

## 'MINNE' AND THE GRAIL IN WOLFRAM'S 'PARZIVAL'<sup>1</sup>

In Wolfram's *Parzival*, as indeed in other Arthurian literature, *minne* is central: the copious attention which Wolfram *Forschung* has devoted to the subject is, in itself, proof of this<sup>2</sup>. The «Minne-theorie» which is exemplified in *Parzival* is unique in that age: it excludes adultery and depends upon the exercise of knightly deeds. For Wolfram, there is no other worthy form of *minne* service, and an ideal *minne* relationship will always lead to marriage. The motivation, too, is different; the knight does not merely seek glory and self-aggrandisement: if his *minne* relationship is to be successful, and lead to marriage, then his service will be motivated by a desire to help his lady rather than merely to prove his worth and glorify himself.

In the courtly world *minne* is inherently problematic for Gahmuret, Orilus and Clamide. The former epitomizes the bygone glory of knight errantry: he thinks more of fighting than of love — for him the lady is a prize to be won or an inspiration to further fighting. Orilus' primary objective in his *minne* service is to gain honour, and Clamide tries to obtain *minne* in an unchivalrous way. Wolfram does not allow any of these characters to be successful on their own terms: Gahmuret dies tragically and Orilus and Clamide are both defeated by Parzival. However, Wolfram offers a solution

---

<sup>1</sup> This article has been adapted from Chapter IV of my thesis '*Minne*' in Wolfram's '*Parzival*' Cardiff, 1984, which was accepted by the University of Wales in candidature for the degree of M. A. (Magister in Artibus).

<sup>2</sup> The more important recent works to deal with Wolfram's *minne* ideal are: M. SCHUMACHER, *Die Auffassungen der Ehe in den Dichtungen Wolframs von Eschenbach*, Heidelberg, 1967; H. E. WIEGAND, *Studien zur Minne und Ehe in Wolframs 'Parzival' und Hartmanns Artusepik*, Berlin, 1972, and H. DEWALD, *Minne und 'sgrales aventiur'*, Göppingen, 1975. For more detailed bibliographical information cf. my above mentioned M. A. thesis, pp. x-xiii.

to the purely secular problems of *minne* in the Arthurian ideal of Gawain. Artus' nephew has an understanding of courtly love and a self-assurance in dealing with its problems that enable him to resolve successfully the *minne* dilemmas of others, at least in the secular sphere; by his fighting (which is never rashly or needlessly begun) he resolves problems and ends conflicts, bringing peace and harmony, until at last he can cure the *minne* sickness of Orgeluse and bring joy to Schastel Marveil.

However, *minne* in *Parzival* is not purely secular: parallel to the Arthurian world there is also the spiritual world of the Grail. Wolfram himself sought to make clear the contrast between the two domains, since the action is divided between the different worlds of Artus and the Grail, and is dedicated to different ideals. Gawain excels in the Arthurian world, becoming sovereign of Schastel Marveil; Parzival, after years of trial, finally becomes Lord of Munsalvaesche — the Grail Castle.

Those who serve the Grail are chosen by the Grail itself (their names appear on the stone). The Grail knights or *templeise* (so called to bring the real templar knights to mind) and the Grail maidens must serve the Grail exclusively: for them there can be no secular *minne*, unless they are sent out specifically for this by the Grail. They aspire not to the idealized secular *minne* relationship of Gawain and Orgeluse, but are called upon to renounce worldly love and devote themselves to God, the *wäre minncere* (466,1)<sup>3</sup>. They find their fulfilment in their service to God; but since their ideal is spiritual and they must forgo the carnal pleasures, more self-discipline and self-sacrifice is required of them.

There are certain rules which the Grail company must follow. Trevrizent explains how the Grail knights are bound by a strict code (473,2 f.), and no secular *minne* is allowed (495,7 f.). Their service to the Grail is as serious as that a courtly knight would pay his lady: the Grail knight does not need a lady to act as a stimulus for his deeds of glory because he is motivated to service by the Grail.

