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Ami and Amile: A Partial Source for Pwyll?

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IN the opening section of the First Branch of the Middle Welsh *Mabinogi* the hero Pwyll first develops his relationship to the Otherworld. The story begins with the young prince of Dyfed hunting in a forest in his own domain. In a clearing he comes across a strange pack of hounds which kills a stag in front of him. He drives off the pack and feeds his own dogs on the carcass. Suddenly a mysterious horseman rides up and accuses Pwyll of gross discourtesy. Pwyll is contrite and offers to buy the stranger's friendship. The latter then reveals himself to be Arawn, king of Annwn, and tells Pwyll that to redeem himself he must agree to rid him of his enemy, Hafgan, another king in Annwn. To achieve this, Pwyll has to exchange shapes and places with Arawn for a year, at the end of which time he, in Arawn's guise, must engage Hafgan in single combat and strike him a single, mortal blow. He does all this willingly, even displaying admirable loyalty to his new friend by refraining from touching his unsuspecting wife during the entire year. At the end of the allotted time, Pwyll slays Hafgan and meets Arawn, who returns each of them to their respective shapes and kingdoms. Back in Annwn, the Otherworld king discovers from his wife that Pwyll has been faithful and Arawn and Pwyll become fast friends from then on.

There has been much scholarly speculation about the possible sources for the tale of *Pwyll*, and probably the most popular explanation of the origin of this first section has been based upon the theory of Irish influence. There exists a recognized Irish motif in which a fairy king requires the assistance of a mortal warrior to defeat his fairy opponent¹ and some scholars have concluded that this fully accounts for the situation in *Pwyll*.² However, this argument

¹See F176 and F389.4 in Tom Peete Cross, *Motif-Index of Early Irish Literature* (Bloomington, 1952). ²See Glenys Goetinck, 'La legende d'*Ami et Amile* et le *Mabinogi* de Pwyll', *Romania*, 86 (1965), 404-8 (p. 408), and Kenneth Hurlstone Jackson, 'Some Popular Motifs in Early Welsh Tradition', *Études celtiques*, 11 (1964-65), 83-99 (p. 88). I shall cite *Pwyll* from the edition by R. L. Thomson, *Pwyll Pendueic Dyuet* (Dublin, 1957).

is insufficient on its own, for it ignores the fact that in *Pwyll* the exchange of places between the mortal and the fairy king occurs in conjunction with several other plot elements that are unparalleled in Irish tradition. That the king of Annwn needs the mortal prince of Dyfed to overcome his enemy probably *is* in origin a Celtic motif, but the combination of the circumstances of the initial meeting, the single combat, the exchange of physical appearances, and the chaste friend seems to draw on quite another source. This is a highly complex and specific collection of narrative elements which, if found in two distinct texts, would be difficult to dismiss as coincidental. Moreover, it does occur in a story other than *Pwyll*.

Throughout the Middle Ages and beyond, the originally French legend of Ami and Amile—two physically identical heroes bound together by a virtually superhuman friendship—enjoyed a tremendous vogue across Europe. The story existed in multiple Latin variants as well as in versions in most major European vernacular languages. Although it has been customary in academic circles to regard the *Mabinogi* as a repository of purely Celtic lore, the great popularity of *Ami and Amile* suggests that it is perfectly possible that the author of *Pwyll* was familiar with some version of the French tale and incorporated elements of it into his own work. Certainly the striking overlap between the first section of *Pwyll* and some of the major episodes in *Ami and Amile* suggests that this may well have been the case. It is this proposition that I shall examine in this paper. First, a summary of the French legend is necessary.

The tale of the two friends exists in so many versions that there are inevitably substantial differences in detail from one to another, but the story in its simplest form (that found in the Second Epistle of the eleventh-century French monk Radulfus Tortarius) is as follows:

Two boys, Amicus and Amelius (or Ami and Amile, to give the best-known variants of the names), are born on the same day in different noble households. As youths they meet at (or on the way to) court, where they win the affection and admiration of all but the jealous steward Ardradus/Hardré. In the *chanson de geste* Hardré plots against the friends and, to cover his tracks, gives his niece Lubias in marriage to Ami. In Radulfus and other versions Amicus marries, but his wife's identity is unimportant.

While Amicus/Ami is at home with his wife, the king's daughter Belissant falls in love with Amelius/Amile and succeeds in seducing him, in spite of his having been warned against such an occurrence by his absent companion. The steward overhears the lovers and denounces them to the king. An ordeal by battle is decided upon and Amelius/Amile risks perjuring himself; he is saved by Amicus/Ami who, capitalizing on their identical appearance and his own innocence in the affair, substitutes for his friend in the combat.

Meanwhile, Amelius/Amile plays the part of his identical companion, even so far as sleeping with his unsuspecting wife. However, he demonstrates his

extraordinary loyalty by placing his naked sword in the bed between the woman and himself.

Amicus/Ami defeats and slays the wicked steward. Mistaken by all for Amelius/Amile, he is obliged to marry the princess, whom he then delivers to her rightful husband.

Some time later, Amicus/Ami is stricken with leprosy and his heartless wife drives him away. He is eventually cured by Amelius/Amile, who bathes him in the blood of his own sacrificed children, who themselves then miraculously revive. Radulfus ends on this happy note, while in all other versions the two friends die together and are buried side by side at Mortara in Lombardy.

It can be clearly seen from this summary that the principal points of similarity with *Pwyll* are the substitution in combat and the man who sleeps chastely with his absent friend's wife, who does not realize that it is not her husband who shares her bed. It may also be significant that in most of the major variants of the French legend Ami and Amile meet in a wood, as do Pwyll and Arawn. Finally, it may not be too far-fetched to suggest that the choice of the name 'Hafgan' may owe something to (H)ardradus/Hardré. Both *Pwyll* and the *Ami* story are complex, multi-episode narratives, which for much of their length bear no apparent relation to each other whatsoever. However, the particulars in which they do overlap may be specific enough to suggest some kind of direct relationship between the texts.

To examine this possibility in detail, we must review the principal variants of *Ami and Amile* and try to determine the relative chronology of these and *Pwyll*. All the versions may be loosely divided into 'romantic' and 'hagiographic' types. The former show considerable variation in detail, while the latter tend to follow relatively closely the twelfth-century Latin *Vita Amici et Amelii Carissimorum*. A useful, if not quite comprehensive, list of both types may be consulted in MacEdward Leach's admirable study of the legend.³

Our earliest extant account of the legend is a 204-line verse summary incorporated into the above-mentioned epistle *Ad Bernardum*, written by Radulfus Tortarius, a monk at the abbey of Fleury-sur-Loire. The sole manuscript for which there is any real evidence (Vatican Library, Codex Reginensis 1357) was rescued by Pierre Daniel of Orléans when the Huguenots burned the abbey of Fleury in 1562.⁴ According to Francis Bar, in his massive study of the epistles, it is datable on orthographic grounds to approximately the third quarter of the twelfth century.⁵ Although Radulfus' own

³*Amis and Amiloun*, edited by MacEdward Leach, Early English Text Society, original series, 203 (London, 1937), pp. ix–xiv. ⁴*Rodulfi Tortarii: Carmina*, edited by Marbury B. Ogle and Dorothy M. Schullian (Rome, 1933), p. xxxv. ⁵Francis Bar, *Les Épîtres latines de Raoul le Tourtier (1065?–1114?): Étude de sources, 'La légende d'Ami et Amile'* (Paris, 1937), p. 7. This agrees with Ogle and Schullian, who state that the work was written in the twelfth century (pp. xxxvi–xxxix).

precise dates have been much debated, Eugène de Certain argued persuasively that he must have been born in 1063, since in another letter, bearing the firm date of 1108, Radulfus describes himself as having lived forty-five years thus far; a date of c. 1090 for Radulfus' poem on Amicus and Amelius is generally accepted.⁶

A frustrating aspect of Radulfus' poem is that it presents its version of *Ami and Amile* as a mere summary of a well-known and widespread *chanson de geste*, stating boldly 'Historiam Gallus, breviter quam replico, novit, / Novit in extremo litore Saxo situs' (lines 117–18), that is to say, 'The Gaul knew the song that I tell briefly; the Saxon knew it too in his far dwelling'.⁷ No independent evidence of such an epic has ever come to light, but one assumes that Radulfus' allusion is genuine and that an earlier *chanson* did exist. Nonetheless, one cannot rule out the possibility, suggested by Dr Neil Wright in a personal communication, that the monk may have invented the 'tradition' himself, thus causing generations of scholars to pursue a fruitless search for lost originals.

The next oldest extant version of the legend dates from the first half of the twelfth century. This is the *Vita Amici et Amelii Carissimorum*, of which the earliest published manuscript is Saint-Omer, Bibliothèque Municipale, 776 (thirteenth century).⁸ B. Woleedge notes that at least two other manuscripts (apparently not published) are twelfth-century, as he believes the composition of the *Vita* to be: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, nouveaux fonds latins, 13775, and Bibliothèque de Dijon, 649 (389).⁹ Leach lists twelve Latin prose versions, noting that they are all 'substantially the same; often only the most minute verbal differences mark one from the other' (p. xi).

The version of the story underlying the Middle English romance *Amis and Amiloun* may have been composed as early as the *Vita*, according to Leach (p. xx). However, the earliest surviving manuscript (Edinburgh, Advocates' Library, Auchinleck W. 4. 1) dates from about 1330 (p. xc).

⁶Eugène de Certain, 'Raoul Tortaire', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 16 (1855), 489–521 (p. 494). Cf. Leach, p. xxi, n. 2: 'This poem was composed not later than the last half of the eleventh century, and probably not later than 1175 [evidently a typographical error for 1075]. De Certain . . . has shown that the date of the *Epistolae ad Diversos*, of which this poem is a part, is c. 1090. This date has been accepted by all scholars without comment; it seems clearly established by de Certain's evidence'. Other discussions of Radulfus' dates (in agreement) may be found in J. A. Asher, 'Amis et Amiles: An Explanatory Survey', *Auckland University College Bulletin*, 39 (1952), 3–28; and Bar, *Épîtres*, pp. 3–4. ⁷Leach, p. 101. ⁸F. J. Mone, *Anzeiger für Kunde der deutschen Vorzeit*, 5 (1836), 146–60. The most often cited printed version of the *Vita* is that in Eugen Kölbing, *Amis und Amiloun, zugleich mit der altfranzösischen Quelle*, Altenglische Bibliothek, 2 (Heilbronn, 1884), pp. xcvi–cx. This is an edition of the sixteenth-century version, Bibliothèque Nationale, ancien fonds latins, MS 6188. ⁹B. Woleedge, 'Ami et Amile: Les versions en prose française', *Romania*, 65 (1939), 433–56 (p. 435).

Two more 'romantic' versions were reputedly composed around 1200. One of these is the *Chanson d'Ami et Amile*, which is probably the version most familiar to modern scholars. The manuscript (BN, anciens fonds français, 860) dates from the thirteenth century: the first half of that century, according to Leach (p. x), the second, according to Peter Dembowski.¹⁰ The composition date of c. 1200 is by no means fixed; Dembowski sums up the state of knowledge when he says that this date is generally accepted by scholars without being able either to verify it conclusively or to suggest another (p. xii, n. 1).

The other version which has been held to date from about 1200 is the Anglo-Norman poem *Amis e Amilun* (earliest manuscript: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 50). Leach states that the manuscript is contemporary with the *chanson* (p. xx), while he and Dembowski both consider the composition to be more 'primitive', without suggesting any particular composition date earlier than the alleged manuscript date of 1200.¹¹ M. R. James, however, placed the Corpus Christi manuscript in the second half of the thirteenth century; so the issue remains unresolved.¹²

What Killis Campbell describes, without further elaboration, as 'a very early version of the story of *Amis and Amiloun*'¹³ occurs as an insert into the tale *Vaticinium* in some manuscript editions of the extremely widespread collection of stories known as the *Historia Septem Sapientum*. This insert first appears in a manuscript dated 1342 (Innsbruck, Universitätsbibliothek, Latin MS 310). Thus the tale of the two friends (here called Alexander and Lodovicus) must have become attached to *Vaticinium* no later than 1342, perhaps earlier.

