North and South

North and South:
Essays on Gender, Race and Region

Edited by

Christine DeVine and Mary Ann Wilson

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TO JEANNE M. LEIBY (1964-2011)

Writer, teacher, editor

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The editors wish to thank all of those who made this volume possible through their work on the tenth annual Louisiana Conference on Literature, Language and Culture, the conference that inspired this collection, and whose presenters—through their hard work, insight and creativity—encouraged us to look further—near and far, North and South—for additional essays to complement this volume. While they are too numerous to list here, the organizers of the conference are all graduate students in the English program at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. In addition, we would like to thank the sponsors of the conference, both on campus and off.

We are extremely grateful for the hard work of our Editorial Assistant, Claire Gamble. Her wholehearted and skilled editorial work, and her ongoing enthusiasm for and commitment to this project have helped to shape this collection for publication.

INTRODUCTION

MARY ANN WILSON

As I meditate on the theme of this collection, North and South, and imagine the many geographical versions of that divide, I am thinking of the tenacious literal and metaphorical boundary between northern and southern Italy—the country where my grandparents were born. But let me clarify. They were born south of southern Italy—in Sicily—another country to those up north. The Italian Language Intercultural Alliance (ILICA) recently held a conference at St. John's University in Manhattan called *Terroni e Polentoni:* "terroni" is the term cultivated, urbane northerners call the southern Italians, many of whom are farmers, close to the earth; "polentoni" is what the food-conscious southerner designates for northerners —polenta eaters. This age-old division is known as the "southern question," and it continues to evoke two main facets of Italian identity. The question of North and South and of the borders they represent or imply invites us to ask if the terms continue to represent real divisions, or if usage and habit have drained them of any real meaning. And how have literary texts sought to represent and elucidate the divisions and to complicate and undermine such rigid categories? This collection of essays will consider such questions and offer some tentative and original answers.

In teaching women's literature, one of my own fields, the persistence of boundaries in women's texts becomes a trope embodying confinements domestic and political, personal and public. The case of Kate Chopin and her novel, *The Awakening*, may serve to illustrate. Born in St. Louis, Missouri, in a state typically characterized as both southern and midwestern, and a city that was divided between Union and Confederate sympathies during the Civil War, Kate O'Flaherty witnessed the ravages of the war in her city's streets, and in later years would see the conflict between North and South as a time of self-definition for her region. Similarly, Kate attempted to define herself as a woman throughout her marriage to Oscar Chopin from New Orleans, where she was an outsider among Oscar's French family. New Orleans brought her into an unknown and paradoxical Creole world of sensual license and rigid cultural borders

that would occasion and complicate her attempts to define herself. These same conflicts would appear two decades later in *The Awakening*, as Kentucky Presbyterian Edna finds herself among the intimate world of New Orleans Creoles.

Chopin's text, *The Awakening*, appearing in 1899, on the cusp or boundary of the new century, remains instructive for its breaking of genre and thematic boundaries. More European than American, *The Awakening* is a hybrid text: drawing from French sources like de Maupassant, the novella's structure and language are poetic and lyrical; while its plot trajectory moves toward the conclusion as grimly and inevitably as Stephen Crane's naturalistic *Maggie*. Edna Pontellier explores the limits of desire in her otherwise staid and matronly life, reveling in her own body in a way that surprised and shocked the late nineteenth-century American reading public. Edna's awakening takes place in a sultry beach environment south of steamy New Orleans—Grand Isle—as she learns to swim, and ultimately at the novel's end, swims farther than she—and by extension, any woman—had been before. The boundaries Edna transgresses are physical and psychological, reaching beyond novelistic propriety and leaving us with an ambiguous ending. Does she willfully choose her death, as fallen women like Anna Karenina did before her, or does the lush sensuality of this last scene with its images of rebirth suggest otherwise? Writing at the crossroads of a new century, Kate Chopin posed questions in her novel that challenged current norms and anticipated an unborn future for women. Generations of critics and students have pondered this boundary-crossing novel set in that most unique part of the south, New Orleans and its environs. *The Awakening* invites transgressive reading and is a kind of template for the literary border crossings in this collection.

The essays in *North and South* treat a wide variety of topics, both generically and geographically—from medieval romances such as Thomas Malory's *Morte Darthur* to contemporary ethnic memoir in Gloria Anzaldúa's seminal text, *Borderlands/La Frontera*; from Ireland as political hotbed to the Arctic as destination for heroic nineteenth-century British explorers. Within their localized framework of "North and South," they interrogate the elusive topic of boundaries symbolic and literal; boundaries as means of communication rather than division; boundaries that define borderlands; boundaries that invite transgression; boundaries that resist erasure. Across and within these boundaries, the theme of identity emerges: international, national, regional, gendered, racial, and ethnic.

