

Types of *Minne* in Hartmann von Aue's *Erec* and *Iwein*

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Submitted to the graduate degree program in Germanic Languages and Literature and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

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Date Defended: 24. August. 2012

The Thesis Committee for Jenny Faber certifies that this is the approved version of the following thesis:

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Abstract

The Arthurian Legends *Erec* and *Iwein*, adapted from material by Chrétien de Troyes by Hartmann von Aue discuss, among other things, the issue of *minne*, the Middle High German term for “love.” In this study, I use close reading, language analysis, and the historical-critical method to investigate the various types of *minne* found in *Erec* and *Iwein*. Hartmann uses material from classical antiquity, the *Aeneid* in particular, as an allegory for the *minne* between Erec and his wife Enite and as a model for the character *Vrou Minne*, who appears in both works. I aim to demonstrate that *Vrou Minne* is modeled on the portrayals of goddesses from antiquity and that she becomes more of a developed figure in *Iwein*. I also demonstrate that in *Erec*, the *minne* is divided into three different types: *anderre minne*, *kreflige minne*, and *guote minne*. *Anderre minne* constitutes the *minne* Erec and Enite first experience for each other and is dominated completely by sexual pursuits. *Kreflige minne* is the sort of *minne* that men experience for Enite, which overwhelms their senses and leads to their ruin. The ideal type of love that Erec and Enite obtain at the end of the story is the balanced *guote minne*, which is an integral part of their lives as partners and rulers. *Iwein* discusses the theme of *grôze minne* between Iwein and his wife Laudine, which does not undergo the same development as depicted in *Erec*.

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Introduction

Since the appearance of his works around the turn of the 13th century, Hartmann von Aue has been the subject of scholarly discussion, beginning with praise for him and his works among his contemporaries such as Gottfried von Strassburg in *Tristan* (vv. 4621-4637) and Wolfram von Eschenbach in *Parzival* (III, vv.143: 21), continuing with critical scholarship through the rediscovery of medieval texts in the 1800's and up to the present day. Hartmann (ca. 1165-1215), a member of the lesser nobility, or ministerial class, seemed to have had a clerical education and to have been in the service of a lord of Schwaben (von Borries 73). His corpus of works ranged from shorter lyrical poems discussing the Crusades, love, relationships, or nature to epic poetry that in turn spanned a large variety of genres, including hagiography (*Gregorius*) and Arthurian Legend.

This thesis will focus on Hartmann's Arthurian Legends *Erec* (ca. 1190) and *Iwein* (ca. 1210). As adaptations of medieval French texts composed by Chrétien de Troyes, *Erec* and *Iwein* recount the stories of two Arthurian knights who fall from grace and consequently undergo tests of extreme physical and mental endurance before reaching their full potential — and of course the appropriately happy ending. In *Erec*, the titular character and protagonist is the very handsome son of King Lac who demonstrates his worthiness by winning the extremely beautiful, although destitute, Lady Enite. After obtaining the social favor of King Arthur's court, they return to the court of King Lac, who abdicates the throne in favor of the young lovers. However, Erec and Enite soon fall from grace due to their neglect of the kingdom through their sexual pursuits. The court begins to discuss the shame Erec and Enite have brought upon themselves and their court by spending all of their time in the bedroom. Upon recognition of this failure of

their expected roles, Erec and Enite set out on a joint adventure to regain their respective and collective honor. Erec bids Enite accompany him and not speak one word to him, no matter what the situation on pain of death. While Erec regains his honor through knightly combat, Enite must negotiate when to speak and when to be silent. Throughout their adventures, Erec and Enite become rulers and partners suitable both for each other and for the society they were destined to rule.

Iwein, by contrast, describes the trials of the knight Iwein, who, after winning a kingdom and the lady of his dreams, then completely neglects his lady Laudine in favor of gaining knightly renown. After missing his deadline of returning home no later than one year after departing to fight in tournaments, Iwein loses both land and lady due to his disregard. Iwein descends into madness, becoming a feral man until he is cured with a magic salve by some noble women whom he then rescues from a siege. Iwein then seeks to prove himself worthy as a ruler through knightly deeds, and worthy as a husband through directing such deeds toward protecting women — as well as refraining from the temptation to sleep with or marry other beautiful women. Among other things, he acquires a loyal companion in a lion, which gives him the moniker “Knight of the Lion” and saves an entire land from the giant Harpin. In the end, Iwein, corrects the wrong his actions caused Lunete, Laudine’s faithful handmaiden who facilitated Iwein and Laudine’s relationship in the beginning. Having learned his lessons with regard to the balance between knightly duties and domestic pursuits, Iwein does regain both his honor and his reputation — as well as his wife Laudine’s forgiveness, which Lunete once again orchestrates.

Hartmann’s two works discuss the intricacies of love in great detail. In Middle High German, two words were used to express the idea of love: *minne* and *liebe*. While *liebe* later prevailed and morphed into the Modern Standard German *Liebe*, at the time Hartmann was

writing, *minne* appears to have been the dominant word for love. To ascertain whether there were distinct contexts in which *minne* was used instead of *liebe* — or vice versa — I analyzed each usage of the word and its variations (noun, verb, adjective, etc.) in both *Erec* and *Iwein* as well as *Gregorius* and *Der Arme Heinrich*, in order to provide a context for the usage within Hartmann's body of works. I did not reach any relevant conclusions about the preference for one word over the other because they appeared to be used interchangeably, but it became clear that both *liebe* and *minne* were used in conjunction with familial relationships and friendships as well as romantic relationships. For example, in *Gregorius*, the love between humans and God is described with the word *minne* (vv. 257). Following convention of contemporary scholarship when investigating love in Middle High German works, I will use the term *minne* when discussing the concept of love as it appears in Hartmann's works. In Middle High German, nouns were not capitalized unless they were proper nouns, so when I write about *minne*, I will not capitalize it; on the other hand, if the subject in question is *Vrou Minne*, I will capitalize the word and also, as Hartmann does, refer to *Vrou Minne* simply as *Minne*.

Over the course of this investigation, I direct special attention to the depiction of love between male and female characters. I concentrate on the development, or lack thereof, of the *minne* between Erec and Enite and between Iwein and Laudine. In addition, my study includes a focus on the figure of *Vrou Minne* or Lady Love and the influence of the *Aeneid* with respect to *Vrou Minne* in both works, as well as Erec and Enite's relationship. Although there is a lengthy passage concerning the love between Gawein and Iwein in *Iwein* (vv. 7015-7074; 7484-7510), to discuss in the detail the love described between the two men deserves an analysis that would be beyond the scope of this particular paper. However, it is my hope to investigate further the love between Gawein and Iwein in conjunction with this study at a future time.

Combining close reading with the historical critical method, I aim to analyze the figure *Vrou Minne* and the love relationships between wife-husband partners in *Erec* and *Iwein*. In doing so, I will demonstrate how the *Aeneid* material influenced Hartmann's writings — most evident in the highly personified portrayal of *Vrou Minne* in *Iwein* and the inclusion of various *Aeneid* scenes in *Erec*. Furthermore, I will illustrate the dynamism of Erec and Enite's relationship in contrast to the relative stagnancy of the relationship between Iwein and Laudine. The *minne* between Erec and Enite distinctly develops through the stages of *anderre minne* (a primarily sexual *minne*) to *guote minne* (a balanced and healthy *minne*), whereas — although Iwein's character is personally dynamic — the *minne* between him and Laudine retains the same quality over the course of the narrative. To the best of my knowledge, the distinction between the types of *minne* (*anderre*, *kreflige*, and *guote*) has not been discussed previously by scholars and is my own contribution to the study of these texts.

Vrou Minne in Erec and Iwein

In both *Erec* and *Iwein*, the personification of *minne* as *Minne* or *Vrou Minne* plays an integral role, not merely as a mechanism for furthering the plot, but also serving as a didactic venue for Hartmann to explain about the power with which *minne* can act upon people. Hartmann portrays *Vrou Minne* as a wild and untamable force in *Erec*, something that differs from the *Vrou Minne* of *Iwein*, where she has much more developed and human-like characteristics. In the days preceding their wedding, the narrator describes *Minne* as governing Erec and Enite: “diu Minne rîchsete under in/ und vuocte in grôzen ungemach” (vv. 1858-1859). Erec and Enite wait with ill-concealed impatience for the consummation of their marriage, but this unseemly desire for intercourse does not stem from a fault in their respective characters.

Instead, an outside force (*Vrou Minne*) compels them to think in such a lustful manner. *Vrou Minne* manipulates the pair, causing their inner conceptions of honor to fail; their impulses are kept in check only by the scrutiny of the court:

der tage dûhte in ze lanc,
 daz er ze langern zîten
 ir minne solde bîten
 dan unz an die nêhsten naht.
 ouch truoc si im bedaht
 einen willen dem gelîch,
 daz ez wære wætlîch,
 und hetez nieman gesehen,
 daz dâ wære geschehen
 ein vil vriuntlichez spil.
 zewâre ich iu daz sagen wil,
 dâ was der Minnen gewin... (vv. 1847-1858)

[The day seemed too long to him — that he should have to wait until the next night for her love. Just as her mind turned to him in secret, so that, probably, if no one would have seen it, it would have come to a very friendly game. Truly I wish to say to you, this was Lady Love's victory...]¹

According to the narrator, if no one would have been watching them, the pair would have engaged in pre-marital sexual intercourse (vv. 1854-1856), a thing which, especially for women,

¹ All of the translations into English from the Middle High German are my own.

was considered the height of dishonor and could have resulted in extreme punishments, such as the trial by ordeal seen in Gottfried von Strassburg's *Tristan* (vv. 15047-15764). The narrator's comment that *Minne* was victorious in this case demonstrates the sexual agenda of *Vrou Minne* and the victory of *Minne* over courtly virtue. The juxtaposition of the unstructured forces of desire against the order of the courtly society in which Erec and Enite live further accentuates the conception of *Vrou Minne* as the embodiment of a raw force that disturbs societal structure.

