ANIMAL AND DREAM FUNCTIONS IN WILLIAM OF PALERNE

THESIS ABSTRACT.

ANIMAL AND DREAM FUNCTIONS IN WILLIAM OF PALERNE - WITH AN INTRODUCTION TO MEDIEVAL ANIMAL IMAGERY AND HISTORY OF DREAM INTERPRETATION.

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS.

This thesis attempts to trace the plot of William of Palerne, a medieval romance poem, in terms of its action on many levels, with special emphasis on animal and dream functions within the poem. Since most of the critical work done on this poem is devoted to the categorization of sources and analogues the accent here is placed on the characters themselves and the action of plot. The thesis explores the main problem of this romance, the divorce of the two world orders of forest and city, and comments on its causes and its effects on the hero and heroine of the story, William and Melior. Animal and dream functions are considered as factors of mediation between the split world orders, and the means of their reunification. They are commented on mainly in the forest background where they occur, leading William and Melior back to their reintegration into the world of actuality, the city. On a more basic level animal imagery is considered in terms of symbol and heraldry; dreams are treated in terms of their prophetic and symbolic roles.

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Chapter One.

In order to appreciate fully the animal imagery in William of Palerne it is essential to understand something of the animal lore and symbolism of the Middle Ages. In this background commentary I shall confine my history to those animals which make their appearance in the poem, namely, the wolf or werwolf, the bear, the hart and hind, classed generally as stag, and the eagle.

The wolf was the most diabolical beast known to the ancient Greeks, and it was generally regarded by them as a bloodthirsty ravening creature. Its skin was used to make helmets for ancient armies, and the Thraciens joined to the army of Xerxes are recorded as bearing each two spears of a kind used especially for wolf-hunting. Being a nocturnal animal the wolf was most often sighted at'wolf-twilight' or grey dawn. Here we can see the beginnings of the diabolical associations henceforth so consistently applied to wolves. In fact the wolf was much celebrated by the ancients in witchcraft and superstition.[1] Homer places the wolf and lion in his landscape around the abode of Circe.[2] Socrates is the first to give voice to a superstition which will grow up through the centuries even to the Middle Ages: when a man and a wolf meet, if the wolf sees the man first that man is defenceless against the animal's attack. But if the man sights the wolf first then the wolf will lose courage and run away.[3] Hence the Greek expression'to see a wolf.' Aristotle in his History of Animals states that wolves produce blind puppies (like a dog), and they

give birth only during a certain twelve days of the year. During these twelve days wolves are supposed to have conducted Latona from the Hyperboreans to Delos, she having changed herself in a she-wolf for fear of detection by Juno.[4] Aristotle also says of wolves in his History of Animals that they live on flesh, eating grass like dogs when they are sick, and earth in extreme cases to avoid starvation. Wolves which travel alone are more prone to attack men than those which hunt in packs. Aesop used the wolf to symbolize tyrannical greed and wild free nature. [5]

The Egyptians associated the wolf with the world of darkness. Wolves are found painted on their tombs and the walls of their temples, probably associated by their priests with the transmigration of souls. Wolf mummies were found at Ossiout, the ancient Lycopolis.

It was at Rome that the wolf came into honor, and was made the symbol of an entire nation and the figure of a national character. Lupa, as Livy calls her, is foster-mother to a nation. She suckled the twins Romulus and Remus who founded Rome. Lupa is deemed sacred to Mars and eventually deified under the name of Luperca. Her festival, the Lupercalia, was observed on the day that corresponds to the fifteenth of February on our calendar. A whole new body of saying arose, built around the wolf image. 'Lupus in sermone' (the wolf in the conversation) refers to the sudden appearance of the person spoken of (strangely enough we say 'speak of the devil'...). 'To have a wolf by the ears' is to be in a difficult situation

from which it is possible neither to advance nor to retreat. 'To snatch the lamb from the wolf' denotes a timely but dangerous rescue. The mother wolf and the twins Romulus and Remus was the favorite representation on Roman coins.

In the Middle Ages we can find both strains of the wolf tradition: the diabolical rapacious wolf, eater of human flesh, and the benign wolf capable of suckling and raising a defenceless pair of children. Let us consider each in the medieval context.

There is a widespread medieval legend (slight variations occur from country to country) explaining the origin of the wolf. God made sheep to feed and clothe man, and so the devil tried to create a wolf to kill the sheep. However the devil could not impart life to his creation. After repeated attempts by Satan to bring the wolf to life and repeated commands for it to eat God, God Himself gave the animal life and told it to chase its maker. The devil, in order to hinder the wolf in its pursuit, gave it bristles so that it might get caught. The wolf's eyes shine brightly with the devil's own fire, and the three hairs between its eyes were placed there by Satan in an attempt to bring it to life. [6] A whole structure of symbolism connects the wolf with the devil. The wolf's strength is in his head and chest, yet he can never turn his head backwards except by turning completely around, this because Satan cannot turn around to repent. The wolf whelping in the first thunder of May symbolizes the noise of the devil falling from Heaven in his first motion of pride. The wolf preys on sheepfolds even as the devil constantly stalks the community of the faithful,

the flock of the Good Shepherd. Its eyes shine in the dark just as the promises of Lucifer glow in darkened minds.

Thus on one hand the wolf is a ferocious cunning and cruel beast, dangerous when hungery and sleepy when full. His 'virtue is in his paws' as the medieval saying goes, meaning that whatever he pounces on dies, and whatever his paws walk on becomes waste. If his paw betrays him with noise while he is hunting he will bite it.[7] He will massacre any and every person who passes near him and one of his favorite tricks is to kidnap a small child, play with it, then slay and eat it. Moreover the wolf is a singularly vengeful animal. If he is stoned he will remember the persecutor and return to destroy him.

These then are some of the beliefs and legends that support the image of the evil wolf. As with the ancients these beliefs translate themselves into expressions used by medieval man. Prostitutes are referred to as wolves because, imitating the rapacity of those animals, the devastate the possessions of their lovers. Condemned men and criminals in medieval times are said to wear 'caput lupinum', the wolf's head which is an omen of doom.[8] Wolves become a symbol of death even as the loup garou of the later popular French tradition. Their element is winter, and darkness when the sun and all goodness hide.

Now on the other side of this tradition of the malignant wolf there grows up a tradition of the benign or benignant wolf. This began with the wolf-mother of Rome, but it developed in various other nations. The early Irish for example took a very favorable view of wolves, prayed to wolves for salvation

and chose them as godfathers for their children. In Druidical times the wolf and certain other animals were regarded as divine manifestations. The Celts were greatly attached to their beast-gods and protected all animals, and the Gallic people believed that dispossessed wolves were the companions of new saints. Northmen gave high honor to the wolf as the beast sacred to their god Odin. Odin is always accompanied by two wolves named Geri and Freki. Another great wolf in Northern mythology and legend is Fenrir whose father is Loki, god of fire. According to belief Fenrir will play a decisive role on doomsday.

Even more specifically than this there are countless stories in middle and eastern Europe concerning wolves acting as direct instruments of divine justice and mercy. For instance a Rumanian story goes as follows. From the feast of St. Basil until the feast of Epiphany the water in pools and swamps is sanctified. Thus the demons are forced to flee from these swamps, their natural habitat, and roam the land. It is then that St. Peter gathers the wolves together and tells them where the devils have fled that the wolves may find them. And so, just as at their creation, the wolves chase and eat the devil.[9] Obviously the old creation story is being used here, except that the other side of it, the wolves as chosen agents of God's justice and commands is being stressed. There are many other legends and accounts ot this kind. According to Baronius in 617 A.D. wolves entered a monastery and tore heretical monks to pieces.[10] Wolves also massacred the sacrilegious thieves of Francesco Maria, Duke of Urbino, who came to sack the holy house

of Loreto. Oddo, abbott of Cluny, was delivered by a wolf from an attack of foxes. There is of course the famous Wolfdieterich, spared by the wolves who were supposed to kill him.[11] The wolf is said to have guided the beatified Adam to his rest, and to have been the guide to the priests of Ceres.[12] There is an incredible abundance of Russian, Estonian, Rumanian folk tales about wolves who save peoples' lives, help the poor, aid people in seemingly impossible tasks, suckle motherless babes, and generally succour mankind. Wolves even aid other animals. In the German folk tale Sultan an old dog, no longer considered useful, is about to be killed by its master. The dog begs aid from his friend the wolf. So the wolf pretends to attack the master's child in order that Sultan may pretend to save it. The ruse succeeds and Sultan lives out the remainder of his life loved and repsected by his master.

One of the related traditions that we will speak of here is that of the werwolf. An early mention of the werwolf tradition is found in Greece. Certain Scythians near the Black Sea passed for wizards because once a year they became wolves for a few days. The lover in Virgil by means of the herbs of Pontus, sees the Maeris turn into werwolves and call ghosts from their graves.[13] The Northmen believed that by wearing a wolfskin one could become a wolf at will. In early Christian times there are stories of saints who turned evilly-disposed people into wolves and other beasts by magical powers that all baptised people supposedly possess, if not actually at least potentially. Thomas Aquinas also expresses this belief.[14] Also, in a Russian

folk tale the apostles Peter and Paul turn a bad wife and husband into bears. In the seventh century a man-wolf is supposed to have defended the head of St. Edward the martyr against other beasts.

At this point it is essential to establish the difference between an evil werwolf and a benign one. An evil werwolf becomes such either as a penalty imposed by a saint or good man or by a deliberate self-transformation by magic roots, formulae, certain ointments, or a girdle or wolfskin. Such a transformation by a perverse man is always for nefarious purposes, he chooses the beast in man instead of the man in beast. Sometimes the motive is for blood, sometimes it is an effort to gain the second sight which animals are believed to possess. The choice of animal depended mainly on what species was prevalent in the area. In the far North the customary choice for such purposes was the bear. The benign wolf, however, apart from being a good man, was most often an innocent victim turned into a werwolf by a sorcerer or an enemy, parent or malicious guardian. In these cases an essential aspect is that, just as the perverse self-transformed man retains his evil tendencies, the good and innocent victim retains both his virtue and his self-consciousness. Thus the benign werwolf preserves his capacity to act on a higher level of virtue. The benign werwolf tradition was still common in the Middle Ages, but later on in the sixteenth century it gave way by degrees to the evil tradition of lycanthropy.

In conclusion let me list some of the symbolic meanings

that the wolf held for medieval man. The evil wolf generally symbolized bloodthirstyness, corruption, covetousness, cowardliness, cruelty, destructive cunning, greed, hypocrisy and deceit, rapaciousness and relentlessness. The benign wolf was symbol of astuteness, melancholy, protection, swiftness, and free nature. The dream significance of killing a wolf was triumph for the dreamer. Seeing a wolf in a dream foretold adversity and destruction. In heraldry the wolf was emblematic of caution in attack.[15]

The bear and the hart or stag have not accumulated nearly as much literature and tradition as the wolf. Perhaps it is merely that they have been upstaged by the wolf as a centrally representative character in one of man's prime concerns, the dialogue of good and evil. Nevertheless these animals do possess some very interesting traditions.

A hart is a five-year-old stag. In Greek they are called 'Cervus' either from their habit of sniffing an herb called cerastes, or from the Greek word for horns'cerata'. Harts are generally timid creatures. They cure themselves from sickness by eating snakes, their natural enemies. Latin bestiaries say that after a meal of snakes the hart will shed his coat and his old age with it. In the Christian context the reference here is to the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist. After being absolved by confession and fortified by the meal of Christ's body the Christian can shed his sins and his old ways. Harts are slso known for their use of the herb dittany, with which they

expel arrows from their wounds, and their custom of swallowing a stone to cure biliousness. After these animals' death their horns and hide were used by medieval men as a safeguard and cure against snakebite. Harts love well-attuned music especially that of the pipes, and can hear it well with their ears pricked up. In the Christian medieval tradition only the balanced and virtuous soul could perceive and appreciate true harmony. Thus the ability to perceive true harmony was in itself a sign of a virtuous soul.

Angelo de Gubernatis associates the stag with the luminous forms that appear in the cloudy and nocturnal forest (i.e. lightening, thunderbolts etc.).[16] And indeed the stag is so connected in mythology. Aktaion, after seeing Artemis goddess of the moon naked while bathing, was transformed into a stag. Artemis is represented as a hunting goddess wounding an antelope between the horns with her left hand. Artemis is said to have been able to overtake the stags without the aid of dogs. Artemis's twin brother Apollo is the sun, and she is the moon. Thus Apollo is the stag, and Artemis follows him at night as the hind. When the moon goddess shines at night the stag and the hind turn luminous and are generally regarded as good omens. However when the moon does not shine and the sky is dark they too become dark, deprived of their life-light, and they bode ill.

In the Bible the hind or doe is constantly associated with the wifely virtues of humility and fidelity. Solomon in his Book of Songs says:"Gazelle nor fawn was ever so fleet of foot as my heart's love...Rise up, rise up quickly dear heart... and

come with me."[17] In the Book of Proverbs Solomon says:"My son, here is good advice for thy heeding...drink, and drink deep at thy own well, thy own cistern...A blessing on that fountain of thine! take thy pleasure with the bride thy manhood wins for thee. Thy own bride, gentle as a hind, graceful as a doe."[18]

There are two stories concerning the hart that merit notice. The first is a Christmas carol from northern Europe, the second is a Church allegory taken from a twelfth-century Latin bestiary.