We have divided our collection into four parts, the first two designated by place: Part I, Britain and Part II, America. Part III, "Publishing—The

View from Canada," consists of a practical, inside view, from two Canadian editors on how to get published in an academic journal. It should be required reading for graduate students or young faculty, not only because of its no nonsense advice, but for its succinct and lively prose that no doubt models the kind of writing these two seasoned editors would like to read. Part IV, "Creating Place in the Twenty-First Century," considers the idea of the South in the twenty-first century, beginning with a lyrical tribute to a recently deceased colleague who moved south to become the first northerner and the first female to edit LSU's *Southern Review.* In his creative non-fiction essay, Christopher Chambers gives us his own migration story, tracing his travels all over the United States map, finally settling in New Orleans, where he edits *The New Orleans Review.*

Part I, "Britain," consists of five essays taking us from Malory's medieval world to contemporary Ireland in poetry and film. The central essay in this section, M.B. Hackler's "Ladies and Gentlemen: British Travelers and the Antebellum American South," conveniently draws from both sides of the Atlantic. The first essay, John Ellis-Etchison's "'A Noble Knight and a Mighty Man': Palomydes's Saracen Chivalry in Malory's *The Book of Tristram de Lyones*," argues that in defining notions of courtly love and chivalric justice, Malory constructs an ideology of chivalry that transcends geographical borders and defies rigid gender roles. In making Palomydes embody Christian chivalry though he is southern, African/Middle Eastern, and non-Christian, Malory complicates popular Eurocentric concepts of masculinity and knightly behavior. Ellis-Etchison's essay combines gendered, racial, and ethnic constructions of masculinity as he explores how Malory's atypical hero steps beyond the conventional depictions of heroism to become a more nuanced figure. Moving to England in the mid-nineteenth century and class-inflected notions of identity, Lindsay Mayo Fincher's "'Uncleaned Corners': Dirt and the Politics of Place in Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South*," argues that the 1854 novel explores an opposition between the industrial North of England and its genteel South. But complicating this binary, heroine Margaret Hale is uprooted from her wealthy southern environment to the industrial North when her family falls on hard times. She falls in love with a northern mill owner, Robert, who reaches beyond his social class by trying to educate himself. Both learn from each other to overcome their cultural stereotypes of the "other" region. Throughout the novel, dirt is used as a signifier or metonymic device for the working class, the moral valence of clean/unclean becoming a way to differentiate laborers from their betters who presumably inhabit cleaned or cleaner spaces. The mill owner as bridge character ultimately unites, Mayo-Fincher argues, the two

regions by making heroine Margaret aware of the working class—"the labor behind her luxury,"—as she cultivates a social conscience. Gaskell, rather too easily, resolves the tension between North and South through the figure of the middle-class hero and his "social housekeeper" Margaret as they reach across geographical and class divides.

M.B. Hackler's essay "Ladies and Gentlemen: British Travelers and the Antebellum American South," continues to examine the role of class, connecting Britain and America as he recreates the nineteenth-century world of wealthy, curious travelers coming to the fabled, exotic, unknown South. Examining a series of travel narratives to understand the differing attitudes and constructions of the American South before the Civil War, Hackler argues many British travelers betrayed their own class and political biases in such constructions. What they perceived as southern recognition of British cultural superiority may have been the product of southerners' desire to draw clear distinctions between themselves and their northern countrymen and to win champions across the Atlantic. Hackler contends that in such attitudes, Britain may be understood as a sort of proxy in an intra-national conflict that was mounting in the years before the Civil War.

