430) within the disguise episode proper, but is repeatedly referred to as a harper throughout the poem. Both disguise types, harper or poor minstrel/ beggar minstrel are typical variations in this motif. But as we saw, although Orfeo's disguise type is typical, his physical appearance as wildman is not.

The performing skills in these episodes are varied including playing instruments, storytelling, singing, recitation of poetry, juggling, gleowing, clownery, foolishness, and so forth. With the exception of clowning and foolish behavior, the other skills represented in these episodes are a part of what Southworth calls the northern minstrelsy tradition of the Germanic scop, the Anglo-Saxon gleomen, and the Celtic bard. And importantly, even the three heroes who costume themselves and/or act as fools, Baldulf, John, and *Folie* Tristan, are each also able to play the harp. Keeping to this northern tradition, Orfeo harps for the Fairy King and court while Horn performs his lay. And like most of the other disguise-minstrels, they both have outstanding performance skills. In fact, many entrance trick episodes contain two direct statements of skill declaring the minstrel's outstanding ability-level and a few have even more. *Orfeo* contains by far the greatest number of these statements, defining him more than any other hero by his harping prowess. Horn's skill, on the other hand, is demonstrated indirectly prior to the trick within the description of his education. Here we are told twice that Horn will be taught to harp and then assured that he caught his lessons in his heart.

When each disguised hero reaches the gate, the reaction is most generally positive, with the exception of Baldulf, often resulting in the preparation or enhancement

of a celebration, a joyful, friendship-like welcome or more simply immediate admittance or audience to perform. Even John and *Folie* Tristan, both of whom are taunted and struck by on-lookers because of their appearance, are promptly admitted and welcomed. Tristan as a mad fool is even called over and sent in the gate without requesting admittance. Horn and Orfeo receive immediate admittance, but their receptions are not as gushingly warm as some, which often include being called "friend." In *Horn*, after declaring themselves musicians they are admitted (by Fikenhild in L and O, and in C Rimenhild admits Horn), and Horn performs for the group. In *Orfeo*, the porter opens the gate "anon" when Orfeo offers his services as a minstrel (A385), but then he is questioned by the Fairy King about why he dares visit the Fairy kingdom without summons. After explaining the minstrel's ways, he is allowed to perform.

The general purpose of the trick in each of these stories is to enter enemy territory, such as an enemy camp, castle or compound peacefully. Yet the specific reason for entry varies, as does the level of respectability in the hero's intent. In this catalogue, the trick is used to spy, rescue, gain an advantage in battle, gain safe passage, provide aid, steal, enable romantic liaison, regain birthright, obtain revenge, or cause humiliation. In some cases the hero's aim is mixed, involving more than one purpose from this list. All the noble fosterling heroes have an honorable intent in their use of the entrance trick. The Trickster Tale heroes, on the other hand, often have less noble intentions such as theft, romantic liaison or humiliation. Both Horn and Orfeo undertake their entrance tricks to rescue. While performing his rescue, Horn is also able to avenge himself on an unfaithful liegeman.

Along with the commonly noted practical advantages of this disguise—mobility, security, proximity, anonymity—which can be found in a number of other typical medieval disguise-types, this study adds three further advantages offered specifically by the minstrel disguise: a celebratory or solacing inducing mood, a distraction, and a sense of trust. Each of these special benefits is interconnected: the celebratory mood fosters trust; celebratory excitement together with trust leads to distraction. All three together aid the hero in completion of his mission.

The first of these benefits, celebratory mood, is also noted by Lawrence whose study concludes that the minstrel is a bringer of joy and celebration. And indeed the positive reception these disguise-minstrels most often receive, even in cases of unpleasant outward appearance, confirms this joy-bringing role for the literary minstrel at least. Horn and Orfeo are somewhat unusual in this respect. These two heroes are the only characters to enter a solemn environment, perhaps explaining their cooler receptions—a forced wedding and a castle filled with grim representations of madness and violent death. Harp and rote Tristan too enters the scene where Isolt is held prisoner, but here only Isolt is sorrowful.¹ Her abductor gives Tristan a warm and friendly welcome: Gottfried's Gandin calls out to him, asks him to play to console the lady, and twice refers to him as "friend." Regardless of the level of warmth in their reception, the performances of these three appear to be more solace-inducing than celebratory for some of the characters. In this catalogue, along with a soothing or more typically joyful mood which puts the audience off its guard, the minstrel's generally well-executed performance adds another distraction and also engenders trust, assuring the enemy that this minstrel really is

a minstrel and in some cases enabling the more extended stays necessary for completion of the hero's purpose.