In the Christmas carol a mythical stag carries a girl between his horns on a journey. References are made to parallel journeys made by the bull of Mithras, and the bull in the Avesta, the bull from which the world was created. In this carol, however, the girl sings of an allegorical palace created from the body parts of the stag.[19]

The Church allegory refers to the manner in which stags cross a river. They support each other, each hart resting his head on the haunches of the one in front of him. Thus they do not suffer so much from the burden of their weight, and can cross faster in order to avoid being caught by hunters. The allegory here concerns the Christian's journey towards Heaven. As Christians leave this world and cross to heavenly pastures they support each other, the more perfect bearing the weight of the others and sustaining them by their example and good works. Thus they can proceed more swiftly and avoid the snares of the devil.

In the medieval world the hart and hind were emblems of

dawn, elegance, grace, swiftness, agility. In the Christian tradition harts symbolized piety and religious aspiration, purity of life. The white hart symbolized the soul searching for Baptism, the Grail, and ways of ascent to God its Maker. In heraldry harts signified true harmony and peace. [20]

Legend has it that the bear's name 'Ursus' comes from the word 'ore', mouth, this because the bear's cubs are born shapeless and she licks them into shape with her mouth.[21] The bear's head is feeble, thus earning for it the reputation of being unstable unsteadfast and uneasy. Its greatest strength lies in its arms and loins, thus it can sometimes walk upright in imitation of a man. Bears also copulate in the human manner according to Aristotle. Sick bears cure themselves by eating ants , and this is their only antidote against the poisonous mandrake root which is fatal to them. Their special treat is honey. Pliny says that not only is the bear's breath foul and offensive to all other wild animals, but indeed it is poisonous, and none can touch what its breath has touched for fear of being poisoned.[22]

The name of bear also means star (from its shiny reddish fur). The polar stellar constellation of the Great Bear rules the North and all frigid regions. The king of bears, St. Joseph, is reputed to be the father of Sugrivas, king of monkeys, and these two animals are sometimes connected in natural histories. Another interesting connection between a bear and another animal occurs in the name of Beowulf, the great hero of Anglo-

Saxon poetry. The name is probably a composite of beo meaning bear, and wulf meaning wolf.

To medieval man the bear symbolized bravery, endurance, and strength. But this animal was also the synbol of brutality, clumsiness, ill-temper, greed,and silliness. In heraldry the bear was emblematic of ferocity in protection of kindred. In the Christian tradition this animal typified evil and destruction.[23]

The eagle stands for ascension, aspiration, empire, faith, fearlessness, fertility, fortitude,and freedom. It is also associated with generosity, immortality, majesty, omnipotence, strength, splendor, victory and virtue. On the evil side of the spectrum the eagle stands for discord, evil, and rapacity. The eagle is the deity of fire, lightening, storm and wind. It is the only creature capable of gazing directly at the sun without being dazzled by it. In an old medieval tale the eagle flies up to the sun. Its feathers are burnt off and it falls back into a pool, but soon grows anew in a regenerative birth. The eagle is the emblem of Rome, and in Christian thought the symbol of salvation. Generally its dream significance is prosperity. Dreams of a dead eagle denote ruin, a wounded eagle means loss of money, even life. In heraldry the eagle denotes a man of action, lofty spirit, judiciousness, speed in apprehension, and warlike tendencies. [24]

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[1]Morgan George Watkins, The Natural History of the Ancients (London, 1896), p. 210.

[2]Watkins, p. 202

[3]Watkins, p. 202-203.

[4]Watkins, p. 205

[5]Watkins, p. 210.

[6]Moses Gaster, Rumanian Bird and Beast Stories (London, 1915), p. 79-81.

[7]Herbert West Seager, Natural History in Shakespeare's Time (London, 1896), p.347.

[8]Angelo de Gubernatis, Zoological Mythology - The Legends of Animals (London, 1872), p. 146-147.

[9]Gaster, p. 87.

[10]De Gubernatis, p. 148.

[11]De Gubernatis, p. 149.

[12]Watkins, p. 203.

[13]Watkins, p. 207.

[14]Watkins, p. 210.

[15]Gertrude Jobes, Dictionary of Mythology Folklore and Symbols (New York, 1902), p. 1688-1689.

[16]De Gubernatis, p. 83.

[17]The Holy Bible, (London, 1960), p. 570.

[18]The Holy Bible, p. 541

[19]Gaster, p. 95-96.

[20]Jobes, p. 729.

[21]Terence Hanbury White, The Book of Beasts, p. 45.

[22]Percy Ansell Robin, Animal Lore in English Literature (London, 1932), p. 100.

[23]Jobes, p. 189-190.

[24]Jobes, p. 482-484.

Chapter Two.

Medieval man's concept of dream and dream interpretation, like his associations of animal imagery, was formed of ideas and traditions going back to the ancients. The dream as symbol has some of its beginnings in Babylon. Dreams played an essential part in the life and religion of these people. They interpreted all of creation symbolically. Even the physical aspects of the world, stars, the earth, even buildings were regarded as corresponding signs within which were hidden all the secrets of the universe. Dreams were therefore regarded as guides in the interpretation of corresponding signs in the world. In dream the deity appeared, revealed himself, declared the will of Heaven and predicted the future. The priest-seers who interpreted these dreams were called bârû, and sometimes the priests of revealed law. These priests prescribed certain conditions for dream interpretation: the subject presented himself at the temple, fasted and did penance. Answers to his queries were obtained by invoking Mokhir the god of dreams, and sleeping in the temple. One of the penitential psalms goes as follows: "Reveal thyself to me and let me behold a favorable dream. May the dream that I dream be true. May Mokhir the God(dess) of dreams stand at my head. Let me enter the E-Saggila, the temple of the Gods, the house of life."[1]

In documents and histories of ancient Babylon there are innumerable references to people who acted wisely on the influence of dreams. Assur-bani-pal was encouraged to make an important river-crossing in safety by the appearance of the

goddess Istar in a vision. This same Assur-bani-pal is said to have possessed a most extensive collection of books on onieromancy (drema interpretation) in his library at Ninevah. Also, the order to build the temple of the Moon God at Harran is said to have been revealed in a dream to Nabonidus.

The Babylonians stressed the infranatural or demoniac character of dreams. They believed that the spirits of the dead or demons could enter men's dreams and that they must be exorcised by magic. This was another function of the Bârû priests, who would exorcise the demon at the temple of Mokhir.

The Babylonian Talmud contains a discourse on good and bad dreams. In it the writer, a man called Rab Hisda, says that bad dreams are good in the sense that the pain they cause is sufficient to prevent their fulfillment. Good dreams are good simply because of the joy they produce. Rab Hisda also says that an uninterpreted dream is like an unread letter, dreams follow the mouths of the interpreter. No dream is fulfilled in every detail but dreams are still definitely prophetic. Lastly, if the dreamer awakes and utters a phrase or verse spontaneously that is a minor prophecy.

Belief in dream as prophecy continued in the Egyptian times. These people did not believe, as other nations of their time, that the soul wandered from the body in sleep or communicated with the dead, only that it received supernatural messages from the gods, messages that were untransmittable through the waking senses. Egyptians believed in three kinds of godly intervention in dreams. In unsolicited dreams the gods appeared

to the dreamer (usually a king, high priest or someone else of worth and rank) and demanded an act of piety towards themselves, sometimes accompanying the demand with prophecies of future success for the dreamer. In dreams of spontaneous warning the gods gave advice on future action to the dreamer, and showed him how to avoid possible pitfalls. The solicited dream usually consisted of the god's answer to a specific question put by the dreamer.

Procurement of dreams through magic spells and potions, and dream interpretation by seer-priests was continued in the Egyptian civilization. The most formal method of dream request was incubation at certain temples accompanied by fasting and penance. Such temples were Imuthes at Memphis, the temple of Thoth at Khumunu, at Thebes the temple of Karnak mentioned above, the sanctuary of Isis at Philae, and the temple of Sarbut-el-Zadem near Sinai. Dream interpreters were also named Scribes of the Double House of Life because the Egyptians considered that the other side of life, the side revealed by gods in dreams, was just as much of a reality as the one lived day by day. The Masters of Secret Things, the official prophets of Egypt, lived in these temples. Their influence over their country was enormous.

Thus for Egypt the dream was more of a tangible reality than a mystic secret. It was a rule of life and was regarded as a medium for receiving knowlege, not as a journey of the soul.

The Greeks incorporated many ideas from nations before them: the Babylonian concept of the prophetic quality of dreams and

the possibility of demoniac influence, the Egyptian traditions of incubation and fasting in order to obtain advice or help from a deity, the general importance (as commonly agreed) of proper authoritative dream interpretation.

In Greece prophetic dreams were regarded by some as dependant on the sacredness of certain spots such as Delphi. The Oracle of Delphi was said to be controlled by Apollo, the great sender of the veridical. After incubation at the temple of Aesculapius at Epidaurus the god would appear in a dream. Orphic religion was thus founded on the divine nature of dreams. However even more clearly than by general history the ideas of the ancient Greeks on dream and divination are rendered by the ideas and writings of their great philosophers.

Homer wrote that there are two gates through which dreams come. The first is the gate of horn and the second is the gate of ivory. The gate of horn is the gate of truth because as one approaches it the horn becomes clear and transparent, allowing one to see through to the truth. The ivory gate is the gate of error and delusion because as one approaches it the ivory turns opaque, hiding all the truth beyond. Heraclitus maintained that the soul, isolated in sleep both from the function of the senses and contact with exterior reality, gained contact with the divine and irrational world, and thus gained knowlege of the future. This theory is much expanded by the later Greek writers. One negative note arises at this point in the Pythagorean philosophy of dreams which is simply that either dreams are totally meaningless, produced by intestinal dirorders,

or they are demoniac in character. Thus in neither case are they worthy of man's consideration or dependance, and are much better ignored. And with this the Pythagoreans summarily dismiss the notion of dreams.

There are three main Greek authors who wrote on the subject of dreams: Plato, Aristotle, and Democritus. According to Democritus the universe is filled with images which, filtered into the body during sleep, can be transformed into either good or evil figures. These images of the universe are clearer at night because then the images of day have been dissolved and the air waves are more tranquil. Also, sleeping people have a greater perception of their small and inward motions than those who are awake and preoccupied with exterior objects. These inward motions, felt in consequence of sleep, produce phantasms. Thus dreaming, these interior phantasms, is the result of an objective process not due to any special effort or sensitivity on the part of the dreamer. Anyone, wise or foolish, can dream. Democritus contends that if dreams were sent by a divinity they would take place in the honorable light of day, and be sent to wise men only. But he does admit the possibility of 'casual' meaning foolish people,foreseeing the future. And the explanation for this is that the personal appropriate motions of foolish people are easily expelled. Thus when foolish people are impelled by a foreign motion they cannot resist, and are easily led by it.

And so for Democritus dreams are demoniac almost by default, first because they are not sent by a divinity, second because

the universal images that cause dreams have to enter the body at night since then, weak in sleep, it cannot resist them. Similarly dreams occur in foolish people because these peoples' personal images are easily dispelled and they cannot resist the foreign dream images.

The scientific theory of dreams begins with the ideas of Plato and Aristotle. Plato wrote of dreams, their origins and value in his Republic. Of their origins he said " In all of us, even in good men, there is a lawless wild beast-nature which peers out in sleep.[2] What happens in his opinion is that in sleep the rational,mild,governing part of the soul relaxes its vigilance against those parts savage and rude. These latter parts, often strengthened by intoxicating beverages and overly-spicey foods, make their appearance loosed from all modesty shame and prudence. As a solution Plato poses the temperate man who drinks :acts and lives moderately. Instead of feeding the savage parts of his soul with wines and spices he feeds reason with noble thinking and moderate habits. He excites the better parts of his mind with valuable investigations and philosophy. As a result this man attains inner harmony, having given his appetites neither to want nor to repletion, that he may rest properly. He prepares for the unknown by consciously quieting the less worthy and rousing to action the more worthy parts of his soul (wisdom etc.). By such a man, contends Plato, is truth best apprehended, and the visions of his dreams are the least likely to be portrayed contrary to human law.

Plato admits that some dreams have a higher, a divine origin.

But such dreams again are most likely to be given to those who prepare for them in the proper manner prescribed above. Lastly in his writings on this subject Plato introduces an idea which will be expanded by later thinking. He indicates that dreams are very often either the inward affirmation of man's daily thoughts and preoccupations, or the revelations of his desires.

Thus beginning with Plato dreams cease to be a totally God-inspired phenomenon. They become a human function, one antithetical to reason but nevertheless able to be controlled by it. Dreams portray the unconscious mind as opposed to the conscious one. But the key has been provided: man can, by using his reason and by moderating his habits, control to a great degree the less worthy influences of dreams, and direct his receptiveness to dreams of worth and truth.

Aristotle further humanized the theory of dreams.[3] He did not believe in divinely inspired prophetic dreams, and said that there was no rational explanation for divination. The reasoning behind these arguments is simple but effective. If God sends dreams to man, and if those dreams are indeed prophetic, then why are they sent not to the best and wisest but to the more casual (again meaning foolish) of men. Animals also dream, but one can hardly say that these dreams are sent to them by a divinity.