The last two essays in this section examine cultural representations—and mis-representations—of national identity: of Britain and British masculinity in narratives about polar expeditions in the late nineteenth century; and of northern and southern Ireland both in opposition to each other and to Britain. Heidi Hansson's essay "*Punch*, *Fun*, *Judy* and the Polar Hero: Comedy, Gender and the British Arctic Expedition 1875-76" examines three popular comic journals and how they alternately exalted British imperialism and deflated images of British heroism—and by extension British superiority—through a humorous look at the Arctic expeditions of the period. The Arctic became a testing ground for masculinity, Hansson argues, as the polar quest itself—in the face of failure—was nevertheless figured as a heroic and glorious event. Helen Thompson similarly examines popular constructions of her native Ireland in "Bombs and Blarney: Re-imagining Ireland in Irish Poetry and Film." Her essay views Ireland, both North and South, as "othered" by Britain either through fear of chaos and violence in northern Ireland, or embracing of bucolic, pastoral idylls of southern Ireland. Contemporary poets and filmmakers like Ciaran Carson and John Crowley seek to unpack and complicate these stereotypical images by emphasizing commonalities rather than sectarian and religious differences. Both poet and filmmaker ultimately see Ireland as often complicit in reproducing itself as "other" to America and Europe. These contemporary artists instead reaffirm

continuities between Europe and America with Ireland, effectively re-imagining the country globally.

Part II, "America," consists of five essays, the first three on the American South of the last two centuries and its mythologies and ideologies, self-created, externally imposed, and maintained by geographic, gendered, and linguistic borders. These first essays range broadly, from the lives and works of New Orleans writer Grace King, African-American writer Charles Chesnutt, to Appalachian writer Lee Smith. The fourth essay examines border culture and the elusive concept of "home," as defined in Gloria Anzaldúa's new mestiza; the last evokes Harlem and the Great Migration from the South in the early decades of the twentieth century, as imagined by Pulitzer-prize winning Toni Morrison. Geographically, these essays take us from New Orleans and the plantation south to contemporary Appalachia, from the Mexican/American border of our own time to Harlem in the early decades of the last century. However varied, they treat the theme of displacement and dispossession created by real and imagined borders, and the consequent search for a stable cultural identity—whether gendered, regional, racial, or ethnic. Mary Ann Wilson's essay, "Across the Great Divide: Grace King and Her Northern Connections," looks at New Orleans writer Grace King as emblematic of southern women searching for personal and professional models to replace the myth of the southern belle as they entered a new century. Using the 1885 Cotton Centennial Exposition as a pivotal historical moment for New Orleans and King, Wilson argues that King's exposure to northern women like Julia Ward Howe; her mentoring by powerful northern editors; and her friendship with Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) and his wife Olivia thrust her into a Gilded Age northern world in many ways antithetical to conservative and impoverished New Orleans. While outwardly an unregenerate southerner, Grace King wrote fiction that showed a deep sympathy for women, black and white, and the constraints imposed on their lives by history and circumstance. Her career shows the cross-fertilization between North and South in the last decades of the nineteenth century, as women from both regions wrote themselves into the national narrative.

Anthony Wilson's essay, "'Giving the Lie:' Exposing Southern Myth to Northern Audiences in Charles Chesnutt's *The Marrow of Tradition,"* continues to explore the American South's rage to explain, defend, and reconstruct itself post-Civil War. Chesnutt's 1901 novel uses the actual historical event of the Wilmington, North Carolina Race Riots of 1898, to expose the fiction of racial identity in a small southern community, undermining "the fiction of whiteness," as perpetrated by white southern

aristocratic culture for white northern audiences. Throughout Chesnutt's novel, Wilson argues, he highlights the importance of language—private, public, official, legal—in perpetuating myths of racial supremacy. As southern whites manipulate language to reinforce racial borders and construct a false racial superiority, Chesnutt's novel illustrates, they create a sham civilization.

Laura Holder's premise in her essay about the contemporary Appalachian South brings us back to the gender norms Grace King and other southern women were dismantling at the end of the previous century. In her essay, "Ghosts and Barely Visible Bodies: Southern Women in Lee Smith's *Black Mountain Breakdown*," Holder considers the trope of haunting in Lee Smith's novel—haunting by past trauma and by outmoded notions of passive, silent southern womanhood. Smith's 1980 novel treats the borders between the seen and the unseen, the borders of consciousness that harbor repression and mask abuse. Smith's heroine Crystal exists in a liminal state, occasioned by her sexual abuse at the hands of her uncle years ago. Holder maintains that Crystal is a "textual remnant" of the cult of southern white womanhood depicted in previous southern literary texts. She is dispossessed of her body and ultimately of her right to speak.