The Grail maidens are capable of worldly love, and yet they must remain chaste (493,19 ff.). However, the narrator himself

---

<sup>3</sup> All references to the text of Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* are from K. Lachmann's sixth edition, Berlin, 1926.

admits that they appear well deserving of worldly *minne* (232,13 f.); indeed, they may openly be sent out by the Grail to marry — their offspring will then later serve the stone (495,1 ff.). There are several examples of ladies sent forth by the Grail to marry: Schoysiane, Sigune's mother (477,2 f) marries Duke Kyot of Katalangen, but she then dies in childbirth. Herzeloide is sent out to marry Castis, yet before the marriage can be consummated he dies, so she is left to find another husband: her son later returns to the Grail to become King. Repanse de Schoye is also permitted to leave the Grail to marry Feirafiz: their son, Prester John, enhances Christianity in the East.

The kingship of the Grail is hereditary, so children in that family are born to the Grail — that is their *telos*: thus, after Titurel has gone into retirement, his son Frimutel rules. After Frimutel's death, his son Anfortas reigns; similarly, after Parzival, Loherangrin will rule. Because of the importance of an heir to the Grail King, finding a wife is a necessity. Yet the Grail Lord is so evidently bound by the rule of chastity that any possibility of engaging in *minne* seems unthinkable. But the Grail does, it would appear, allow the King to serve for a lady's hand, if that service leads to a marriage which the Grail desires. Thus Loherangrin is later to serve the Grail in defending and marrying the Princess of Brabant (861,1 f.). *Minne* is then only possible for the Grail King within marriage. Problems arise for the Grail family when the desire for *minne* is too great; when Anfortas and Trevrizent indulge in love service outside matrimony, and therefore without the Grail's permission, the results are tragic.

Wolfram tells his audience remarkably little about the earlier members of the Grail dynasty. We know that Titurel was the first to be entrusted with the Grail: he must have married at some stage to enable him to have a son, but no mention is made of his wife. Similarly, with Frimutel, who had four children, there is no reference made to his wife's name. We do, however, learn that in his marriage he was devoted to his wife and loved her with *triuwe*<sup>4</sup> (474,14ff.).

---

<sup>4</sup> It is to be remembered that *triuwe* plays an important role not only in Frimutel's relationship. Parzival's and Condwiramurs' *minne* is based on *triuwe*, as indeed is Sigune's affair with her dead lover, Schionatulander. Outside

In the relationship between Frimutel and his wife there is love in marriage, but no mention is made of *minne* service. We are told that Frimutel died in a joust (474,12 f.): however, no reasons are given for his presence there. Trevrizent explains that Frimutel went into battle carrying a Grail shield (474,11), probably then in the service of the stone. Sigune explains that Frimutel died for the sake of *minne* (251,9 f), although she does not specify in whose *minne* service this was: for his wife or for the *wâre minncere* — God. Wolfram nowhere else makes mention of it, but since Frimutel is so highly praised by both Sigune and Trevrizent, it is impossible to believe that he had broken the Grail rules concerning *minne*.

Anfortas is unmarried when he becomes Grail King: therefore, according to Grail tradition, he is not allowed to engage in *minne* service, but (like Loherangrin) should wait until called upon to go and find a wife. This he does not do and, in the impetuosity of youth commits a sin in, as Lord of the Grail, seeking adventure for the sake of *minne*<sup>5</sup>. For a lord of a secular realm this would not have been sinful, but since Anfortas' first duty is towards God, by serving a lady without His permission he will bring about his own downfall. Therefore his sin is seen to be one concerning *minne*<sup>6</sup>. As Trevrizent explains to Parzival:

'Amor was sîn krîe.  
Der ruoft ist zer dêmuot  
iedoch niht volleclichen guot.' (478,30-479,2).

The specific use of the word *âmor* was not only obviously secular, but also heathen. Trevrizent condemns Anfortas because of his lack

---

the domain of the Grail Gawan's relationship with Orgeluse is also dominated by *triuwe*. *Triuwe* in *minne* represents loyalty: in the context of the Grail it denotes a sacred faithfulness, through God, to one's partner.

<sup>5</sup> H. HECKEL, *Das ethische Wortfeld in Wolframs 'Parzival'*, Erlangen, 1938, notes that «Das Gralskönigtum schließt die Liebe Frimutels nicht aus, nur die Minne des Anfortas» (p. 47).