Aristotle's explanation for the natural phenomenon of dreaming is this, and one can recognize here the development of some of Plato's ideas: sleep reduces the intensity of sensory

activity which in the waking state overshadows unconscious imagery. Thus when the sensorium is at rest this unconscious imagery emerges. Also during sleep the small stimuli of the days (heat, cold, fear) are magnified into the sensation of great stimuli. For instance a man who got chilled during the day might dream that he was freezing to death. Dreams can also be memories of motions produced by the 'real' stimuli of the day, of which traces may be left in the mind. Thus some of the phantasms appearing in sleep may be caused by the memory of actions performed in the waking state.

Aristotle further theorizes that just as the mention of an event is neither the definitive sign nor the cause of its existence, so the dream is not the sign of definition nor the cause of an event happening as it appeared to the dreamer, but merely a fortuitous circumstance. Thus most dreams are not verified because fortuitous things have neither a perpetual nor a frequent subsistence. On the other hand some dreams by pure coincidence do happen, mainly because as in throwing darts, out of many which are tried some are bound to hit the mark.

Aristotle admits that some dreams, while being prophetic, are clearly demoniacal. Degenerates can often see the future clearly, but this vision is a gift from the devil and not from God. Other prophecies such as they are, would seem to be the special property of unstable people, because these are more driven by their unconscious and irrational impulses. The source of this prophecy would be the greater degree of consciousness of smaller internal movements that is attained during sleep.

Man being a microcosm of nature and reality, these inner motions might indeed have a correlation to some greater, perhaps universal truth. One reservation to be made in this line of thought is that the vividness of the dream phantasm is often caused by the familiarity and vividness of the correlating associations. For instance one could dream in vivid detail of a friend or of an event in his life, mainly because one knows every detail of his personality, because he is so familiar, In any case Aristotle concludes that dreams are at best a distorted mirror which only a true interpreter can correct.

Rome too had her great writers who thought and composed works on this subject. Their works form the direct springboard, basis, even some of the original points of medieval dream theory. Lesser writers advanced some widely differing theories, some drawn from Plato and the Greeks, some drawn from the traditions of ancient Egypt.

Rufus of Ephesus proposed his humoral theory of dreams.[4] He contended that dreams and types of dreams depend on the biological state, the humors of the body. Cratippus, another philosopher of early Roman times, held that in sleep the soul becomes more vigorous, freed from the senses and cares of the body. The soul is eternal, and in sleep it transcends not only time but space: it sees all things. Reason and divination are part of the soul, and through these qualities the soul finds its way to and becomes part of the greater, the total world.[5] This theory goes back to the Babylonian system of world correspondances and each part of the world being part and symbol

of another.

In the fourth and third century Zeno and the Stoics put the answer to the dream question differently. In their estimation the mind of man was divine. The world was considered to be full of what they called 'consenting intelligences', meaning intelligences with sources other than humanity. In these consenting intelligences we again have an echo of Babylon and later Cratippus's system of world correspondances. In any case the Stoics concluded that man's mind, by its inherent divinity in conjunction with other intelligences, could indeed foresee future events.

Marcus Tullius Cicero, taking his cue from Aristotle, argues against dream prophecy.[6] Cicero agrees with Plato that dreams release the beast in man. But as to the prophetic qualities of dream he questions whether we can believe the hallucinations of a drunkard or of a maniac. Then why should we believe in dreams? Cicero flatly denies that dreams are god-sent. First of all he reason[5], dreams are not clear god-like statements, only confused broken patterns of images. They are not sent to man in his reasonable waking state, but when he is in the weakened state of sleep. Lastly Cicero asks with typical Roman pride, why reveal to man a future that he is basically equipped to cope with?

Thus Cicero concludes that dreams have no exterior source, that they are caused solely by the thoughts and activities of man's waking state. They are reflections of his conscious patterns and are therefore beyond the possibility of true or

false interpretation. Any meanings that dreams might accidently have are decipherable only by the interpreter. Dreams for Cicero are not uniform or predictable. Any correspondance with real life is either an unconscious reflection of the conscious state or pure accident. It is interesting to note here that while Cicero takes many of his questions and theories from Plato and Aristotle, he refuses to leave open the possibilities that they do for divinity as a source of dreams, or dream as prophecy.

Titus Lucretius wrote of dreams in his work De Rerum Naturae, in the first century before Christ. He claimed that spirits possess our bodies when we sleep. Lucretius believed, like Cicero, that the dream was a direct product of the mind, especially the unconscious mind, and that it had no exterior sources. In sleep, he explains, the loss of conscious reason opens the way for dreams of absurdity and of the dead. According to this philosopher men dream within the frame of reference in which they live: a lawyer dreams of documents, a dog dreams of food etc. For most men this frame of reference includes their daytime occupations, their habitual interests and their primary emotions.

Lucretius does not entirely deny dream fulfillment. He thinks, as the Bible states, that dreams are related to wish-fulfillment and the workings of men's conscience. He also agrees with Plato's theory of unity between body and mind, and states that the dream of certain organic processes may stimulate those processes in reality.

Quintus Septimus Tertullian, one of the Church Fathers, wrote on dreams in the third century A.D. The work in question is entitled No Soul Is Exempt From Dreams. Tertullian denies that the soul wanders in sleep as the ancient traditions suggest. He explains that the soul is always occupied even in sleep. This is the proof of the soul's immortality. Sleep is therefore an unnatural state for the soul, and when the body sleeps the soul uses its own energy. In the beginning sleep was initiated by ecstasy:"And God sent an ecstasy upon Adam, and he slept".[7] The very word 'ecstasy' means 'to step out of', this refers to the soul's capacity to transcend its natural boundaries during sleep. Even in that first sleep Adam dreamed in prophecy of the woman that would be Eve. Ecstasy rests the body but stimulates the soul. During sleep, says Tertullian, we experience real feelings and emotion. We cannot, however, be held responsible for our dreams, they are amoral. Memory of the dream is a gratuity of the ecstatic condition. Dreams, concludes Tertullian, can be sent from God, from nature, or from the devil.

Synesius of Cyrene (A.D. 370-413) believed that dreams do indeed take the soul to a higher region. During sleep the way is opened to the soul for the most perfect inspection of things it had never known or desired to know.[8] He refers to a saying of the Greeks: "By lessons some are enlightened, By sleep, others are inspired," the Sybilline Oracles.[9] Waking instruction, says Synesius, must come from man in order for the conscious mind to relate to it. But inspiration in sleep comes from God. Divination by dreams in available to all men and interpretable by all men, each is his own instrument of prophecy. Thus we do not sleep only to live, but also to learn

to live.

Synesius's explanation of dream prophecy is a development of the Babylonian concept of a united world organism consisting in a universal system of correspondances which can be studied by the soul. According to Synesius the soul can understand and prophecy concerning this universal system because the soul is itself a microcosm of the world system. Zodiac and stellar vibrations set up similar patterns of vibrations in the soul. The soul and the mind both contain these patterns: the mind contains the pattern of existing things, and the soul contains the pattern of things to come. Thus when dreams prophecy the future they are merely raising to our conscious level the eternal patterns of the soul. Dreams are therefore the map of the soul, a guide for life and for the future. In this statement by Synesius we have the theory of dream prophecy and correspondances at its clearest. The correspondance theory of ancient Egypt has reached its apex and will be of prime importance in the medieval world view.

Gregory of Nyssa (fourth century A.D.) was an Eastern Church Father who asserted the independence of the soul, and yet said that the soul could still be a medium of divine forces. He divided dreams into two types, ordinary and prophetic. Prophetic dreams are gifts of vision from divine forces, but such dreams are much rarer than their natural brothers, the ordinary dreams. Gregory gives a familiar picture of the ordinary dream: memory images of waking sensory perceptions which fall into the soul due to the inactivity of the sensory

and intellectual faculties during sleep. The dream, besides reflecting the external stimuli of the day, often reflects internal stimuli, the inner organic processes of the body. This kind of dream helps to foretell and diagnose disease.

Maimonides, a twelfth-century Spanish philosopher, wrote that prophecy is an emanation sent by God through the medium of the active intellect, first to man's rational faculty, then to his imaginative faculty which retains and combines sensual impressions to make images. The principle function of this imaginative faculty is performed when the senses are at rest, for then it receives divine inspiration. This is the nature of prophetic dreams. Prophecy can be acquired in a dream or vision where the imaginative faculty perceives, as if through the medium of the bodily senses, the object of its learning. Maimonides contends that persons of developed mental capacity dream truly prophetic dreams, and through the influence of the divine intellect they perceive the true nature of that which is only superficially known by them when they are awake.

St. Thomas Aquinas dedicated one section of his Summa Theologica (Part two, second part, question 25, article 6) to the question of whether divination was lawful or unlawful. He concluded that it was not unlawful. It is good to make use of Divine instruction, and dreams are tools of God's instruction. "Through a dream in a vision by night, when sleep comes over men and they slumber in bed, then He (God) opens the ears of men, and teaching them, imparts instructions"[10] Aquinas cites many Biblical precedents for divination and interpretation

of dreams: Joseph interpreting the dreams of Pharaoh, Daniel interpreting the dreams of the king of Babylon, and so on. As for the actual phenomenon of dream prophecy Aquinas argues that it is impossible to deny that which all men experience, and all men have experienced dreams which contain some indications of the future.

To the admonition in Deuteronomy 18:10"Let there not be among you him who observes dreams" Aquinas replies that this warning concerns false interpreters of dreams, whose utterances are superstitious and unlawful. Sometimes dreams can cause future events when men act in such a way as to make their dreams come true. Other dreams can be signs of the future insofar as they can be referred to causes common to dreams and future events. Here again we go back to Plato and Aristotle and their theories of man as a microcosm, his inner motions reflecting the greater systems of the universe (this idea developed greatly by Synesius of Cyrene). Aquinas states that most dreams of prophecy are of this last sort, where cosmic future and microcosmic dream have a common cause. However Aquinas also suggests a third possibility. Quite apart from the reciprocal causality of dream and future there might be a third causal agent. And if the cause of that agent were found control of dreams might be possible.

Artemidorus of Daldfs(second century A.D.) prime importance and interest for medieval man is the clarity he achieves in his categorization of dreams.[11] His main point is that dreams are constructive in intent and purpose, they

are visions given to men for their advantage and instruction. Dreams can accomplish all the operations of perception that the waking body is capable of. Artemidorus distinguishes five main types of dreams: the dream, the vision, the oracle, the fantasy, or vain imagination, and the apparition. In a dream man discovers truth under a hidden figure or meaning (i.e. Joseph interpreting Pharaoh's dream). In a vision man sees in the waking state what he previously dreamed of (Gennadius' vision on the second night). In the oracle a revelation is made to a certain person during his sleep by an angel, saint, or other agent of God (i.e. the angel's revelation to Joseph that Mary would be the mother of God). Phantasy or vain imagination occurs when the affections are so vehement that they ascend to the brain in sleep and meet with the more watchful spirits of the soul. Thus the thoughts of the day are repeated in dreams (a lover dreams of his betrothed). The last class of dream is the apparition, the nocturnal vision that comes to weak infants and ancient men who fancy that they see chimeras approaching to harm them.

Artemidorus also distinguished between speculative or contemplative, and allegorical or figurative dreams. Speculative dreams have immediate results, while the outward results of the allegorical dream may be delayed. Dreams which cannot possibly come true, such as a man flying like a bird or a man visiting Hell, are allegorical and have a different significance. Both of these classes of prophetic dreams Artemidorus calls somnium. Insomnium is a non-prophetic type of dream, a dream

that is affected by the state of body or mind, or a wish-determined dream.

This writer also reiterates the old theory that great dreams are dreamed by great men, and the prophetic quality of the dream is proportionate to the greatness of the person. If the dreams of eminent people are good they signify great benefits. If they are unpleasant, then they signify great misery. By inverse application then, the more inconsiderable the person, the more inconsiderable the dream.

Lastly Artemidorus sets forth certain thoughts and general rules to apply to dream interpretation. He says that dream symbols cannot be considered merely as abstract thoughts, but also as the spirits' substitution for objects of reality. Dream interpretation also requires the dreamer's mental associations. Thus the criteria for examining a dream stand as follows.

1- Natura: whether the events of the dream are natural or not.
2- Lex: whether the events of the dream are lawful or not.
3- Consuetudo: whether the dream actions correspond to the actual waking experience of the dreamer.
4- Tempus: the general and personal circumstances at the time of the dream.
5- Ars: the dreamer's occupation.
6- Nomen: the dreamer's name.

Ambrosius Theodosius Macrobius is probably the single most important exponent of the dream tradition here, simply because he was the most readily available and sometimes the

only available source for dream information in medieval times. Macrobius belonged to a small but important group of polymaths and encyclopedists who from the fourth to the sixth centuries tried to epitomize and present in a more accessible form the classical arts, and some of the teachings of classical philosophy. The problem was that, quite apart from the average medieval man's inability to understand the ancient languages, the ancient sources themselves were separated from ready access by innumerable works of various commentators and compilers. Each author, and this is the case with Macrobius also, would go not to the ancient source itself but to the most recent work concerning it, and would then quote the original source as his authority. Thus the later encyclopedists were removed from their classic sources by as many as five or six studies. The resulting loss of authenticity is clear.