By explicitly informing the audience that *Minne rîchsete*, or reigned over them, the narrator qualifies the inner feelings of the lovers for each other as having been brought about by *Vrou Minne* acting upon their inner workings from without. The design of *Vrou Minne* appears to be to bring the two together through their sexual yearning for one another, as is the result. Such is the power of *Vrou Minne* that Erec and Enite have the exact same thoughts about being unhappy unless they sleep with each other for a couple of nights: "ir beider gedanc stuont alsô:/ 'ja enwirde ich nimmer vrô,/ ich engelige dir noch bî/ zwô naht oder drî.'" (vv. 1872-1875)

Not only can *Vrou Minne* exert her power over people, but that power can also be intoxicating, causing those who normally have good judgment and character to fall into ruin, as in the case of Gaolein, the first count the pair encounters on their journey:

der enwas dar an niht stæte,
 wan in vrou Minne betwanc
 ûf einen valschen gedanc,
 daz er dem vil biderben man
 sîn wîp ze nemenne muot gewan (vv. 3717-3721)

[He did not hold to these [values], because Lady Love compelled him to a false thought that he thought to take the wife from that honest man.]

Before *Vrou Minne* took irrevocable hold of him, Gaolein had been an exemplary nobleman — after she ensnared him, he plots to murder a fellow knight in order to take sexual possession of his wife. Here, the narrator clearly demonstrates that *Vrou Minne* can lead someone to utter ruin by forcing someone (“betwanc”) to think “a false thought” (vv. 3718-3719). This episode constitutes an augmentation of the dishonorable thoughts that appeared in Erec and Enite as they impatiently awaited their wedding night. Courtly society here cannot hold the sexual desire of Gaolein in check, since he seems to be the sole controller of society within his territory. In fact, he can even use others to carry out his plans, which *Vrou Minne* compelled him to carry out, as evinced when he takes his vassals with him to murder Erec (vv. 4035-4231). No longer restrained by social codes of appropriate conduct, Gaolein transgresses against all honor codes due to the strong and ambiguous motives of *Vrou Minne*.

Vrou Minne exists in a liminal space in the narratives of *Erec* and *Iwein*. As seen, she can exert an immense amount of power over those in the human realm, but she herself is not human, but rather a force. Yet, she does not exist within the Christian hierarchy of God and deity-like beings, such as angels or the devil. She seems to exist on an otherworldly plane of being as a power that occurs as part of the natural world, yet separate from it. A clue to the nature of *Vrou Minne* may be found in Heinrich von Veldeke’s *Eneasroman* (ca. 1180) and its influence on writers such as Hartmann von Aue and Wolfram von Eschenbach, both of whom include *Vrou Minne* as a narrative character.

Models for *Vrou Minne*

In Virgil's *Aeneid*, as in Heinrich von Veldeke's version, Venus, goddess of love and Aeneas' mother, uses the power of Cupid to inflame Dido with love and desire for Aeneas, so that Aeneas will be safe (Book I vv. 664-722). This eventually leads to Dido's downfall and suicide (Book IV vv. 630-705). Dido cannot resist the power of a goddess and succumbs to her fatal love for Aeneas, demonstrating symptoms similar to Gaolein, Erec and Enite, and Iwein. Furthermore, it is clear that Hartmann was certainly familiar with the *Aeneid* material, since the saddle given to Enite in *Erec* contains the *Aeneid* written on it and Hartmann specially references Dido and her downfall through her love for Aeneas (vv. 7553-7563). It would be highly unlikely that Hartmann would not have been familiar with Heinrich's *Eneasroman*; "In der Hartmann- und Wolfram-Forschung herrscht weitgehende Übereinstimmung darüber, dass Heinrichs von Veldeke Darstellung der *minne* in der Dido- und Lavinehandlung des *Eneasromans* nach Form und Gehalt Hartmann und Wolfram beeinflusst [hat]..." (Wiegand 129). Through his inclusion of the story of Aeneas, Hartmann draws parallels between the Aeneas-Dido relationship and the Erec-Enite relationship, alluding to the success of the Erec-Enite relationship where the Aeneas-Dido relationship failed. Including the material also adds legitimacy to Hartmann's own tale, by relating his narrative to a well-known literary tradition, a common and important way of creating credibility in medieval German storytelling.

By modeling *Vrou Minne* on the goddesses Venus and Amor, Hartmann preserved a sense of superhuman power that alleviates some responsibility from the characters who fall from grace because of *Minne*. Just as with Dido, who is led to her downfall due to Venus' personal agenda for her son, Gaolein is led to his ruin (and possible death, if Chrétien's version of events is to be followed) as a result of the compulsion and ambiguous motives of *Vrou Minne*.

The personification of *minne* as a woman also serves to connect the uninhibited sexual component of love to woman and to the pagan deities, which suits the medieval mindset that was theologically dominated by the Augustinian perception of woman as the seductive downfall of man (as is indeed the case with Erec). Furthermore, the anthropomorphic features attributed to *Minne* meld the concept of a force with that of a person, something that calls the pagan (and Christian) concepts of deities clearly to mind. These anthropomorphic features come more clearly to the forefront in *Iwein*, where the narrator actually has a dialogue with *Vrou Minne* (vv. 2971-3024).

Throughout this dialogue, *Vrou Minne* clearly demonstrates that she has the power to control people and events to suit her own wishes. The dialogue begins with *Vrou Minne* asking a didactic question, asking Hartmann if he thought that Iwein went home with King Arthur and left his wife behind: “sage an, Hartmann,/ gihstû daz der künec Artûs/ hern Îweinen vuort ze hûs/ und liez sîn wîp wider varn?” (vv. 2974-2977). The narrator then proceeds to discuss a conversation in which *Vrou Minne* convinces him of her superior authority in the matter of what has happened between Iwein and Laudine — that they have exchanged hearts, so that Laudine went with Iwein and Iwein stayed behind with Laudine, despite the physical separation of their bodies (vv. 2990-2994). The narrator’s usage of the phrase “unz sî mich brâhte ûf die vart” (v. 2985) indicates the power of *Vrou Minne* to create a situation between two humans that she has orchestrated according to her plan. Her didactic manner regarding the narrator further demonstrates her authority over people and her knowledge of their inner workings. This does bring to mind the deity-like quality of *Vrou Minne* as a goddess who has apparent omniscience and omnipotence regarding matters of the heart, as seen in her response to one of the narrator’s questions about the advisability of having a woman’s heart in a man’s body and vice versa:

Dô zêch mich vrou Minne,
 ich wære kranker sinne.
 sî sprach ‘tuo zuo dînen munt:
 dir ist diu beste vuore unkunt.
 dich geruorte nie mîn meisterschaft:
 ich bin ez Minne und gibe die kraft
 daz ofte man unde wîp
 habent herzelôsen lîp
 und hânt ir kraft doch deste baz.’ (vv. 3011-3019)

[And then Lady Love told me that I was of a sick mind. She said “Shut your mouth. The best teaching is unknown to you. My superiority has never touched you: I am Love and give the power that often man and woman have bodies without hearts and even have better strength because of it.”]

In addition, including *Vrou Minne* in the work at the narrator’s level establishes *Vrou Minne* as a relevant force to be reckoned with in the “real” world, as opposed to existing merely within the fictional framework of the characters in the narrative. This lends even more credence to the idea that Hartmann viewed *Vrou Minne* as existing in a liminal space between the divine realm and the physical world. The postulation that Hartmann’s *Vrou Minne* was modeled on the love deities contained in the *Eneasroman* also gains support from the manner in which Venus ensnares Dido. As with *Vrou Minne*, Heinrich’s Venus uses overwhelming force to ensure that Dido falls passionately in love with Eneas, to her disadvantage. The narrator foreshadows from the start that Dido would have to pay dearly for her love “daz chôte vil tivre/ Dido...” (vv. 37, I:

820-821). All of the men *Vrou Minne* ensnares in *Erec* and *Iwein*, although this is especially clear in *Erec* must endure some type of punishment due to the machinations of *Vrou Minne*: Erec falls from grace, Gaolein loses his honor and may die, Iwein loses his mind, and so forth.

The Ambiguous Nature of *Vrou Minne*

As in *Erec*, Hartmann provides a commentary on the devious and ambiguous nature of *Vrou Minne*:

ein dinc ist clagebære:
 sît Minne kraft hât sô vil
 daz sî gewaltet swem sî wil
 und alle küenege die nû sint
 noch lihther twinget danne ein kint,
 sô ist sî einer swachen art,
 daz sî ie sô diemüete wart
 daz sî iht böses ruochet
 und so swache stat souchet,
 diu ir von rehte wære
 smæhe unde unmære.
 sî ist mit ir süeze
 vil dicke under vüeze
 der Schanden gevallen,
 als der zuo der gallen
 sîn süezez honec giuzet

und der balsam vliuzet
 in die aschen von des mannes hant:
 wan daz wurde allez baz bewant.
 doch enhât sî hie niht missetân (vv. 1566-1585)

[One thing is lamentable: since Lady Love has so much power that she can rule whom she wishes, and can coerce all the existing kings more easily than a child, in that case, she is ignoble, that she sinks so low that she does not care for evil and seeks such lowly places that should be repulsive and shameful to her. Oftentimes, she, with her sweetness, falls under the feet of Shame, such as when one pours sweet honey into gall or when ointment is poured into ashes by man's hand — because all of that could have been put to better use. Yet, here she did not do ill.]