<sup>6</sup> M. SCHUMACHER (1967) claims that Anfortas' sin «besteht letzten Endes in seiner Versündung gegen die Ehe, gegen das Ehegesetz des Grals» (p. 183). However, Anfortas is not in a position to sin against the marriage rules of the Grail, because he is not married. His sin is that he has been seeking *âmor*, while he should have been motivated by divine *minne*.

of *demuot*, which, because it is the chief virtue of Christianity, is an important prerequisite to membership of the Grail company (473,4)<sup>7</sup>. Anfortas himself, after he has been returned to health following Parzival's question, also sees that he has trespassed because of a lack of *demuot*: he was governed by *hōchvart* (819,18 ff.) (he is committing the sin of Lucifer)<sup>8</sup>. He has fallen into pride because he has sought glory to find the admiration of a lady.

It is towards the end of the romance that we learn to whom it was that Anfortas paid his love service. When Orgeluse finally throws herself at Gawan's feet, she explains how she had asked two knights to help her for *minne*; one was Anfortas (616,14) and the other Parzial (619,10). It is Parzival's *triuwe* to his wife which makes him refuse Orgeluse's proposal, also in so doing he shows respect to the marriage rules of the Grail: yet Anfortas has failed the same teste. In paying *minne* service to Orgeluse's name, he shows *untriuwe* in his commitment towards the Grail as another reason for his sinfulness. Orgeluse does not belong either to the family or the spiritual world of the Grail, and it is therefore inherently improbable for her to become Queen of that domain, and Anfortas has, of his self-will, chosen somebody not of the Grail; Condwiramurs, who is of the Grail family, is a more fitting Grail Queen.

The wound which Anfortas receives in his joust with the heathen Ethnise is appropriate for the sin he has committed<sup>9</sup>. Like Clinschor, who was castrated after having slept with the King of Sicily's wife<sup>10</sup>, the heathen lance wounds Anfortas' scrotum: his sin is obviously associated with *minne*, since he is now denied consummation of his relationship with Orgeluse — typical for the age, the injury is fitting for the crime. There is no cure to the wound: Wolfram dwells at some length on the horrible aspect and painful

---

<sup>7</sup> The Grail company have been chosen to replace the angels who fell because of pride.

<sup>8</sup> There is no textual evidence to support the assertion made by H. B. WILLSON, *The Grail King in Wolfram's 'Parzival'* (Modern Language Review, 55, 1960, pp. 553-563, that «Anfortas represents symbolically mankind in its fallen state, having broken the laws of God» (p. 554).

<sup>9</sup> D. BLAMIRE, *Characterization and Individuality in Wolfram's 'Parzival'*, Cambridge, 1966, remarks that the «wound is the external sign of spiritual disfavour that Anfortas has incurred in the sight of the Grail» (p. 273).

<sup>10</sup> Peter Abaelard was also castrated for his marriage with Heloise.

treatment (480,5 ff., 481,5 ff.), perhaps to make his audience more aware of, the nature and extent of the injury. The insistence of the pain burning cold — the *frost* which Trevrizent describes (493,3) — is symbolically like hellfire<sup>11</sup>. The hermit later states that the nature of the wound was right and appropriate, since this was where Anfortas had sinned. Trevrizent explains how his; brother would have escaped the punishment through death, but when he was taken before the Grail, it was evident that his injury was not going to be fatal (480,25-30). Since there is no worldly cure, and the Grail will not let him die, the pain is to be everlasting: this again is a foretaste of hell, which burns us eternally as a punishment for sin. Anfortas' atonement for his crime against Grail *minne* is the pain he feels from the injury: this forces him into an unnatural bending position<sup>12</sup>.

Through the compassionate intercession of Parzival (795,28), and the Grail, Anfortas is allowed to live. His sin is so great, however, that although restored to God's grace, he is no longer worthy to be Grail King — a position which is subsequently given to Parzival. But after having been returned to good health<sup>13</sup>, he is seen to have learned his lesson and spends the rest of his life in Grail service, taking no interest in women and possessions. At the end of the romance, when Feirafiz is about to sail to India with Repanse de Schoye, Anfortas resists the former heathen's offer to accompany him and serve ladies in the East, explaining that he now only intends to fight in the service of the Grail, never again for the love of women (819,21-29). The pride which first brought about his sin has, through his atonement, made way for humility.

Trevrizent sins in the same way as his brother. Through the inexperience of youth Trevrizent also broke the Grail commandment

---

<sup>11</sup> M. WYNN, *Chivalrous Journeys in Wolfram's 'Parzival'*, «Speculum», 36, 1961, pp. 393-423, describes how the cold of the injury is a sign of exclusion from both courtly and Grail worlds (pp. 406ff.).