Macrobius's Commentary on the Dream of Scipio is almost itself encyclopedic, informing the reader on topics that range from geography to medicine. The pertinent information on dreams is found in the third chapter of this work. Here Macrobius presents a system-category of five main types of dreams.
1- The enigmatic dream - in Greek 'oneiros', in Latin 'somnium'.
2-the prophetic vision - in Greek 'horama', in Latin 'visio'.
3- oracular dreams - in Greek 'chrematismos', in Latin 'oraculum'.
4- the nightmare - in Greek 'enypnion', in Latin 'insomnium'.
5- the apparition - in Greek 'phantasma', in Latin 'visum'.

According to Macrobius the nightmare and the apparition have no prophetic significance. Nightmares are caused by mental

or physical distress, or anxiety about the future. The victim of the nightmare experiences vexations similar to those which disturb him during the day (i.e. a man who over-ate will dream that he is choking on food). Since nightmares arise from the dream-memories of the day's disturbances they vanish when the dreamer awakes, and have no more meaning or importance. The Latin word for the nightmare, insomnium, means that they have importance only during sleep and never after. Indeed Virgil considered nightmares to be deceitful, and in line 896 of his Aenèid we find "False are the dreams (insomnia) sent by the departed spirits."

Macrobius continues with the assertion that apparitions (phantasma, visum) come between wakefulness and slumber, in the first cloud of sleep. In this condition the dreamer still imagines himself to be awake, and sees various unnatural spectres and inhuman shapes, sometimes delightful and sometimes frightening. To this class of apparition belongs the incubus, which according to Macrobius, rushes upon people in sleep and presses them with a weight they can actually feel.

Macrobius states that although the nightmare and the apparition are of no use in foretelling the future, yet by means of the other three classes of dreams we are gifted with the powers of divination. In an oracular dream a pious and revered man, a priest, an angel, or even a god, clearly reveals events which will transpire, and recommends to the dreamer a proper course of action. A prophetic dream is an unsolicited vision which actually comes true (such as a man who dreams of

his friend's return and then meets him on the next day). An enigmatic dream according to Macrobius conceals with strange shapes and veils with ambiguity the true information which is given. Such a dream requires proper interpretation. The enigmatic dream can be personal, (involving oneself), alien (involving someone else), social (combining the dreamer with other people), public (concerning a public or general misfortune), universal (reaching cosmic proportions, concerning the condition of the universe).

Macrobius's work on dreams was the prime source for dream investigation and information in the Middle Ages. His categories may seem simplistic to some, but they provided a necessary clarification and representation of the ideas of philosophers both ancient and medieval. It is said by some critics that Augustine's De Spiritu et Anima was based greatly on Macrobius's classifications.

Thus the Middle Ages combines three basic elements out of all the ancient dream theory to form her own theory. There is a distinct and developed revival of the ancient theory, begun in Babylon, of correspondances and cosmic patterns, a system that in itself reflects admirably the medieval world view. There is a renewal of belief in dreams directly inspired by God or by the devil. And combined with these is the natural scientific explanation of the dream phenomenon, begun and developed greatly by Plato and Aristotle, and continuing its growth up to and beyond the Middle Ages. The debate continued on the subject of whether dreams were truly meaningful or not,

and as a result both traditions developed in the Middle Ages. The most famous exponent of the dream as vain images side of the argument is Pertelote.

There was a distinct need in these times for some scientific and rational explanation of the phenomenon of dreams, it helped man to understand himself and his world in the natural sense. As for the supernatural factor, this was the factor that men had been trying to define and explain for centuries. Ancient philosophers tried to refer its source to god-figures, to a cosmic system, to natural causes, even to coincidence and accident. The Churchmen-philosophers of the Middle Ages managed to combine all of these levels, scientific, natural, and supernatural, into an attempt at the most complete solution in history. This combination epitomizes the admirable unity in the mozaic system of thought of the Middle Ages. It was also necessary from the point of view of the Church that dreams be set in their proper place in the moral hierarchy, and that they be well defined in terms of their virtues and limitations for the moral guidance of the faithful.

But in the final analysis there is always some aspect of dream and dream prophecy which simply cannot be defined or ascribed to any certain cause. It was in the attempt to answer this last eternally-remaining question that philosophers and scientists came up with the theories and answers described in this section. The Middle Ages finally chose to ascribe this unknown factor directly to God. Therfore all dreams that were not naturally, cosmically, and scientifically explicable

were referred to the Supreme Authority of the medieval world, God Himself.

References.

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[2]Cambridge, 1963, p. 243.

[3]Werner Wolff, The Dream - Mirror of Conscience (New York, 1952), p. 17.

[4]Ralph L. Woods, The World of Dreams (New York, 1947),p.395.

[5]Woods, p. 514.

[6]Woods, p. 191.

[7]Woods, p. 131.

[8]Woods, p. 135.

[9]Woods, p. 135.

[10]The Holy Bible, p. 472.

[11]Woods, p. 128-130.

Chapter Three.

The old French romance Guillaume de Palerne was written at the request of the Countess Yolande, daughter of Baldwin the fourth, Count of Hainault, and Alice of Namur. This Yolande was married twice: first to the Count Yves of Soissons, later in 1177 after his death to Hugh Candavene the fourth, Count of St. Paul. The Countess Yolande claimed descent from the line of Charlemagne, and later became aunt to Baldwin the sixth, Count of Hainault and Flanders. Baldwin was elected Emperor of Constantinople in 1204, and later suffered martyrdom for his faith at the hands of the infidels in the seige of Adrianople. The Counts of Hainault and Flanders were noted and distinguished patrons of poetry. The romance itself was probebly composed at the close of the twelfth century, in the Picard dialect of central France.

By approximately 1350 Roman De Guillaume de Palerne was translated into the alliterative long lines so popular in the West Midlands of England, by an author also named William. This translation was requested by Humphrey de Bohun, the sixth Earl of Hereford and grandson of King Edward the first. Of importance in connecting Humphrey with this French source are his three periods of military service in France, where he could have acquired a taste for or direct knowlege of the original work. The poem was later rendered into both French and English prose during the sixteenth century (Pierre Durand Lyons 1552, and Wynkyn de Worde, 1520-9)[1] But the text for my commentary is the Middle English version of the poem, edited

by the Reverend Walter W. Skeat.

Most of the scholarly work done so far on this poem tends to be concerned with motif catalogues, discussions of sources, analogues and the like. I would like to concern myself more with the actual characters and events of the poem, the action on different levels, and their multiple effect on the medieval audience. However, as concerns setting and sources a detailed study of the setting of William of Palerne and its symbolic representations and parallels of early history has been made by Charles W. Dunn in his literary-historical examination of this work. Briefly as he puts it," the setting is clearly intended to represent the Norman (1130-94) or the earliest period of the Hohenstaufen (1194-1250) kingdom of the two Sicilies."[2] The hero's name recalls William the Good, an especially revered king of Sicily and Apulia. In addition Sicily had three kings by the name of William; the William referred to above was William the second. The chronicler of William's peaceful reign was Richard of San Germano, who provides an interesting parallel to the description of William's rule over Rome. At the end of the poem Palerne is Palermo, the capitol of the Sicilian realm, and the details provided by the poem are quite similar to the factual descriptions of the city by medieval eye-witnesses. For example the description in the poem of the royal park at Palermo, with a tower of marble in the middle and enclosed by stone and cement due to the many wild animals in it, echoes in almost every detail the description of the actual park at Palermo by a twelfth-century

eye-witness, Romuald of Salerno, even as to what kind of animals and shrubbery were kept there. The relationship between Alphonse and William has its historical echo in the story of Alfonso the eighth of Castile and Alfonso the second of Aragon who were famed for the brotherly love and closeness that they displayed for each other. The name Alphonse is taken directly from one of these two Alfonsos, which of them we cannot be sure. The only clue to be had is that the story of Alfonso the eighth of Castile is strikingly similar to William's story. Alfonso too had his kingdom seized by an uncle when he was four (William's age at the abduction), and had to flee protected by an old follower of his father. Eventually, however, he regained his throne. A close study of the details of these two stories brings out further parallels.

The author begins his poem with an appeal to an ancient source or tale, a convention used by nearly all medieval writers. This prestige of anitquity reference is made partly to gain credence for the improbable events of his romance, and partly to win respect for having garnered wisdom from the ancients themselves. In general invoking ancient tales or wisdom lent authority to the undertakings of these artists, and they, our author among them, were well aware of the importance of exploiting this possibility, especially since the ancient sources were far removed from the intellectual realm of the average medieval man, or even the average medieval writer.

There is one point of importance that should be mentioned before proceeding with the poem itself. In order to appreciate

fully the works of the medieval poets it is necessary to understand that these writers were not preoccupied primarily with originality, but rather with giving certain consideration to prescribed forms and genres, to stylistic convention and established rules of composition. The chance for individual idiom, however, was not denied. It lay rather within these very conventions, and revealed itself in the occasional changes and twists, the personal variations of these authors on traditional themes.

The poem begins with a brief passage which names and introduces the first protagonists: Embrons, king of Apulia, his wife the queen Felice, the prince William, his two maids Acelone and Gloriande, as well as the wicked uncle, Embrons' brother who plots to steal the throne. The setting is a high festival day, and the court is gathered in the palace garden at Palermo. A hint is given during the introduction of the characters concerning the plot by Embrons' brother against William and the king his father. However at this time the author merely mentions that there is a plot against the throne by the king's brother aided by Acelone and Gloriande, and that they intend to kill the king and his son. Their means of accomplishing this are not yet disclosed, but we have in effect been warned that the attempt will take place "mult porres bien oir comment" says the poet. (1.50)[3]

The jumping-off point from Palermo to the world of wolf and forest is unwittingly created by the inhabitants of the world of actuality. The king's brother, Acelone and Gloriande

are clearly the sources and the agents of the evil situation from which the wolf will have to rescue William. Thus the promoting factor is the situation of human evil created in Palermo, and this factor forces in a sense the intervention of the world of nature in order to preserve William's life. And so it is the festival day, everyone is amusing themselves in the park, William is gathering flowers:

> "atant esgardent la ramee,
> saut un grans leus, goule baee,
> a fendant vient comme tempeste;
> tuit se destornent por la beste;
> devant le roi, demainement,
> son fil travers, sa goule prent,
> atant sen va; " (l. 85-91)

The intrusion of the world of nature into the garden of Palermo is stunningly sudden and brief, and the wolf immediately escapes into the forest.

This action or intrusion of the world of nature takes place on two levels of perception. On the first level, that of the characters in the poem, it is an intrusion of hostile nature: a vicious beast kidnaps a child and will probably eat him. The characters with the exception of the king's brother and the two maids are not aware of the plot against William. And even these last three view the kidnapping more as an alternate misfortune precluding the need for further evil action on their part. So for all of these characters the advent of the wolf seems to be an attack of hostile nature. However on the second level of perception, that of the reader, the action takes a different turn. First of all we have been informed by the author of the plot against the child's life.

Thus, whether or not we are sure of the wolf's motives, we can still see that the prince has been removed from a very dangerous situation. Also, the author reveals to us the tender care that the wolf takes of the child and the actual identity of the wolf. We learn that the animal is really a werwolf. He is the prince Alphonse who was bewitched by his evil stepmother. Alphonse the werwolf and William the new foundling possess a common link. In both cases their plight is the result of human evil. Alphonse, seen by his stepmother as an obstacle to her power, was transformed into a werwolf. William, destined to meet death at the hands of his uncle, had to be saved by the werwolf. These two will flee for refuge to the protective world of nature, the forest.

The king of Palermo and his nobles, these characters who remain at the first level of action and perception of hostile nature discussed above, give chase but are left behind by the werwolf at the Straits of Messina (The Far). The king, unable to cross the Straits, is defeated in his chase and returns sorrowfully to Palermo and his queen. We however are taken further on with the wolf and the babe to the great forest near Rome.

It is at this point that the first dramatic tension of the story is resolved. Important to remember is the fact that up to this point (the author's revelation in the forest of the werwolf's true identity) we have had no reliable indication that this animal is more than just an animal, that he is a werwolf, or that he is Alphonse. Even to the reader he is merely

the wolf that kidnaps William, outstrips all his pursuers, and carries him to the forest near Rome. And so in the beginning even while we are mentally accompanying them on the chase we are wondering whether this wolf is of the benignant kind or whether the babe has merely fallen into a worse fate. than before. The tension is heightened by the obvious reference here to the medieval tradition of the evil wolf whose favorite trick it is to kidnap a small child, play with him, and then eat him. But our doubts are resolved. The author says:

"lenfant de quanques fu mestiers
li a proquis la beste franche,
conques de rien not mesestance." (1.174-6)
"li leus-garous le fil le roi
lacole de sȩs .iiii. pies.
si est de lui aprivoisies,
li fix le roi, que tot li plaist
ce que la beste de lui fait;" (1.182-6)

Thus the convention of the wolf as child protector is immediately introduced and prevails. The werwolf even makes a cradle of earth for the child, and at night lays near him to warm and guard him. And so we see how carefully the wolf provides for the child, we note that the author specifically calls him a noble beast and confirms that he is a werwolf. This has already been suggested by queen Felice who says of William "Now art thou food for the werwolf" (1.151) even though she has no idea that he is anything more than an ordinary wolf. These revelations relieve our doubts concerning the child's safety; they also open the way for future explanations of the werwolf's origin and his nature.