The last two essays in the "America" section invite us to conceptualize the shifting geographic and textual borders of "home," as conceived by Gloria Anzaldúa's groundbreaking feminist work, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987), and Toni Morrison's 1992 novel *Jazz.* Deirdre Egan-Ryan's essay, "'No, Just an Alien': Gloria Anzaldúa's New Mestiza at 'Home'" considers how Anzaldúa's notion of Chicana female identity is both enriched and complicated by the multiple and contradictory "mothers" Chicana women have as models: Our Lady of Guadalupe; Malinche, the raped mother; and La Llorona, the weeping mother. Further alienating Anzaldúa is her sexual identity as lesbian—an identity that makes home a conflicted place, both safe and unsafe. Egan-Ryan uses Freud's theory of the uncanny to unravel Anzaldúa's hybrid lesbian identity as both alien and familiar in her Mexican Catholic culture. The androgynous or lesbian body becomes uncanny, Egan-Ryan argues, manifesting "a strange doubling much like Mexico becomes the double of the U. S," or Anzaldúa's poetry and prose in *Borderlands/La Frontera* becomes a textual doubling. In bringing together both concepts of individual and nation, in advocating a mestiza spirituality, a crossing of faith borders, the Mexican author both undercuts such a coherent narrative and imagines its possibility.

Narratives about the liminal and shifting borders of home bring us to concepts of diaspora and migration, crossing cultural and geographic

borders. Todd Hoffman's essay, "Overcoming the Trauma of Maternal Loss in Toni Morrison's *Jazz*" ends this section designated "America" with one of the great cultural migrations in history as dramatized by an author whose lifework has been to consider the sources of African-American identity in her essays and fiction. Hoffman situates Morrison's novel within Julia Kristeva's theories of maternal loss, and Cathy Caruth's theories of trauma and narrative, showing how the novelist enacts the trauma of geographical displacement through the migration of Joe and Violet as they make their way north toward Harlem. Exiles within their own country, for Joe and Violet, North is future, hope, rhythm, movement; South is trauma, memory, repression, loss. Throughout her work, Hoffman argues, Morrison weaves the culturally specific musical form of jazz, an improvisational form, a mode of African-American identity. Ultimately, the South becomes integrated into the North "as the symbolic language of African-American culture flourishes in the rhythms and cadences of Harlem." Hoffman's essay ends by reiterating Morrison's own belief that literature can project identity, both communal and individual, can be a dialogic space crossing borders of past and present, and can tentatively look toward a future of promise and hope.

The collection's last two sections—Parts III and IV—blend personal and professional voices and stand as fitting counter-narratives to this diverse group of essays. Each section consists of one essay, both written by editors of scholarly/creative journals, the first about how to get published, the second about the sometime-nomadic writer's life. Part III, Publishing, consists of a wise and witty essay, "Getting Published in an Academic Journal: the View from Canada" by Mary Elizabeth Leighton and Lisa Surridge. As editors of the *Victorian Review*, Leighton and Surridge see themselves as part of a highly competitive global publishing industry, and as "midwives for some superlative articles." Their advice to potential contributors is clear, direct, and a model for the kind of prose they welcome.

Christopher Chambers' lyrical meditation on place, "Highway 61 Revisited Again, or, Gone South: Creating Place in the Twenty-First Century," begins with remembering his colleague and friend Jeanne Leiby, whom he last saw at the 2011 University of Louisiana at Lafayette conference that served as the inspiration for this collection. His introductory reminiscence thus brings us full circle to the place and event occasioning this book. His subsequent essay represents a kind of southern conversion narrative, as he describes coming south from the snowy wilds of Minnesota to graduate school at the University of Alabama, where he met Jeanne, herself an expatriate from Detroit. He eventually moved to

New Orleans, where he has lived for twenty years, and where he edits *The New Orleans Review*. These personal details become a springboard to Chambers' meditations on the persistence of regional differences in the United States despite homogenizing influences like Starbucks and Walmart. He confesses that though born and raised in the North, he felt the "pull of the South from the moment [he] began to read its writers, and hear its music."

The editors of this text offer it as a multi-dimensional look at a prevailing theme in current discourse. Boundaries and Borders have been the subject of a number of special issues in scholarly journals, edited volumes like this one, and conferences similar to the one referred to early in my Introduction. The coupling of North and South in our theme and title inevitably suggests the broader concept of borders that invites us to cross historical, regional, and disciplinary boundaries. Essays in this collection have considered a range of primary texts, used a number of critical approaches, and it is hoped, will inspire creative thinking and perhaps ideas for classroom teaching.

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Literature and Culture, *Victorian Review*, *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, *University of Toronto Quarterly*, *Dickens Studies Annual*, *Women's Writing*, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, the *Blackwell Companion to Sensation Fiction*, the *Cambridge Companion to Sensation Fiction*, *Charles Dickens in Context*, *Victorian Animal Dreams*, and *New Readings in Victorian Illustration*. With Mary Elizabeth Leighton, she has just co-edited *The Broadview Anthology of Victorian Prose 1832-1901* (Broadview Press, 2012) and is co-writing a book on illustrated Victorian serial fiction, 1859-1875.