<sup>12</sup> H. B. WILLSON (1960), with no textual evidence to support his claim, interprets Anfortas' unnatural posture as symbolically representing the human soul, having lost its rectitude, having become *curva* (p. 557).

<sup>13</sup> H. B. WILLSON (1960) interprets Anfortas' return to health as symbolically representing «mankind... reborn through redemption» (p. 558). This attributes to Parzival the role of Jesus: Wolfram's text, however, gives us no reason to suspect he is so unpious as to compare Parzival to Jesus.

concerning *minne*. He, too, sought a love encounter without first being sent out by the Grail (495,15 ff.). Trevrizent's atonement is not in the form of divine retribution, but is self-imposed on hearing of his brother's injury. He becomes a hermit, not only to atone for his own, but also his brother's sin. Since his is not such a high position (he is merely brother to the Grail King), his suffering is not as extreme as Anfortas'. His life as a hermit is rigorous — unlike Sigune he receives no food from the Grail, but lives on what he finds himself — if he encounters nothing, then he fasts to the glory of God. Unlike his brother, whose suffering is assuaged by Parzival's intercession, Trevrizent continues his hermit-like existence, and does not return to the Grail Castle.

The character of Sigune who, like Trevrizent and Anfortas, belongs to the Grail family, was of special importance to Wolfram. The same figure in Chrétien's *Perceval*<sup>14</sup> romance is described much more briefly than in Wolfram's version. The story of Sigune and Schionatulander appears to have been popular with the audience: in *Parzival* Wolfram expanded it into four episodes, and later described the story of the tragic love affair in *Titirel*. In *Parzival* only the end of their ill-fated relationship is described: altogether some twenty narrative blocks (*Dreißiger*), from the 827 which make up the romance, are devoted to Sigune. Yet, of all the major female characters, only she is given her own story<sup>15</sup> — one much more independent of the main theme of the romance<sup>16</sup>, a fact which Wolfram himself recognized (since he later created an independent *Titirel* romance).

Since Sigune has been raised outside the Grail, and has not been called to Grail service, she is evidently entitled to *minnedienst* from Schionatulander. But it would seem that those from the Grail dynasty must be especially careful with their *minne* relationships: secular *minne* is dangerous. Anfortas and Trevrizent before her had both run foul of the Grail *minne* rules: the same is true for Sigune. Although she is not in Grail service, and is therefore not bound

---

<sup>14</sup> Cf. CHRÉTIEN DE TROYES, *Perceval ou li Contes del Graal*, ed. Hilka, Halle, 1932, pp. 68-82.

<sup>15</sup> Herzeloide also has the makings of an independent story, but hers is in no way so developed as Sigune's.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. M. GIBBS, *Wiplichez Wibes Reht*, Pittsburgh, 1972, p. 38.

by the rules, hers is a major sin. Schionatulander died while fighting against Orilus for Sigune's love (141,9), but she realizes that he died because she had asked too much of him:

'ein bracken seil gap im den pîn.  
in unser zweier dienste den t6t  
hât er bejagt, und jâmers not  
mir nâch sîner minne.  
ich hete kranke sinne,  
daz ich im niht minne gap:  
des hât der sorgen urhap  
mir freude verschrôten' (141,16-23).

These lines imply that her sin has consisted in pushing him too far, and that the erotic consummation would have been proper. In her inexperience<sup>17</sup>, but also in her sin of pride, she was interested only in the honour he might bring her; she sees herself responsible for his death<sup>18</sup>, since she had refused his love for so long. But, whereas Belakane, whose first love Isenhart died in the same way, although she grieves, is ultimately able to marry Gahmuret, Sigune is not able to overcome the same offence; although there is no reason given for this, it is possible to assume that her close relationship with the Grail makes her *minne* especially intense. Sigune seeks *minne* and not marriage: had she married Schionatulander before his death, she would doubtless have been able, like Herzeloide after Castis' death, to find another husband.

Her sin is seen as her overzealous yearning for *êre* which her lover's service could bring her — it is again a sin of pride, since she wants glory for herself. She atones by devoting herself to her dead lover, giving him the reward belatedly:

'nu minne i'n alsô tôten' (141,24).