"Now art thou food for the werwolf" (1.151), the line spoken by the queen, is a good example of the prophetic system

of warning that is one of the features of this poem. Of course in the case of this exclamation the fear expressed that William will be eaten by the werwolf proves unfounded. This portion of the prophecy proves untrue, it serves merely to aid and develop the tension of the wolf's motives that was discussed above. It is the other part of the sentence, the inadvertent use by the queen of the word werwolf, that is prophetic. Time and again the author will warn us (later on this is done mostly by dreams) of events which almost immediately follow his warnings. Some critics of this poem, for example John Edwin Wells in his section on this poem in his Manuel of Writings in the Middle Ages, choose to condemn these warnings of the event as completely superfluous and damaging to any drama or suspense that could be built up during these sequences. I see them differently. They do have their value in the system of the poem: a whole structure of echoes is built up here. This structure is related to the different levels of action and perception that I discussed earlier. A character may say or see or dream something which is about to happen. That is the prophecy on his level. Then the event actually occurs in the poem. And its occurrence may have added ramifications on the reader's level due to the wider scope of the reader's perceptions of action in the poem. Then too the warning and the actual occurrence comment on each other. For example later on in the poem, in cases where a character will have a dream prophesying metaphorically events which occur directly afterward, it is left to the reader to see the

similarities, tensions, and additional levels of meaning created by the interaction of dream and the actual event. This is what I intend to show in my explanation of the characters' dream-prophecies when they occur.

The werwolf in William of Palerne is of a specific class in medieval animal imagery. The fact that William is four years of age obviates the necessity for a female mother-type wolf. And so we turn from the Roman Luperca tradition to the Celtic werwolf tradition. However one element is notably retained from the Romulus Roman tradition: the werwolf's kindliness to the child and to a certain extent his raising the child. Thus, even though wolf-mother becomes male werwolf the chief element, his benign nature and care of William, remains the same throughout the story.

When the old cowherd guided by his hound, finds William in the forest he takes him home to his wife who bathes and feeds the child. As they have no children of their own they decide to adopt William. The werwolf returns, finds William gone, and tracks him to the cowherd's hut. Seeing William in such a good home the werwolf sadly decides to leave the child in the care of the old people, and goes his way. This is the first full glimpse we have of the man in the wolf. Although exteriorly transformed the werwolf has retained the nobility of spirit he obviously possessed before, a well-known factor in medieval wolf-lore. Leaving William is put forward as a conscious decision on his part at personal sacrifice. Furthermore the author says that "hertily for that hap to-heuene-ward he loked, and throlich thonked god". (l. 102) A conscious verbal

prayer from the wolf both establishes his true charity and connects him firmly with God, final proof of his worth.

After this last Christian act and before he temporarily leaves the scene the story of Alphonse the werwolf's bewitchment by his step-mother Braunde is told. At this point the author establishes clearly the medieval tradition of werwolves retaining their former natures when he says:"ac his witt welt he after as wel as to-fore". (l. 142) It is interesting to note that the author's use of the words 'a noble beast' (l.175) foreshadowed not only the nobility of nature, but nobility of blood in Alphonse. In the medieval world this is entirely natural. A truly noble man will have his nobility revealed in all the aspects of his person. Thus in Alphonse's case, as in William's, their station in life and noble rank are merely a complement and another manifestation of their true inner virtue and nobility. The problems in this poem arise when the appearances do not echo the realities. William appears to be a foundling, Alphonse appears to be a werwolf. And most of the characters, for example the king and nobles of Rome, do not perceive the reality of these two men because their perceptions are hampered by the non-correspondence of appearances to reality. God and nature must set the world right by returning William and Alphonse to their proper stations in life, thereby re-establishing the true balance between corresponding appearance and reality. Then too, other men will be able to perceive William and Alphonse as they truly are.

William is brought up by his new foster-father the cowherd.

He learns to hunt, herd and shoot. His noble origins of which the cowherd knows nothing manifest themselves in the natural virtuousness of his character. The author tells us the he shared the bounty of his hunt with all his friends, and

> "so kynde and so corteys. comsed he there
> that alle ledes him louede. that loked on him ones;
> and blesseden that him bare. and brought in-to this worlde,
> so moche manhed and murthe. schewed that child euere."
> (l. 193-7)

It is here that is strongly suggested the benevolent nature of both the forest world and its inhabitants. The forest has become a refuge for Alphonse, and here especially for William. The babe is protected and grows into healthy and worthy youth. His natural inclinations to what is noble and worthy are developed and guided. Prototypes of this world are the faithful cowherd and his wife who find William and do not hesitate to adopt him as their own. The cowherd cultivates in the prince all the virtues that are desirable in a worthy man. Plots, dangers, threats are unseen here, but seem to belong to another world.

One day the Emperor of Rome, on the trail of a great boar, loses his way in the forest and meets William. Impressed by the fairness and presence of the boy the Emperor decides to take him to Rome.

The last scenes between William, his foster-father, and his friends are full of the influence of the forest world. William takes tender leave of the cowherd and of his friends, thanks his foster-father for his care and sends a special message to his mother. The cowherd's last admonition to William

is an eloquent summary of the simple yet noble virtues we find in these people and in the prince:

"whanne thou komest to kourt.among the kete lordes,
& knowest alle the kuthes. that to kourt langes,
bere the boxumly & bonure, that ich burn the loue.
be meke & mesurabul. nought of many wordes,
be no tellere of talis. but trewe to thi lord,
& prestely for pore men.profer the euer,
For hem to rekene with the riche.in right & in skille,
be feightful & fre. & euer of faire speche,
& seruisabul to the simple. so as to the riche,
& felawe in faire manere. as falles for thi state;
so schaltow gete goddes loue. & alle gode mennes." (1.330-40).

It is interesting to note that bears harts and hinds are all mentioned in the hunting catch of the Roman Emperor. Also, as he was riding along in the forest it is mentioned that he saw a werwolf chasing a hart. This is a curious foreshadowing. The werwolf will later bring William and Melior the skins of a hart and a hind to disguise themselves with. The hunt has also yielded William who will later flee with Melior disguised as a bear and then a hart, so continuing the animal motif. When the Emperor's men ask him where the child came from he said " that god it him sent". (l. 395) This makes William nature's foundling, a sort of magic child sent not by the fairies this time, but by God.

In Rome the Emperor puts William under the care of Melior, telling her that he has brought her a rich present. The Emperor cannot guess at this point that his rich gift will cost him his most prized possession, his daughter. Melior takes charge of William in obedience to her father, and cares for him. The question on everyone's lips is articulated by Melior: can he be the son of a king? The poet provides their answer:

"mult si acointe belement,
si com li hom qui nestoit mie
norris en cort nentre maisnie,
mais auques le prueve nature,".(l. 35-7)

In a year William acquires all the knowlege and manners of the court world, yet none of its deceit vanity or affectation. The honesty and naturalness of his character remain unspoiled. In time the Emperor grows to love William as a son, and he is revered and loved by the people also. It is not surprising therefore that Melior finds herself in love with the young man.

The poet at this point makes use of the usual courtly love conventions. Melior, as will happen with William later, does not immediately realize that she is in love. She is sick and faint and yet recovers at the sight of William. William will later fall ill and take to his bed when he hears of Melior's proposed marriage to the son of the Greek emperor.

Melior's debate with herself continues the theme of appearances and reality discussed above. Her debate typifies the kind of perception problems experienced by the Emperor and the people of Rome, all the characters in fact who remain on the first level of apprehension that I defined earlier in this commentary. Melior's resolution of her problem however, does not extend to anyone else. Melior first says that she is foolish to give her heart to a mere foundling, for all his beauty:

"what? fy! schold i a fundeling. for his fairenesse tak?
nay, my wille wol noght a-sent.to my wicked hert.
wel.kud kinges & kaysers. krauen me i-now,
I nel leie mi loue so low, now at this time;". (l.481-4)

This is also the reason for her father's anger when he discovers their love and their flight: a foundling is not worthy to be loved by a princess, however virtuous and fair he may be.

Should that foundling be revealed as a king or as a prince then he would be considered worthy of the princess's love, although the man himself had not changed. This is a false estimate of worth, and it results from the situational problem in this poem: the divorce between the exterior appearance and the inner reality that it should represent. This divorce is itself provoked by the split between the two moral orders here: protective nature and civilization. William is obviously a worthy man; we know that he is also a prince. However the prince was threatened because of his very rank, and nature bestowed on him the protection and disguise of his foundling state. The world at Rome cannot perceive the reality thus protectively disguised - until it does the two orders of nature and civilization must also remain divorced. Melior begins with this false standard of reasoning (he is a foundling therefore unworthy of my love), but approaches step by step a truer logic. She reasons to herself that since she is sovreign surely she cannot have set her heart in an unworthy place. Surely the rich clothes that William was found in as a child prove him of noble birth, even though he be a foundling. Then Melior takes the last step to a true perception of the real William. She realizes that his ways and manners are noble and virtuous, he is honored and loved by all, thus he must indeed be the best and noblest of all men. Thus deliberately overstepping the regular standards of title and position Melior concludes that her heart has chosen truly, and that she has bestowed her love on the one man worthy of it.

As Melior pines for William her cousin and lady-in-waiting, Alexandrine, sets in motion a plan to make William fall in love with the princess. She administers to William a magic potion which induces him to dream of Melior. This dream is the first of several in the poem, and it brings to a conscious level the latent love of William for the Emperor's daughter. Obtaining dreams by the use of magic potions was certainly a known method in the ancient world. Other than that this dream is quite straightforward: it represents simple wish-fulfillment. The people involved do not appear disguised, they are themselves, William and Melior. William would not realize or admit his love for Melior. Even if he did admit it he would never dare to reveal it or expect a response from the princess. The wish-fulfillment in the dream is thus an alternate route, by-passing the block of consciousness imposed by William and bringing him face to face with a reality he dared not confront before.

Once again when he wakens William recites the formula that prohibits their love:"she is a princess, I am a foundling." Just as Melior first chid herself for laying her heart so low, William now reproves himself,"ac i nel na more leie mi loue so heize..." (l. 718-19). Now William himself falls into the trap: the false standards of nobility that hold sway in Rome. A union of William and Melior based on their love alone, however worthy it might be, would be impossible in the social hierarchy of Rome. The world of conscious reality precluded this love and so a dream had to bring it to consciousness.

The world of Rome forbids this love, so the solution will have to be sought by the lovers outside of Rome, in the world of the forest.

After a series of courtly vigils by William outside his lady's window the two lovers are eventually brought together through the machinations of Alexandrine. The young people seem almost incapable of approaching each other and openly declaring their love. They have to be all but tricked into it, they must go through a ritual prescribed by a third agent. The agent (here Alexandrine) engineers a course by which it becomes possible for each lover to admit and give his love under guise of doing something else entirely. William appeals to Melior indirectly through Alexandrine, pleading pity for his sorrowful state. She alone, says William, holds the key to his life, one word of mercy from her will cure him. Thus Melior is provided with the perfect cover. If she does not have pity on the youth, she tells herself, he will surely die. And since she has no right to kill a man she must grant him her love, but only to save his life to be sure. After this rather tortuous beginning the love affair takes a rather more positive turn, and the lovers, having admitted the existence of their love in an environment so hostile to it, begin to be more spontaneous about their feelings.

The social gap between the foundling and the princess is closed slightly when William is knighted by the Emperor of Rome for his major part in the successful war against the Duke of Saxony. But this bit of hope is quickly squelched by the

proposal of the Greek emperor for Melior to marry his son. This factor directly precipitates the flight into the forest. Melior dares not reveal her love for William, who has fallen sick on hearing of her marriage arrangement.

The means for escape is provided by Alexandrine who comes up with a plan. She will disguise the lovers in the skins of bears, since "the beres me semen the gon most grisli" (l.1686-7), and this will scare off anyone who tries to prevent their escape. In order to procure the disguises Alexandrine herself dons a disguise, that of a boy. This begins the motif of people disguising themselves as their opposites to avoid detection. The young handmaiden disguises herself as a boy; William and Melior clothe themselves as fierce bears.

Another theme begun here is that of the hunter and the hunted. Alexandrine procures the bearskins from the kitchen where, after flaying the skins to get the meat, the cooks throw them aside. These skins belong to the animals taken on the Emperor's hunt. These bears had already been hunted, caught, and killed. Now William and Melior will don their skins and become the prey hunted by the Emperor of Rome. This hunter-hunted motif also apples retroactively. William the prey of the werwolf, hunted and given up for lost by his father, is found on a hunt by the Roman Emperor. The Emperor set out to hunt boar, lost his way, and found William instead. Taken to Rome William later proves to be a lion in battle against Saxony, his foes are referred to as his prey. Now he and Melior must run to the forest and become the objects of a hunt.