Finally, the last version to be considered in this study is the Welsh translation of the *Vita*, found in the Red Book of Hergest and entitled *Kedymdeithyas Amlyn ac Amic*. The dates of copying of the Red Book span the period 1382 to 1410,¹⁴ but the date of the translation of *Amlyn ac Amic* remains open to debate. It is possible that, as it is a direct translation of the Latin, its composition date and copying date are one and the same, but this is not necessarily the case. Patricia Williams, in her edition of *Amlyn ac Amic*, argues persuasively, on linguistic and

¹⁰*Ami et Amile: Chanson de geste*, edited by Peter F. Dembowski, Les Classiques Français du Moyen Age, 97 (Paris, 1969), p. vii. Cf. *Ami and Amile*, translated by Samuel Danon and Samuel N. Rosenberg (York, SC, 1981). ¹¹Leach, p. xx; Dembowski, p. xii, n. 2. ¹²Montague Rhodes James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge*, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1909–12), 1, 101. ¹³*The Seven Sages of Rome*, edited by Killis Campbell (Boston, 1907), p. cxii. See *Die 'Historia Septem Sapientum' nach der Innsbrucker Handschrift v. J. 1342*, edited by Georg Buchner (Erlangen, 1889). ¹⁴Daniel Huws, in the Introduction to *The Arthur of the Welsh: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval Welsh Literature*, edited by Rachel Bromwich and others (Cardiff, 1991), p. 11.

orthographic grounds, for a composition date in the first half of the fourteenth century.¹⁵

It should be clear from the above list that the issue of dating is a complex one. The problem of the date of *Pwyll* is, if anything, an even more difficult task, and one which remains unresolved. For some time the received wisdom (received, that is, from Ifor Williams) was that the date of composition for the *Four Branches* was c. 1060. Subsequently a wide range of other estimates has been made on the basis of historical, literary, and linguistic evidence, ranging from as early as 1050 × 1120 (T. M. Charles-Edwards) to as late as c. 1190 (Saunders Lewis).¹⁶ Patrick Sims-Williams's recent study of this problem, which is both the most comprehensive and the most up-to-date, comes to the frustrating but unavoidable conclusion that it is still quite impossible to date the *Four Branches* with any degree of accuracy at all.¹⁷ D. Simon Evans simply assigns the language of the text to the twelfth century,¹⁸ as such, it is definitely earlier than the language of *Amlyn ac Amic*.

The uncertainty surrounding the dates of *Pwyll* and of some of the seven versions of *Ami and Amile* described above greatly complicates the question of whether the Welsh tale could have been influenced by the French legend. It is simply not possible to state definitively that *Ami and Amile* did or did not exist early enough to have had any effect on *Pwyll*. The first scholar to suggest *how* such an influence might have come about was Francis Bar, who pointed out that both *Pwyll* and the Welsh version of the French legend, *Amlyn ac Amic*, occur in the Red Book. The author of the former could, he postulated, have borrowed freely from the latter.¹⁹ This overlooked the rather important facts that *Pwyll* also appears in the White Book, c. 1350, and that its language is undoubtedly older than that of *Amlyn ac Amic*. Indeed, the one point which is clear is that one can be reasonably certain, on linguistic grounds, that *Pwyll* antedates *Amlyn ac Amic*. Therefore, if *Pwyll* was influenced by the French legend at all, it was not by way of the extant Welsh translation. Both Kenneth Jackson and Glenys Goetinck, who seem to be the only scholars who have followed up Bar's discussion,

¹⁵Kedymdeithyas *Amlyn ac Amic*, edited by Patricia Williams (Cardiff, 1982), p. xxxvii.

¹⁶T. M. Charles-Edwards, 'The Date of the Four Branches of the Mabinogi', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1970, pp. 263–98; Saunders Lewis, 'Pwyll Pen Annwfn', *Llên Cymru*, 9 (1967), 230–33. ¹⁷Sioned Davies, *Pedeir Keinc Y Mabinogi* (Caernarfon, 1989), p. 6; Patrick Sims-Williams, 'The Submission of Irish Kings in Fact and Fiction: Henry II, Bendigeidfran, and the Dating of *The Four Branches of the Mabinogi*', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies*, 22 (Winter 1991), 31–61. ¹⁸D. Simon Evans, *A Grammar of Middle Welsh* (Dublin, 1976), p. xxx. ¹⁹Francis Bar, 'Le "Mabinogi" de Pwyll, Prince de Dyvet et la légende d'Ami et Amile', *Romania*, 68 (1944–45), 168–72 (p. 172).

agree that *Amlyn ac Amic* could not have influenced *Pwyll* because of this conflict of dates.²⁰

Goetinck makes the further observation that there is no evidence anywhere in Welsh literature that the *Ami and Amile* story was known at all until references appear in the fourteenth century in the works of Dafydd ap Gwilym and Iolo Goch (p. 406). Actually, these are not the only references. D. R. Johnston has collected allusions to the legend in the works of five different Welsh poets: (i) Dafydd ap Gwilym (fl. c. 1320–80) in his *Marwnad Rhydderch*: 'Och Amlyn o'i dyddyn dig, / Alaeth mamaeth, am Emig' ('Amlyn's cry from his sad home / A nurse of sorrow, for Emig'); (ii) Iolo Goch (fl. c. 1340–98) in his *Marwnad Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen* (d. c. 1390): 'Mi ac ef, ail Amig oedd, / Amlyn wyf' ('I and he, he was a second Amig, / I am Amlyn'); (iii) Llywelyn Goch (fl. c. 1360–90) (according to National Library of Wales, MS Peniarth 57—but elsewhere the poem is attributed to the early-fifteenth-century Dafydd ap Hopcyn, of the time of Owain Glyn Dŵr): 'Hwyl amic hveil ym wrdd' ('[In his] course [like] Amic, [like] Hueil in might'); (iv) Rhisiertyn (fl. c. 1350–1400), praising Goronwy Fychan ap Tudur (d. 1382): 'Amlwc drwyddied Amlyn weithred / Ym i yfed am ei ofwy' ('Famous hospitality, a deed [worthy] of Amlyn to me / To drink concerning his visit'); (v) Meurig ab Iorwerth (fl. c. 1320–70), praising Hopcyn ap Tomos: 'Hylym aryf ynggryt ual hwyl amic' ('Keen [his] weapon in battle like the course of Amig').²¹

These five poets were active during a period extending roughly from 1320 to 1400. In other words, their work corresponds fairly well to the probable date of *Amlyn ac Amic*. One possible conclusion to be drawn from this sudden burst of references is that *Ami and Amile* was not known in Wales until the Welsh translation of the *Vita* appeared. Goetinck espouses this view, and her argument against French influence on *Pwyll* runs as follows: the lack of pre-fourteenth-century

²⁰Kenneth Hurlstone Jackson, *The International Popular Tale and Early Welsh Tradition* (Cardiff, 1961), p. 83; Goetinck, 'La légende d'Ami et Amile', p. 406. Mabel van Duzee, with no reference to Bar, argues for a close relationship between *Pwyll* and *Ami and Amile*, but as she accepts without question Ifor Williams's dating of the *Four Branches*, she takes the position that *Pwyll* is the source text for the French legend. See her *Eger and Grime* (New York, 1963), pp. 36–39. See also James Ralston Caldwell, *Eger and Grime*, Harvard Studies in Comparative Literature, 9 (Cambridge, Mass., 1933), pp. 86 and 166, n. 96, where he briefly notes the similarity of the exchange of identity for combat in *Pwyll* and *Ami*, and suggests that both texts derive from the *Two Brothers*—a theory which I discuss at length below. ²¹*Gwaith Dafydd ap Gwilym*, edited by Thomas Parry, second edition (Cardiff, 1963), no. 17, lines 15–16; *Gwaith Iolo Goch*, edited by D. R. Johnston (Cardiff, 1988), no. XXII, lines 60–61 and pp. 311–12; *Peniarth MS. 57*, transcribed by E. Stanton Roberts (Cardiff, 1921), p. 38, no. XXVII, line 7; *Gwaith Sefnyn, Rhisiertyn ac Eraill*, edited by Nerys Ann Jones and Erwain Haf Rheinallt (Aberystwyth, 1995), pp. 54 and 91; *The Poetry in the Red Book of Hergest*, edited by J. Gwenogvryn Evans (Llanbedrog, 1911), cols 1290.41–42 and 1373.31–33.

references in Welsh indicates that the French legend was unknown in Wales prior to *Amlyn ac Amic*; *Amlyn ac Amic* appeared in Wales between 1375 and 1425; it is therefore impossible for the legend to have influenced anything composed in Wales earlier than 1375. This argument is problematic. First, although Goetinck states that the portion of the Red Book in which *Amlyn ac Amic* appears dates between 1375 and 1425, the manuscript as a whole is now held to have been written between 1382 and 1410.²² Secondly, most of the five poetic references could conceivably have been written before 1375, given the floruits of their authors. In other words, chronology in no way precludes the possibility that the poets were drawing on a version of *Ami and Amile* other than the text in the Red Book itself.

What is striking is that all the above poets give the impression of alluding to a well-known story which the audience would immediately recognize. The lack of concrete evidence (apart from *Pwyll* itself) that *Ami and Amile* was known in Wales prior to the 1300s may not be especially significant. It may be that earlier poets merely preferred to allude to native material rather than literary imports. The story may even have been known at an earlier time, say the eleventh century, and then more or less forgotten until the Welsh translation of the *Vita* caused a sudden surge in popularity in the fourteenth century. This is necessarily conjecture, but the point is that the argument that *Ami and Amile* did not reach Wales at all until it became *Amlyn ac Amic* in the Red Book is not watertight.

All this uncertainty about dates leaves open two possibilities as far as *Pwyll* is concerned. First, if the linguistic impression is somehow illusory, it is not impossible that *Amlyn ac Amic* could be early enough, and *Pwyll* late enough, for the former to have affected the latter; however, given that estimates for the date of *Pwyll* tend not to set the tale after 1190 at latest, it seems unlikely that the extant *Amlyn ac Amic* was the source for any input that the French legend may have had. I shall discount this possibility. The second, more plausible, possibility is that the *Pwyll* author derived the legend from an earlier French or Latin version. If the later estimates of the date of the *Four Branches* are correct, then even Radulfus' poem of c. 1090 would have been early enough, but one need not depend on Radulfus, for it seems highly probable that he was in fact drawing on a pre-existing *chanson de geste*, as he claims. The monk states that the tale he summarizes was well known to the Gauls and the Saxons, as we have seen. Leach takes him at his word and estimates that for the southern French story to be 'well known' in Gaul and Saxony by 1090, the original *chanson* must have been current no later than 1050 (p. xxi, n. 2). Whether or not Radulfus' claim was intended to be taken

literally, neither his summary nor his presumed source, the *chanson*, are likely to have materialized out of nothing. It is thus quite possible that the legend was in circulation early enough to have influenced *Pwyll* even if the *Four Branches* are assumed to date from as early as c. 1060, Sir Ifor Williams's date.

The immensely complex issue of the sources of *Ami and Amile* has attracted a great deal of scholarly attention over the years, and has generated considerable controversy. Possible sources fall roughly into five categories, with some scholars insisting tenaciously on one, while others attempt to synthesize all the options. For the sake of convenience, these categories may be labelled as follows: (1) feudal Christianity; (2) the history of the two Guillaumes; (3) the story of Lantfrid and Cobbo; (4) Dioscuric myths; and (5) folktales. The last is the most important for the present discussion, but a brief review of each of the others may be useful for a broader perspective on the issue.

Joseph Bédier was the principal proponent of the feudal Christianity explanation for the origin of *Ami and Amile*. While conceding that certain folk elements are present, he is almost contemptuous of those who believe that these indicate either an ancient or a folk origin.²³ On the contrary, he argues that *Ami and Amile* is a feudal Christian legend and that as far back as one can search it is a French *chanson de geste* (pp. 186–87). He suggests that Radulfus' source was an early *chanson*, which then became attached (in its hagiographic variant) to the village of Mortara in Lombardy. The relationship between Mortara and the legend of the two friends stems from the fact that near the village, at the church of Saint-Albin, there are twin tombs, dating from the end of the eleventh century, or somewhat later, one of which bears the inscription 'Amelius'.