---

<sup>17</sup> Both Parzival and Sigune err from the self-same cause: inexperience. In Sigune's case this inexperience leads to a *minne* sin; Parzival's transgression against *minne* (i.e. in his mistreatment of Jeschute) is easily put right, but his sin of not asking Anfortas the right question is of much greater importance.

<sup>18</sup> M. GIBBS (1972) notes that «In Sigune's grief there is no bitter attack on the claims of chivalry» (p. 40). Indeed, she attacks Parzival precisely for his lack of chivalry when he does not show compassion at Munsalvaesche.



But this devotion (and the atonement) develops each time that she is presented to the audience<sup>19</sup>. On the first occasion (138,9-142,10) she refers only to her great love towards him, and how she had refused her lover *minne*. The next time we see her (249,11-255,30), her suffering has increased, and mention is made of her dead lover. The third occasion (435,1-442,30) shows how the spiritual side of *minne* has led to a religious dimension, since she is now in almost constant prayer over Schionatulander's coffin. Now, however, he is no longer just her lover, but through her devotion, has, in the sight of God, become her husband (440,8). Indeed, she now wears a ring as a token of wedlock (440,13), which is evidence of *triuwe* — this *triuwe* will ensure her way to heaven. The secular wedding ring has become a road to God because it has been spiritualized; her relationship becomes much more spiritual. The last time we see Sigune, she has realised her plan of joining her lover in death (804,30 ff.).

As her suffering increases, so her physical condition deteriorates and so her spiritual condition improves. The more she pines for Schionatulander, the more she loses her beauty — this is seen particularly in the references made to her lips<sup>20</sup>. The narrator notes the first time Sigune speaks to Parzival:

ir rôter munt sprach sunder twâl (140,15).

On their second meeting, Parzival, on recognizing her<sup>21</sup>, asks:

'ôwê war kom dîn rôter munt?' (252,27).

On the third occasion the narrator remarks:

ir dicker munt heiz rôt gevar  
was dô erblichen unde bleich (435,26-27).

---

<sup>19</sup> Cf. M. SCHUMACHER (1967), p. 179.

<sup>20</sup> B. RAHN, *Wolframs Sigunedichtung*, Zürich, 1958, misinterprets the text when he states: «Sigune (140,15) bewahrt noch ihre brennende Liebe zu Schionatulander, was symbolisch in ihrem roten Mund zum Ausdruck kommt» (p. 84). Since it specifically states that her lips in the second and third meetings are no longer red, this interpretation must be false.

<sup>21</sup> B. RAHN (1958) couples the way Sigune and Schionatulander are united in death with Tristan and Isolde «wo die Liebenden am Ende auch in Gott vereinigt wurden» (p. 88); Gottfried, however, nowhere specifies that Tristan and Isolde would be united in God.

Yet, while her beauty has faded, Schionatulander, in death, remains undecayed; when the coffin is opened the narrator comments:

Schianatulander schein  
unrefült schône balsemvar. (804,28-29).

It would almost seem as if he were awaiting her in death.

Her life is devoted to atoning for her part in her lover's death: this can only lead to her own demise, for only by leaving this world can she be reunited with her lover<sup>22</sup>. She atones, however, not only for her own sin, but, like Trevrizent, also for Anfortas'. She cares for Anfortas' salvation: she is shattered when she realizes that Parzival did not ask the question the first time he went to Munsalvaesche. Her own fate is indeed connected with Anfortas since she is also atoning for him: it is only when Parzival finally asks the question and relieves Anfortas of his pain that Sigune dies because she has no further function in the romance<sup>23</sup>. Like Trevrizent, her atonement is self-imposed: both are paying for Anfortas' sin. Sigune, unlike Trevrizent and Anfortas, dies as a result.

In Sigune's love for Schionatulander there is no erotic element: prior to his death she gave him no opportunity — hers is a virgin love (*magtuomliche minne*) for her 'husband'. It is also very intense, since after his death she devotes herself to him (also to Anfortas, the Grail and thus also to God). In her devotion to Schionatulander she shows her *triuwe*; the narrator has already remarked:

reht minne ist wâriu triuwe (532,10).