Later at Palermo William and Melior will fulfill their roles as the prey, and William will once again become the fierce warrior, hunting the enemies of his mother, the queen of Spain. He thus returns to the role of hunter and warrior, a role which suits him eminently more than that of prey. Indeed the poet takes care to tell us that even while he was growing up in the forest William learned everything about hunting, and became so skilled at it that there was enough meat caught to share with all his friends. With the role of hunter so naturally associated with William the fact that he becomes the prey, hides with Melior, and is chased from country to country seems a curious reversal, if not indeed an unnatural state of affairs. And it is unnatural. William is a worthy man and a prince of noble blood, Yet he is hunted and chased like a lowly criminal. This is just another symptomatic example of the state of division and disorder here. Virtue is not perceived by men and is therefore persecuted. Furthermore while the lovers are in the forest and on the run William, deprived of his role of hunter in the sense of king and conqueror, is not even a hunter in the sense of food-procurer. It is the werwolf who steals and attacks to provide food for the lovers, and assumes the role of guide and protector, a role that should be William's. The wolf will thus take over the role of third agent or mediator between William and Melior in the natural world of the forest, and their pursuers the Emperor of Rome and his nobles. At the end of the poem one of the symbolic clues that everything has reverted to its proper order is that William and Melior doff

their disguises, needing no more protection from the city world that now perceives and accepts them. William, ceasing to be the prey of the hunt, can once again become a king and great warrior: the hunter.

This motif of the hunter and the hunted had its beginnnings with the forest near Rome where the Emperor appeared as the hunter and William became the unexpected prey or take of the hunt. As the poem progresses 'hunter' takes on the additional connotations of great warrior and powerful man. 'Hunted' comes to be connected with the victim put to flight. These two devices are joined in William, a noble prince, who as a result of the lack of true perception of him in Rome, is forced to flee, to become the hunted, an unnatural state for him.

Dressed in two white bearskins by Alexandrine William and Melior begin their flight to the forest, and immediately commence their imitation of the beasts they are disguised as. They flee on all fours: "thei went a-wai a wallop". (l. 1770). Later when they are tired they revert to human custom and walk upright. This is just the opposite of the bear's habit: he can walk upright for long periods, and drops down on all fours when he is tired. This contradiction in characteristics reminds us of a fact of primary importance: William and Melior don the disguise of animals, but are human and will remain so. They adopt enough animal traits to serve the purpose of their disguise, but retain intact their intellect and personality. This forest fantasy is after all no more than a protective temporary mediator. The forest and their animal disguises (later

on their dreams too) have one function: to give them a covering cloak of protection and interposition until they can reintegrate themselves into the world of actuality.

The lovers run all night and when day dawns they take refuge under a hollow oak in a den. Symbolically this den under a tree takes us back to where William was hidden as a babe by the werwolf, in just such a den. This detail is interesting in that it signifies William's return to a state where he needs guidance and protection, just as in his infancy. Indeed William's attitude is one of utter simplicity, he says:

> "a! my loueliche lemman. our lord now vs help,
> he that was in bedleem born. & brought vs on the rode,
> schilde us fram schenchip. & schame in this erthe,
> & wisse vs in what wise. to winne vs sum mete;". (1.1801-4)

His proposal to steal meat from a child is vetoed by Melior who says it will only reveal their presence to the pursuers. William is thus reduced to a state of passivity and later on complete reliance on the werwolf. This is a far cry from William the fierce warrior.

This change of state of the characters is only one of the many reversals that can be noted in this part of the poem. The forest, though it is and will remain a benign place of refuge,now also takes on a curiously negative quality. The forest world becomes somewhat the inversion of the world of Rome. This is not to say that one order is good and one is bad. Rome, as is clear from the section above, has its negative attitudes, its lack of true perception. But some of the prime virtues of William in Rome seem to be lost in the forest world,

or at least held in suspension until his return to the world of actuality. The manliness, the courage and fierce virtue seem to be played down now. On the other hand the peaceful freedom and innocence of the forest are lacking in Rome. What this will lead to is the conclusion that a union of both world orders would be best, and necessary. For the moment, however, the conclusion is still being worked out and so there will be a certain shifting from one order to another.

Some other reversals revealed at this point in the poem include the habits of William and Melior in their animal disguise. On this level of habit and disguise alone do they descend to an animal way of life. Day is turned into night and night to day. In Rome one sleeps at night, the proper and designated time for such activity. During the day one wakes and goes about the business at hand. Now the lovers sleep by days and travel by night as the animals do, inorder to avoid detection. At night they can walk in human stance being unseen, but if they venture out by day they must go on all fours.

The author takes care in certain ways to remind us constantly of the people within the bearskins. William and Melior's constant prayers to God, their unselfish concern for each other, their noble love and the desire of each to protect and sustain the other, all of these serve as ample reminder of the truly noble spirit of these two people, and the purity of their love. We get constant glimpses of the people encased in the animal skins: "The outward form does not reveal the man but rather the mind of each individual is his true self, not the figure that

one designates by pointing a finger."[4] This is a realization which will come only later in the poem, it embodies a true and admirable standard of judgment.

The werwolf, as if mutely summoned by the young fugitives' need, makes his reappearance in the story at this point, seemingly undeterred as an animal by the poisonous breath of the bears, and begins the provision for and protection of the lovers which lasts until they re-enter the world of actuality. The werwolf, half man and half wolf, serves as a perfect link between the two worlds of the forest and civilization. On the level of plot he was the one who first introduced William to the protective world of nature, and in the end of the poem he will re-introduce both William and Melior to the world of civilization. The lovers can certainly use his protection. The Emperor of Rome gives chase to the two young people, but his hounds are led on a false trail by the werwolf.

The trio journey from Lombardy to Apulia, and outside the city of Benevento they stop to rest in a quarry under the hill. Quarry workers there recognize the fugitives and send for the provost of the town. Meanwhile the author recounts Melior's dream in which the cave, their hiding place, is beset by bears, apes, boars, bulls, and badgers, all these led by a lion and his cub. Just as the group of animals prepares to catch them all the werwolf, using his familiar false-trail tactics, snatches away the lion cub. All the animals give chase to the werwolf and the lovers are saved.

An additional dimension is here added to the forest fantasy

by the fact that Melior, disguised as an animal, dreams of animals. This dream seems to add to the general fantastic quality of the forest world. It is also an extention of the allegory through dream device: the townspeople descend to the level of animals of prey, chasing and perscuting these people disuised protectively as animals. Indeed the citizens of Benevento seem to us to be more animal-like than the two bears they are chasing, this is the intimation of the allegory. Already the forest world has a curiously unsubstantial quality: it is a place where dream and magic animals are the rule. Also this world is involved with protective yet negative elements in the story: flight, hiding, being chased, disguise as something the lovers are not, life by night. Such factors as time, apart from the distinction between night and day, and geography, except for the general names of countries the trio passes through, are nonexistent. Now the princess Melior who is disguised as an animal, dreams of animals. So what we have here is practically a dream within a dream, which places an additional accent on the unreality of the forest world.

On a simple directly prophetic level the dream of Melior symbolizes exactly what will happen. The animals of which Melior dreams are all animals of prey, especially the lower class of apes and badgers. These point directly to the vulture-like quarry workers who see a chance to turn the lovers' misfortune to a profit by collecting the reward for their capture. And so the animals of prey symbolize the townspeople and soldiers who come to capture William and Melior. The lion is the town

provost who leads the group, and the lion cub is his son. Such a dream is definitely unsolicited, and according to the summaries of Macrobius could be defined as an enigmatic social dream: enigmatic because the events and people in this prophetic dream are under animal disguise and are involved in a hunt motif, and social because the dream involves not only Melior and William but also the werwolf and the townspeople. Thus many characters take part in the dream.

This dream of Melior, however, also functions on a higher and more universal level in the poem. In this confontation between the fugitives and the townspeople we have emissaries from both worlds. On one hand there is the provost and his townspeople, envoys of the world of civilization and actuality, on the other there is William and Melior, refugees for the time being in the world of forest and protective nature. Neither of these sides is either ready or capable of meeting. The provost and his group of workers regard the lovers as fugitives; they realize that Melior is a princess but consider William as a lowly foundling, not to mention a scoundrel for luring the princess along with him. The sole object of these people is to capture the lovers and turn them over for the promised reward. William demonstrates once more a curious passivity, wishing for a horse and armour that are certainly not about to be provided, and entreating Melior to flee and let them take him prisoner. For the time being, therefore, there can be no dealings between these two worlds. Thus it is the function of this prophetic dream to present the situation of actuality

to Melior in terms that she can accept (the dream device), and provide warning in this way. Once again the dream is mediating between William and Melior in the forest, and objective reality. And this function of protective mediation is carried on and completed by the werwolf who,during the actual attack which follows, snatches up the provost's son as Melior dreamed he would, and diverts the threat posed by these envoys of the world of actuality from the two lovers.

These mediating effects of the dream and animal motifs, however, are achieved mainly on the reader's level of perception. The author achieves a balance between the lovers' perception of the situation and our own by first informing us of the forthcoming threat, then recounting Melior's dream, and lastly describing the actual events. So that while for William and Melior there is just the prophetic dream and then the event, for us there are all three phases of preview, dream, and then event. It is thus that we are able to see the dream in its wider functions of mediation. William and Melior by the very nature of their problem cannot exist in one world, must survive in the other, and can only experience one of these world levels at a time. For them the dream is simply a direct prophecy of an impending event. For us the dream stands mid-way between the world of actuality and the lovers' inability as yet to live in such a world. The problem is aggravated by the constant intrusions of the world of actuality into the forest world where the lovers have been forced to flee, (the Emperor hunts them, the provost attempts to capture them etc.).

Due to the fugitives' inability to deal with the world of actuality and its intrusions the result is inevitable. Some mediating force must establish itself, and this task is taken up as I explained above by the functions of the dream and the animal. They continue the kind of protective concealing role first taken up by Alexandrine.

The protective role of the forest world and its functions of dream and animal is made clear here. The translation of the threatening forces of reality into a dream and a set of animal imagery terms relevent to William and Melior's present level of perception and activity brings the whole problem of dealing with the city world into the realm of the dream and the werwolf. Thus, any need for action on the lovers' part is precluded. The dream cushions the warning in a set of allegorical terms, one familiar by now to William and Melior. The werwolf then immediately takes over the office of protector. Furthermore in Melior's dream the enemy appeared as animals, which automatically sets them on the werwolf's level. Hence they become his responsability to deal with as he sees fit.

This setting up of the dream and the werwolf as safety-screen between the lovers and the world of actuality is borne out even on the physical level. When the two flee from Rome Alexandrine is left behind to face the Emperor; when the attack at Benevento is about to occur a warning dream precedes it so closely as to be separated from the event by only moments; when the soldiers of Rome or the townspeople of Benevento seek out the lovers the werwolf acts as physical bait, invariably

drawing the attack to himself; he throws his own body between the forces of the city and the hidden lovers.

After their escape from Benevento and upon being rejoined by the werwolf the lovers decide to change their disguises because the bearskins are now too well known. They don the skins of a hart and hind, brought to them by the ever-provident werwolf. The change at this point from the bear to the hart disguise is of central importance. The bear, the northern animal (symbol of the northern origin of their journey),is also symbolically associated with misanthropy and is reputed to be offensive to other animals(see p. 15). Imagistically both these misanthropic and offensive qualities fit in well and support the motif of William and Melior's flight from the world of actuality, their escape to the forest, their deliberate evasion of all men and all beasts on their journey. The bear was also associated in old European lore with immortality because of its habit of hibernating each winter.[5] This is interesting on two levels here. Firstly the bears that the lovers are now dressed as once lived in their own right. After they were hunted and killed their skins once again covered living beings, William and Melior. Secondly William and Melior are about to terminate their 'hibernation' in the forest, they will soon re-enter the world of actuality.

And so now the lovers dress as hart and hind, symbols of elegance, swiftness, surefootedness, agility, piety, purity, and aspiration. The poet could hardly have chosen a more suitable disguise in terms of projected imagery. The lovers

have certainly taken on a disguise more in keeping with their personal nobility and beauty. Also purely on a level of poetic device, when they arrive at Palermo the queen will also dress as a hart. Now that they are soon to reach their destination the journey takes on a slightly swifter pace, the werwolf is guiding them with a sure instinct towards their destined end.

The qualities of piety, purity and aspiration associated symbolically with the hart take us into a more religious series of images, developing into two main streams. The first of these streams is associated with the purity and selflessness of these two young peoples' love for each other. Here I would refer back to the quote in chapter one from Solomon, comparing the bride to a gentle doe. This image of faithful and worthy love and the disguise that prompts it provide one more blessing and avowal, the last in the forest before the formal recognition at Palermo, of the truth and value that characterize these young peoples' love. This love is one circumstance, along with William's nobility and virtue, which has remained constant throughout the poem. It was first revealed in Rome and has been asserted again and again since that point, so that the recognition of the world of actuality will be more of a reaffirmation than a validation of it. The second stream of these religious images develops into a pilgrimage motif. The white hart is the symbol of the soul in religious lore.[6] Christian tradition symbolizes by the hart the pious soul searching in some cases for Baptism, in others for the Grail, and generally for ways of ascent to its Maker. William and

Melior have been on just such a pilgrimage, perhaps in a more naturalized sense. They are searching out their own kind of grail: a home in the world which could not accept or perceive them truly before now, a world where nature and civilization are in complete harmony, a revelation of William's identity (this part of the search remains on an unconscious level), and a general unification of the qualities of the forest world with those of the civilized world. Their pilgrimage is to truth, to reality, to Palermo, and to the joy and peace that is symbolized by the stag.[7]

In heraldry the hart is emblematic of harmony and of those who love harmony and are skilled in music. The music referred to here is greater than that made by one or even many instruments. It is a universal music and involves world order and harmony between all world levels. This kind of harmony prefigured by the symbol of the hart or stag that William disguises himself as, will be achieved in Palermo. The harmony will involve the combination and re-unification of the split orders in this world to achieve a new total world where outward appearances for one thing, will once again correspond 'harmoniously' and properly with the interior realities they embody; and men's perception, now properly guided, will once more be true. William, the hart, the animal who loves properly attuned music (see p. 12) will be the one to bring this all about. Thus the last of the images to be mentioned here, the hart as symbol of dawn and the new day.[8] William the hart is the hope of his people. He will conquer their oppressors, free

his country, bring the dawn. He will establish a new and just reign, ruling over both Palermo and Rome in the new day of peace and unity.