Up to a point, this view was also taken by Gédéon Huet, who saw Radulfus' poem and the *Vita* as descendants of two different, archaic *chansons de geste*, now lost. He suggests that a *jongleur* may have been inspired by the twin tombs—famous because Mortara lies on the pilgrimage route to Rome—and may have composed a *chanson de geste* which was the source for all subsequent variants.²⁴ Huet belongs more in the folkloric-origins camp, but he does agree with Bédier that the *chanson* form of the legend is feudal and French, although not as Christian as Bédier (and, much later, William Calin) would have it, on the grounds that the whole strikes him as too warlike to be the product of churchmen (p. 163, n. 4).

J. A. Asher and William Calin provide more recent arguments for a

²³[D]e nombreux critiques y voient un très ancien conte populaire, d'origine orientale, naturellement': Joseph Bédier, *Les Légendes épiques: Recherches sur la formation des chansons de geste*, II, third edition (Paris, 1926), p. 186. ²⁴G. Huet, 'Ami et Amile: les origines de la légende', *Le Moyen Age*, 30 (1919), 162–86 (p. 163).

²²Huws, in *Arthur of the Welsh*, p. 11.

feudal and Christian origin. Both refute the folkloric theory (discussed below) and root the legend firmly in medieval Christianity. Calin points out that 'Any work of literature so permeated with *merveilleux chrétien* and other aspects of the religious was probably written as a Christian poem and should be so interpreted'.²⁵ The obvious problem here is that our earliest surviving text, Radulfus' summary, contains no Christian references whatsoever, but Calin argues that this does not prove that his *source* was secular (p. 116). Asher offers a more complicated solution, suggesting that two lost *chansons de geste* originally existed, one inspiring Radulfus, and the other the *Vita* and the surviving *chanson*.²⁶

The second major theory involving strictly medieval sources is that the characters of Ami and Amile are based upon a pair of real early-eleventh-century friends, Guillaume Taillefer II, count of Angoulême, and Guillaume le Grand, third count of Poitiers and fifth duke of Aquitaine. Bar explores this possibility in detail, pointing out that both these historical noblemen and the legend of *Ami and Amile* were connected with the city of Blaye—according to Radulfus, Amicus is born here, while in the *chanson* he becomes lord of the city through his marriage.²⁷ Bar notes several important respects in which the legend seems to reflect the historical friendship, including Guillaume le Grand's relationship with Lombardy and Guillaume Taillefer's pilgrimage to Rome in 1026 (pp. 68–70). In conclusion, he states that while no one would actually identify Ami and Amile with the two Guillaumes, some aspects of their lives were incorporated into the legend of friendship which already existed in rudimentary form as poems about Lantfrid and Cobbo (p. 73). Bar's suggestion is that the originally German story of Lantfrid and Cobbo could well have been known at the court of Guillaume le Grand, who was on excellent diplomatic terms with the Emperor (p. 73).

Other scholars have considered the possibility of influence from the Guillaumes, most recently Patricia Williams, who rejects a direct equation between the two but suggests that the story of the historical friends could easily have coloured the legend, especially in its hagiographic form.²⁸ However, Bar's discussion of Lantfrid and Cobbo appears to be unique. The poem describing their friendship exists in two manuscripts: BN, fonds latins, 242, and Cambridge, University Library, Gg. 5. 35. In his edition of the Cambridge text, Karl Breul reports that 'it is said to be "highly probable" that the date of the compilation of the collection was the reign of the Emperor Henry III

(1039–55)'.²⁹ A. G. Rigg and G. R. Wieland date the manuscript to the mid-eleventh century on palaeographical grounds, noting that 'the last dated entry in the "Cambridge Songs" section is 1039, the death of the emperor Conrad II'.³⁰

The parallels with *Ami and Amile* are not overwhelming, but there is undoubtedly a thematic similarity. *Lantfrid and Cobbo* is a short and simple story, as it stands in the manuscripts. Two noblemen are the best of friends. Cobbo tests the friendship by asking Lantfrid to give him his wife when he journeys to his own country. Lantfrid freely hands her over, saying, 'Let no one say I possess anything alone'. As Cobbo sails away, Lantfrid stands on the shore singing a song in which he exhorts his friend to be faithful. Cobbo thereupon returns, relinquishes the woman and says he was only testing Lantfrid's friendship. Bar identifies the principal similarities with *Ami and Amile* as the following: the noble status of the protagonists and the fact that they are in the service of a prince; the test of friendship, the subordination of conjugal love to the love of a friend; and the chastity of one friend with the other's wife (pp. 75–77). In addition, like Radulfus the authors of the surviving versions of *Lantfrid and Cobbo* seem to be referring to a well-known story (p. 76). Bar's conclusion is that one of these texts was known to the first author of the legend of Ami and Amile (p. 75).

It is puzzling that *Lantfrid and Cobbo* has not attracted more interest among recent students of *Ami and Amile*, for the story is at least as likely to be a partial source for the legend as any of the more popular hypothetical origins. It is sufficiently early, thematically related, and shows enough similarities of detail to suggest that it could have provided original inspiration for what was later developed into a complex *chanson de geste*.

Scholarly hesitance to deal with this possibility may be due in part to the extreme popularity of two theories which locate the origins of the French legend in the more distant past. One of these is the notion that the two friends were initially a pair of divine twins whose cult became localized at Mortara. A. H. Krappe expounds this theory at length, pointing out, first, that Ami and Amile share many of the typical attributes of divine twins (such as simultaneous conception and birth and an extraordinary bond of fraternal love), and secondly, that Mortara is situated in the heart of Dioscuric country. He claims that 'Gallia Cisalpina was teeming with twin sanctuaries and that the cult of Castor and Pollux played an important part among the Romanized population of that part of the country. Christianity had to

²⁵William Calin, *The Epic Quest: Studies in Four Old French 'Chansons de Geste'* (Baltimore, 1966), p. 95. ²⁶Asher, 'Amis et Amiles', p. 26. ²⁷Épîtres, pp. 62–65.

²⁸Patricia Williams, 'Ffynonellau Tybiedig Chwedl Amllyn ac Amig', *Ysgrifau Beirniadol*, 15 (1988), 73–91 (p. 88).

²⁹Karl Breul, *The Cambridge Songs: A Goliard's Songbook of the XIth Century* (Cambridge, 1915), p. 23. ³⁰A. G. Rigg and G. R. Wieland, 'A Canterbury Classbook of the Mid-Eleventh Century', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 4 (1975), 113–30.

supplant these cults; it did so by substituting twin saints for twin gods, ... so in the neighbourhood of Mortara Amicus and Amelius took over the inheritance of their predecessors'.³¹ Patricia Williams follows Krappe's lead, arguing that one of Mortara's churches might have been constructed around a pagan altar to the Dioscuri or similar divine twins and that these gods could then have been transformed into the mortal heroes of a story about faithfulness. When this story was told to amuse passing pilgrims on their way to Rome, the heroes could have developed further into twin saints.³²

Marianne Shapiro has elaborated upon this theory, claiming that the ultimate origin of *Ami and Amile* is to be found in the divine twins of primitive Indo-European mythology, who then acquired a local northern Italian cultic overlay of Dioscurism.³³ Krappe was slightly more circumspect, declaring it to be 'unnecessary to hold Oriental or Byzantine influences responsible for the rise of the legend' (p. 59). His argument combines the theory of Dioscuric origins with that of international folklore by suggesting that *Ami and Amile* belongs to the same group of primitive beliefs that gave rise to the popular tales known as the *Two Brothers* and the *Faithful Servitor* (p. 58). Unlike many proponents of the folkloric-origins theory, Krappe does not believe that these two tales were *sources* for the legend, merely analogues. However, as the folkloric argument is the only theory which has a direct bearing on the relationship of *Ami and Amile* to *Pwyll*, it deserves careful consideration.

Both the most lucid and the most detailed (although not the earliest) presentation of the argument is that of Leach (pp. xxxii–lxv). He makes an eloquent case for the tales of the *Two Brothers* and the *Faithful Servitor* providing the raw material for an eleventh-century French poet who 'felt moved to compose a poem to celebrate ideal friendship' (p. lxxxviii). The basic assumption is that the *Two Brothers* could have been the model for the identical friends and for the scene in which one friend/brother lays his sword in the bed in order to sleep chastely with the other's wife, while the *Faithful Servitor* could have provided the cure-through-child-sacrifice episode. Contemporary life and literature undoubtedly added to the simple folkloric base but, according to this line of argument, the legend is fundamentally an elaborate reworking of the *Two Brothers*, with input from the *Faithful Servitor*. Huet—who to a large extent inspired Leach—is characteristic of this school of thought, arguing that the story of the faithful friends

is 'nothing more' than a literary elaboration of themes borrowed from these two folktales (p. 182).

The folkloric argument has been called into question by some since Leach's 1937 study. Calin examines the issue in meticulous detail, and concludes that the presence of individual folk motifs in the literary work does not necessarily indicate that any given folktales were actual sources. He argues quite persuasively that several motifs are native to the *chanson de geste* as a genre and that specific motifs can in any case arise by polygenesis (p. 63). Asher takes much the same view, conceding that there are similarities, but that 'an analogue is one thing, a source is another; and the legend of Amicus and Amelius does not resemble adequately any other story, not even *Die zwei Brüder* or *Der treue Johannes*, to justify the certain conclusion that a source has been found' (p. 24). Finally, Patricia Williams, whose article on the sources of *Ami and Amile* is one of the most recent attempts to synthesize all the major origin theories, concludes with regard to the folktales that all it is safe to say is that some events in *Amlyn ac Amic* correspond to elements in the tales but that the latter should be viewed as analogues rather than sources (p. 87).

The parallel between *Ami and Amile* and the *Faithful Servitor* is limited to the child-sacrifice-as-cure motif, which bears no relation to *Pwyll* and is therefore not relevant to the present discussion. However, the *Two Brothers* can be seen to pose certain problems in terms of a possible direct relationship between *Pwyll* and *Ami and Amile*. This is because the most convincing argument *against* regarding the first section of *Pwyll* as deriving in part from an early form of *Ami and Amile* is that the details in which the two texts overlap are also typical motifs found in the *Two Brothers* and could therefore have been taken independently from oral folk tradition by the original authors. After all, the *Two Brothers* tale is found in virtually every European country from Georgia to Scotland and Malta to Latvia.³⁴

Leach provides a concise summary of the typical European form of the *Two Brothers* which is useful enough for our present purpose to merit quoting in full:

1. A woman having no children (and often lamenting that fact) eats a piece of fish and becomes pregnant. She gives birth to twins. (In some versions two women eat of the fish, and each produces a child as a result.)
2. The brothers go out in the world, leaving a recognition token or tokens so that

³¹A. H. Krappe, 'The Legend of Amicus and Amelius', *Modern Language Review*, 18 (1923), 152–61 (p. 158). ³²Ffynonellau, p. 90. ³³Marianne Shapiro, 'Ami et Amile and Myths of Divine Twinship', *Romanische Forschungen*, 102 (1990), 131–48.