The narrator depicts *Vrou Minne* in a very unflattering light — claiming she controls the fates of kings, with the implication that this leads to their destruction. The graphic imagery of distasteful metaphors used in conjunction with the machinations of *Vrou Minne* not only foreshadows the calamity to come, but also characterizes the power exerted by *Vrou Minne* as dangerous and destructive. The dominance of *Vrou Minne* is further underscored by the contention that she can control rulers as if they were children; a significant simile when one considers that during this time period, kings were believed to represent God's authority on earth. This allusion to *Vrou Minne's* extreme power further places her character into the category of deity-like forces that do not fit into the official Christian hierarchy of divine beings, but nonetheless retain a place in the minds of Hartmann and his medieval audience.

This twenty-line defamation of character functions as a warning to the audience about the unpredictable and harmful nature of *Vrou Minne*. Mentioning that *Vrou Minne* often goes places

in which she should not implies that *Vrou Minne* has no moral compass and has no regard for the havoc she can wreak. Even more deplorably, she has the power to be unimaginably sweet, so that when she fails to be, it is all the more bitter, as is illustrated by the juxtaposition of “honey” and “gall.” Combined with her strength, the fickle character of *Vrou Minne* can have major consequences for her victims. This seems to have been a widely held conception in medieval literature, as Ulrich von Zatzikhoven also writes among other things in *Lanzelet* of the insanity *minne* can cause: “minne ist ein wernder unsin” (v. 4856). Due to *Vrou Minne*, Iwein falls passionately in love with his mortal enemy, a fate he cannot escape because she has irrevocably conquered him.

Prior to his discourse on the dangers of *Minne*, Hartmann characterizes *Vrou Minne* in terms of a dangerous warrior — an anthropomorphic portrayal that also brings the might of deities to mind. In fact, in the *Eneasroman*, Venus, goddess of love, induces Dido’s passionate feelings for Eneas by using his son Ascanius as a vessel to impart love from Venus to Dido (vv. 37, 1: 20-40). The narrator then uses warrior imagery to describe what Venus has done to Dido: “sint ir Venvs die strale/ in daz herze gischoz” (vv. 38, 1: 38-39). By using the graphic imagery of an arrow to the heart — a wound that proves fatal for Dido later in the narrative-- the narrator demonstrates the capacity of the love goddess to be ruthless and capable of expending human life to serve her own purpose.

Although the exact metaphor of an arrow to the heart is not used in *Iwein*, Hartmann employs strikingly similar imagery in his description of *Vrou Minne*’s conquest of Iwein, in which he describes *Vrou Minne* as capturing and binding Iwein and giving him a deadly wound:

vrou Minne nam die obern hant,
daz sî in vienc unde bant.

si bestuont in mit überkraft,
 und twanc in des ir meisterschaft
 daz er herzeminne
 truoc sîner vîendinne
 diu im ze tôde was gehaz.
 gerochen danne ir wære kunt:
 wan er was tœtlichen wunt.

die wunden sluoc der Minnen hant. (vv. 1537-1547)

[Lady Love took the upper hand and she captured him and bound him. With her immense strength, she conquered him and her dominance forced him such that he felt heart's love for his enemy, who hated him to death. Avenged herself better than it was known to her: he bore a deadly wound. Lady Love's hand gave him this wound.]

In this case, Iwein, a powerful warrior, becomes the prisoner of *Vrou Minne* within a matter of lines. Not only is he a prisoner, but he cannot even move due to his bonds and is completely incapacitated by a personified force wielding “überkraft” against which he cannot protect himself. The narrator casts an aura of foreboding onto the situation with the contention that *Vrou Minne* has dealt Iwein a deadly wound, which further augments the later disparagement of her character. The audience, after hearing so much against *Vrou Minne*, can only rely on the single-line assurance of the narrator that “doch hat si hie niht missetan” (v. 1585) for comfort.

On a basic level, *Vrou Minne* functions as a narrative device to help further the plot. How else would an honorable knight such as Iwein fall irrationally in love with someone who hated him? Furthermore, in order to retain his honor and not come into the same disgrace as Oringles

in *Erec* who marries a woman against her consent, Iwein must have the responsibility for his actions alleviated somehow, which his falling prisoner to *Vrou Minne* takes care of nicely. However, *Vrou Minne* also transcends the barrier between being merely a character of the story and a figure of “reality,” in that she holds a conversation with the narrator, teaching him to understand the love between Iwein and Laudine from a different perspective. By bringing her out of the story, so to speak, Hartmann makes the embodiment of *minne* into a figure who may not merely appear as part of a legend, but as someone who may act in the physical world that the narrator and audience apparently occupy.

Vrou Minne also brings about real change for Iwein and Laudine. Iwein clearly believes that she can control Laudine’s attitude toward him:

und wirt mîn vrou Minne
 rehte ir meisterinne
 als sî mîn worden ist
 ich wæne sî in kurzer vrist
 ein unbillîche sache
 wol billich gemache. (vv. 1625-1630)

[and if my Lady Love becomes her mistress as she has become mine, I would guess that in a short time she would smooth out a bungled situation.]

Iwein has faith that if only *Vrou Minne* will take control of Laudine, she, his mortal enemy, will love him as much as he loves her. The imagery Iwein uses when describing *Minne* becoming Laudine’s mistress makes it clear that Iwein understands *Vrou Minne* as an entity that

(or who) can easily take charge of others and change their thoughts, as indeed occurs later: “dô was gereite dâ bî/ diu gewaltige Minne” (vv. 2054-2055).

Although Laudine had been somewhat convinced by Lunete’s arguments of practicality and safety to marry Iwein, the narrator plainly states that *Vrou Minne* was *already* (gereite) present to pave the way for the marriage to happen. It is *Vrou Minne* who is there to cause Laudine to become more kindly disposed toward Iwein — the arguments made by Lunete are not enough. Yet, with *Vrou Minne* present with Laudine, Laudine changes her thoughts and begins to love Iwein.

When describing how it is that he has fallen in love with his mortal enemy, Iwein states that such does not come from his own thoughts, but that it comes from *Minne*’s command: “dazn ist niht von mînem sinne/ ez hât ir gebot getân” (vv. 1656-1657), the “ir” referring to *Vrou Minne*. Furthermore, Iwein believes that *Vrou Minne* can take away his feelings for Laudine if she so chooses — which he desires if *Vrou Minne* will not move Laudine to return his affections; she has the right to bring two together as one, so that Laudine would come to him or that she can take away his mentality of *minne* for Laudine: “sô hât sî michel reht dâ zuo/ daz sî der zweier einez tuo/ daz si ir râte her ze mir/ od mir den muot beneme von ir” (vv. 1649-1652). This passage plainly demonstrates Iwein’s belief that *Vrou Minne* has the power to steer thoughts and infuse people with love or take that love away. Attributing the irrationality of his love for his enemy to *Vrou Minne* also serves to maintain his position as a level-headed knight of honor, rather than a strange and fickle person who acts in a manner ill-befitting a knight of King Arthur’s court. One can also unmistakably see the narrator’s belief that *Vrou Minne* can work within a person, given the discourse near the end of the work regarding the coexistence of love and hate within the same person or vessel (vv. 7015-7074). The narrator discusses *Vrou Minne*

living within a person—once again transcending physical boundaries as an outside force coming to exist within an inner human space: “dâ rûmet der haz/ vroun Minne daz vaz” (vv. 7037-7038). In addition, the narrator contends here that love has stronger hold over a person than hate, so much so that hate must vacate a vessel in order for *Vrou Minne* to occupy it.

In both works, *Vrou Minne* constitutes a powerful force that can act on men and women for their good or ill. Given the tragic outcomes of *Vrou Minne*'s manipulations in *Erec* and the irrational attachment Iwein develops toward Laudine, it is clear that *Vrou Minne* has a very ambiguous character. This is further substantiated by the narrator's discourse on the lowly nature of *Vrou Minne*, in which he concedes that, in this case at least, she acted correctly. The more developed anthropomorphic personification of *Vrou Minne* in *Iwein* demonstrates similar characteristics to Venus in Heinrich von Veldeke's *Eneasroman*, modeled on the same figure in Virgil's *Aeneid*. By describing a conversation between the narrator and *Vrou Minne*, Hartmann allows her character to break the fourth wall, so to speak, and move from existing merely in the realm of Iwein and the other characters, to the level of the narrator and the audience. In doing so, Hartmann develops *Vrou Minne* from a legendary figure into one that the audience could perceive as a viable force that has the potential to act upon them as well.

Inclusion of Aeneas-Dido and Aeneas-Lavinia Material as Allegory

By expanding on the French source material, the romance *Erec et Enide* by Chrétien de Troyes, Hartmann displays his own familiarity with *Aeneid* material, although it is unclear exactly what version of the *Aeneid* he would have known. Given his clerical education, Hartmann could have been familiar with Vergil's *Aeneid* in Latin, the *Roman d'Eneas* in Middle High French or the *Eneasroman* by Heinrich von Veldeke in Middle High German. In any case,

the depiction of Dido does not vary much among the three works. However, the popular attitude toward Dido had somewhat evolved by the 12th century. Early commentators such as Fulgentius in the 6th century CE viewed Dido as the personification of unbridled lust, whereas “by Hartmann’s era, under the influence of Ovid, Dido was rehabilitated, no longer the personification of lust and uncontrolled passion, but the archetype of the scorned woman who had loved too well” (McDonald 486). Yet, a parallel to the immoderate love for Aeneas that led to Dido’s suicide (as well as an emphasis on the physical element of their relationship) can also be found in the inordinate erotic attachment between Erec and Enite.