It is essential to note here the slight shift in function of the animal image, and as we shall see later, of the dream. Now, instead of mediating between two world orders for the lovers, they are actually prefiguring the unity which is soon to be achieved. The forest world itself is pointing forward to its fulfillment within the world of actuality. Dream prophecies too, cease to be warnings of impending disaster. They become foreshadowings of future victory, sources of essential information and identity etc. It could be said perhaps that these devices of animal imagery and dream are taking on a more positive role.

Now, guided by the werwolf to Sicily, the lovers begin to emerge from the dens, caves and the forest, and almost seem to be journeying through a wasteland on their way up from the underworld. They journey through the ravaged country that will be revealed as William's own kingdom:

> "Thei went fast on here way. the werwolf hem ladde
> ouer mures & muntaynes. & many faire pleynes;
> but alwei as thei went. wasted thei it founde.
> for burwes & bold tounes. al for-brent were,". (l.2618-21)

William's country is burnt and desolate, having no warrior-king to defend it against attackers. The poet now informs us of the existing conditions in Sicily. The king of Spain demanded the princess of Sicily in marriage for his son, Alphonse the werwolf's half brother. William's mother the Queen of Sicily refused, and as a result she is being warred upon by Spain. At present the queen is beseiged in Palermo and her nobles

are begging her to surrender. She however has sent for aid to her father the Emperor of Greece, and in the meantime asks the Spanish king for a truce of fourteen days. He refuses and she is reduced to waiting desperately for help. Help will come, but from an entirely unexpected source.

The hart, the hind, and the werwolf meanwhile cross the straits near the city of Reggio hidden on a ship. Just before the ship nears land the werwolf jumps overboard and leads the crew on a false pursuit. This is the last time that the werwolf will employ his now-familiar tactics to protect the lovers. Soon things will revert to their proper order and William will be able to protect the werwolf. The hart and the hind make good their escape. Melior, however, is wounded by a ship boy frightened by their appearance. Once again, as at Benevento, William wishes for weapons that are simply not there, and vows vengeance on the boy should Melior be seriously hurt. Fortunately she is not and they continue their journey rejoined by the werwolf.

Finally the wolf leads them to Palermo, to the very park place from which he first abducted William. In a physical and geographical sense William has come full circle, back to the point of his origins. He was abducted from this park as a four year-old boy, taken to the forest, to Rome, then back through the forest to Palermo and this very park. However on this level the circle concept remains. On the higher levels of William in a personal sense and the world it has been more a journey of pilgrimage, a search. William has returned as a

grown man and an accomplished warrior. He has found what will be his world and he will be the instrument of its salvation. Thus the park is the beginning and the end of the poem. Keeping in mind our two world levels of Rome and the forest, the park can now become one of the symbols of the meeting and conjunction of both levels. The park becomes the forest cultivated within the city. Now that we approach the conclusion of this story the synthesis of the qualities from both world levels, the solution that I mentioned above, will become more and more apparent on many levels.

The Queen of Palermo dreams that she and her daughter are attacked in the palace park by one hundred thousand leopards and bears. But a werwolf and two white bears come to her assistance, and the white bears as they come nearer are changed into a hind and a hart. On the forehead of the hart is the figure of a knight like her lost son, and on the forehead of the hind is the shape of a maiden. The hart beats down the other beasts, taking the largest ones prisoner while the rest flee. The queen next dreams that she goes up to her castle tower and her right arm lays over Rome, while her left is spread over Spain. Moses, her priest, interprets the dreams for her. The beasts who attacked her are the beseiging armies, and the bears who changed into harts with crowns of gold symbolize the knight who will rescue her and take prisoner the king and prince of Spain. The knight, whether or not he weds the queen (by inheritance) will become king of Sicily. Also the werwolf who is really a knight, will inform the queen about

her son. Moses also predicts that the queen's son shall rule over Rome, and her daughter will be queen of Spain. The queen rejoices and bids the priest say a Mass in order that her dream may come true.

This dream fits into the general class of wish-fulfillment dream, but is also a social dream of prophecy according to Macrobius, like Melior's dream at Benevento. The animal attack motif in this dream echoes the dream prophecy and animal attack upon William and Melior at Benevento. But even further back than that this motif of animal attack in the park at Palermo echoes the very first event of the poem: the werwolf's supposed attack on William in this very garden. Therefore the dream of the queen firmly connects the original misdeed with the noble who will now right the situation of chaos resulting from that misdeed. Lastly this dream is a perfect example of the new role of dream mentioned above, a prophecy of victory and an introductory aid in the reunification of the two world orders. No longer is it necessary to protect one world order from the other. Events - the war, Sicily's need of William, his return to his kingdom - have made the setting most conducive to this reunification, and the dream and animal motifs now aid these two world orders in their last steps toward each other.

The queen sees the harts in the park on two occasions. On the second, the sun has cracked their skins and she sees through to their clothes. This is a detail, but an important one. Nature herself (here the power and heat of the sun) has

decided that the need for disguise and protection is past. She herself cracks the skins which cover the lovers, and only after the skins crack do William and Melior remove them. The queen points out the lovers to the priest and he recognizes them immediately, telling her that it is Melior princess of Rome, and her lover the knight with whom she fled. Moses advises the queen to go down and welcome them. And so, provided by Moses with a hind skin, the queen disguises herself and descends to the park.

The animal disguise here, as the queen's dream shortly before, continues in its more constructive role of providing a common set of terms within which the world of the forest can be re-introduced to the world of actuality, and both can be combined. The queen's dreams, besides being directly prophetic, serve as instructions for her. Once interpreted by her priest they provide her with the solution to her dilemma. The animal disguise provides the direct means for the accomplishment of that solution. In contrast to the situation in Rome where Alexandrine had to steal the bearskins from the kitchen and sneak them to the lovers, the hindskin is here openly provided by the priest Moses, who has himself suggested that the queen go down and bring back William and Melior. The skin of the hind in which the queen dresses provides the common ground for her meeting with William and Melior, the meeting of two worlds through their representatives. The queen of Sicily, by the mere fact of having donned a hindskin, is making a personal connection and commitment to the lovers. The world of actuality

which was the offending party, has come forward halfway through its representative and queen. And it has come forward at the urging of a figure of institutional authority, a priest of the Church. For the first time the world of actuality sees the two animals as William and Melior, for the first time it sees William as a noble, not a foundling. Once this connection has been made, and once William has made a firm and open commitment to the world of actuality in his promise to defend the queen loyally, the skins as disguises and the dreams as symbols of reality are no longer needed, their function is completed.

The hart and the hind meanwhile awake at sunrise and embrace each other lovingly. Then William says two things that are significant, and also prophetic. He tells Melior that he longs to see her face, that it seems so long since he looked directly upon her. This is the first time any indication is given that William is weary of the disguise. This points clearly to the fact that he is ready to emerge from the disguise, as indeed they have already emerged from the forest. Also William says that he wishes the queen of Palermo were aware of his identity, that if she would provide him with a horse and armour he would deliver her from this war and the present danger. For the first time William's repeated wish for arms and the opportunity to fight nobly again falls within the realm of the possible. As we can foresee the queen is aware on at least one level of William's identity (he is a noble knight who can deliver her). She will invoke his help

and provide him with weapons against the king of Spain. Once again we can see opening before the lovers the way for their re-assimilation into the world of actuality: a place has been provided for them and they are willing to occupy it.

Melior is the last to dream. She dreams that an eagle takes her up to the tower of the palace, why she knows not. Once again this dream is classed as directly prophetic, but this time it is a personal enigmatic dream, involving Melior only. The eagle symbolizes ascension, empire, freedom, immortality, majesty, power, sovreignty, splendor, strength, swift victory and virtue among other things. It is the king of birds and when it appears in dreams it signifies prosperity. Its heraldic significance is a man of action, high position and lofty spirit, a great warrior. In the Christian tradition the eagle signifies salvation, and lastly it is the emblem of Rome.[9] All of these qualities signified by the eagle are apt characterizations of the future reign of William: majesty, power, freedom, strength, etc. Also in the heraldic sense the eagle is William who is now going to assume once again the role of king and leader. The eagle, emblem of Rome, carries Melior up to the castle tower. William will be king of Rome later on. Now he carries Melior with him in the ascent to his rightful position as king in the palace at Palermo.

As William's statements unconsciously predict the queen of Palermo approaches them dressed as a hind. Melior observes that the hind nears them and does not flee. William says:

"   .i ne wot whi it schuld;
It weneth that we ben right. swiche as it-silue;
for we be so sotiliche. be-sewed in thise hides.
but wist it wisli. whiche bestes we were,
It wold fle our felaschip. for fere ful-sone." (l.3115-19)

The queen answers,

"nay, bi crist,... that al mankinde schaped,
I nel fle ful fer. for fere of you tweyne.
I wot wel what ye ar. " (l.3121-23)

William thinks that the hind would flee if it recognized them as human beings, but 'I know very well what you are', says the queen. Finally the change has come: people are no longer limited to appearance. They are perceiving the reality of things, just as the queen sees the people beneath the animal disguise. Nature has finally brought the opportunity (the present situation in Sicily) and the cure (William) together. And so the opportunity opens the way for William's emergence and participation in the world of actuality. Hints of his nobility have been given to the queen in dream and prophecy. Thus the last obstacle to the proper perception and acceptance of William is removed.

William asks the hind approaching them whether it is a good spirit or a fiend. The queen then identifies herself and asks William's aid, promising him the crown of Sicily if he will help her. William rejoices, this is the exact fulfillment of his wish, and he promises to serve the queen faithfully. Then all three enter the castle of Palermo by the postern gate (the very gate that the lovers used to escape from Rome). The poem is full of these kind of echoes, and they establish well the natural justice at work here, restoring everything to its original and proper state. Thus we come from the palace

park back to palace park, from Rome's postern gate to Palermo's postern gate. The queen takes William and Melior to a chamber in the tower, thus in part fulfilling Melior's dream of being carried up to that tower by an eagle.

The couple are re-initiated into the 'civilized' world by the symbolic bath (baptism), new clothes and the first meal, suggesting the theme of the prodigal son returning home and being welcomed by his father. The queen asks William what crest he will bear on his battle shield and he asks for a shield of gold with the design of a werwolf on it. The shield of gold symbolizes the dawn, sun, glory, majesty and power, the wisdom and incorruptibility of its wearer.[10] The dawn symbolism is interesting here because of its contrast to the symbolism associated with Spain. Spain or Iberia is the land where the light of day was extinguished. In Greek antiquity it was regarded as the site of Hades.[11] Indeed the present war casts the king of Spain in the role of the villain, and the darkness of his land extends itself over the beseiged Sicily. William with his shield of gold will bring deliverance, dispel the darkness, and establish a new day of glory. The werwolf that William wishes put on his shield is an obvious reference to his friend and protector Alphonse the werwolf. But also in heraldry the werwolf symbolizes caution in attack, which William will manifest in his attack against the Spanish invaders. William riding into battle with the signs of his nobility and the symbol of his mission emblazoned on his shield reminds us of William and Melior advancing out of the forest to

meet the world with the symbols of their identity and nobiility on their foreheads.

William keeps his promise to the queen and rides into battle with the shield of the werwolf, and the horse that once belonged to his father Embrons. There are four hundred Sicilian soldiers to fight against three thousand Spaniards. William's battle plan is a bold and courageous one, yet wise and knowlegeable also. He eventually kills both the Spanish steward, leader of the battle that day, and his son. With this the Spaniards flee and the Sicilians take many prisoners.

At the end of this first day of battle the werwolf appears for the first time since he guided the lovers to Palermo. He raises his paws in supplication, then leaves. The queen wonders at the meaning of this sign and William tells her that it is a good omen. The queen then tells William the story of her lost son. But William though he knows that he is a foundling and was cared for by a werwolf, fails to make the connection, for the queen had said that her son was drowned. However he promises the queen that he will stand in the place of her lost son, which of course is just another parallel inching towards the truth.

On the second day of battle the prince of Spain leads another three thousand men against William's tiny army. William captures the prince and manages to retreat with him to Palermo, where he is delivered up to the queen. On the second night yet another teasing detail is given by the queen concerning William's resemblance to her dead husband Embrons. As on the

first night the werwolf appears, bows, and returns to the forest.

