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GRADUATE COLLEGE

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE THREE FRENCH VERSIONS
IN VERSE OF THE STORY OF *BARLAAM ET JOSAPHAZ*

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

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2001

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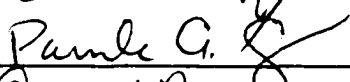

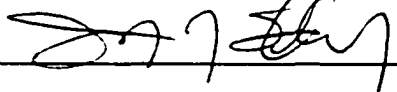
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**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE THREE FRENCH VERSIONS
IN VERSE OF THE STORY OF *BARLAAM ET JOSAPHAZ***

**A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
Literatures and Linguistics**

BY

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	iv
Table of Contents	v
Abstract	vi
Chapter One A Question of Genre	1
Chapter Two The Redactors	25
Chapter Three The Texts	41
Chapter Four The Parables	65
Chapter Five The Additions and Amplifications in the version of Gui de Cambrai	98
Chapter Six Conclusion	125
Appendices	
A. The Story of <i>Barlaam et Josaphaz</i>	128
B. The Voyage of <i>Barlaam et Josaphaz</i> to the Western World	131
C. Timeline	135
D. Introduction of Gui de Cambrai	136
Bibliography	140

Abstract

Barlaam et Josaphaz is a saint's life that enjoyed much popularity in the middle ages. Accepted as a Christianized retelling of the Buddha story, it was translated from Greek (originally accepted as being written by John Damascene, the consensus now is that it was composed by Euthymius. See Wolf: "Barlaam and Iosaph," Harvard Theological Review XXXII, 1939.) into Latin and thence into most of the languages of Western Europe (see Pflaum: Der Religionsdisput der Barlaam-Legende, ein Motiv Abendländischer Dichtung pp. 224–52 for a complete listing). This Latin source served as the basis for three metrical versions in Old French, written by an anonymous translator, Gui de Cambrai and an Anglo-Norman called Chardri. Written at roughly the same time, between 1180 and 1225 CE, there is no indication that these authors knew each other's work. The *Version Anonyme* and that of Gui de Cambrai come from the continent, while that of Chardri is from England. Significantly, while all three used the same Latin *vita* as their source, they each created a unique version of the story. My dissertation studies each verse version in relation to the source *vita*, the other verse versions, salient themes, and their language/vocabulary in an attempt to ascertain whether the story truly falls under Hagiography, or should be more properly considered a Romance or Epic Romance.

Chapter 1: "A Question of Genre." In this chapter I explore the definition of genre and how modern scholars apply it to medieval literary works. Additionally, I introduce my contention that the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* can be classified under more than one genre.

Chapter 2: “The Redactors.” In this chapter I examine each of the three redactors who translated this story into the vernacular, their choice of style, and their possible motivations for doing so.

Chapter 3: “The Texts.” This chapter focuses on the texts themselves and on which genre each could, or should, be classified under.

Chapter 4: “The Parables.” The parables are an important aspect of the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz*, and many enjoyed a popularity outside the story of these two saints. In this chapter I examine Chardri’s decision to leave them out of his version, and their treatment at both the hands of Gui de Cambrai and the anonymous author.

Chapter 5: “The Additions and Amplifications in the version of Gui de Cambrai.” Of the three versions of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* in verse, that of Gui de Cambrai deserves especial consideration, in that it takes the most liberties with its source material and was selected by a later scribe as a vehicle for attacking the very class of people, the aristocracy, for whom it was commissioned. In this chapter I examine these liberties, showing how they confirm that Gui was indeed writing for a courtly audience.

Chapter 6: “Conclusion.” In this chapter I review my findings and show how they confirm my original hypothesis that the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* can be classified under more than one genre.

Chapter One

A Question of Genre

The three French verse versions of the story of Barlaam and Josaphaz occupy a unique place in the corpus of medieval French literature. Written over a period of approximately forty-five years (1180-1225 CE), they take the same source material, a Latin version of the story, and present it in the vernacular, but each translator brings to the story his own idea not only of what the story should convey but also of what his audience might expect to gain from it. While current scholarship accepts the basic story as hagiographical, the verse versions raise certain questions that lead to the argument that they could quite possibly belong to other genres, such as the romance or romance-epic. Such classification depends not only upon the author and his intended audience, but also on how modern scholars define the concept of genre.