³⁴Johannes Bolte and Georg Polivka, *Anmerkungen zu den Kinder- und Hausmärchen der Brüder Grimm*, 5 vols (Leipzig, 1913–32), 1, 535–42.

each can tell how the other is faring. 3. One brother rescues a princess from a monster. He does not remain to wed her, but, cutting out the monster's tongue, goes on his way. A passer-by (a courtier or charcoal-burner) sees the dead monster, cuts off its head and takes it to court to prove that he killed the creature. The princess, against her will, is being married to the imposter when the brother arrives and proves his claim by the tongue, whereupon he and the princess are married. 4. He goes on further adventures (or hunt) and is turned to stone by a witch. 5. By means of the recognition token the distant brother knows that his brother is in danger. Searching for him, he comes to his brother's house, and is mistaken for him. That night he sleeps with his sister-in-law, a sword between them. 6. He succeeds in restoring his brother, who kills him when he hears that he has slept with his wife; later, learning the truth, he restores his brother by magical means. (p. xxxvi)

Examining the Old French *Ami et Amile*, Calin, who argues that the *chanson* is not primarily folkloric in origin, finds no less than forty-one distinct motifs recognized by the *Motif-Index* (pp. 60–62). Of these, only three are definitely shared by the *Two Brothers*: F577.1. *Friends/brothers identical in appearance*; K1311.1. *Husband's twin brother mistaken by woman for her husband*; T351. *Sword of chastity*. To this one might add T350. *Chaste sleeping together*. A further comparison of the many identifiably traditional motifs in the first section of *Pwyll*³⁵ with the *Type Index*'s list of motifs typically appearing in the *Two Brothers* (AT 303), yields an overlap of only two: K1311.1 and T350. Thus the sum total of folk motifs shared by *Pwyll*, *Ami and Amile*, and the *Two Brothers* is also two: K1311.1 and T350. This is not a very impressive overlap if one is seeking to prove the folkloric origin of either medieval text. Calin makes precisely this argument with regard to *Ami and Amile* (p. 68), and one may certainly question whether *Pwyll* drew directly on the *Two Brothers* when the similarities between the two are so minimal.

In addition to the very limited overlap with the folktale, there are further reasons for doubting whether the *Two Brothers* could have been a source for either *Pwyll* or *Ami and Amile*. A frequent element of the folk-origins theory is that the *Two Brothers* is extremely widespread and thus would have provided easily accessible material for a medieval poet. The weakness of this argument is that although variants

of the *Two Brothers* exist as hundreds of modern tales,³⁶ there do not seem to be any documented examples early enough to have inspired any medieval literature.³⁷ Huet is typical of this school of thought when he says of the *Two Brothers* that if it was circulating in France in the nineteenth century it could just as easily have been current in the eleventh (p. 169). Unfortunately for Huet, there is simply no evidence that this was the case. He himself states that the oldest written version occurs in Basile's *Lo cunto de li cunti*, published three years posthumously in 1635 (p. 168, n. 1). Elements of the *Chaste Brother*, which is the subtype most relevant to this discussion, are in fact attested considerably earlier than this, but still probably not early enough to have influenced either *Pwyll* or *Ami and Amile*.

The plot of the *Chaste Brother* is quite simple: '(a) When the second brother sees from the life-token that the first is in trouble he seeks him and (b) is greeted by the brother's wife as her husband. (c) At night he lays a naked sword between himself and her' (AT 303.IV). A variation on this theme occurs in the Norse *Saga of Hrólfr Kraki* which, according to E. V. Gordon, dates from the late fourteenth century, thus substantially antedating Basile.³⁸ In this saga, Bóthvar respects the chastity of his brother Thórir's wife although she herself believes him to be her husband.³⁹

The critical difference between the standard *Chaste Brother* story and both *Pwyll* and *Ami and Amile* is that in the two medieval texts the substitution in bed is brought about by the prior need for substitution in combat. In this respect the two literary works are closer to each other than either is to the folktale. The closest early parallel in fact occurs in another Norse source, the *Prose Edda* of Snorri Sturluson (1179–1241). Here Sigurd and Gunnar do not change places for combat exactly, but the substitution is motivated by Gunnar's inability to meet a physical challenge himself:

Brynhildr abode on Hinda-Fell, and about her hall there was a flaring fire; and she had made a solemn vow to take none but that man who should dare to ride through the flaring fire.

Then Sigurdr and the sons of Gjúki (who were also called Niflungs) rode up onto the mountain, and Gunnarr should have ridden through the flaring fire: but he had the horse named Goti, and that horse dared not leap into the fire. So they exchanged shapes, Sigurdr and Gunnarr, and names

³⁵Andrew Welsh, 'The Traditional Narrative Motifs of *The Four Branches of the Mabinogi*', *CMCS*, 15 (Summer 1988), 51–62 (p. 56). The editions of the *Motif Index* and *Type Index* referred to below are: Stith Thompson, *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature*, revised edition, 6 vols (Copenhagen, 1955–58), and Antti Aarne, *The Types of the Folktale*, second edition, translated and revised by Stith Thompson, *Folklore Fellows' Communications*, 184 (Helsinki, 1961) (cited as AT).

³⁶See Bolte and Polivka, I, 528–56, and Kurt Ranke, *Die zwei Brüder: Eine Studie zur vergleichenden Märchenforschung*, FFC, 114 (Helsinki, 1934). ³⁷Elaine Ranelagh in her *Men on Women* (London, 1985), pp. 31–35, gives the text of an ancient Egyptian tale she calls 'The Two Brothers', but it is quite different, being rather of the 'Potiphar's Wife' variety, in which one friend/brother resists the other's wife's deliberate efforts to seduce him. ³⁸E. V. Gordon, *Introduction to Old Norse* (Oxford, 1927), p. 26. ³⁹Stella M. Mills, *The Saga of Hrólfr Kraki* (Oxford, 1933), p. 51.

likewise; for Grani would go under no man but Sigurdr. Then Sigurdr leapt onto Grani and rode through the flaring fire. That eve he was wedded to Brynhildr. But when they came to bed, he drew the sword Gramr from its sheath and laid it between them.⁴⁰

This episode is missing from the earlier *Poetic Edda* (Copenhagen, Royal Library of Denmark, Reg. 2365), but references later in the text suggest that it was originally present in the eight lost manuscript pages known as the Great Lacuna. Although the surviving manuscript dates from the late thirteenth century, estimates of the date of composition typically assign the work to the previous century. There is considerable debate about its precise age, but one of the more recent studies states that 'there is no certainty that the poem antedates the twelfth century'.⁴¹ In other words, *Ami and Amile* still seems to provide the earliest example of substitution plus sword-of-chastity as a plot element. The sword-of-chastity motif in isolation certainly has a more ancient pedigree, occurring in the Pseudo-epigrapha and the Midrash Hagadol, which 'though compiled in Yemen (13 C.), contains very old (much Tanaitic!) material'.⁴² In his much-quoted study Bernard Heller even suggests that the motif dates to the third century.⁴³ Be this as it may, the narrative circumstances in which it occurs in these and other early texts are quite different. For instance, in the *Thousand and One Nights* when Aladdin lays his scimitar between himself and the Sultan's daughter after his genie abducts her from her bridal chamber, it is only a temporary measure pending his own marriage to the girl.⁴⁴ The most famous appearance of the sword of chastity is probably in the many versions of *Tristan*, and here too the motivation is quite different from that in *Ami and Amile*. Tristan has no illusions about his own chastity; rather the lovers use the sword to deceive the legitimate husband into thinking their relationship is innocent.

So the objections to a possible folkloric origin for the points of overlap between *Ami and Amile* and *Pwyll* are these: (1) there is no solid evidence that the folktale from which the relevant motifs could theoretically derive (the *Chaste Brother*) antedates the twelfth century, and even this twelfth-century date for the tale is only possible if one assumes that the relevant episode in the *Edda* is based on folk

⁴⁰Snorri Sturluson, *The Prose Edda*, edited by Arthur Gilchrist Brodeur (New York, 1916), p. 155. ⁴¹Theodore M. Andersson, *The Legend of Brynhild*, *Islandica*, 43 (Ithaca and London, 1980), p. 24, n. ⁴²Dov Neuman (Noy), 'Motif-Index of Talmudic-Midrashic Literature', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Indiana University, 1954), p. 40. ⁴³Bernard Heller, 'L'épée symbole et gardienne de chasteté', *Romania*, 36 (1907), 36-49 (pp. 46-48). ⁴⁴*Tales from the Arabian Nights: Selected from the Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, translated by Richard F. Burton and edited by David Shumaker (New York, 1978), pp. 600-1.

material; and (2) the specific combination of substitution in battle and substitution in bed occurs only in *Ami and Amile* and *Pwyll*.

Jackson's view on this second point is that 'the episode of the exchange of shapes, the Chaste Friend, and the duel must therefore have existed, *already* joined together, as a current popular tale before the latter part of the eleventh century, and this was used independently in France and in Wales'.⁴⁵ His argument is based on the belief that *Pwyll* antedates Radulfus, but it has been demonstrated above that the present state of knowledge precludes any such certainty. This eagerness to postulate a hypothetical folktale for which we have no evidence may also be part of a widespread scholarly unwillingness to admit the possibility of outside literary influences on the *Four Branches*. However much one may wish to regard *Pwyll* as a purely native composition, in the light of the available evidence the most economical hypothesis is that the Welsh text drew not on an unattested folktale, but on the French legend which certainly existed by 1090 at the very latest.

There remains an objection raised by Goetinck in her attempt to discredit Bar's argument in favour of a direct relationship between *Ami and Amile* and *Pwyll*. This is the fact that there is no sword of chastity in the Welsh tale. Bar did not see this as a problem, suggesting that the author of *Pwyll* merely suppressed the sword motif. Goetinck, on the other hand, claims that Bar's explanation is weak, saying that it is more realistic to assume that the sword of chastity is absent in *Pwyll* because it is unnecessary to the plot than to insist that the motif was originally present and was subsequently suppressed (p. 407). There is a problem here, however. Although it is obviously commendable to seek the simplest answer, as Goetinck suggests, and to avoid postulating motifs where none exist, in this case there is good reason to believe that the separating sword was originally present in *Pwyll*, or at least in the source from which the bed episode was derived. Quite simply, the chaste sleeping-together motif is extremely common and nearly always involves a separating object (typically a sword). This is true in medieval literature as well as international folklore. *Tristan* is the most obvious example, but Sigurd's chastity with regard to Brynhild in both *Eddas* provides a closer parallel, and the motif recurs in Book Nine of Saxo Grammaticus' *History of the Danes*.⁴⁶ It is also interesting to note as a possible parallel to *Pwyll*, that, in the marriage-bed substitution scene in the *Saga of Hrólfr Kraki*, Bøthvar, instead of drawing his sword, reveals his identity to his sister-in-law and it becomes a secret between them. Since, apart from this detail, the episode in the saga closely resembles the chaste sleeping-together

⁴⁵Jackson, *International Popular Tale*, p. 83. ⁴⁶See Heller, 'L'épée', for many more examples.

scene in the *Chaste Brother*, it seems reasonable to suppose that the sword was present in the saga's source, but was omitted for some reason, perhaps because, as a result of the popularity of both *Tristan* and *Ami and Amile*, it had become too hackneyed or even too absurd an element to include in a new composition. The lack of a sword in *Pwyll* may very well be due to similar circumstances. Perhaps the author, though inspired by the central themes of *Ami and Amile*, found the sword of chastity rather trite and left it out. Although Calin insists that 'the folk type exists as a generic whole, not to be chopped up into fragments at a scholar's whim' (p. 68), it is nonetheless quite possible for traditional material to be used selectively by a creative author, and there is no law of folk narrative prohibiting specific motifs from dropping out or being discarded where they are unnecessary, inappropriate, or simply displeasing to the author. In fact, Huet notes that the sword has disappeared even in some versions of the *Two Brothers* (p. 168, n. 1).

Thus far we have seen that neither the folkloric-origins argument nor the question of dates rules out the possibility that *Pwyll* drew directly on *Ami and Amile*. The next task is to examine the actual parallels between the texts to assess their significance. These may be classified for convenience under the headings of 'meeting place', 'change of identity', 'chaste bed scene', and 'reunion of spouses'. Translations are my own except where otherwise indicated. Editions of the text are as follows: *Pwyll*, R. L. Thomson; Radulfus, Ogle and Schullian; *Vita*, Mone; *Chanson de geste*, Dembowski; Middle English *Amis and Amiloun*, Leach;⁴⁷ Anglo-Norman *Amis e Amilun*, Kölbing; *Vaticinium*, Buchner; *Amlyn ac Amic*, P. Williams.