It is through her perseverance that her love becomes spiritual, and through her dead lover she finds her way to God<sup>24</sup>. Hers is an

---

<sup>22</sup> There is no textual evidence to support B. RAHN'S (1958) claim that «Allem Hofischen hat sich im Laufe ihrer Buße so völlig entfremdet, daß Parzival ihre Gesellschaft im Gegensatz zu seiner ersten Begegnung mit ihr nicht mehr begehren mag» (p. 85).

<sup>23</sup> Similarly Herzeloyde and Secundille also die when they are no longer of use for the plot.

<sup>24</sup> Sigune is not the only one who reaches God through secular *minne* — so do Belakane, Feirafiz and Condwiramurs in *Parzival*, and Gyburc and probably Rennewart in *Willehalm*.

unorthodox spirituality — she never goes to mass, yet spends all her day in prayer. Her 'marriage' to Schionatulander, which even includes the ring, is not unlike that of a nun with Christ<sup>25</sup>, although Sigune is no nun, but a hermit. Even in death, Sigune and Schionatulander demonstrate Wolfram's ideal of *minne*: a faithfulness in love culminating in this world in marriage, but leading beyond to a climax in God's love.

Herzeloide, who is also of the Grail family, undergoes a distinct change in character from the second to the third book. In the former she is a rather forward courtly lady, whose main aim in life is to find a husband. Yet, in the third book she has become a recluse, with an inordinate fear of anything courtly, and particularly protective of her son, from whom she tries to hide all knowledge of knighthood. There are two possible reasons why Wolfram decided to change her character to such an extent. Firstly because whatever sources he used for the *Vorgeschichte* depicted a very different type of lady from that Chrétien's *Perceval* romance presents. However, Wolfram does, on other occasions, change the depiction of one of Chrétien's characters (i.e. Vergulaht): it is therefore equally probable that Herzeloide undergoes such a change for purely psychological reasons<sup>28</sup>. In the second book she is pressing and even unpleasant with Gahmuret: for political reasons (i.e. she has been left to reign over two kingdoms alone), she needs a husband. The distress she feels on the death of Gahmuret gives her such distaste for courtly life, that she leaves with her son, in the hope that he will never learn of *ritterschaft*; she therefore plays a different rôle.

As Parzival's mother, Herzeloide, remembering the fate of Gahmuret and his dynasty, is over-protective and tries, at all costs, to keep from him knowledge of knighthood and *minne*<sup>27</sup>. To this

---

<sup>25</sup> Cf. D. BLAMIRE (1966), p. 186.

<sup>26</sup> W. J. SCHRÖDER, *Die Soltane Erzählung in Wolframs 'Parzival'* Heidelberg, 1963, comments on Herzeloide: «Wechselt die Funktion, spielt die Figur also eine doppelte Rolle» (p. 411f.). However, by merely interpreting Herzeloide's change in personality as being due to the different role she must now play, W. J. Schroder makes her character superficial, and does not take into account the psychological aspect.

<sup>27</sup> A uniting factor between the Herzeloide of the second and third books can therefore be seen in her forcefulness.

end she is prepared to go to extraordinary lengths: when Parzival shows his tendency to *minne* through his feelings for the birds, her reaction is to have the birds killed<sup>28</sup> (119,1ff.). When Parzival tells her he intends to leave to become a knight, she tries to prevent him. This she is unable to do, so in the hope that he will be forced to return, she dresses him as a fool. The information she gives him about *minne* is very sparse: in fact her instructions would only be comprehensible to somebody who already knew of the *minne* theory<sup>29</sup>. The way she only half informs him later leads to his first major problem in courtly society (i.e. his encounter with Jeschute).

Despite the way Herzeloide tries to hold back her son, Wolfram does not criticize her: indeed he seems sympathetic towards her. The name he gives her indicates that it is she who will suffer the most pain. However, Herzeloide does criticize herself (119,13f.). She sees that she has rebelled against God, as indeed do Anfortas and Parzival.