Genre

Scholars today consider genre most basically as a category of texts defined by an association of form and content. However, in considering the whole of medieval French literature this grouping is not static. There is no one *romance*, for example, that embodies all the elements of those works modern scholars consider romance. As each new text was written, the boundaries, and hence the definition, underwent a transformation. Such a situation allows the modern scholar to group together both *la Chanson de Roland* and *Huon de Bordeaux* under the genre of *chanson de geste*, though these two works, aside from a few stylistic similarities, are markedly different from one another in terms of content and story. Nevertheless, the categorization of medieval literary works is a passionately debated topic and the temptation to apply

modern critical perspectives is a constant danger to today's scholar of the Middle Ages. The celebrated theorist Hans Robert Jauss has noted, for example: "Medieval literature poses a particular challenge since its generic categories in no way correspond to those of modern genre-systems, and even basic facts about medieval literary theory remain obscure."¹ The need to be able to classify the works that make up the bulk of the modern scholar's research is strong, yet in the field of Old French literature exceptions to classification seem to be the rule.

Even so, writers such as Chrétien de Troyes, Marie de France, Jean Renart and others clearly expected their audience to have a sense of what their work was and, therefore, to be cognizant of that which modern critics call genre. Chrétien sets forth his purpose in writing *Erec et Enide* "Et trait [d']un conte d'aventure / Une molt bele conjunture,"² while Marie claims:

Pur ceo començai a penser
d'alkune bone estoire faire
e de latin en Romanz traire;
mais ne me fust guaires de pris:
itant s'en sunt altre entremis.
Des lais pensai qu'oïz aveie. (ll. 28-33)³

Jean Renart in his *Guillaume de Dole* "claims that his text is both a *romans* (lines 1 and 11) and 'une novele chose' because he interpolates lyric stanzas into his narrative

¹ Hans Robert Jauss, "Theory of Genres and Medieval Literature," trans. Timothy Bahti. *Modern Genre Theory*, ed. David Duff (Essex: Pearson Education Ltd., 2000), 127.

² Chrétien de Troyes, *Erec et Enide*, ed. Jean-Marie Fritz *Lettres Gothiques* (Paris: Brodard et Taupin, 1992), ll. 13-14.

³ Marie de France, *Lais*, ed. Karl Warnk *Lettres Gothiques* (Paris: Brodard et Taupin, 1990), ll. 28-33.

(ll. 13-14).”⁴

Each of these authors knew that his or her work belonged to a particular group or style of works recognizable to their audience. This grouping would later come to be defined as genre.

As the question of genre will play an important role in the present study, particularly as it pertains to those works which modern scholars classify as hagiography, *chanson de geste*, and romance, a closer examination of these fields is in order. While certain elements exist that are common to each genre, there are also characteristics peculiar to each which allow scholars to categorize the texts generically. This ability is key to this study of *Barlaam et Josaphaz*, and furthermore, I contend, there is enough difference among the three verse versions of the story to warrant classifying them into separate genres.

Hagiography

One of the earliest medieval French literary genres is the saint’s life. It was also for a long period in scholarship one of the most overlooked genres because it never developed a distinctive literary form of its own.⁵ With early saints’ lives resembling the vernacular French epic in form, and later ones, the romance, the saint’s life as a genre found itself relegated to a secondary literature by modern scholars. This neglect was particularly evident during the period of rebirth of

⁴ Simon Gaunt, “Romance and other genres,” The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance, ed. Roberta L. Krueger (Cambridge: UP, 2000), 45.

⁵ P.F. Dembowski, “Literary Problems of Hagiography in Old French,” Medievalia et Humanistica 7 (1976), 119.

medieval studies, between 1850 and the Second World War.⁶ This was a time of rising nationalism, often bleeding into academia, when scholars found it preferable to see in *la Chanson de Roland* nascent French patriotism rather than the moralistic edification of the saint.