In contrast to the minstrel's joy bringing function, all of the disguise-minstrels in this catalogue except Thorleif are warriors. And even Thorleif performs the acts of a soldier through his incantation. In fact after the peaceful entry expected of a minstrel, in many of these episodes the hero performs unexpected acts of violence that can include sudden or gruesome brutality against the enemy or his company. In most cases this violence is made to seem appropriate, as an heroic act of vengeance such as we see in Horn when he rescues Rimenhild by decapitating the traitor Fikenhild and killing all his men. Orfeo, however, is one of nine tales in which the hero undertakes no act of violence during the trick. Of those nine, six are variations of the same two stories: Talbot, Orfeo, Math, three versions of Tristan harp and rote, and three versions of Baldulf. In two additional stories, violence appears only in each hero's acts of reasonable force: Folie Tristan smacks playfully back at teasing boys, and the minstrel-knights of Continuation engage in one individual joust as well as tournament prowess. And finally, in Layamon's Baldulf, the violence is actually directed against Baldulf.

Regardless of whether or not the episode contains violence, the hero normally conceals evidence of his role as knight or soldier while assuming the identity of minstrel until he is able to gain his objective. In three tales, however, Continuation, Beton, and Gottfried's harp and rote episode, authors illustrate the coexistence of these two contradictory roles in characters by providing evidence of both identities at once. In another tale, Romance, this same theme is explored through the author's use of

metaphoric language play. Neither Horn nor Orfeo, however, contains this type of overt exploration of the minstrel-warrior paradox.

Finally, it is also common in these entrance trick episodes for the author to add a statement calling the hero or his act cunning, occurring at least once in thirteen out of twenty-one stories, including Wace, Layamon, and Manning's Baldulf episodes, Gloucester's report of Anlaf, Malmesbury's accounts of Anlaf and Alfred, Folie, Continuation, Fouke, Hother's tale, Horn, Romance and the Saga harp and rote episode.

Notable Features of the Horn and Orfeo Episodes

Orfeo is the character in this catalogue most closely identified with the harper king image. Because of this intimate identification through numerous references to his harping abilities and to the harp itself, there is a natural comparison between King Orfeo and King David, often noted by critics. I have grouped Orfeo with the Tales of Enchantment both for the features it possess as well as because of the features it does not possess. Orfeo is filled with otherworld characters, enchantment, apparitions, power, and finally it finds its most climactic scene in an otherworld location, clearly qualifying it for this category. Yet, the other tales within this classification additionally fall under the heading of Trickster Tales. Orfeo's character, however, cannot be called a trickster, despite the fact that he, as Severs points out, hides his true identity and misrepresents his intentions. Even his outright lie to the Fairy King while insisting on honesty and the concocted story about his own death do not make him into a full-blown trickster character.

But Orfeo isn't technically a noble fosterling either. His story does not follow the typical story-type formula, and he isn't described as possessing all of the personal traits normally found in a noble fosterling. He isn't even a fosterling. Yet his character behaves as a noble fosterling should. The more negative trickster features are gleaned from his character. His intentions for the trick are honorable. He is a wise and good leader. He is an outstanding harper.

In this respect, as well as in his unusual costume details as this catalogue's only wildman figure, Orfeo is a unique example of this motif. Emerging relatively late within this catalogue, the story appears to take advantage of the noble fosterling feeling evidenced already in Hother, Beton, King Horn, and the Saga by hooking into the harper king version of the entrance trick without overtly adding its trademark features to the story. The poet, therefore, appears to rely on the audience's knowledge of a familiar motif, incorporating it subtly into his already very eclectic piece.

King Horn too, although Horn is generally a very typical entrance trick hero as the comparative analysis results show, is also among the later tales and appears to be slightly removed from the need to spell out every detail of the motif. This poem fits neatly into the noble fosterling category in both character traits as well as story details, but compared to Hother, Tristan and Beton, it contains less extravagant statements naming Horn's noble traits, and the description of his musical talent is not as emphatic as it is in these other three tales.

Horn's character study is also quite complex and skillfully executed. In King Horn, the poet points out incidences of Horn's "skill at the oath" and his imperfect honoring of his promises to Rimenhild through a series of six water-threat images

depicting the sea's ability to derail human plans and intentions. Five of these six images have been newly added to the Horn story by the King Horn poet himself: Rimenhild's fishing dream, Horn's reference to the dream before departing to Ireland, the drowning of the messenger, Horn's story of his own death by sickness at sea, and the tower's tidal defenses. These five new images plus the dream of Rimenhild's drowning are each coupled with a statement of deception or a reminder of one of Horn's vows or both, highlighting Horn's carefully made promises, his delayed returns, and his final hour rescues. These water-threat images also allow us to track Fikenhild's vows and obvious treacheries, encouraging a comparison between how each character handles issues of fidelity and underscoring the sense of Horn's superior sense of honor despite his missteps along the way.