I. MEETING PLACE

PWYLL

Ac ef a welei lannerch yn y coet, o uaes guastat. (lines 13–14)
And he could see a clearing of a level field in the wood.

RADULFUS, AD BERNARDUM

No reference to setting.

⁴⁷This in preference to Le Saux's 1993 edition because Leach provides the text of the earliest version, while Le Saux edits one from the late fifteenth century. Also, as Le Saux herself says, Leach is the 'standard reference for the poem': *Amy's and Amylion*, edited by Françoise Le Saux (Exeter, 1993), p. 20. The Anglo-Norman *Amis e Amilun*, edited by Kölbing (n. 8 above), is translated by Judith Weiss, *The Birth of Romance: An Anthology* (London, 1992).

ST OMER VITA

Amicus comes upon Amelius and his men

juxta Sequanam fluvium in prato quodam florido. (col. 149)
near the river Seine in a certain flowery meadow.

CHANSON

Both the initial encounter of the two friends and their later meeting to discuss exchanging identities take place in flowery meadows:

uns prés, / Touz fu floris si comme el mois d'esté (laisse 11: lines 169–70)
a field, all flowered as if in the summertime.

Ainz, ne fina, si vint en pré flori. (52: 908)
Thus, he did not stop until he came to a flowered field.

AMIS AND AMILUN

In to a wilde forest he [Amis] cam. (line 992)

Where he is found sleeping by Amiloun:

So al þat niȝt he rode til day, / Til he com þer sir Amis lay / Vp in þat forest wide. (lines 1051–53)

AMIS E AMILUN

... vers une vespree / En un grand bois est entre. (lines 455–56)
 ... one evening / He [Amis] came into a great wood.

En cele nuit tant i errerent, / Ke par mi le bois passerent, / Ou sire Amis se reposeit. (lines 477–81)
That night they travelled so, / That they passed through the wood, / Where Sir Amis lay.

VATICINIUM

No mention.

AMLYN AC AMIC

The first meeting is in a meadow; the second on the edge of a wood:

y gwelei y mywn gweirglawd meillyonawc, ar lann yr avon a elwir Sein.
 (lines 219–20)
he could see in a clovered meadow on the bank of the river called Seine.

yd erchis Amlyn idaw vynet y gyt ac ef y'r coet yr oedynt yn seuyll yn y myml. (lines 349-50)

Amlyn asked him to go together with him into the wood on the edge of which they were standing.

II. CHANGE OF IDENTITY AND INSTRUCTIONS

PWYLL

'mi a'th rodaf di y'm lle i yn Annwuyn, ac a rodaf y wreic deccaf a weleist ei roet y gyscu gyt a thi beunoeth, a'm pryt innheu a'm ansawd arnat ti hyt na bo na guas ystauell na swydawc na dyn arall o'r a'm canlynwys i yroet a wyppo na bo miui uych ti.' (lines 53-57)

'Llyna,' hep ef, 'y llys a'r kyuoeth i'th uedyant. A chyrch y llys; nit oes yndi nep ni'th adnappo, ac wrth ual y guelych y guassanaeth yndi, yd adnabydy uoes y llys.' (lines 71-74)

'I will put you in my place in Annwfn, and I will give you the fairest woman you ever saw to sleep together with you nightly, and my own form and my appearance on you so that there may be neither chamberlain nor officer nor other person of those who ever followed me who will know that it is not me you are.'

'Behold', said he, 'the court and the domain in your possession. Approach the court; there is not in it anyone who will not know you, and according as you see the service in it, you will know the custom of the court.'

AD BERNARDUM

Moribus hii similes forma linguaue fuere, / Secerni poterant nullius inditio. / Permutant vestes, uxorem linquit Amicus / Amelio, nuper nupserat illa sibi. (lines 165-68)

Amicus and Amelius were alike in manners, appearance and speech; no one could tell them apart. They exchanged garments; Amicus left his wife, a bride, to Amelius. (Leach, p. 102)

ST OMER VITA

'Commutemus vestimenta et equos et ad domum meam proficiscere sine mora, et cum proditore comite pro te deo adjuvante bellum faciam.' cui comes Amelius respondit: 'quomodo ad domum tuam proficiscar, qui uxorem et familiam tuam non novi neque illorum faciem vidi?' respondit Amicus: 'secure ad domum meam perge et quae sit familia atque uxor mea, prudenter quaere, sed cave ne ullo modo tangas uxorem meam. tunc utrique flentes discesserunt. abiit autem Amicus ad regis curiam sub specie Amelii, Amelius vero ad domum socii sub specie Amici. (cols 151-52)

'Let us exchange clothes and horses and you set off without delay to my

home, and with God's help I will fight the treacherous count for you.' To which Count Amelius replied: 'How shall I go to your home, when I do not know your wife and household, nor have I seen the face of any of them?' Amicus replied: 'Proceed cheerfully to my home and skilfully discover who my wife and household may be, but take care that you do not touch my wife in any way'. Then both weeping they departed. Amicus now went away towards the king's court in the guise of Amelius, and Amelius towards his companion's home in the guise of Amicus.

CHANSON

'Dex ne fist home, qui de mere soit nés, / Se l'uns de noz a en un lieu esté, / Se l'autre i vient, que ja soit avizéz. / Ostéz vos dras et les miens vestiréz. / Droit a Paris m'en irai la cité.' (60: 1051-55)

'Sire compains, quant a Blaivies venréz, / Par celle foi qu'a moi devéz porter, / Et Lubias soz le pin trouveréz, / Li siens services voz sera presentéz. / Fiuls de baron, voz le refuseréz.' (60: 1064-67)

'Le soir au vespre, quant voz devréz souper, / A ma grant table asseoir voz iréz, / Le seneschal feréz més apporter, / Lubias iert a ton destre costel, / Li cuens Gautiers a ton senestre léz.' (60: 1073-77)

'Sire compains, en ma chambre entreréz, / Et Lubias si fera autretel. / Li siens services voz iert abandonnéz, / Sire compains, et voz le refuséz. / Biaux chiers compains, bonne foi me portéz / Et voz ramembre de la grant loiauté, / Que li uns l'autre se doit bien foi porter.' (60: 1086-92)

'There is no man alive who, if one of us has passed through a place and then the other comes, could tell the difference. Take off your clothes and wear mine, and I'll go right off to Paris. . . . Dear friend, when you come to Blaye and find Lubias waiting under the pine tree, she will offer you her womanhood; by the loyalty you owe me, noble baron, refuse it. . . . In the evening when you go to supper, you will sit at my great table and have the steward bring in the meats; Lubias will be on your right side, count Gautier on your left.⁴⁸ . . . Dear friend, go to my room and Lubias will do the same. She will offer you her womanhood, and you will refuse it, my dear friend. Good companion, remain faithful to me and remember the great loyalty that each of us has sworn to the other.' (Danon and Rosenberg, pp. 62-63)

AMIS AND AMILOUN

'Ac broper,' he [Amiloun] seyð, 'haue al mi wede, / & in þi robe y schal me schrede, / Riȝt as þe self it ware. . . .' (lines 1117-19)

'Broper,' he seyð, 'wende hom now riȝt / To mi leuedi, þat is so briȝt, / & do as y schal þe sain; / & as þou art a gentil kniȝt, / þou ly bi hir in bed ich niȝt, / Til þat y com ogain.' (lines 1129-34)

⁴⁸One cannot but wonder whether this has anything to do with the mysterious 'earl' seated next to Pwyll at the court of Annwn.

AMIS E AMILUN

'Mes pur vus la bataille frai, / Le serment sauvement jurrai, / Ke jeo unkes ne li forfis, / E quiderunt ke seit Amis.' (lines 497–500)

'Mes chivalers k'or sunt ici, / Od vus desormes demorrunt / E a ma court od vus irrunt; / Kar kaunt avroms robes change, / Dunc quiderunt de verite, / Ke vus seiez lur seingnur; / E si vus requer par amur / Ke de ma femme facez autant, / E en fet e en semblant, / Com jeo maimes iceo fusse, / Ke ele encheson ne truisse, / Ke ele ait autre mes ke mei; / Car ceo vus di en bone fei, / Ke ele est mult aparcevante!' / Est vus Amis trestut le grante. / Lur robes aitant ont change, / E Amilun s'en est ale. (lines 504–20)

'But I shall undertake the fight for you and safely swear an oath that I never did her any wrong, and they will think I am Amis.' . . . 'My knights, who are here now, will stay with you henceforward and go with you to my court. For when we have changed clothes, they will truly think you are their lord. Moreover, I entreat you, in all affection, to do the same to my wife, in appearance and in actuality, as if I myself were here, so that she has no reason to think she has anybody except me. For I tell you truly, she has very sharp eyes!' Amis was in complete agreement with his plan. Then they changed clothes, and Amilun departed. (Weiss, pp. 166–67)

VATICINIUM

It is the princess herself who suggests that Lodovicus exchange identities with Alexander:

' . . . cum omni agilitate ad regem Allexandrum pergas et roga eum propter deum et nostrum amorem ut in hac extrema necessitate tibi subueniat ut personaliter loco tui huc veniat et pro te pugnet! Vos vero duo estis tam similes per omnia, quod nullus ex imperio noticiam eius habebit, nisi ego sola. Et si istud feceris, mortem euadere potes et honorem tuum ac meum perpetuo optinere.' (Buchner, p. 80)

' . . . with all haste go to King Alexander and entreat him by God and our love to help you in this extreme need and to come here to take your place and fight for you! You two are truly so similar in all ways that none of the empire will perceive it to be him, save I alone. And if you do thus, you can escape death and obtain your honour and mine perpetually.'

Lodovicus repeats her words to Alexander:

'Et sic ad te veni, quia, ut dicit Florentina et hoc uobis constat, tam similes sumus per omnia, quod nullus noticiam tui habebit nisi Florentina.' (p. 81) 'And thus have I come to you, because, as Florentina said and this is well-known to you, we are so similar in all ways, that none will perceive that it is you save Florentina.'

Alexander, who is due to be married on the morrow, replies:

' . . . tu vero locum meum tamquam rex tenebis, quia sumus ita similes, quod nullus noticiam tui habebit, nisi quod sis persona mea, rex Allexander. In facie ecclesie vxorem meam desponsabis et conuiuium tamquam rex tenebis. Cum vero ad lectum veneris, michi sis fidelis!' (p. 81)

' . . . you shall indeed take my place as king, because we are so similar that none will notice you, except that you are playing my part, King Alexander. Marry my wife in front of the church and hold the banquet as king. When you come to bed, be true to me!'

AMLYN AC AMIC

A gwedy eu dyuot yno, y dirgelwch y coet, y gerydu yn vawr a wnaeth Amic am ysgaelussaw y gynghor, ac erchi a wnaeth idaw newidyaw gwisc a march ac ef, ual y gallei ef, yn gyntaf peth, mynet tu a'e lys ef att y wreic briawt. . . . 'Dos ragot,' heb yr Amic, 'ac amovyn am vyng gwreic a'm tylwyth, a thi a geffy gyfarwydyt yn hawd. A cheis ymoglyt yn gywir na wnelych gewilyd ym am vyng gwreic. (lines 350–54, 359–61)

And after they came into the secrecy of the wood, Amic rebuked him greatly for disregarding his counsel and asked him to change clothes and horse with him so he could in the first instance go in the direction of his court towards his wife. . . . 'Go on your way,' said Amic, 'and ask for my wife and my people, and you will get information easily, and try truly to avoid shaming me concerning my wife.'

III. CHASTE BED SCENE

PWYLL

Y gyt ac yd aethant yn y guely, ymchwelut e weneb at yr erchwyn a oruc ef, a'y geuyn attei hitheu. O hynny hyt trannoeth, ny dywot ef wrthi hi un geir. (lines 94–96)

As soon as they went into the bed, he turned his face to the edge of the bed, and his back to her. From that until the morrow, he did not say to her a single word.