On the third day of battle the king of Spain leads six thousand men into the field uttering the prophetic remark "God wol... with the right stonde" (l.3801). The king also says "I wold him hunte as hard as euer hounde in erthe honted eny werwolf". (l. 3835-6). Again we have an echo of an earlier event where the hounds of Rome chased the werwolf Alphonse. It is interesting that the king poses himself as the hound chasing a werwolf, and will soon find his own son in the disguise of a werwolf. William, wounded in the head, slays Meladius son of the Constable of Spain, and captures the king himself, forcing him to surrender. Then he delivers the Spanish king together with a considerable number of his nobles to the queen of Sicily. Once again when they are all seated in the queen's council hall the werwolf makes his appearance, kisses the feet of the Spanish king his father, salutes the queen and leaves. Some of the nobles wish to kill the wolf but William begins to repay his debt of gratitude by saving the werwolf's life.

The king of Spain, asked by William why the werwolf bowed to him in particular, recounts the story of his elder son changed by witchcraft into a werwolf. This was done by his wife Braunden, and the king admits that he believes the werwolf to be his son in spite of the reports of his wife that the boy had drowned. William demands the presence of Braunden to disenchant Alphonse, and she is fetched from Spain. The werwolf is meanwhile kept in Williams's chamber and all is made ready,

The werwolf's three salutations were said by William to be good omens. We see them however as direct and open pleas for mercy. More subtle is the fact that, since the werwolf guided William back to the park where he saved him from the plot against his life, we are reminded even more strongly of William's debt of gratitude to Alphonse. The upraised paws beg release, and indeed this shall be accomplished.

At the sight of Braunden the werwolf charges at her fiercely. This is the first and only time in the poem that the werwolf deliberately attacks a human being with vicious intent. The motive is revenge, and the wolf's memory of his persecutor and determination to destroy him are well-known in medieval lore (see p. 5). However the werwolf is restrained by William and the Spanish queen, repentant, disenchants him. By a magic ring and with the aid of a formula Alphonse is returned to his human state. He then reveals William's true identity to the queen of Palermo, his mother.

Now the rejoicing begins. The evil repent and the good are rewarded for their virtuous conduct. Alphonse asks for Florence, William's sister, to wife; William of course is wed to Melior; and Alexandrine as a reward for her good service to the lovers is given in marriage to Braundnis, the prince of Spain.

Concerning William and Melior's love affair and marriage it is important to note that at no time in the poem is the morality and nobility of their love ever questioned. Their protective attitudes toward and unselfish concern for each

other during the long journey (when for a great period of time they do not even see each others' faces due to their disguise) more than amply testify to the purity and virtue of their affection. In fact their love is one facet of the flight that we never question. The marriage at Palermo sets the sacred seal of Church and society's approval on a match which the reader must have approved from the start. Thus true and spontaneous love is sealed and blessed with sacramental marriage, the traditional medieval symbol of order restored.

William, returned to his role of warrior and hunter once more, assumes and will fulfil the role of king of Palermo. The poet takes special care to mention the peace and justice of William's reign. Upon the death of the old Emperor of Rome, Melior's father, William is made emperor of Rome (the fulfillment of the queen of Palermo's dream). And so Alphonse and Florence, Braundnis and Alexandrine, William and Melior, and the queen of Palermo all gather at Rome for the festivities. Afterwards when the two Spanish princes and their wives prepare to return to Spain the queen of Palermo gives them admonitions of good conduct which, like the advice of the old Emperor of Rome to Melior at her wedding, recall the original admonition of the old cowherd to William when the boy was first taken to Rome. The cowherd in fact is rewarded for his care of William with an earldom. This reinforces the present theme of reunification of the two world orders. The cowherd's advice is echoed by the representatives of the world of actuality: the Emperor of Rome and the queen of Palermo.

Thus both moral orders have returned to a common moral standard. And the virtues of the cowherd being given recognition in the city is another token of the new unity of perception achieved. This true perception is that kind spoken of by Plotinus in his essay Which is Creature and Which is Man where he says: "Therefore that which is seen is not the true man, but the true man is he by whom that which is seen is ruled."[12] This contrasts sharply with the Romans' blindness to William's true nature so many years ago.

Lastly the reign of William is described by the author in terms which clearly recall the cowherd's first admonition to William. William, in fulfillment of the admonition, proceeds

> "to knowe the kuntres. as a king ought;
> laught omage of eche lud. that longed to the reaume.
> & whan that dede was don. deliuerli & sone,
> Gode lawes thurth his lond. lelly he sette,
> & held hem so harde. i hete the for sothe,
> that robboures ne reuowres. might route none,
> that thei nere hastili hange. or with hors to-drawe.
> flatereres & fals men. fram him sone he chased,
> Lieres ne losengeres. loued he neuer none,
> but tok to him tidely. trewe cunsayl euere,
> that al the puple for him preide. the pore & the riche;
> so wisli he wrought. to sauen his reaume." (l. 5473-83).

Thus the cowherd's sermon of virtue has become the universal standard of morality, the true union of the world orders.

> "bere the boxumly & bonure. that ich burn the loue.
> be meke & mesurabul. nought of many wordes,
> be no tellere of talis. but trewe to thi lord,
> & prestely for pore men. profer the euer,
> For hem to rekene with the riche. in right & in skille.
> be feightful & fre. & euer of faire speche,
> & seruisabul to the simple. so as to the riche,
> & felawe in faire manere. as falles for thi state;
> so schaltow gete goddes loue. & alle gode mennes." (l.332-40).

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[1]Charles W. Dunn, The Foundling and the Werwolf (Toronto, 1960), p. 4-5.

[2]Dunn, p. 39.

[3]William of Palerne, ed. Walter W. Skeat (London, 1867), line 50. All subsequent textual references are to this work.

[4]Werner Wolff, The Dream - Mirror of Conscience (New York,1952), citing Cicero, p. 76.

[5]Gertrude Jobes, Dictionary of Mythology Folklore and Symbols (New York, 1902), p. 78.

[6]Jobes, p. 729.

[7]Jobes, p. 729.

[8]Jobes, p. 729.

[9]Jobes, p. 482-3.

[10]Jobes, p. 671.

[11]Jobes, p. 1479.

[12]Wolff citing Plotinus, p. 54.

Chapter Four.

William of Palerne then, begins with a poetic statement of the problem involved. The author reveals the original situation of human evil which prompted the kidnapping and flight to the forest. Once this motif of flight to the forest world is established the poet is provided with the two locales which will clearly demonstrate in terms of contrasting values, the split between the world orders of town and nature. When William is brought back to the city of Rome and falls in love with Melior a situation is once again created which forces them to flee back to the protective world of nature. This flight from the world of actuality becomes a quest-journey. On one level it consists of subjective man and objective reality attempting to come to terms with each other. On another level it is the escape of the lovers in order to preserve their love, and their search for justification and freedom for that love. On an unconscious level this quest-journey is also a search for the origins and identity of William.

The primary level, however, remains the working out of the rupture which has occurred between the two world orders of nature and civilization. In order to work out this rupture William and Melior must re-discover themselves and in doing so develop a way of relating themselves to the world outside them. They must learn how to live in the world of actuality. The world of actuality on the other hand, must learn how to properly perceive the two fugitives, especially William. And it must return to the true moral standards of natural

innocence. In the meantime the forest world provides a protective refuge for the lovers and it is there that their journey continues and they are gradually guided by dream and animal back to the world of actuality.

The functions of dream are multiple. During the poem dreams guide our thoughts and those of the characters in certain directions; they suggest courses of action, and urge the story one step further. They hint at parallel events and situations and, together with the animal motifs, interweave plot angles and the motifs themselves, so reinforcing the themes. Thus the dreams are agents (both to the characters and to the audience) of action, warning, and information. They also constitute direct prophecies reflecting and by their nature commenting on action which will follow. But perhaps their most important function is their mediation between two worlds, more specifically, between the two fugitives and the world of actuality that they have fled. Each intrusion of the actual world into the forest world (i.e. the attack by the townspeople of Benevento) constitutes a danger to the fugitives that they cannot handle. It is here that the dream intervenes, couching the harsh facts of reality in the less threatening terms of a dream. The dream reflects and prophecies the events of reality, but its terms constitute a somewhat more vague threat, something that the lovers can deal with at that point. Thus for the present they confront and try to come to terms with the dream, and by doing this they eventually work their way back to reality, led by the dream.

The animal section of the forest world performs much the same mediating function, but in a more physically active sense. The werwolf provides for the fugitives' every need while at the same time actually interposing himself between the lovers and their enemies who hunt them. The werwolf continues physical protection where the warning mediating protection of the dream leaves off, thus precluding even the need for any action on the lovers' part. The bears, the hart and the hind also contribute to the physical protection of the lovers, providing the disguises which hide them from most human eyes. What the werwolf does also is to conduct the lovers to Palermo, the scene of their re-integration into the world of actuality.

The animal imagery of this poem also has a more personal function. It reinforces (for example by means of the animal disguises) the qualities and characteristics of the people who use it(i.e. William and Melior fleeing Rome as two white bears). White bears of course, for their love is pure and their motive sincere. Bears, strongest in the hind legs, weakest in the head, typify exactly the situation they are in. The lovers cannot think constructively about their plight. They cannot deal with the situation or try to solve it, so they run. The change of disguise from lumbering bear to fleet and timid hart provides the core of the poem, echoing both past and future animal images and motifs, foreshadowing the closing events of the poem, reflecting in a special way the personalities of William and Melior. The lovers, guided

through their world of refuge by dream any animal imagery, eventually emerge from it back into the world of towns and cities. They prepare to leave off their disguises and take up their roles in a society that desperately needs them (I refer here to Palermo facing destruction in the absence of its king and defender).

This animal imagery also creates a continuum out of the traditions of the past. This continuum in turn creates situational tensions by relation to or by the departure from it of the animal imagery in this poem. This is the creative art of the poet which I referred to earlier. Within the framework of tradition he sets up his own parallels and contrasts, and in doing so attaches his own personality to his poem. I mentioned in the first scene of the poem, the abduction scene, some of the dramatic tensions created by what tradition can lead us to expect of a werwolf and what actually happens. Here tradition works both with and against the werwolf. The story of a wolf's favorite trick being to kidnap a child, play with it, and then eat it, leads us to expect the same here. But on the other hand we are soon told of Alphonse's enchantment by his stepmother. This then, immediately identifies Alphonse with the traditional class of innocent victims who, though changed into animals by others, still retain their good nature and virtues along with their intellect and the capacity to act on a higher plane. Thus the imagery established is twofold: the impression created by Alphonse's horrifying exterior, and the knowlege we possess of

the nobility that exists within that exterior (this works much the same way with William and Melior). The result is that the noble actions and spirit of the werwolf seem even nobler by the constant contrast between his appearance and what he actually is like. This contrast is again heightened by the dual set of reactions in the poem: the fright of those people who do not know Alphonse and can only go by his outer form, and the affection displayed toward him by those who really know him.

This applies to William and Melior as well. We are given many glimpses throughout the poem of the nobility hidden within the disguise: their prayers to God, their care of each other, and their concern for the welfare of the werwolf.

Another notable aspect of this poem is the fact the the author very carefully places all the elements of magic, dream, and the marvelous within the context of Christianity. The wolf though enchanted never resorts to black magic. His protective powers and the providential warnings of dreams are shared with God Himself. On this level the dreams are not merely natural instances of prophecy but part of the protective providential functioning set up by God, Who is final Master of all the universe, even the magical world of the forest. The constant prayers of William and Melior for their safety and the wolf's deliverance from danger are more than just idle repetitions. The wolf protects the lovers, but who protects the wolf? Granted he is enchanted, has special powers of mind, and is more than naturally fleet of foot. But these

prayers of the lovers provide the ultimate answer for the wolf's safety. His escapes and the well-being of the fugitives can finally only be referred, as with all things in the medieval world, to God. The fitting of this natural morality of the forest back into the framework of the institutional Church is one of the manifestations of the final unification achieved in the poem.

On a more basic level of human action this Christian morality is displayed in the punishment or at least the repentance of those in the poem who have acted in an evil manner. The best example of this is queen Braunden who enchanted Alphonse. Now, repenting, she returns him to his princely state and begs his forgiveness. Henceforth she acts in a truly Christian manner.

But by far the most important resolution achieved in the poem occurs when the institutions of the city take on the qualities of the forest world. Now that the animal disguises are removed and appearances once more correspond with reality, the city world begins to achieve a true perception of the realities of William and Melior. William is restored to the position that is his by birthright. He is made king of Sicily and Melior becomes his queen. Thus William can once more resume the role that is most suited to him, that of warrior and defender of the realm. The world of actuality also blesses the love between the hero and the heroine with marriage. The two sides having met in the park of Palermo continue to fuse. The structures and justice of the city are combined with the

mercy love and truth of the forest. This combination is represented to its fullest in the new reign of William: justice is tempered with mercy, rights are established for both nobles and commoners, flattery and deceit are condemned. This is the ideal and proper world where the structures of law and society have purpose, and the right system of correspondances has been re-established so that virtue and nobility for instance, can be truly represented in position and worth. This is the promise of true justice of the forest world, brought to fulfillment in the reign of William, Emperor of Rome.

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