The heart of the poet's exploration here lies in the duplicated rescue sections, beginning at the statement of a possible misstep by Horn and continuing through each disguise and wedding rescue episode, built both times around a vivid drowning scene and following a shared pattern. Although as Spearing shows, the narrator is relatively invisible in this poem, he does offer a statement at the start of both rescue sections, indicting Horn's actions. Horn, as well, shows outward signs of internal anguish or guilt twice, tears and sweating, in connection with the results of his actions. Yet despite Horn's apparent contrition within the first rescue section, he still does not fully honor his vows to Rimenhild until the end of the second time through the pattern. This repeated pattern, in addition to the mythic meaning Beatie points out, forms a loop which Horn appears doomed to repeat until he finally fulfills his word to Rimenhild in total, thus bringing a positive resolution to the story. Whether Horn's "skill at the oath" is intended

to be a trait he grows out of as a result of his trials or rather simply a part of his cunning nature that he learns to better control is unclear. But as other entrance trick heroes share similar traits, we may assume it is a common feature of *list(e)* or clever cunning.

The work of this chapter on imagery and pattern in Horn is significant because although Scott discusses Horn's questionable integrity, evidencing his open-ended promises and their delayed fulfillment, the more typical stance on Horn's character is to label him a flat, stereotypically good character. This study's identification of the poem's careful use of sea-threat imagery, encourages us to rather question Horn's integrity in both promise making, with his trickster-like skill at the oath, and promise fulfillment in the realm of love. This theme is complicated, but the poet seems to have structured its exploration for a listening audience. Indeed, the sea-threat images are easy to mark and recall because of their common theme and visual nature. Like a string of pearls, these images guide the audience through the narrative from one pivotal moment to the next, the most crucial moments highlighted by the two most violent images or larger pearls. Listeners need not have the text in front of them to follow its pattern.

This pearl analogy is also fitting within a discussion of the rescue pattern's repeating loop, broken when Horn finally fulfills all of his vows to Rimenhild. Here the audience follows this same chain around twice, marking the pearls and watching the emphasis shift from Horn to Fikenhild between the first and second time through. Additionally, the identification and mapping of this pattern shows that these two duplicate episodes, which have been judged unfavorably, are actually tied into the poem's overall theme, integral to the poet's carefully executed exploration of deception and fidelity.

In comparison to other entrance trick episodes, Horn's most unusual feature is its inclusion of tides, a feature shared only by Tristan's harp and rote episode, appearing in the Norse Saga and Gottfried. The investigation of this scene in chapter three reveals a careful description of the timing of Fikenhild and Horn's actions, all of which fit within a typical cycle of high and low waters, suggesting that this episode was constructed using real tides as a guide. Fikenhild's tower too, as we saw, may be based on the unusual example of Flint castle in the Wirral peninsula on the Dee Estuary, built by Edward the I as part of his campaigns in Wales. Artistically, the addition of tides in this scene creates a concrete version of the existing prophetic dream of Rimenhild's drowning: Fikenhild's treachery is illustrated in the new tower and the raging waters that threaten Rimenhild are reflected in the tidal surges now protecting the castle.

In terms of character development, the tides raise the difficulty level of Horn's task, better illustrating Horn's creative cunning and superiority to other knights. Additionally, their inclusion as the final water-threat image ties Horn's entrance trick scene directly into the poem's investigation of deception, further increasing the effect of the entrance trick as a means of illustrating the positive potential of Horn's cunning nature over his dubious behavior. As the resolution to the poem, as well as one of its central conflicts, representing Horn's final compliance with his vows to Rimenhild, this use of deception becomes a positive illustration of innovative cunning rather than another example of questionable integrity. Indeed, despite the numerous references to deception throughout the poem, no words indicating deception are used in association with Horn's disguise or trick. Therefore, if Horn's character will have learned from these experiences

to be less skillful at the oath when it comes to Rimenhild, we can see that his cunning nature remains intact, ready for deployment against any future enemy.

Notes

¹ Both *Horn* and *Orfeo* show a connection to Tristan's character beyond the obvious fact that all three are harpers. In addition to the common feature of tides appearing in both *King Horn* and two Tristan harp and rote episodes, we see another connection in *Folie*'s description of Tintagel as "a very fine, strong castle, impervious to attack or siege engine" (122), which mirrors *Romance*'s description of Wikele's castle as "very fine and strong: he made it of stone and cement in an impregnable spot" (Weiss 115). Similarly, the narrator's statement in *Folie* declaring the situation impossible is reminiscent of Arnoldin's at the start of *King Horn*'s entrance trick: Tristan "knew well there was no device to be found to enable him to talk to her. Prowess, knowledge, intelligence, skill—all were of no avail" (123). *Horn*'s Arnoldin likewise laments: "Ne mai þer come inne / Noman wiþ · none · ginne" (C1455-56).

Orfeo's connection to all three Tristan harp and rote episodes is the rash boon, pointed out abundantly by critics. However, in terms of this motif, Tristan's rash boon occurs before the episode's true entrance trick, necessitating the trick. Orfeo's, on the other hand, comes after the entrance trick, facilitating the trick's purpose. Or in other words, in *Tristan* the rash boon causes the problem that the entrance trick will solve, and in *Orfeo*, it is combined with the entrance trick to supply the solution. A careful study of all three characters would likely reveal additional similarities.

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