AD BERNARDUM

Cum qua dum strato de noctibus incubat uno, / Crebrius et pulsata illa latus iuuenis, / Avertit faciem, metuit dare basia saltem; / Sed sibi dum semper illa molesta foret, / Noctibus assiduus nudus deponitur ensis / Inter eos, tristis unde fit ipsa nimis. (lines 173–78)

When he lay down with her in one bed, and she touched the youth's side too often, he turned his face away, afraid even to kiss her. When she got too troublesome in her persistence at night, he placed a bared sword between them. At this her grief was exceeding. (Leach, p. 102)

ST OMER VITA

At uxor Amici, ut vidit Amelium comitem, credens suum esse virum more solito amplectens illum oscula ei praeberere voluit. cui ille dixit: 'recede a me mulier, quia instat mihi tempus flendi et non gaudendi. ex quo enim a te discessi, multa passus sum adversa et adhuc multa restant perferenda.' In nocte autem cum eundem intrassent lectum, insem inter se et ipsam posuit dicens: 'vide ne mihi aliquo modo appropinques, quia statim hoc ense morieris.' et sic reliquas duxerunt noctes, donec Amicus ex improviso rediit, volens experiri, si ei fidem de uxore sibi commissa servasset. (col. 152)

Now Amicus' wife, as soon as she saw count Amelius, believing him to be her husband, and embracing him in the usual way, wanted to offer him a kiss. To which he said: 'Depart from me, woman, for the time is at hand for me to grieve and not to rejoice. For this reason I have drawn away from you, I have suffered many ills and many yet remain to be borne'. Then at night when they had got into the same bed, he placed a sword between himself and her, saying: 'See that you do not draw any nearer to me, for you will at once die by this sword'. And thus they passed the subsequent nights, until Amicus unexpectedly returned, wanting to test whether he had kept faith concerning the wife entrusted to him.

CHANSON

Li cuens Amiles en la chambre est venus, / En lit Ami s'ala couchier touz nus. / Avec lui porte son brant d'acier molu. / Et Lubias a les siens dras tolus, / Deléz le conte s'a couchié nu a nu, / Quelle le cuide acoler com son dru. / Deléz lui sent le brant d'acier molu, / Grant paor ot, si s'en est traite ensus. / Dex, com est effraee! (64: 1158-66)

Quant Lubias senti nue l'espee, / Grant paor a, moult en fu affraee. / 'Sire, dist elle, ou m'avéz voz trouvee? / Por moi ocirre aportastez espee.' (65: 1167-70)

Ou voit la damme, si l'a mise a raison: / 'Dame, dist il, par Deu qui fist le mont, / Nul bel samblant faire ne voz poons. / Ce fu l'autrier que je fui a Charlon, / Que il tenoit sa cort a Mont Loon, / Moi dist uns mires, qui iert de Besanson, / Qui me donna et herbes et puisons / Que en mon cors avoie grant frison, / Et que a fame n'eusce habitacion / Ne compaignie tel com avoir doit on, / Ainz m'en tenisse trente jors a bandon.' (66: 1190-1200)

Count Amile went to his room and lay down all naked in his friend's bed; with him he had his keen steel sword. Lubias took off her clothes too, and lay down naked next to the naked count, for she expected to make love to her husband. She felt the keen steel blade and jumped back in fear. God, how frightened she was!

When Lubias felt the naked sword, she was seized with fright and dread. 'Lord,' she said, 'what have I done wrong? You have brought your sword to kill me!' . . . Then he turned to the lady and spoke: 'Lady,' he said, 'as God is

our creator, I cannot love you tonight. Only the other day, when I was with Charles as he was holding his court at Laon, a doctor from Besançon gave me herbs and potions for a great fever in my body and told me for thirty whole days I should not lie with a woman or take a man's pleasure.' (Danon and Rosenberg, pp. 65-66)

AMIS AND AMILOUN

& when it was comen to þe nigt, / Sir Amis & þat leuedi brigt, / To bed þai gun go; / & whan þai were to-gider ylayd, / Sir Amis his swerd out braid / & layd bitvix hem tvo. // Þe leuedi loked opon him þo / Wroplich wiþ her eizen tvo, / Sche wend hir lord were wode. / 'Sir,' sche seyde, 'whi farstow so? / Þus were þou nouzt won to do, / Who haþ changed þi mode?' / 'Dame,' he seyde, 'sikerly, / Ich haue swiche a malady / Þat mengeþ al mi blod, / & al min bones be so sare, / Y nold nouzt touche þi bodi bare / For al þis wardles gode!' // Þus, ywis, þat hendy knigt / Was holden in þat fourtennigt / As lord & prince in pride; / Ac he forgat him never a nigt, / Bitvix him & þat leudi brigt / His swerd he layd beside. (lines 1159-82)

AMIS E AMILUN

Amis, kant il ennuita, / Les la dame se coucha. / S'espeie nue entre eus posa; / La dame de ceo s'enmerveilla. / A la dame ne vout parler / Deske al matin a son lever. / Chaskune nuit si se contint, / Deske Amilon a l'ouhtel vint. (lines 537-44)

When night fell, Amis lay down next to the lady. He placed his naked sword between them, at which she was much astonished. He would not talk to her until morning, when he rose. Every night he behaved in this way until Amilun returned home. (Weiss, p. 167)

VATICINIUM

Cum vero nox adesset, Lodouicus lectum intravit; regina iuxta eum collocata est. Ipse gladium extraxit et inter se et reginam posuit, ita quod caro eius carnem regine non tetigit. Illa vero ammirabatur, sed nichil loquebatur. Sic ambo adinuicem iacuerunt, quamdiu rex Allexander absens erat. (Buchner, p. 81)

When night came, Lodovicus went into the bed; the queen lay next to him. He drew his sword and placed it between himself and the queen, so that his flesh did not touch her flesh. She wondered indeed, but said nothing. Thus they lay with each other, as long as King Alexander was absent.

AMLYN AC AMIC

A'r nos honno yd aethant y gysgu y'r vn gwely. Ac ual y doethant y'r gwely y dodes ef y gledyf yn noeth y rynthaw ef a hi, a dywedut wrthi, o nessaei hi attaw ef yn nes no hynny, y lladei y phenn. Ac uelly y buant beunoeth, yny doeth kennat Amic, yn dirybud nossweith attunt y'r ystauell, y edrych pa wed yd oedynt yn kadw kywirdeb ac ef am y wreic. (lines 370-75)

That night they went to sleep in the same bed, and as they came to the bed, he placed his naked sword between himself and her, and said to her that if she approached him nearer than that he would strike off her head. And thus they were each night until a messenger of Amic's came to them suddenly one night in the chamber to see in what manner they were keeping faith with him concerning his wife.

IV. REUNION OF SPOUSES

PWYLL

Y vely a gyrchwys, a'y vrec a aeth attaw. Kyntaf y gwnaeth ef ymdidan a'y wreic ac ymyrru ar digriwch serchawl a charyat arnei. A hynny ny ordif-nassei hi ys blwydyn, a hynny a uedylywys hi; 'Oy a Duw,' heb hi, 'pa amgen uedwl yssyd yndaw ef heno noc ar a uu yr blwydyn y heno!' A medylyaw a wnaeth yn hir. A guedy y medwl hwnnw, duhunaw a wnaeth ef, a farabyl a dywot ef wrthi hi, a'r eil, a'r trydyt. Ac attep ny chauas ef genthi hi yn hynny. 'Pa achaws,' heb ynteu, 'na dywedy di wrthyf i?' 'Dywedaf wrthyf,' heb hi, 'na dywedeis ys blwydyn y gymmeint yn y kyfryw le a hwnn.' 'Paham?' heb ef. 'Ys glut a beth yd ymdidanysam ni.' 'Meuyl im,' heb hi, 'yr blwydyn y neithwyr o'r pan elem yn nyblyc yn dillat guely, na digrifwch, nac ymdidan, nac ymchwelut ohonot dy wyneb attaf i yn chwaethach a uei uwy no hynny, or bu y rom ni.' Ac yna y medylywys ef, 'Oy a Arglwyd Duw,' heb ef, 'cadarn a ungwyr y gydymdeithas, a diffleis, a geueis i yn gedymdeith.' Ac yna y dywot ef wrth y wreic. 'Arglwydes,' heb ef, 'na chapla di uiui. Y rof i a Duw,' heb ynteu, 'ni chyskeis inheu gyt a thi yr blwydyn y neithwyr, ac ni orwedeis.' Ac yna menegi y holl gyfranc a wnaeth idi. 'I Duw y dygaf uyng kyffes,' heb hitheu, 'gauael gadarn a geueist ar gedymdeith yn herwyd ymlad a frouedigaeth y gorff, a chadw kywirdeb wrthyf titheu!' 'Arglwydes,' heb ef, 'sef ar y medwl hwnnw yd oedwn inheu tra deweis wrthyf ti.' 'Diryued oed hynny,' heb hitheu. (lines 146-70).

He headed for his bed, and his wife went to him. First he conversed with his wife and engaged in affectionate pleasure and love with her. And that she had not been accustomed to for a year, and she reflected on that: 'O God', said she, 'what a different mind is upon him tonight than there has been for a year till tonight!' And she pondered at length. And after that meditation he awoke, and he uttered a remark to her, and a second time, and a third. And he did not get an answer from her then. 'What is the reason', said he, 'you do not speak to me?'

'I am telling you', said she, 'I have not spoken so much in a year in such a place as this.'

'Why?' said he. 'We have conversed continually.'

'Shame on me', said she, 'if there has been between us for a year to last night from when we would go into the folds of the bedclothes either pleasure or conversation, or your turning your face to me, much less what might have been more than that.' And then he thought, 'O Lord God', said he, 'uniquely steadfast in companionship, and constant, is he whom I have got as a friend'. And then he said to his wife, 'Lady', said he, 'do not blame me. Between me and God', said he, 'I have not slept together with you a year until last night, and I did not lie down'. And then he told the whole story to her.

'To God I bear my confession', said she, 'a strong hold did you have upon a companion in respect of fighting the temptation of the body, and keeping faith with you!'

'Lady', said he, 'it is upon that thought that was while I was silent with you'.

'Not strange were that', said she.

AD BERNARDUM

No mention.

ST OMER VITA

No mention.

CHANSON

Ou voit Ami, si l'a amentetie: / 'Qui sont ces gens qui viennent par ces rues?' / Dist li cuens: 'Damme, ne soiez esperdue, / C'est la gens Charle a la barbe chenue, / Ces ameroiz, se de moi avez cure.' / 'Volentiers, sire, mais que seüre fuisse / Qu'en vostre lit anquenuit me geüsse, / Que n'i fust mise la vostre espee nue.' / Dist li cuens: 'Damme, bien seroit mais mesure; / Mais les dolours ai je moult grans eties, / Parmi le cors me sont outre corrues. / La merci Deu, or me perdent et fuient.' (99: 1981-92)

Li cuens Amis s'en est aléz couchier, / Dejouste lui Lubias sa moillier. / Quant gabé ont asséz et delitié / Et tout ont fait quantque an lit afiert, / La male damme l'en prinst a arraisnier. (100: 2003-7)

[Lubias] saw Ami and questioned him: 'Who are these people coming along the streets?' The count said 'Lady, do not be troubled. These are the men of white-bearded Charles. Whom you will welcome in friendship if you care at all for me.' 'With pleasure my lord on condition you let me lie in bed with you tonight without your naked sword between us.' The count answered: 'Yes, lady, now it is perfectly fitting. The pains and fever I had were great and affected my whole body, but now, thanks to God, they have left me and fled.' ...