Nonetheless, the saint's life is an important genre in the corpus of French literature. If one accepts the premise that the birth of French literature begins with the *Sermons de Strasburg*, generally considered as the first document in medieval French, some of the earliest literary texts are hagiographical in nature. The *Séquence de sainte Eulalie*, (late ninth century), *La vie de saint Léger* (tenth century), *Jonas* (tenth century), and probably the most famous, *La vie de saint Alexis* (eleventh century) are just some examples. Definable not by their form, but strictly by their content, hagiographical works in medieval France were essential to the instruction and edification of a public that was unable to read or understand Latin.⁷ This role, coupled with the preconceived notions mentioned above, has reinforced the view of saint's life as a secondary literature. Add to this the fact that virtually all surviving examples are translated from, or at least dependent on, Latin originals,⁸ it is easy to understand why the modern scholars, until relatively recently, would choose to concentrate their research elsewhere.

⁶ Dembowski 117.

⁷ "Hagiography," *The New Oxford companion to Literature in French*, 1995 ed.

⁸ "Hagiography." Latin text and the French translation are sometimes found in the same manuscript. Such is the case with the *Séquence de sainte Eulalie*.

The Latin originals date mainly from the tenth and eleventh centuries, often composed in the Benedictine monasteries. As Douglas Kelly notes: "The Latin lives were written principally for a religious audience, more often than not for monks. They contain an implicit or explicit exhortation to strive to emulate the saint and his or her exemplary life, to acquire his or her virtues, if not through torture and martyrdom, at least by strict adherence to prescribed practices. This is the *sanctus imitabilis*."⁹ Indeed, a majority of saints' lives derive from Latin originals, Latin serving as the *lingua franca* of the Church. These originals were written with a well defined, established grammar and vocabulary (medieval varieties of Latin notwithstanding) that was consistent from one monastery to another. Communication among these monasteries helped to account for the widespread diffusion of hagiographical material.¹⁰ Given that the legends share so many motifs and themes, many modern critics have deprecated the genre, claiming that all examples are essentially identical, regardless of date, place of composition, or authorial intention. "When you've read one Saint's Life you've read them all," wrote James Whitby Earl in his dissertation "Literary Problems in Early Medieval Hagiography."¹¹

⁹ Douglas Kelly, The Art of Medieval French Romance (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992) 206.

¹⁰ S.C. Aston, "The Saint in Medieval Literature," The Modern Language Review 65 (1970), xxx.

¹¹ James Whitby Earl, "Literary Problems In Early Medieval Hagiography," diss., Cornell University, 1971, 7.

Yet such an overly inclusive statement fails to consider the many and varied circumstances that inspired the desire to set down a particular saint's life in writing and in the vernacular. And while it is true that "Repetitions imperil...the historical credibility of a given life, and diminish its pertinence to the experience of the believer,"¹² one can also gain – with careful study – a glimpse into the mind, or the culture, of the intended audience, if not directly into the mind of the author. Furthermore, given "the array of texts stretching from the earliest records through Greek and Latin lives to the vernacular literature...one may chart the phases of [a legend's] evolution in a manner which is rarely possible with secular literature...[These versions] show us how the writer read his source, and in what direction the legend as a whole [was] growing."¹³ This is indeed a rare opportunity for the scholar of medieval culture. Whereas other genres such as the *chanson de geste* or the romance often require the scholar to collate a variety of manuscripts in an often unachievable quest for the Urtext, the saint's life facilitates the comparison between the source material and its treatment. Witness Gui de Cambrai's description of how he came into possession of his source material:

Jehans, uns vesques de Damas,
Le translata molt hautement,
Car il le sot bien vraiment;
Et uns Jehans le nous presta;
En Arouaise l'emprunta.
Cil Jehans ert d'Arras doiens;
Je cuic k'il ert bons crestiens;
Haus hom estoit, de grant nobleche
Et de parage et de hauteche.
L'estoire ama de Baleham

¹² Duncan Robertson, "The Way of Hagiography," *Romance Philology* 43 (1989), 210.

¹³ Robertson 215.