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PART I:

BRITAIN

CHAPTER ONE

"A NOBLE KNIGHT AND A MIGHTY MAN": PALOMYDES'S SARACEN CHIVALRY IN MALORY'S *THE BOOK OF TRISTRAM DE LYONES*

JOHN ELLIS-ETCHISON

Thomas Malory's characterization of Palomydes within *The Book of Tristram de Lyones* from his *Morte Darthur* (1485) is one of the most richly complex and deeply abiding of any of the knights whose exploits the author recounts. In this text Malory constructs a complex interplay between northern, European and English, decorum, in the form of chivalry, and the way it is enacted, and even embodied, by the southern, African and Middle Eastern, figure of the Saracen knight, Sir Palomydes. While one might expect Palomydes to personify otherness because on the surface he inhabits both racial and religious traditions that contrast with, and perhaps even oppose, those that predominate in the text, this is not the case.[1] Nonetheless, Palomydes continues to stand out from the knights that populate the stories that Malory pens, but it is his noble thoughts and knightly deeds, rather than his exotic appearance and origin, that distinguish this Saracen from the predominantly British (including Irish, Welsh, and Cornish) and continental knights with which the text is replete. Not merely constructing a one-dimensional paynym warrior, Malory explores in almost equal measure Palomydes's psychological journey as he simultaneously investigates the somatic elements of the Saracen's knightly quests. Palomydes, in a way that no other knight within *Morte Darthur* does, personifies courtly love and chivalric justice because Malory, in this Saracen knight, constructs a character who is equally able to embrace contemplative and active lifestyles with aplomb. Palomydes is thoughtful and observant, as well as brave and courageous. In fact, this parity of acumen and thew creates a knight who is more valorous than violent; the author's construction of Palomydes allows him to theorize and

practice notions of love and justice that challenge competing belief systems upheld by other oft-labeled noble knights within the text. Ultimately, Malory, through Sir Palomydes, interrogates the limits of rigid, narrowly defined notions of masculinity and knightly behavior, offering a complex alternative to such exclusively martial worldviews, and further, challenges the limits of the artificial dichotomy between Palomydes's southern, African and Middle Eastern, cultural background and the northern, European and English, cultural ideals that he embodies in order to construct an ideology of chivalry that transcends geographic borders and embraces heroism in all its forms.[2]

While relatively few scholars examine the role of Palomydes within *Morte Darthur*, those who take up the task often attempt a literary history or historical analysis of the figure of the Saracen in order to elucidate the role(s) he plays within Malory's text. For instance, Maghan Keita and Meg Roland both construct cohesive narratives around the portrayal of the Saracen in the medieval period. While Keita delineates Palomydes's literary history to examine the construction of his racial and ethnic heritage,[3] Roland explores the treatment of Saracens in *Morte Darthur* by examining how "Caxton, through editing and paratextual framing, sought to historicize Arthur" and his interaction with the figure of the Saracen in "the Crusades."[4] Conversely, the other prominent vein of scholarship that focuses on Palomydes exclusively examines his role within *Morte Darthur* and is often concerned with his complex relationship with both Isode and Trystram. For instance, Olga B. Mongan and Bonnie Wheeler explore the complexities and nuances within Malory's depiction of Palomydes's psychology, especially the figurations of turmoil that arise from his relationship with his rival and his courtly lady. Mongan maintains that Palomydes's choice of Isode is, to a certain degree, "determined by his choice of either a real or an imaginary rival, who represents a frame of reference for the desiring subject, an ideal the subject constantly measures himself against, identifies with and tries to emulate,"[5] whereas Wheeler focuses on how "with persistent nostalgia, Sir Palomydes mourns the fellowship that rarely was, that might have been," going on to illustrate how the Saracen knight's "discontent and anxiety expose the inescapable hierarchy of the passion-prowess linkage that marks and mars the masculine chivalric project."[6] My examination of Palomydes lies somewhere between the two, attempting a synthesis of both approaches; unlike most scholars, however, my analysis does not lead to Palomydes being viewed as an example of failure, but rather an intentional alternative to the idea of illicit courtly love and martial chivalric justice represented by nearly all other male characters within *Morte Darthur*. Whereas Molly