Count Ami went to his bed: beside him lay his wife Lubias. Once they had enjoyed and delighted each other and done all that man and wife may do, the wicked woman began to speak. ... (Danon and Rosenberg, pp. 87-88)

AMIS AND AMILOUN

Sir Amiloun & þat leuedi brigt / In bedde were layd biside; / In his armes he gan hir kis / & made his ioie & michel blis, / For noþing he nold abide. // Þe leuedi astite asked him þo / Whi þat he hadde farn so / Al þat fourtennigt, / Laid his swerd bitven hem to, / þat sche no durst nougt for wele no wo / Touche his bodi arigt. / Sir Amiloun bipouzt him þan / His broþer was a trewe man, / þat hadde so done, apligt. / 'Dame,' he seyd, 'ichil þe sain / & telle þe þat soþe ful fain, / Ac wray me to no wigt.' / Þe leuedi astite him frain gan, / For his loue, þat þis world wan, / Telle hir whi it ware. / þan astite þat hendy man, / Al þe soþe he teld hir þan, / To court hou he gan fare, / & hou he slou3 þe steward strong, / þat wiþ tresoun & wiþ wrong / Wold haue his broþer forfare, / & hou his broþer þat hendy knigt / Lay wiþ hir in bed ich nigt / While þat he was þare. // Þe leuedi was ful wroþ, ypligt, / & oft missayd hir lord þat nigt / Wiþ speche bitvix hem to, / & seyd, 'Wiþ wrong & michel unrigt / þou slou3 þer a gentil knigt; / Y wis, it was iuel ydo!' (lines 1460-94)

AMIS E AMILUN

Com il en son lit gisoit, / Sa bele dame a li disoit: / 'Me diez par amour de moi, / Car jeo vus aime en bone fey, / T'espee nue meistes entre nous: / Sire, pur quei le feistes vous?' / 'Dame, jeo ne le dirrai mes: / A ceo ne me fai jeo confes.' / Par ceo savoit sir Amillioun, / Qu'Amis estoit leal compaignon. (lines 801-10)

As he lay in his bed, his lovely lady said to him: 'Tell me, for love of me, for I love you most truly, why, my lord, did you put your naked sword between us?' 'My lady, I shan't tell you; I won't confess it.' Amilun knew by this that Amis was a true friend. (Weiss, p. 171)

VATICINIUM

Cum nox adesset, lectum cum regina intrauit; statim verba dulcia regine protulit ac eam amplexatus est. Que ait: 'Iam tempus esset, ut saltem aliquod signum dileccionis per te inuenirem.' At ille: 'Quare talia dicis?' Illa respondit: 'Nonne ab illo tempore, quo te desponsaui, omni nocte nudum gladium inter nos posuisti, ita quod cara tua carnem meam non tetigit?' Rex, cum hoc audisset, intra se cogitabat: 'Iam video quod socius meus est michi fidelis.' Et ait: 'Karissima, hoc non feci propter malum tuum; sed quia dicitur quod mulier sit fragilis nature; ideo te probare volui.' (Buchner, pp. 82-83)

When night came, he went into the bed with the queen; at once he spoke sweet words to the queen and embraced her. She said: 'It were indeed time I got at least some sign of love from you'. And he: 'Why do you say so?' She replied: 'Is it not so that since that time when I married you, every night you placed between us a naked sword, so that your flesh did not touch my flesh?' When

he heard this, the king thought to himself: 'Now I see that my companion is true to me'. And he said: 'Dearest, this I did not do for your harm; but because it is said that woman is weak by nature; therefore I wanted to test you'.

AMLYN AC AMIC

No mention.

The similarities between *Pwyll* and the principal early versions of *Ami and Amile* may not be close enough to permit the definite conclusion that the two texts are directly related; however, it is probably safe to say that they are more like each other than either is like any other story for which we have concrete evidence. Of the only two surviving contenders for the role of a common source, the *Two Brothers* (which cannot be proved to have existed early enough in the first place) has been demonstrated to share an unimpressive total of three motifs with *Ami and Amile* and two with *Pwyll*, while *Lantfrid and Cobbo* is similar to both texts in theme but to neither in detail.

In the French legend and the Welsh tale, on the other hand, it is precisely the similarity of detail which leads one to suspect influence of the one upon the other. Let us take the categories of apparent overlap one at a time. The meeting place of the two protagonists is the least definite point of similarity, but may nonetheless be significant. In *Radulfus* and *Vaticinium* the setting of the encounter is not specified, and in some versions of *Ami and Amile* both the heroes' initial and later meetings occur in described landscapes, while in others only one meeting has a specific setting. This rather complicates the business of comparison. However, in the Middle English, the Anglo-Norman, and the Welsh versions at least one encounter takes place in a forest, as does the meeting of *Pwyll* and *Arawn*. In the *Vita* and its Welsh translation the first meeting is in a flowery meadow on the banks of the Seine, as are both meetings in the *Chanson*. According to Curtius, the *chansons de geste* use trees and hills for battle- or death-scenes, and springs, brooks, grass, or orchards for pleasant meetings.⁴⁹ It might be that while the *Chanson*, the *Vita*, and *Amlyn ac Amic* were influenced by *chanson de geste* conventions, the forest as meeting point was a primitive feature of the original *Ami and Amile* and it is this that was borrowed by *Pwyll*. The evidence is not sufficient to be conclusive—after all, a forest is an obvious place for adventures to happen—but it is provocative.

A stronger case may be made for the plot parallels. During the exchange of identities, in all texts it is made abundantly clear that no

⁴⁹Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, translated by Willard R. Trask (London, 1979), p. 201.

one will be able to tell that there has been a substitution. Where some variation occurs is in the husband's instructions regarding his friend's conduct with his wife. Goetinck argues that this is a significant difference between *Pwyll* and *Amlyn ac Amic*, indicating that the two stories are not related. She states that while Pwyll voluntarily maintains a continence that he is neither obliged nor expected to observe, Amlyn has to promise Amic to respect his wife and then still needs the separating sword to restrain himself (p. 407). This is indeed true in *Amlyn ac Amic*, its source the *Vita*, the *Chanson*, the Middle English poem, and the *Vaticinium* version, but not in *Ad Bernardum* or the Anglo-Norman text. In the last, in fact, Amilun apparently encourages Amis to make love to his wife! One can hardly argue, under these circumstances, that Pwyll's optional chastity constitutes a fundamental contradiction of the situation in the French story.

In the bed-scene there are several variations in detail. The most obvious is that in *Pwyll* the sword, which is a feature of all versions of *Ami and Amile*, is absent. There are, however, also marked differences among the variant texts of the latter. In the hagiographic versions, the *Vita* and its Welsh translation, Amelius actually threatens the woman with death if she touches him. In the *Chanson* and the Middle English poem he pretends that an illness forces him to abstain for a certain period. However, in Radulfus, the Anglo-Norman poem, and *Vaticinium*, he gives no excuse, but simply deposits his sword in the bed and turns away. Apart from the sword, the situation in these three is identical with that in *Pwyll*: there are neither threats nor explanations, the man turns away, and neither of the bedfellows speaks a word at night for the entire duration of the husband's absence.

Neither Radulfus nor either of the hagiographic versions reveals what happens in bed when the husband finally returns. In the *Chanson*, the Anglo-Norman poem, and *Vaticinium* he makes an excuse to explain his apparent conduct, but does not reveal the truth, while in *Amis and Amiloun*, as in *Pwyll*, he tells his wife honestly about the substitution. Of the four versions containing a reunion scene, all but the *Chanson* emphasize the husband's realisation that his friend is steadfastly faithful. In the two hagiographic texts he knows this already because he has been spying on the couple earlier. What is significant in all versions of *Ami and Amile*, as well as in *Pwyll*, is that the chaste sleeping together is treated as proof of extraordinary loyalty in friendship.

This is the fundamental similarity between *Pwyll* and the French legend. Yet Goetinck argues that the two must be unrelated because, among other differences, *Ami and Amile* is centrally concerned with the ideal of perfect friendship, whereas Pwyll and Arawn initially meet at odds with each other and only later develop their amicable relationship. Her contention is that while the substitution in *Ami and*

Amile serves to illustrate and reinforce the central theme, in *Pwyll* it functions only as a means to explain the hero's title, *Pen Annwfn* (p. 408). This argument is tenuous at best. Although it is undeniable that friendship has a supreme and central place in *Ami and Amile* that it does not occupy in *Pwyll*, it is quite inaccurate to regard the Welsh tale as unconcerned with the sentiment. Not only do the *Four Branches* as a whole deal skilfully with a variety of human relationships, but in the first section of *Pwyll* specifically there are repeated references to friendship and its value. In atonement for his offence, Pwyll offers to purchase Arawn's friendship (lines 39 and 45); Arawn replies that in return for killing Hafgan, Pwyll will win 'a firm bond of friendship' (line 52); one of the pleasant aspects of the court of Annwfn is 'conversation with friends' (line 100); Arawn's first words upon his reunion with Pwyll are 'God repay you for your friendship' (line 134); Arawn and his wife in bed praise Pwyll highly for his steadfast friendship (lines 161–68); the men of Dyfed thank God that Pwyll and Arawn have become friends (line 180); and, finally, the first section of *Pwyll* closes with a description of how the two rulers thenceforth 'began to cement the friendship between them' through the exchange of gifts (lines 184–85).

The friendship of Pwyll and Arawn clearly is important to the author, or he would not have given it so much attention. Edmond Faral, who published the earliest argument for a direct relationship between *Pwyll* and *Ami and Amile*, hinted at this already in 1929. He states that *Pwyll*

is directly inspired, in many of its elements, by traditions which had a great vogue in continental Europe. The episode of Arawn temporarily giving his kingdom and wife to Pwyll is nothing but a refashioning of the legend of Ami and Amile: many details prove this, having been artificially incorporated into the Welsh tale (for example, Pwyll's here unmotivated reserve with Arawn's wife, or again the unexpected focus on friendship in a plot where it plays no part, etc.).⁵⁰

⁵⁰My translation: '[*Pwyll*] s'inspire directement, en plusieurs de ses parties, de traditions qui avaient une large vogue dans l'Europe continentale. L'épisode d'Arawn cédant pour un temps son royaume et sa femme à Pwyll n'est pas autre chose qu'une refaçon de la légende d'Ami et Amile: plusieurs détails le prouvent, qui ont été incorporés artificiellement au conte gallois (par exemple, la réserve, que rien ne commande ici, de Pwyll auprès de la femme d'Arawn, ou encore la place inattendue de l'amitié dans une intrigue où il n'a aucun rôle à jouer, etc.)' (Edmond Faral, *La Légende arthurienne: Études et documents*, Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études, 3 vols (Paris, 1929), II, 251). Although Faral is the first to have expounded this theory, the similarity between the two texts had been noted in passing ten years earlier by M. B. Ogle, who said they must derive 'no doubt from the same source, which seems to have been

Faral is correct in observing that the friendship does not advance the plot of the tale. The Welsh author, who seems to have had an interest in depicting human relationships generally, may well have been attracted to the portrayal of perfect friendship in the French legend, and have incorporated it into his narrative in spite of its being unnecessary to the further development of the action.

The scholarship concerned with the possible relationship between *Pwyll* and *Ami and Amile* is surprisingly sparse. Apart from an unelaborated comment by M. B. Ogle, Faral was the first to draw attention to the apparent overlap, and then only in a footnote as part of his attempted refutation of the suggestion that Geoffrey of Monmouth's work might show any traces of input from *Pwyll*. In his view this is impossible, on the grounds that the manuscript tradition of the *Four Branches* only dates back to the fourteenth century (he ignored NLW MS Peniarth 6 here) and that *Pwyll* is full of cultural references belonging to the sort of feudal civilization depicted in French romances of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (p. 251). While Faral's more general statements would be contested by most scholars today, his observation of the specific similarities of the actual narratives of *Pwyll* and *Ami and Amile* remains sound. However, the immediate response to Faral's suggestion was vehement opposition from Joseph Loth in a detailed review. Loth accused his colleague of ignorance, insufficient knowledge of Celtic culture, and hasty, poorly considered conclusions. The tone of this section of his review is highly confrontational, if not contemptuous, and one suspects that the two scholars' differing views on medieval Welsh literature were rather a personal sore point. Loth objects to Faral's suggestion on two grounds: first, that the apparent similarity of *Pwyll* to *Ami and Amile* can be satisfactorily explained by reference to Celtic rather than Continental culture; secondly, that Faral's dating of *Pwyll* is totally misguided. Loth insists that the entire substitution episode in *Pwyll* is pure Celtic mythology.⁵¹ Yet in spite of the certainty with which he makes this statement, Loth fails either to back up his mythological theory or to give any reasons why French influence should be ruled out. Furthermore, in attacking Faral's knowledge of the dates of the Welsh material, he makes no mention of the

an oriental tale' ('Some Theories of Irish Literary Influence and the Lay of Yonac', *Romanic Review*, 10 (1919), 123-48 (p. 131)). No further explanation follows this assertion. ⁵¹'Comme en Irlande, un héros, Pwyll, est sur le même pied qu'un dieu, Arawn. Ils se rencontrent étant à la chasse. Ils échangent leur forme corporelle. Pwyll, sous la forme d'Arawn, triomphe de l'adversaire d'Arawn, lui aussi un dieu du monde souterrain; tout au plus pourrait-on voir un trait remarquable d'amitié ou mieux de fraternité guerrière, dans le fait que Pwyll respecte la femme d'Arawn qui le prend pour son mari': J. Loth, reviewing *La Légende arthurienne*, by Faral, in *Le Moyen Age*, 41 (1931), 289-331 (p. 306).

dates of *Ami and Amile*, nor does he even suggest that the age of *Pwyll* precludes any Continental influence. Loth's repeated statements that Faral is incorrect and misinformed give the impression that he was not so much interested in disproving the possibility that *Ami and Amile* might have influenced *Pwyll* as in seeking to discredit any attempt by Faral to discuss Welsh literature in any terms.