Like Dido, Enite is superlative in her beauty and she is a queen. Both of these queens neglect their societies in order to carry on sexual liaisons with men, relinquishing their power and influence in pursuit of carnal desire. Furthermore, in each narrative, each woman functions to hold her lover back from his own duties. Dido delays Aeneas from fulfilling his divine mandate of founding Rome, and Enite distracts her husband from governing and maintaining his reputation as a knight.

Generally among scholars, Enite has been seen as a parallel character to Dido and Erec as symbolized by Aeneas. This certainly seems to be the case with Chrétien’s version of the story, which only makes a brief reference to the story of Aeneas in 15 lines as compared to Hartmann’s version, which expounds upon Aeneas’ journey and love life for 36 lines (Wittig 238). The length of Hartmann’s excursus includes much more detail than Chrétien’s description, with Hartmann even making a value judgment on Aeneas’ actions:

an diesem gereite was ergraben

daz lange leit von Troiâ...

wie der herre Ênêas,

der vil listige man,
 über sê vuor von dan
 und wie er ze Kartâgô kam,
 un wie er in ihr genâde nam,
 diu rîche vrouwe Dîdô,
 unde wie er si dô
 vil ungeselliclîchen liez... (vv. 7545-7561)

[on this saddle was engraved the long suffering of Troy... how the lord Aeneas, that very clever man, then traveled over the sea und how he came to Carthage and how he was taken into her charity, the rich Lady Dido, and how he unchivalrously left her...]

One may also find similarities between Erec and Aeneas — both undertake perilous journeys, maturing along the way, only to become kings at the end of their respective developmental adventures. However, in contrast to Chrétien, Hartmann makes an additional reference to Lavinia (vv. 7575-7581) and how marrying her was integral to his happiness and success as king. This reference demonstrates a distinct agenda of Hartmann's to allude to Erec's maturation in the symbolism of the story on the saddle. The side depicting Dido demonstrates the immoderate erotic attachment Erec shared with Enite at the beginning of their marriage, while the side of the saddle portraying Lavinia illustrates the balanced and supportive love between two rulers. This type of love is necessary for happiness and success in the realm of governance.

It must be noted, however that William C. McDonald provides a different analysis of the purpose of Dido on the saddle. McDonald contends that Dido can be seen as a parallel to Erec, especially given their status as rulers (McDonald 496). Since Dido and Erec both bear the

primary responsibility to their cities and both fail to fulfill those responsibilities due to an erotic obsession, McDonald claims that Erec and Dido share a closer affinity than Dido and Enite.

“When Hartmann (and Chrétien) place images of Dido on Enite’s saddle, the Carthaginian queen thus serves as a reminder of retreat from royal duties on account of love ... the consequences of the liaison of Dido and Aeneas ... apply most pointedly to Erec” (McDonald 500).

While it is true that Enite is much less of a ruler than Dido, and that Dido and Erec both neglect their responsibilities to their people in order to concentrate on their own sexual gratification, the same might be said for Enite. In fact, Enite fails in her responsibility to Erec in that she purposefully remains silent about their collective fall into disrepute for fear of losing him (vv. 3011-3012). Thus, Enite knowingly holds Erec back from his duties, just as does Dido with Aeneas, even after he tells her that the gods have mandated that he leave.

Hartmann’s inclusion of Lavinia on the saddle also demonstrates his purpose in showing the development of Erec and Enite’s relationship through the exemplars of Dido-Aeneas and Lavinia-Aeneas. At the beginning of *Erec*, the titular character is young and untried. Although he is able to gain experience in fighting, proving his prowess and “getting the girl,” he has not matured enough to be able to shoulder the responsibilities of being a ruler, due to his obsession with his sexual relationship with Enite. “Aeneas’s love for Dido was for Fulgentius an example of adolescent passion bereft of human reason” (McDonald 486). While Hartmann defends Dido by saying that Aeneas very unchivalrously abandoned her (vv. 7560-7561), he also pointedly places the two women on opposing sides of the saddle.

The failed relationship with Dido, the relationship for which Aeneas was not ready, stands on one side of the saddle, then Hartmann describes the journey to Latium, and then he describes the relationship with Lavinia and the subsequent happiness as a ruler on the other side

of the saddle (vv. 7545-7581). One can see the stages of the relationship between Erec and Enite reflected in the progression of Aeneas's journey from Dido to Lavinia.

Initially, Erec and Enite share the same distracting, erotic passion that consumed Aeneas and Lavinia. Their passion for each other causes them to neglect their duties with regard to courtly society, as with Dido and Aeneas — although their respective societies were not courtly in the sense of the medieval court. In the *Aeneid* (Book IV), Aeneas and Dido are described thus: “Even now they warm/the winter, long as it lasts, with obscene desire/ oblivious to their kingdoms, abject thralls of lust” (vv. 237-240). This is similar to the text describing Erec: “dô kërte er allen sînen list/ an vrouwen Êniten minne” (vv. 2929-2930). Aeneas is then prompted by the gods to continue his journey, abandoning Dido. Even though Erec brings Enite on the journey with him, he forbids her to speak to, eat with, or sleep with him, in essence abandoning her as well. Following Aeneas's journey, Dido commits suicide because her love for him is so great that she cannot face the prospect of being without him. Similarly, when Enite believes Erec has abandoned her in death, Enite attempts suicide — also by sword! — only to be stopped by a chance encounter at the last second.

After undergoing their respective trials, Erec and Enite are reunited, on the other side. They have both matured and understand the balance between love and duty. This part of Erec and Enite's relationship is symbolized by the depiction on the saddle of Aeneas's arrival in Latium and marriage with Lavinia, “where he ruled in happiness until the end of his life” (vv. 7580-7581). The contrast between the Aeneas-Dido relationship and the Aeneas-Lavinia relationship depicted on the saddle further highlights the development of Erec and Enite's relationship by demonstrating how close to disaster Erec and Enite had come.

The inclusion of *Aeneid* material by both Hartmann and Chrétien in their respective narratives constitutes more than a flourish to demonstrate their education. Hartmann in particular expands on the material, making the parallels between the ancient and medieval characters clear. In depicting the progression of Aeneas's journey from one place and one woman to another, Hartman alludes to the maturation and development of Erec — and Enite — as they begin with a solely erotic passion, which they develop into a balanced love, conducive to partnership and good governance.

Types of *Minne* in Hartmann's *Erec*

Hartmann von Aue's *Erec* tells the story of a young couple who overcome failures and endure trials, eventually maturing into a model king and queen. Although the titular character remains the primary focus of the work, Erec's wife Enite also figures prominently as an active force in the narrative. From the very first mention of Enite, she is praised as "diu schoeniste maget/ von der uns ie wart gesaget" (vv. 310-311), which to a medieval mind, carries the strong connotation that the beauty of her countenance reflects the goodness of her character. Despite her poverty, Erec offers his suit to Enite's father Koralus and elevates her to the wealth and status of a queen. Yet, due to their immaturity and inexperience, they fall from grace by neglecting their public duties, spending an inordinate amount of time together in bed.

Since Erec's court essentially disintegrates for lack of a visible leader, the kingdom laments that Erec ever married, blaming Enite for Erec's neglect of his knightly and kingly duties: "si sprâchen alle: ' wê der stunt/ daz uns mîn vrouwe ie wart kunt/ des verdirbet unser herre'" (vv. 2996-2998), a charge that Enite accepts (vv. 3007-3008). In order to regain his honor, Erec departs his kingdom with Enite, forbidding her to speak to him (vv. 3096-3102);

from this point onward both Erec and Enite undergo a process of personal development both separately and together, which aids in the reacquisition of their honor and prevents repetition of their previous mistakes. Enite constitutes a complex, dynamic character who functions as a conduit for *minne* and who develops an understanding of what comprises appropriate action as befits a well-bred woman, wife and queen; it is only by comprehending what *guote minne* consists of that Enite is able to undergo the final stages of maturation necessary to attain and preserve her status as wife and ruler.

Kreftige, Anderre, and Guote Minne

The concept of non-personified *minne* can be connected to *Vrou Minne* in that they are each comprised of the same force with the same capacity to work good or ill on those they affect. Within the work, Hartmann divides *minne* into three different subsets or separate facets: “*anderre*” (v. 1877), “*kreftige*” (v. 3693), and “*guote*” (vv. 8617; 8870). Over the course of the entire narrative of 10, 135 lines, Hartmann uses attributive adjectives modifying *minne* a mere four times — two of those times consist of the use of the same modifier twice within 150 lines. Rather than being simple attributes of *minne*, Hartmann deliberately uses these adjectives to designate a specific type of *minne*.

Kreftig is the attributive adjective used to describe a *minne* that is so strong that it can rob a nobleman of his “right mind:” *dô tete im untriuwe kunt/ diu kreftige minne/ und benam im rehte sinne*” (vv. 3692-3694). Here, *minne* actually schools the count in the art of false love (“*untriuwe*”), and causes a complete change of character in a man of extremely good breeding. Even though a member of the *Hochadel*, the count sinks as low as the uncouth robbers who also attempt to take Enite by means of force and murder. This *kreftige* sort of *minne* captures the

count so fully that, due to its influence, he loses all his honor — Erec observes to him “ir enthöveschet iuch...an mir harte sêre” (vv. 4197-4198). This extreme compulsiveness caused by *kreftige minne* most likely costs the count not only his honor, but his life as well, as he is severely wounded as a result of his rash combat with Erec to win Enite (vv. 4172-4231). (In Chrétien’s *Erec et Enide*, the narrator explicitly states that the count later died of his wounds [vv. 3656-3657].) This type of *minne* not only dominates the senses, but confuses them so that the victim of its *kraft* cannot distinguish between honorable and dishonorable conduct.