Martin believes that Palomydes's gender identity vacillates because he alternates between expressing emotions and demonstrating knightly courage and says that these show "the constant fluctuation of his gendered narrative," I assert that Malory, by having Palomydes systematically embrace and defy otherwise strict gender roles, is creating a character that possesses a complex range of emotions and boasts a greater degree of verisimilitude.[7]

Tristram, in fact, makes clear that there is something extraordinarily different about Palomydes from the moment we first encounter him. As soon as Palomydes enters the proverbial stage, he is distinguished from every other knight in *Morte Darthur* because it is he who is exclusively in pursuit of the Questing Beast.[8] What is significant about the pursuit of the Questing Beast is that it is never-ending, thus this pursuit represents for Palomydes the very challenge of knighthood, the interminable quest for perfection. Martin argues that "this quest associates him at once with both high aspirations and inevitable futility."[9] Underscoring and complicating this idea, Wheeler elucidates that "his quest for the Questing Beast is a paradigm of desire, since the aim and end of this adventure is infinitely postponed."[10] We can see this most clearly in his pursuits of romantic and martial prowess, both of which accord with codes of court and chivalry, respectively. However, Palomydes's quest for the Beast Glatisant, the other term by which the creature is called in *Morte Darthur*, is emblematic of his pursuit for both adoration from Isode and parity with Trystram, in that the resolutions to these quests are perpetually just out of his grasp. Martin highlights this when she suggests that "Palomydes remains ever on the verge of ideal knightly masculinity and the male community, but also always outside their borders."[11] It is precisely because he is in a state of interminably delayed gratification, yet dauntless in his pursuit of it, that Palomydes is perhaps the most knightly character within *Morte Darthur*. More than acting as a microcosm for the very ideal of knighthood that Malory sets up, Palomydes's actions represent the values that underpin the construction of Camelot.[12] By examining key instances within *Tristram*, particularly Palomydes's introduction to Trystram, events surrounding his performances at the tournaments of the Castle of Maidens, Surluse, and Lonezep, and finally his baptism, we will see that Palomydes enters the narrative as a distinguished and noteworthy character. Moreover, his fruitless pursuit for the affection of Isode and his bittersweet competition with Trystram act as catalysts, transforming this estimable figure into a paragon of knightly virtue who inevitably must return to his perpetual quest for the Beast Glatisant. No matter how close to perfection a knight

is, like the Questing Beast, that goal will always be elusively just out of reach.

When we first encounter Palomydes in *Tristram*, Malory assiduously depicts him as a Saracen knight who defies the typical description. Jacqueline De Weever explains that, for a medieval audience, the term *Saracen* signifies

> a non-Christian enemy coming from a place outside the confines of Arthur's empire in pre-historic times and very much, in the public's consciousness, the implacable enemy of the Latin world.[13]

As we can see, Palomydes differs greatly from the Saracens depicted here; beyond that, however, Malory also constructs, in Palomydes, a knight who embodies an amalgamation between the characteristics of both the courtly lover and chivalrous warrior, a combination which also distinguishes him from Malory's English knights. We are privy to this from the moment that Isode introduces Trystram, in the guise of Tramtryste, to her current suitor; Palomydes reveals his noble affection for Isode when Malory tells us that he "profirde hir many gyfftys, for he loved hir passyngly welle."[14] Palomydes inhabits the subordinate position in his relation with Isode, which is central to the role of the courtly lover. In fact, Nina Dulin-Mallory suggests that

> this quality of the long-suffering aspirant is not developed anywhere by Malory so completely as in this depiction of the Saracen Palomides, who alone has sorrows that develop the theme of the struggle for the unattainable.[15]

For Malory, Palomydes, then, seems to be a paragon of courtly love. However, Palomydes's captivation by Isode is but one of the two salient features of the typical aspirant. He also shortly thereafter demonstrates the other when Isode announces that "Palomydes [is] in wyll to be crystynde for hir sake."[16] We can begin to understand that the courtly lover should also be ennobled and inspired by his lady; in other words, he is always on a quest of personal growth. Moreover, these passages further set up another integral aspect of Palomydes's character. He is faithfully and exclusively in love with Isode, a state in which he will remain throughout *Tristram*; this is also indicative of his general appreciation for women, for whom he constantly slows his quest. Dulin-Mallory explains that "regardless of the rebuffs and failures, the Saracen never gives up his love for Isolt, nor does he ever take another lover."[17] Dulin-Mallory rightly suggests that, in this way, Palomydes exhibits far more fidelity than