De Jehan vint chi par Jehan.
Guys de Cambray, ki l'a rimee
Et en roumanch l'a translatee,
Dist que li rois assis estoit
Al parlement que il tenoit. (ll. 6204-18)

The existence of such source texts not only facilitates the comparison of one redactor's work with that of another, but also allows for the comparison of the various manuscripts containing the work of the same redactor. Such an opportunity is indeed rare in the corpus of medieval literature and is one that scholars could study profitably in detail.

An excellent case in point is the story of the lives of the saints *Barlaam et Josaphaz*. From its Eastern origins as the story of the Buddha and eventual translation into Greek and Latin,¹⁴ it suddenly emerges into French literature around the end of the twelfth century and beginning of the thirteenth century in no less than ten versions, contained in thirty-four manuscripts:

1. Champenois version in prose, between 1199 and 1229.
2. Version by Gui de Cambrai in verse between 1209 and 1220.
3. Anglo-Norman version by Chardri in verse, beginning of the thirteenth century.
4. French version of Mount Athos in prose, beginning of the thirteenth century.
5. An anonymous version in verse, thirteenth century.
6. A prose redaction of the anonymous version, thirteenth century.
7. Epitome of the Champenois version in prose, thirteenth century.

8. Jean de Vignay's prose version in The Golden Legend, fourteenth century.
9. A version in verse contained in the "Miracle of Notre Dame," fifteenth century.
10. A version contained in the *Mystère*, fifteenth century.

Of particular note are the three renditions in verse by Chardri, Gui de Cambrai, and an anonymous author (numbers 2, 3, and 5 above, respectively). Although they tell the same tale, the end results are so different that they could each be classified under more than one genre.

As used originally in Greek by Epiphane of Cyprus, in Latin by Jerome, and throughout the medieval period, hagiography "n'a rien à voir avec les saints, mais uniquement avec l'Ecriture Sainte."¹⁵ It is only in the nineteenth century that its present sense of "things pertaining to the saints" came into general acceptance.¹⁶ This new sense of the term came to encompass four basic areas:

1. Une Vie de saint, avec éventuellement une histoire de son culte.
2. Une branche de la littérature; le genre littéraire hagiographique.
3. Une discipline philologique et littéraire, qui a pour objet les Vies de saints et les autres sources les concernant.

¹⁴ For a résumé of its origins and transmission into medieval French literature, see Appendix B.

¹⁵ Guy Philippart, "L'édition médiévale des légendiers latins dans le cadre d'une hagiographie générale," Hagiography and Medieval Literature: A Symposium, ed. Hans Bekker-Nielsen (Odense: Odense UP, 1981), 130.

¹⁶ Philippart 131.

4. Une discipline historique qui a pour objet la vie et le culte des saints.¹⁷

These four criteria indicate that hagiography, in its modern sense, is born out of historiography, but with one essential difference: it continues in its narrative well after the point where a modern reader might expect a biography to end, that is, after the death of its subject. Thus the hagiographical work does not merely celebrate the saint's life; more importantly, it attempts to edify its public. The celebration of the saint's life is reflected in the reading of his or her story at daily mass. As regards the edification of its audience, the anonymous author of *Barlaam et Josaphat* was well aware of this quality when he wrote, "N'a pas mon cuer a ce tendu / ne onc por ce ne vuel romans faire / Mais por mostrer et por attraire" (ll. 36-8). Particular attention should be given to the verbs "mostrer" and "attraire." "Mostrer" has among its meanings "to expound," "to disclose," "to make known," "to reveal the truth" about something or someone, "to explain," "to instruct," "to expound." These meanings are clearly in line with the anonymous author's intent of taking the saint's story, which is hardly known (l. 12), and setting it forth in the vernacular language (l. 2). His desire to reveal the truth and instruct his audience will be reflected in his painstaking attention to detail, "in transposing, down to the last qualifier, Latin sentences into smooth and natural French verse, free from traces of the effort that must have lain behind it."¹⁸ "Attraire" has complementary meanings: "to attract," "to lead," "to draw to," "to gather together," "to translate," "to teach." The anonymous author aimed to

¹⁷ Philippart 132.