Kreftige minne contains similar characteristics to — but cannot be equated with — the *anderre minne* that rules Erec and Enite’s thoughts and actions at the beginning of their relationship. Before the wedding night, Erec and Enite were both ruled by this *anderre minne*: “ez gerten ir sinne/ anderre minne” (vv. 1876-1877). Hartmann’s use of the euphemistic comparative “anderre” gives a strong indication that this subset of *minne* is separate from other types by the word’s comparative form. If there is *anderre minne*, other types of *minne* to which this type may be compared must exist. Since Hartmann does not compare *anderre minne* with another specific type of *minne*, the connotation is that *anderre* constitutes a qualitative description of the *minne* that holds sway over Erec and Enite, suggesting that something different or unorthodox exists between the two of them. While the word *anderre* does not carry an overtly negative meaning, it does connote a difference from the norm, casting within the narrative a seed of doubt on the nature of the romantic union between Erec and Enite.

Preceding the description of Erec and Enite’s *minne* as *ander*, Hartmann allows the audience a window into the lovers’ thoughts, which are consumed with only one goal: *jâ enwirde ich nimmer vrô,/ ich engelige dir noch bî/ zwô naht oder drî*” (vv. 1873-1875). Although clear and intense, such a description of love between two members of the aristocracy was anything but

common: “Ein so unverhüllter Ausdruck sexueller Begierde, auch von Seiten der Frau, findet man nicht oft in einem Artusroman“ (Bumke 30). Concentrating solely on the sexual expression of their *minne*, Erec and Enite do eventually lose their honor, although not in the same way as the count, whose mind is overcome by *kreftige minne*. Erec and Enite’s *minne* takes root after a tentative engagement following the tournament to win the sparrow-hawk (vv. 501-506). “Liebe ist hier nicht die Voraussetzung, sondern die Konsequenz einer gemeinsam bestandenen Statusprüfung...” (Wenzel 256). Thus, Erec and Enite have already forged a social relationship with one another before they begin to experience *anderre minne*, whereas the count and Enite have no such socially sanctioned relationship with each other before he first glimpses her. Furthermore, Erec and Enite’s *minne* involves a reciprocal relationship, while the *kreftige minne* the count harbors for Enite is decidedly one-sided. *Anderre minne* may therefore be viewed as a lustful *minne* within the accepted and in essence honorable relationship between Erec and Enite. By causing their isolation from courtly society and their neglect of their governing duties, *anderre minne* contributes heavily to their loss of public honor, but not in the irrevocable way of *kreftige minne*.

Nevertheless, both Erec and Enite must develop their apprehension of *minne* from the unorthodox and damaging *anderre minne* to the *guote minne* Hartmann describes near the conclusion of their journey. Only subsequent to the trials that both Erec and Enite undergo does Hartmann apply the attributive adjective “guote” to the *minne* between Erec and Enite (v. 8617). After remaining loyal to Erec despite his apparent death in the most difficult *âventiure* of all, Enite and Erec again finally eat and sleep together:

hâten guote zîte

dâ sî ensamet lâgen

und guoter minne phlâgen

unz in erschein der morgen.

manlîcher sorgen

enwas sîn herze niht gar vrî... (vv. 8615-8620)

[They had good times as they lay there and cultivated good love until morning appeared to him. His heart was not free of manly cares...]

Despite their passionate cultivation of *guote minne* that lasts the whole night, in the morning Erec is not compelled to persist in making love to Enite — his heart is not “free of manly cares” (vv. 8619-8620) and he carries out his duties as a knight and ruler, rather than as one completely ruled by a harmful sort of love.

Guote minne also makes an appearance in Erec’s comforting words to Enite prior to his departure to fight Mabonagrîn: “sôst sigesælic mîn hant/ wan iuwer guote minne/ die sterkent mîne sinne” (vv. 8869-8871). In this instance, Enite’s love for Erec will (and actually does) sustain him in a genuine test of knightly strength when everything, including his life, is at stake. Demonstrating a power akin to the *kreftige minne*, but affecting only good, *guote minne* is something that must be discovered and cultivated through hardship — it cannot be merely granted by *Vrou Minne*, it must be earned.

Enite as a Conduit for *Minne*

From the very first time Enite enters the story, her beauty shines through her otherwise disheveled appearance (vv. 323-330). This beauty, also a reflection of inner beauty to the medieval mind, catalyzes a reaction in men, even (and perhaps especially) in her husband Erec,

which causes them to lose all sense of honor and responsibility. Erec, her highborn, chivalrous husband, succumbs to the temptation put forth by her beauty even before the couple marries. The days until their marriage cannot seem short enough: “der tage dûhte in ze lanc...” (v. 1846). Following their troth, Erec becomes entangled by *anderre minne* and neglects his court and all of his responsibilities as a knight and ruler to isolate himself in his bedroom, making love to his wife. Until Enite reveals to him that he had fallen into public dishonor, “dô kêrte er allen sînen list/ an vrouwen Êniten minne” (vv. 2929-2930). Erec’s entire mind concentrates completely on sexual intercourse with Enite, showing him to be completely in the thralls of *minne*, apparently caused by his wife’s irresistible beauty. Hartmann’s language makes it clear that Enite herself does not cause Erec’s extreme expression of *minne*. As seen in the above quote, Erec is the one loving Enite. During this part of the story, Erec is the doer of the action that Enite receives.

As soon as the pair begin their redemptive adventures, *minne* continues to seduce men through an unwitting Enite, ranging from the robbers who see Erec and Enite riding through the woods and immediately covet Enite (vv. 3213; 3331-3335) to both of the noble counts who attempt to take Enite by force (vv. 3670-4231; 6120-6687). Although beguiling, Enite herself is completely without guile. Nowhere in the story does the narrator accuse Enite of seducing the men intentionally. Rather, the blame consistently falls on *minne* for confusing the men’s senses and driving them to rash and irrational action, such as *minne* having “forced” Gaolein into dishonorable acts (vv. 3718-3719). *Minne* works through Enite, who unwittingly serves as conduit for this uncontrollable force with ambiguous intentions to corrupt these men, who in the case of Erec and both of the counts, were noble, honest and good before *minne* caused their ruin.

By channeling *minne* via her superlative beauty, Enite unconsciously serves as a passive conduit for an active and unpredictable force that entraps men without her desire or knowledge

of it. “Hier kann schon gesagt werden, dass die Wirkung Enitens auf Erec, die in den Versen 1840-86 diese *minne* auslöst, eine ihrer *schoene* und *güete* entspringende Ausstrahlung ist, deren sie sich nicht bewusst ist” (Smits 22). In doing so, she becomes an object for which men yearn — a desire that leads to their respective downfalls, and in some cases, to their deaths. *Minne* constitutes a force that (in the case of Erec) acts *on* her and *through* her in the case Erec and of the other men she encounters on her journey.

The Force of *Minne* on Erec and Enite

After completing their first test together to win the sparrow-hawk, Erec and Enite begin to lust after one another. On the ride to King Arthur’s court, they begin to trade glances: “dô wehselten si vil dicke/ die vriuntlichen blicke” (vv. 1490-1491). The absence of dialogue between the two and the overt focus on the bodily consummation of their love demonstrates that the two understand their feelings for each other in almost exclusively sexual terms. At this point what drives them is *andere minne*: a uni-dimensional, sexual love that clouds the senses and causes an abrupt descent from honor into shame.

It is this misconception of love that catalyzes Erec and Enite’s communal fall from grace. By apprehending *minne* in terms of unrestrained lust as opposed to an integral part of a balanced partnership, both Erec and Enite contribute to their public shame. Enite’s complicity is twofold: she exits as a beautiful woman and yet she fails to understand the balance between speech and silence within the private sphere of a marital partnership. Essentially, *minne* works through her to seduce Erec, who disregards duty and *mâze*², focusing purely on the sexual of aspects in his relationship with her. Enite, as a good medieval wife should, follows his lead and adapts a

² *Mâze* constitutes the Middle High German word for “moderation” or “balance” and was considered one of the most important courtly virtues to cultivate.

conception of *minne* that matches his. In fact, Enite's understanding of *minne* remains so closely tied to its bodily expression that she fears that she will lose him if she voices what she has heard spoken within the court: "si vorhte in dâ verliesen mîte (v. 3012).

Minne and Enite's Guilt

For its part, the court blames Enite for causing their lord's downfall. The court laments that she ever met Erec and ever came to court (vv. 2996-2998). They do not point out any further specific behavioral issues of Enite's that cause their lament. According to the court, her fault lies in her mere existence — "Enites 'Schuld liegt offenbar daran, dass es sie gibt. Oder, dass sie eine Frau ist und eine besonders schöne" (Bumke 37). A commonly ignored aspect of this view is that Hartmann's narrator claims that Enite *rightfully* understands that she is guilty of causing Erec's *verligen*³: "ouch gerouchte si erkennen daz/ daz ez ir schult wære" (vv. 3007-3008). By adding "geruochte," the narrator places a value on her agreement with the court about her own complicity: the narrator believes she ascribes to the correct perception of her guilt. Further affirming that any specific conduct on her part could not be cause for concern is the fact the narrator has described her superlative goodness from the beginning of the narrative. "Dennoch darf man, wenn man von einer Schuld Enites spricht, dies nicht in dem Sinne missverstehen, als sei sie durch eine persönliche, Individuelle Entscheidung moralisch schuldig" (Cramer 105). Rather, she has in this case an "objektive Schuld" (Cramer 105): she is a beautiful woman who channels *anderre minne*, which excites the desires of her husband who cannot moderate his lustful behavior.