The next coherent discussion of the relationship between *Pwyll* and the French legend appears nearly fifteen years later in the article devoted to the topic by Bar, who gives no indication of being aware of either Faral's initial proposition or Loth's response. Bar bases his argument upon two points: first, that the motif of a substitute in bed being mistaken by a woman for her husband, with the prior knowledge of the husband, is rare; secondly, that *Pwyll* and the Welsh version of *Ami and Amile* (*Amlyn ac Amic*) both occur in the Red Book of Hergest. In support of his first point Bar—carefully specifying that he means only husband-substitutions made with the consent of the legitimate spouse—notes that Thompson's *Motif-Index* finds only three tales with this motif.⁵² He further argues that such marriage-bed substitution in conjunction with substitution in combat is rarer still.

Bar admits that the separating sword between Amile and his friend's wife is absent in *Pwyll*, but he dismisses this difference when presenting his second major argument: the existence of *Amlyn ac Amic* in the Red Book. He asks why the teller of *Pwyll* should not have known *Amlyn ac Amic* and imitated it, while suppressing the sword motif to tailor the story to the audience's taste (p. 172). Bar is unquestionably misguided here, for the relative ages of *Pwyll* and *Amlyn ac Amic* preclude any influence of the latter upon the former. Nevertheless, Bar's argument about the unusual combination of circumstances surrounding the chaste sleeping together is compelling. The substitution in combat followed by the substitution in bed, *arranged by the husband*, is a distinctive situation which seems to occur only in *Pwyll* and *Ami and Amile*.

Jackson, who was the next to take up the issue, in 1961, objected to this interpretation. His argument's credibility is undermined by his rigid insistence that *Pwyll* must be at least as old as the oldest surviving text of *Ami and Amile* and that the Welsh story was also 'clearly' using much earlier sources.⁵³ He does not deny the similarity between the two, but he argues that because the incompatibility of the dates rules out any direct influence, they must each have drawn independently upon some widely circulating folktale in which the unusual combination of the exchange of shapes, the chastity of the friend, and the single combat already existed. While this is by no means impossible, it

⁵²*Pwyll*, p. 170. ⁵³*International Popular Tale*, p. 83.

is not supported by any concrete evidence. Jackson's views on the relative dates are as controversial as anyone's, and that *Pwyll* and *Ami and Amile* derive independently from variants of the same unattested folktale is no more likely than that *Ami and Amile* drew on folkloric material which it then transmitted in part to *Pwyll*; one could argue the case either way, given that Jackson's folktale and the 'Ur-*Ami and Amile*' are both only hypothetical constructs.

The most recent published discussion of the topic is by Goetinck, and her quarrel, like Jackson's, is specifically with Bar. Her fundamental argument is that the similarities between *Pwyll* and *Ami and Amile* are superficial. She makes six major points, two of which (the central role of friendship in *Ami and Amile*, and the absence of the sword of chastity in *Pwyll*) have already been dealt with above. Her four remaining points merit individual treatment.

First, she argues, *Ami and Amile* is a Christian epic while *Pwyll* is clearly pagan. The immediate flaw in Goetinck's argument here is that the earliest extant version of the former story is Radulfus' thoroughly non-Christian poem. While Calin argues that Radulfus' summary cannot be proved to have had a secular source,⁵⁴ it seems highly unlikely, given that the poet was a monk, that he would have suppressed any Christian elements present in the original.⁵⁵ As it stands, the earliest version of *Ami and Amile* is no more Christian than *Pwyll*, and if anything is less so, for the Welsh text at least betrays the Christian environment of its author in its dialogue, which is riddled with such religious interjections as *dioer* and *y rof i a Duw*. Radulfus, on the other hand, creates a pagan classical atmosphere by mentioning Cupid, Mars, Erebus, Phlegethon, and Styx, and never once gives any hint that Amicus' and Amelius' surroundings are Christian. It is thus tempting to agree with Leach that the Christian elements of *Ami and Amile* are later intrusions into an essentially pagan story-line (p. xxxi). At the very least, one may state that it is far from certain that the legend was Christian in its original form.

Goetinck raises an additional objection concerning the nature of the substitution in combat in the two narratives. In *Ami and Amile* no one but the two friends knows about the substitution, while in *Pwyll*, Goetinck claims, Hafgan is aware of his opponent's identity (p. 407). This is debatable. Hafgan does not give any sign of having recognized that Pwyll is not Arawn until after he has received his mortal wound. One must remember that the original reason for the substitution was that Arawn was incapable of slaying Hafgan himself and required the assistance of a mortal. Could it not be that Hafgan simply realizes that he must have been fighting a mortal because he has suffered deadly

injury? In other words, the substitution in *Pwyll* may be just as secret as that in *Ami and Amile*.

Goetinck views the two combat situations as distinctively dissimilar. In *Ami and Amile* it is a judicial ordeal between two mortals; in *Pwyll* it is a plain fight between a man and an Otherworld being (p. 408). These are fair observations, but again the argument turns on what one perceives to be significant. One could claim that it is the very fact of substitution, rather than the precise nature of the combat in which it occurs, that is important. Judicial combat was the most common form of truth by ordeal in medieval Europe and appears in many *chansons de geste* and romances as a realistic element of real life.⁵⁶ Its occurrence in *Ami and Amile* is thus hardly surprising. In *Pwyll*, however, the judicial ordeal is absent and the combat-by-proxy resembles instead a motif common in Irish literature—that of a fairy king needing mortal aid to overcome his Otherworld rivals. *The Sickbed of Cú Chulainn* and *The Adventure of Loegaire son of Crimthann* provide particularly good examples of this kind of situation.⁵⁷ While it is possible to argue, as do both Goetinck and Jackson, that this Irish motif indicates a Celtic source for *Pwyll*, to the exclusion of Continental influence, there are some substantial differences between the substitutions in the Irish texts and that in *Pwyll*. In particular, in the former there is no deception: the enemy Otherworlders know perfectly well that they are facing mortals and neither Cú Chulainn nor Loegaire is in any way disguised. In the Celtic 'mortal-defeats-fairy' motif the decisive factor is that the hero is *mortal*, not that he is identical in appearance with his ally, whose fight he has taken on. This suggests that the change of shapes for combat in *Pwyll* has another source. All in all, the substitution episode in *Pwyll* seems to reflect a combination of the traditional Celtic motif with the narrative situation drawn from *Ami and Amile*. It is perfectly plausible for the author to have had access to both Celtic and Continental material and to have used it selectively and creatively to produce an original, finished composition.

Goetinck's final argument is that the substitution in *Ami and Amile* arises from and reinforces the central theme of perfect friendship, whereas in *Pwyll* friendship is a very minor issue, serving only to explain his epithet *Pen Annwfn* ('Head of Annwfn') and that in the original tale Pwyll was 'doubtless' a king of the Otherworld who begot a son on a mortal woman, although the plot was later changed completely in order to demonstrate Pwyll's chastity (p. 408). Here Goetinck undermines her own argument by forgetting her previous point that Pwyll is not constrained to respect Arawn's wife. Since this is so, why should Pwyll opt to be chaste if not to prove his friendship? Indeed, both Arawn and his wife stress that Pwyll's chastity is

⁵⁴Calin, p. 116. ⁵⁵Leach, p. xxv.

⁵⁶*ibid.*, pp. lxxx–lxxxiv. ⁵⁷Jackson, 'Some Popular Motifs', p. 85.

motivated by his friendship (lines 161–62 and 166–68). Furthermore, Pwyll is not 'doubtless' an Otherworld deity begetting a son on a mortal. This is a view popularized by W. J. Gruffydd, who in spite of his many important observations on the *Four Branches*, is well known for his habit of doing considerable violence to the texts in order to produce elaborate mythological explanations for their origin.⁵⁸

Goetinck concludes her discussion by stating that the Welsh translator of *Ami and Amile* may have been reminded of aspects of *Pwyll*, but that the latter derived from oral tradition and must already have had its present form before *Amlyn ac Amic* became popular (p. 408). That *Pwyll* was complete, indeed had been written down, before the Welsh translation appeared seems quite certain. However, to claim that it necessarily came directly from oral tradition and could not therefore have been influenced by other works of medieval literature is rather overstating the case. The evidence suggests that the similarities between *Pwyll* and *Ami and Amile* are far from 'superficial', and that there is a very real possibility of literary borrowing. Goetinck's assumption is therefore in every respect unconvincing. Furthermore, it is not impossible that the French legend circulated orally and reached the author of *Pwyll* by this means.

So, to recapitulate briefly, although there is no firm evidence that the legend of *Ami and Amile* was known to the Welsh early enough to have influenced *Pwyll*, there is equally no proof that it was not. The principal objection of those who argue against such influence is based on an incompatibility of dates, but this issue remains unresolved. Although we have no extant texts of *Ami and Amile* that are definitely older than *Pwyll* (which itself has not been firmly dated), Radulfus' summary clearly indicates that the legend was known on the Continent prior to 1090, or perhaps even 1075. Therefore, it is impossible to state that *Pwyll* could not have drawn on an early version of *Ami and Amile*.

The apparently sudden burst of references to *Ami and Amile* in Welsh poetry of the fourteenth century need not indicate that the legend was unknown in Wales prior to this time; earlier poets had tended to focus exclusively on native material, and it is possible that the French heroes were known but simply not alluded to before a change in literary practice brought them out in fourteenth-century Welsh poetry. The nature of the allusions certainly suggests that Amlyn and Amig had become familiar figures whom an audience would immediately recognize.

Goetinck's argument that the similarities between *Pwyll* and *Ami and Amile* are too superficial to be significant is not borne out by comparison of the passages in which parallels occur. Nor, finally, can we accept Jackson's suggestion that both works derive independently

from folk tradition. The degree of motif-overlap between *Ami and Amile* and its postulated principal source, the *Two Brothers*, is actually minimal, and almost identical with the overlap between the folktale and *Pwyll*. In addition, there is no concrete evidence that the *Two Brothers* was widespread, or indeed even in existence, during the period prior to the composition of *Pwyll* and the earliest extant versions of *Ami and Amile*. This is not to say that there are no folkloric elements in *Ami and Amile* and the relevant portions of *Pwyll*, but rather that if the respective authors did draw upon folk material (Jackson's hypothetical tale, for instance), they seem to have selected almost exactly the same details and then to have used them in very similar ways. One can either put this down to coincidence, or infer that the author of *one* of the texts tapped the folk tradition, while the other used the *literary* work of the first in the composition of his own narrative. The latter explanation seems the more satisfactory. In conclusion, in the light of all the available evidence, the legend of *Ami and Amile* does seem worthy of serious consideration as a partial source for the first section of *Pwyll*.

⁵⁸See especially his *Rhiannon* (Cardiff, 1953).