Like all those who leave Grail service, Herzeloide is entitled to *minne*; yet, as with the other members of her generation, somewhere during their *minne* relationships tragedy strikes<sup>30</sup>. Herzeloide's first husband, Castis, is tragically killed before their marriage can be consummated. With Gahmuret she would appear to have found a satisfactory *minne* relationship, but here too tragedy is at hand, for he is killed while fighting in the East. The dream she has of a dragon tearing out her heart symbolically describes her husband tearing out the seat of her *minne*<sup>31</sup>. Herzeloide's love for her son is motivated by her love for her deceased husband, Gahmuret; the baby saves her after Gahmuret's death. Turning her back on the courtly world she retires to the wilderness of Soltane: but her retirement is motivated by faithfulness. Both Sigune (140,18f.) and Trevrizent (476,25f.) refer to her *triuwe*. Her love is not only faithful, but also spiritual: she offers her own breast and recalls how Mary had done

---

<sup>28</sup> G. J. LEWIS, *Die unheilige Herzeloide*, «Journal of English and Germanic Philology», 74, 1975, pp. 465-485, goes too far in calling Herzeloide's attitude «verrückt» (p. 478). The killing of the birds must be understood on a literary level as an attack on courtly *minne*.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. D. BLAMIRE (1966), p. 82.

<sup>30</sup> Repanse de Schoye, it may, however, be noted, does not find the same failure in *minne* as her brothers and sisters.

<sup>31</sup> For a fuller interpretation of the dream cf. A. HATTO, *Herzeloide's Dragon Dream*, «German Life and Letters», 22(1), 1968, pp. 37-62.

this with Jesus (113,18f.). In the same way that the Virgin Mary<sup>32</sup> was both mother and wife of God, so she sees herself as *muoter* and *wîp* of Gahmuret (109,25). She passes her *triuwe* and her capacity for intense spiritual *minne* on to the protagonist, Parzival; when he leaves her, she dies, since he is the only reason why she lives. Her death is motivated by *triuwe*, because having lost both Gahmuret and Parzival, her life loses its meaning.

Secular *minne* is not the motivation for Grail knights: theirs is a religious ideal. Problems arise when, as in the cases of Anfortas and Trevrizent, worldly *minne* becomes more important than their spiritual calling to the Grail. Anfortas is punished for his violation of the Grail rules: only after Parzival has asked the question is his uncle permitted to return to health, spending the rest of his life in Grail service. Trevrizent punishes himself, and atones for this own and his brother's sins by becoming a hermit. Sigune, whose mother Schoysiane served the Grail, commits an error in secular *minne*: she demands too much of Schionatulander, thus causing his death. She suffers and ultimately dies because of the love she feels for dead suitor. Herzeloide, who left Munsalvaesche to marry, also suffers because of her love: she tragically loses two husbands and is deserted by her son — her love, like that of her niece Sigune, is characterized by spirituality; even those of the Grail family who do not serve the stone seem particularly open to the problems of courtly *minne*.

Because of their special relationship with God, secular *minne* cannot be the highest ideal of the Grail community as it might be in the Arthurian world: their special spirituality means that the atonement for their *minne* sins must be great. The problem of *minne* within the Grail family, and Grail society in general, is the conflict between the spirituality of their ideal and secular *minne*. For the Grail Order the *minnedienst* is superfluous because the dynamic impetus, usually provided by the lady in secular *minne*, is here provided by the special privilege of Grail love — spiritual love for God. In the Grail family secular *minne* is merely a stage on the way to full consummation of *Gottesminne*: problems arise, however, when worldly *minne* becomes an end in itself rather than a step on the way to spirituality.

---

<sup>32</sup> D. BLAMIRE (1966) also sees a reflection of the *Mariendichtung* in the light metaphors which refer to Herzeloide (102,26), cf. pp. 71 and 94f.

JOHN T. GREENFIELD

Within the domain of the Grail, secular *minne* is generally rejected in favour of a greater and more spiritual ideal. Yet the Grail and its people belong to this world, and the gradualism in Wolfram's thinking cannot allow him to reject this world, which is, among other things, the world of Gawain and secular *minne*. The worldly and the spiritual are never divorced: as secular *minne* needs its higher purpose, the spiritual *minne* of the Grail company may not lose contact with the realities of this world. Wolfram's ideal man must save his soul, yet live a noble and honourable life here below. As we have seen, worldly *minne* is problematic in the Grail domain; but that problem has a solution, and its key lies with protagonist Parzival. Since the problem of *minne* in the case of Parzival himself is large and very important, I intend to examine this in article on Parzival and *minne* to be published shortly<sup>33</sup>.

*John T. Greenfield*

<sup>33</sup> Cf. my article *Die Minne und Parzival* to be published, «Runa. Revista Portuguesa de Estudos Germanísticos», II (in 1985).