³ *Verligen* is the word Hartmann uses to describe what happened to Erec when he concentrated solely on his sexual activities with Enite and neglected his court. "Ver" as a negative prefix is coupled with "ligen," "to lie" in the sense of lying down, to give the connotation that Erec was falsely lying with his wife or lying in the wrong way.

In the passages leading up to Enite's catalytic utterance, Hartmann does not describe Enite's behavior at all. When describing Erec's *verligen*, he describes what Erec did with regard to Enite, never mentioning what Enite thought or how she acted until the lines directly preceding her longest speech up to this point in the story (vv. 2924-3029). As previously mentioned, Hartmann describes Erec as "loving" Enite (v. 2968), instead of narrating their sexual interactions as if both had an active role in the process, thus making it clear that Enite plays the passive role of the obedient wife rather than the wanton seductress. However, Enite is also a captive in the clutches of *anderre minne*, making no attempt to incorporate into her love life the obligations inherent in her positions. In other words, she has made no effort directed at cultivating *guote minne*. Given the strong hold *minne* has taken over both Erec and Enite, her guilt lies in acquiescing to a false idea of *minne*, allowing the wrong facet of *minne* to reign free within her marriage.

Additionally, Enite fails to speak to Erec in the private sphere, which comprises her other mistake (McConeghy 779). Throughout the narrative, Enite consistently perceives the surrounding environment more accurately than does Erec. For example, the lament of the court about his loss of honor never reaches Erec's ears until he happens to be awake when Enite uncharacteristically speaks to herself about it. While "the expected public behavior in public is silence" (McConeghy 774), in order for Enite to be an appropriate support to Erec, she must speak in the private sphere. Since she understands her role as one of silence and *minne* as purely sexual, she believes that if she speaks, she will cause Erec to physically depart from her, which in her mind would be tantamount to losing his love. Due to her incomplete understanding of *minne*, Enite does not speak to Erec in private, preventing the couple to repair the damage done by their self-imposed isolation until it is almost too late.

As a result of Erec's command for Enite not to speak (vv. 3098-3105), when Enite feels compelled by the dangerous circumstances to speak, she must seriously consider her words and their effect each time before going against Erec's command several times in order to save his life. An example of her development is recorded by the narrator in the form of her inner struggle when attempting to decide whether to defy Erec's command to her and speak or not. Her decisions to speak, despite Erec's threats to kill her if she were to do so (vv. 3094-3095), reflect her maturing understanding of social responsibility and her development as a wife and queen who can complement her husband by not merely blindly following his lead, but by acting instead for his good and the good of those who depend on him as their leader (Jillings 118).

The Development from *Anderre Minne* to *Guote Minne*

Enite's thought processes also remain intimately connected to her growing understanding of the different facets of *minne*. Her inner struggle reflects an evolving concept of *minne* that does not involve lust. Instead, she contemplates Erec's qualities and what he has done for her: "der mich von grôzer armout/ ze vrouwen schuof über michel guot" (vv. 3362-3363), that others depend on him: "den diu werlt niht überwinden kan" (v. 5927), and that there has never been a better husband: "den aller liebsten man/ den ie vrouwe gewan" (vv. 6043-6044). The word Hartmann uses to describe Enite's feelings for Erec also changes from *minne* to *triuwe*—a word synthesizing the concepts of love and loyalty (v. 3262).

Although she remains faithful to Erec, Enite has ample opportunity to return to a relationship in which *anderre minne* holds sway. Both the first count and Oringles become overwhelmed by the intensity of *minne* coursing through Enite when they first see her. They offer her relief from the hardship Erec inflicts on her, a noble title, and so forth. When the first

count desires to wed her, Enite is still married to Erec and resists his *kreftige minne* (vv. 3750-3971). However, the situation with Oringles is entirely different: Erec has apparently been killed and Enite left alone and without protection in a dangerous world (v. 5738).

Yet, despite imminent danger, Enite does not follow the example of Laudine in *Iwein*, who loves and marries the slayer of her husband in order to gain powerful protection and the possibility of happiness (vv. 2177-2400). Although Oringles has not contributed to Erec's death as in Iwein's case, he is ruled by an unchecked and lustful passion that causes him to reject all honorable custom and marry an unwilling woman before her husband has even been buried:

swiez doch dûhte schande
 alle sîne dienstman,
 sîne boten sande er dan
 allenthalben in daz lant,
 daz im kâemen zehant
 die herren die des ambetes phlegent
 daz si die gotes ê gewegent
 daz si im wûrde gegeben,
 wan er entriute nie mê geleben.
 sô grôz ist der minne maht (vv. 6331-6340)

[Even though all of his vassals thought this dishonorable, he sent his messengers all throughout the land, so that immediately all the men came to him whose office it is to contemplate God's law, who would give her to him, because he thought he could not live anymore. So great is the power of love.]

Oringles, operating under the intoxicating influence of *minne*'s extreme power, disregards the advice of his court, which is reminiscent of Erec and Enite's withdrawal from society as a result of *minne* at the beginning of the narrative. Oringles' treatment of Enite also recalls her abuse at the hands of Erec as they began their *âventiure*: "his treatment of Enite differs from Erec's only in degree and savagery and not in kind" (McConeghy 778). His conception of *minne* is one that allows a damaging and distinctly imbalanced variety of *minne* to rule his actions, which is incompatible with the *minne* Enite has come to share with Erec.

Having made the transition to understanding what *guote minne* entails, Enite has matured enough to recognize that the type of *minne* ruling these men is the wrong sort of *minne* — the sort that had already brought her to grief in her own marriage. That is, *minne* has its place in a partnership, but cannot be entirely allowed to rule the senses as an unchecked force. *Minne* must be kept in balance by each person's correct understanding of *minne* and its place within a partnership.

The *guote minne* that Enite and Erec finally share — following Enite's refusal to accept the promise of an advantageous marriage and position (v. 6266) or to acquiesce to Oringles' demands despite his brutal verbal and physical abuse (vv. 6445-6586) — they have attained as a direct result of Enite's *triuwe* in the face of incredible odds. By sleeping together again, they reinforce their bond that they have forged through the trials they endured. Whereas Hartmann described the act of love in Karnant as Erec one-sidedly loving Enite, they experience the *guote minne* together: "Erec und vrouwe Ênite/ hâten guote zîte/ dâ si ensamet lâgen/ und guote minne phlâgen" (vv. 8614-8617). The use of third-person plural form of the verbs indicates their mutual participation in the sexual expression of *minne*, which constitutes a significant deviation from their earlier cultivation of *anderre minne*. *Guote minne* has the capacity to strengthen and heal,

as opposed to the destructive qualities of the immoderate and lustful facet of *minne*, which wrought Erec and Enite's initial downfall.

In the final lines of the story, Hartmann injects a hint of warning into the joy that now rules over Erec's kingdom. Hartmann emphasizes the strength and appropriateness of the new relationship between Erec and Enite by contrasting their post-âventiure conceptions of *minne* and responsibility to their actions before their loss of honor:

der künec selbe huoter
 ir willen swâ er mohte,
 und doch als im tohte
 niht sam er ê phlac,
 dô er sich durch si verlac (vv. 10119-10123)

[The king himself fulfilled her every wish as he could, however, only as it benefited him; not as he did once when he neglected his court for sexual pursuits because of her.]

Not only does the mention of their previous shame provide a perspective for the reader and listener concerning their incredible maturation over the course of the narrative, but these lines also remind the audience of the extreme power and multifaceted character of *minne*. While Erec and Enite have learned to cultivate *guote minne*, the more dangerous sides of *minne* remain both present and potent.

Passive Action

As Enite develops her conception of *minne*, she refines her sense of appropriate action as well. For a medieval audience, a tell-tale sign of a highborn woman lay in the outward

manifestations of her good breeding, such as maintaining a demure silence in public, since “the behavior of refined women is silence” (McConeghy 774). Given that women by nature “[tend] to talk, gossip, and go back on their word more than men...” (McConeghy 773), a noblewoman’s silence can be interpreted as a deliberate act of passivity. Enite not only exhibits this exemplary silence in public, but also in private, in the presence of no one but her husband. In the private realm of existence, Enite remains altogether too passive — while the mark of a good wife is obeying her husband and following his lead, she should also function as a support to her husband. As we have seen, Enite sees and hears things throughout the story that Erec does not; only when she apprises him of what she has perceived can the proper action be taken.

From the very first time Erec and Enite meet, Hartmann does not spare any lines for dialogue between the two characters. The first time one can observe a direct conversation between them occurs when Enite — under duress — informs Erec of his loss of honor in the public eye (vv. 3035-3052). While it may seem as if Erec punishes Enite for her speech by forbidding her to speak for the duration of their journey, as is clearly the case in Chrétien’s *Erec et Enide*, in Hartmann’s version, as McConeghy makes us aware, Erec does not silence her immediately, but commands her “vouwe Ênite, saget,” (v. 3035) (McConeghy 779). It is only due to Enite’s speech that Erec is able to begin to rectify his mistake of neglecting his social responsibilities as a ruler and start out on a journey to restore his honor.

Enite’s lack of complete passivity in the *private sphere* (McConeghy 781) causes her to begin a journey of development in which she learns not merely to react but to act for the good of her partnership, which she has not done up until the couple departs from Karnant. Many contemporary scholars place Enite in a primarily reactive role, except in “Notfall” (Smits 20). However, one can clearly see Enite’s development from a completely passive and reactive entity

to someone who understands how to maintain a balance between public passivity and restraint and private action that complements and aids her husband as both person and king.

As mentioned above, it is Enite's understanding of *minne* that prevents her from assuming her proper role as an active wife within her private realm with Erec. Her belief that *minne* consists solely of the immoderately physical *anderre minne* causes her fears that she will lose him if she speaks of the speculative talk circulating around the court regarding his unknighly conduct. Since she lives in the thralls of selfish, physical *minne*, she deliberately remains passive within her relationship, which deprives Erec of her keen perception necessary to ensure the success of his kingship.

Active Passion

Over the course of their journey, Enite must carefully consider when to speak and when to be silent. The fact that her husband has forbidden her to speak on pain of death causes her to reflect intensely upon the appropriateness of her role as a wife and on the necessity of her speech. Hartmann details her inner struggles, which range from declaring that it is better for her to lose her life as a woman than for such a great man to lose his: “bezzet ist verlorn mîn lîp/ ein als unklagebære wîp/dan ein alsô vorder man” (vv. 3168-3170) at the beginning to her admonishment of *Tod*, whom “she scolds for willfully damaging society by sparing her life whilst claiming Erec's, for others are dependent upon him” (Jillings 118). Near the beginning of their journey, Enite's struggles focus solely on herself and Erec, whereas by the end, she has developed a sense of social responsibility as befits a queen.

Thus, the command for silence given to her by Erec functions not as a disciplinary measure that will discourage her from speech in the future, but instead it works to underscore the

necessity of speech in private when the two are essentially alone — not in front of a courtly gathering of men and women. By verbally intervening, Enite saves Erec's life and their collective honor multiple times, casting doubt on the claim that characterizes Erec as the subject or actor, while Enite is relegated to the role of object and reactor. When Enite alerts Erec to what she has seen and heard, Erec can prepare for threats to their lives and marriage. In spite of Erec's prohibition of her speech, Enite warns him of robbers on multiple occasions (vv. 3182-3188; 3380-3383), and of the devious count's plans to kill him (v. 3996), prompting Erec to act in such a way as to save both his and her life.

During the episode with Oringles, Enite's action causes both Erec and Oringles to react to her control of the situation, despite their perceived power over her. Rather than submit to marrying Oringles, Enite will not do so, even though her husband has apparently died (v. 6353). Although Oringles is a man and ruler over his land and people, Enite will not submit to his will and defies his commands, thus reacting in a negative manner. However, her defiance causes him to react angrily and strike her. Enite's reaction transitions into action when she does not merely submit to his beating, but purposefully meets the blows with her body — “sînen slac si niht envlôch:/vil sere si sich drunder zôch” (v. 6580-6581). It is her subsequent cries and speech that cause a reaction in Erec, who responds to her speech by waking up and rescuing her, again saving both their lives and their honor.

In the aforementioned scenes, Enite has made the transition from being merely a reactive character in the story to one who actively exhibits passion and now acts of her own accord in a manner she deems best. Enite acts to control the circumstances of a seemingly uncontrollable situation by defying Erec's command that she not speak, and instead speaking up to warn him of the robbers and of the devious first count's plan to murder him. When she does so, she can no

longer be classified as a purely reactive object upon whom the men of the story act. As seen with Oringles, she acts outright, deliberately using his vice against him to meet her own needs. At this juncture, Erec must react to her cries in order to save her.

The motivating factor in Enite's actions lies in her enduring love and loyalty to Erec. If it was *anderre minne* that caused their original downfall, it is *guote minne* that catalyzes Enite's development and redemption throughout the rest of the narrative. Enite begins to understand *triuwe* as an essential component of *minne* when she struggles with her loyalty to Erec's good over her own. Her new perspective on *minne* prompts her to act for Erec's good, even though it might mean he would kill her, thus separating her from him irrevocably, which is the potential result she most fears.

Minne in Action

As depicted in Hartmann's *Erec*, *minne* constitutes a wild, uncontrollable and unpredictable force that, while by no means benign, can act for the good of people in the physical world. Aside from the personified *Vrou Minne*, three distinct types of *minne* appear in the story as previously noted: *kreftige minne*, *anderre minne*, and *guote minne*. Enite catalyzes *kreftige* and *anderre minne* in her husband Erec and the men she encounters during the course of her *âventiure*. *Minne* acts through Enite, who functions as a conduit for *minne*'s power, to exert its strength over the men in question, corrupting and confusing their thoughts and conduct.

Kreftige minne and *anderre minne* contribute to the dishonor and even death of those who succumb to them, while *guote minne* is a type of *minne* that incorporates strength, sexual love, and non-sexual loving loyalty, acting as a balanced force on both Erec and Enite. *Guote minne* gives Erec strength in the fight with Mabonagrin (v. 9230), after Erec and Enite each attain it and

share it with one another. This *mâze* in *minne* is a reciprocal energy shared by the couple, who were only able to create this correct understanding of *guote minne* through shared hardship and suffering. Enite's development as a suitable companion and queen to her husband depends on her correct perception of when to remain passive and when to act, an understanding, which in turn depends on her clear comprehension of *guote minne*. As Enite incorporates *triuwe* into her awareness of the multifaceted character of *minne*, her conception of appropriate action develops until she becomes the perfect partner and ruler to her equally mature husband.

Grôze Minne in Hartmann's Iwein

Much as in Erec, Iwein's *minne* for Laudine stems not from her sparkling personality, but from his glimpse of her bare flesh and hair:

swâ ir der lîp blôzer schein,
 da ersach sî der her Îwein:
 dâ was ir hâr und ir lîch
 sô gar dem wunsche gelîch
 daz im ir minne
 verkêrten die sinne (vv. 1331-1336)

[Wherever her body appeared bare, there the lord Iwein looked at her: there her hair and her figure were just as desired, so much that his love for her distorted his senses...]

Although the scenes describing Erec's first encounter with Enite and Iwein's first glimpse of Laudine could not be more different in content or tone, they retain the commonality of female skin laid bare. Enite's skin shows through her ragged dress, while Laudine rips her clothes in grief. While Erec is certainly not immune to Enite's beauty, Iwein is captivated by Laudine's

body and hair, which catalyses a *minne* reaction in him that robs him of his senses — and his good sense. Instead of concentrating on escaping a castle in which every person except one desires his death, Iwein nearly walks into the funeral proceedings unarmed in order to stop Laudine from harming herself (vv. 1478-1482). Iwein's feelings toward Laudine are a direct consequence of his erotic arousal brought on by the sight of her body.

This type of love, which Iwein harbors toward Laudine, Hartmann describes as *grôze minne* (v. 1424) and seems to be specifically oriented toward the erotic aspects of *minne*. Struck only by her beauty, Iwein puts all thoughts of his personal safety aside — even all thoughts of other people aside from Laudine, as is clear when the narrator asserts that Iwein could not care less about any of the other people in the castle:

wan ern gæbe drumbe niht ein strô

ob sî mit glîchem valle

dâ zehant alle

lægen ûf der bâren

die dâ gesinde wâren (vv. 1440-1444)

[because he did not give a damn, whether everyone in the court were lying dead on the bier]

This *grôze minne* seems to have a similar effect that the *anderre minne* of *Erec* had on the figures in the narrative. Iwein no longer cares for others, but instead is focused solely on Laudine and the erotic promise she holds for him. This type of *minne* does seem to differ from *anderre minne* in that Iwein, although blindly taking no regard for his own safety, does retain enough of his mind that he does consider his honor even while encompassed by passion; he does consider what Keie would think of him as a knight if he were to return to King Arthur's court without a

horse (vv. 1530-1533). The narrator allows the audience into Iwein's thoughts to assure them that:

swie im sîne sinne
 von der kraft der minne
 vil sêre wæren überladen
 doch gedâht er an einen schaden,
 daz er niht überwunde
 den spot den er vunde,
 sô er sînen gelingen
 mit deheinen schînlichen dingen
 ze hove erziugen möhte (vv. 1519-1527)

[however much his senses were overwhelmed by the strength of love, he still thought of the shame that he could not overcome, the mockery he would find, if he could not tangibly prove his success to the court]

Rather than being completely absorbed in Laudine as Erec was in Enite, the quality of Iwein's love for Laudine is such that he can incorporate his sense of knightly duties into that love. The phrasing *kraft der minne* calls to mind the *kreftige minne* of *Erec*, which led knights to their downfall. Although this may have been the case if Lunete had not stopped Iwein from disrupting the funerary rites, Iwein kept both his life and his honor, despite or perhaps because of his *minne* for Laudine. It must be noted, however, that without the brilliant planning and courtly savvy of Lunete, it seems that the scenario in which Iwein emerges with a beautiful wife, a gorgeous castle, and knightly fame would not have occurred. The successful outcome seems less a result

of Iwein's love than of Lunete's foresight and planning combined with the intervention of *Vrou Minne*, as previously discussed.

While some scholars — such as Wiegand — argue that the nature of Iwein's *minne* for Laudine cannot be classified as purely sexual due to the degree to which her distress moves him, one must look closely at Hartmann's choice of words: “dô sî her Îwein eine ersach...ir wîplîche triuwe/ und ir senlîche riuwe/ dô minnet er sî deste mê” (vv. 1599-1605). He “minnet” Laudine “deste mê,” which gives no indication that the nature of his *minne* toward her has changed in any way, or that the original motivation for his *minne* can be ignored. Her distress and loyalty are factors in his increasing *minne* toward her and function in the narrative as a display of her good character. This in turn demonstrates that she is a worthy companion for an honorable knight such as Iwein.

Iwein himself admits that his love for Laudine came solely from her beauty. During their first interaction, Laudine asks Iwein: “...wer hât under uns zwein/ gevüezet diese minne?” (vv. 2342-2343). The following conversation ensues, in which Iwein explains his irrational love for Laudine:

Iwein: ‘mir reitz niuwan mîn selbes lîp.’

Laudine: ‘wer rietz dem lîbe durch got?’

Iwein: ‘daz tete des herzen gebot.’

Laudine: ‘nû aber dem herzen wer?’

Iwein: ‘dem rieten aber diu ougen her.’

Laudine: ‘wer riet ez den ougen dô?’

Iwein: ‘ein rate, des muget ir wesen vrô

iuwer schœne und anders niht.’(vv. 2348-2355)

[“My own body commanded me.” “By god who told your body?” “The mandate of my heart did.” “But now who told the heart?” “My eyes commanded my heart.” “Well, who commanded your eyes?” “A command, of which you may be pleased: your beauty and nothing else.”]

By his own admission, Iwein tells Laudine that it was her beauty and nothing else that moved him to harbor *minne* toward her, placing his *grôze minne* for her plainly in the realm of sensually motivated *minne*. Her beauty and nothing else caused his love for her. In this instance, there is no scenario of a communally passed status test or honor accrued together as with Erec and Enite. Rather, Laudine seems to function here as proof of Iwein’s success in attaining victory over Ascalon. By securing a marriage to her, not only does he obtain land and rulership, but he also has tangible proof that he succeeded in beating the knight to whom Kalogrenant had lost. The narrator cites visible proof of his victory as a reason for Iwein not to leave the castle (vv. 1723-1730), but on the other hand, he would be indifferent to knightly honor if he were not to see Laudine:

do begunde in dô an strîten
 zuo den andern sîten
 daz im gar unmære
 älliu diu êre wære
 diu im anders möhte geschehen
 ern müese sîne vrouwen sehen
 von der er was gevangen (vv. 1731-1737)

[Then an argument began, on the other hand, that all the honor would be distasteful to him if he could not see the woman who had taken him captive.]

This sentiment hearkens back to the lack of regard Erec maintains for his courtly honor when experiencing *anderre minne* for Enite. Although Iwein still has thought for his honor, he readily would disregard that if it meant he could not see the object of his desire. This indicates that although the *grôze minne* maintains significant similarities to *anderre minne* including affecting the propensity for the affected knight's loss of honor, this type of *minne* that Iwein feels toward Laudine differs fundamentally from that which Erec feels toward Enite at the beginning of *Erec* in that it does not cause Iwein's loss of honor. Instead, the *grôze minne* that Iwein feels toward Laudine aids him in proving his honor and worth as a knight to the world.

Lunete's Role in Iwein and Laudine's *Minne*

While Iwein's love for Laudine is passionate, erotic, and so powerful that he is willing to put his life at risk for it, Laudine does take more persuading. Iwein is caught in *Vrou Minne's* clutches; Laudine on the other hand must be persuaded to love Iwein both by *Vrou Minne* and by the calculated mediation of her lady-in-waiting, Lunete. Lunete not only must convince Laudine of the practicality of marrying Iwein, but she also orchestrates their initial encounter, giving Iwein cues about what to do and say even after she has prepared Laudine appropriately for their meeting (vv. 2200-2290).

In fact, throughout the narrative, Lunete effectively organizes and disorganizes the *minne* relationship between Iwein and Laudine. Lunete is the one who saves Iwein from those who would have killed him, pleads his case to Laudine, and organizes the most effective first meeting

between the two, even prompting him as to what he should say. Later, Lunete informs Iwein of his loss of love and honor and then at the end of the story, Lunete helps to trap Laudine into making the oath that she would marry the “Knight of the Lion.” Rather than consisting of a mutual and organically developing love between the two of them, Laudine must be compelled by both Lunete and *Vrou Minne* to enter into a marriage with Iwein based on the safety of her lands and the protection of her people that Iwein could potentially provide. Iwein, also struck by *Vrou Minne* desires to possess Laudine sexually and thinks of little else but attaining that goal, which, once attained recedes into the background as the least of his concerns until forcibly reminded by Lunete. The love that exists between Laudine and Iwein is thus more precarious from the start — it had to be orchestrated by a third party. Iwein then promptly forgets his bond and promise to his wife, resulting in the actual breaking of the love relationship, which remains broken until the very end of the story when it is restored by artificial means — the oath. While Iwein himself develops over the course of the narrative, Laudine remains static — the couple does not undergo the same communal transformation as Erec and Enite. Even at the “happy end” the love between them is less about mutual affection than a cleverly played trick aimed at securing the appropriate social status for a mature and famed knight.

Thus, what prompted the *minne* in the first place is what restored it—attraction and social standing on Iwein’s part and practical necessity on the part of Laudine. Iwein himself has developed with regard to his understanding of duty to his kingdom and his wife, but the actual nature of the love between the two consists of passion on Iwein’s part—an erotic attachment that is sanctioned by marriage and orchestrated by Lunete. Without Lunete’s intervention, that is to say, without her lies and tricks, the reconciliation (both times) between Laudine and Iwein would never have come to fruition. Both at the beginning and the end of the narrative, Laudine harbors

feelings of hate toward Iwein and must be coaxed into assenting to the legal relationship with Iwein. Due to her feelings of entrapment and helplessness, Laudine consents to a relationship with someone she has only until very recently despised. As a character, she is anything but dynamic, as she repeats the same behavior twice. Although the narrator assures the audience that she does indeed love Iwein, that love remains dependent on the necessity of having a man to protect her as well as the binding oath she swore to love the Knight of the Lion (vv. 7895-7938).

Results

As demonstrated above, Hartmann was greatly influenced by the material from Virgil's *Aeneid*. Especially evident in *Iwein*, the figure of *Vrou Minne* hearkens back to the goddesses of love from classical antiquity. By depicting *Vrou Minne* as a powerful and untamable entity, even characterizing her as a deadly warrior, Hartmann uses imagery that is very similar to the goddess Venus in the *Aeneid* and the *Eneasroman*. Furthermore, the emphasis on the highly dangerous nature of *Vrou Minne* brings to mind the well-known fate of Dido at the hands of Venus, a story with which Hartmann appears to have been very familiar, given his use of the Aeneas-Dido and Aeneas-Lavinia relationships as an allegory for the development of Erec and Enite's *minne* in *Erec*. Through the usage of this ancient material, Hartmann adds depth to and legitimates his own narrative. Not only does Hartmann reveal his own knowledge and education by referencing the *Aeneid*, but he also connects his characters with previously known figures, which adds an element of "historical" continuity and credibility to his tales.

Hartmann develops the character of *Vrou Minne* in *Iwein* — generally accepted as the later work — much more than in *Erec*, even recounting a dialogue between her and the narrator. In both works, *Vrou Minne* aids each pair of lovers in coming together. Yet, Hartmann never fails

to warn the audience about the dangers of *Vrou Minne*. Portraying *Vrou Minne* as a personified, yet primal force, Hartmann emphasizes the dangers of a powerful love. *Vrou Minne* serves to orchestrate the downfall of the first count in *Erec* by overwhelming his senses with desire for Enite (vv. 3717-3721), giving the audience a practical demonstration of her capricious nature. In *Iwein*, Hartmann goes into much more detail in an explicit excursus of how dangerous *Vrou Minne* can be. Yet here, Hartmann adds a dialogue between *Vrou Minne* and the narrator, which brings the personhood of *Vrou Minne* into the forefront. Since *Iwein* would have been recited aloud in public more often than read silently in private, this dialogue is a way of breaking down the fourth wall, so to speak, between *Vrou Minne* and the audience. In this manner, Hartmann makes *Vrou Minne* a text-external force to be reckoned with in the world of the audience and not just within the narrative of *Iwein*. Hartmann thus uses *Vrou Minne* in a didactic sense to make the audience aware of the very real dangers that *Minne* can present for those within her grasp.

Erec and Enite experience those dangers first-hand when they become consumed by an imbalanced and overly sensual variety of *minne*. Hartmann demonstrates how the pair comes to achieve balance in their *minne* relationship, by developing the correct understanding of partnership, cooperation, and social responsibility. When Erec and Enite each come to understand their respective roles as partners and rulers — and how their *minne* fits into their lives — they not only obtain their own “happy ending” but they also have the capacity to aid others, such as Mabonagrin and his lady. The *minne* between them does not exclude erotic passion, but it rather integrates that passion into daily life within certain confines of time and space. When Erec and Enite cultivate *guote minne*, they enjoy sex with each other, but when morning comes, Erec returns to his knightly duties.

The story of Iwein warns the audience of the perilousness of the opposite extreme in relation to Erec. While Erec neglected his duties in favor of his lady, Iwein neglected his lady in favor of his duties. A distinct difference between *Iwein* and *Erec* lies in the lack of development of the *minne* relationship between Laudine and Iwein in *Iwein*. Hartmann emphasizes the importance of *minne* by describing the extreme personal consequences for Iwein in the absence of *minne*. Namely, Iwein becomes insane, incapable of any kind of duty until he is rescued by women and is able to focus on protecting (mostly) women in an effort to atone for his lack of consideration. The *minne* between him and Laudine remains static on his part and cyclical on her part. That is, from the first time he sees her, Iwein's *minne* for Laudine is *groz*. She, on the other hand, reviles him as the killer of her husband, then comes to love him as her new husband and protector, then hates him for his neglect and betrayal, and then loves him again upon reconciliation.

The analysis of the *minne* relationships as well as the figure of *Vrou Minne* in these two works reveal that Hartmann had a highly developed concept of both the dangers of *minne* and of what the ideal sort of *minne* relationship should constitute. The successful *minne* portrayed in *Erec* and *Iwein* consists of equal parts strong emotion, erotic attachment, and a sense of balance and duty. If any part of this equation becomes out of balance, it results in social and personal ruin.⁴

⁴ I would like to thank my advisor Dr. James Brown and my graduate committee, including Dr. Brown, Dr. Leonie Marx, and Dr. Lorie Vanचना for their guidance and feedback.

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