¹⁸ Edward C. Armstrong, The French Metrical Versions of Barlaam and Josaphat, (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1922), 3.

attract a sizeable audience in order to engender a change in their minds. This change is a vital facet of the hagiographical work, and there are many examples from the Middle Ages to support this claim. St. Augustine tells of his conversion after hearing the *Life of St. Anthony*, as does St. Guthlac. Furthermore, such changes were not limited to those who went on to become saints in their own right, but also occurred among the common people. One example is the conversion of Peter Waldo in 1173. A Lyon merchant, he experienced a spiritual awakening after hearing the *Life of St. Alexis*.¹⁹ Though the Catholic Church later characterized his experience as “extreme,” it is but one example of the influence that the saint’s life wielded during the Middle Ages.

With the intended goals of celebration and edification, the basic content of any given saint’s life is identical: “[A] biographical narrative, of whatever origin circumstances may dictate...concerned as to the substance as with the life, death, and miracles of some person accounted worthy to be considered a leader in the cause of righteousness; and, whether fictitious or historically true, calculated to glorify the memory of its subject.”²⁰ Regis Boyer has attempted to replace this somewhat broad definition with a more statistical approach. According to his study, a saint’s life usually, but may not always, contain nine distinct steps:

1. The origins of the saint (usually noble, good family, good milieu);
2. His birth, ordinarily accompanied either by some sort of miracle or by the predictions of wise people – based on the model of the Gospel

¹⁹ Quoted in Allison Goddard Elliott, “Saints and Heroes: Latin and Old French Hagiographic Poetry,” diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1977, 23.

²⁰ Gordon Hall Gerould, *Saints’ Legends* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1916), 5.

events when Jesus was born; Childhood, where the saint either reveals qualities or virtues and a precocious wisdom, or conversely displays a multitude of serious defects that transform into virtues due to some determining event that will be recalled over and over;

3. Education, which is never indifferent to the author and is often the occasion for a clearly didactic development;
4. Piety, to which the author typically allots a special section of the text, but which may also be distributed throughout the rest of the *vita*;
5. Martyrdom, on which the authors do not hesitate to expatiate, giving many details which are commonly absent in the rest of their tales;
6. *Inventio*, that is the discovery of the saint's relics or body, which gives rise to miracles, especially if a witness refuses to believe in the sanctity of these relics;
7. If appropriate, *translatio*: transport of the saint's relics to a place of veneration at the time when the author is writing; this may also occasion further miracles;
8. Miracles, which may be very numerous and often constitute a very interesting part of the text because they offer many lively and even picturesque details drawn from everyday life.²¹

Despite the ability of scholars such as Boyer to divide the typical *vita* into a number

²¹ Régis Boyer, "An Attempt to Define the Typology of Medieval Hagiography," Hagiography and Medieval Literature: A Symposium, ed. Hans Bekker-Nielsen (Odense: Odense UP, 1981), 32.

of constituent elements, the relative uniformity of hagiographical *vitae* in comparison to other contemporaneous genres leads Delehay to remark that the saint's life suffers from what he calls "la teinte monochrome."²² Yet given the popularity of the genre during the Middle Ages – especially during hagiography's so called "Golden Age" of the twelfth century – this "sameness" of the stories seems to have had little effect upon their popularity: "Les vulgarisateurs populaires continuent à préférer la légende enchanteresse à la sèche exposition véridique...Habituellement sans valeur historique, elles demeurent parallèles aux vies latines, qu'elles dépassent dans l'attention populaire."²³

"[E]lles demeurent parallèles aux vies latines..." – this phrase is very important to any study of medieval saints' lives. As previously noted, most saints' lives were derived from Latin originals and thus had bestowed upon them a certain authority, given the respect for Latin as the language of the learned. With their source material firmly established as canonical, the redactors could, on the whole, begin their adaptations in the knowledge that they were doing the work of the Church.

Chanson de geste

Appearing almost simultaneously with the Old French saint's life is the genre scholars label the *chanson de geste* and its temporal proximity has elicited no small debate about which came first or which had the greater influence on the other. Early theorists, arguing that manuscripts of saints' lives in the vernacular antedate those of

²² Quoted in Elliott, 25.

²³ Joseph de Ghellinck, L'Essor de la littérature latine au XII^{ème} siècle (Brussels: Desclée de Brouwer, 1955), 421-22.

the *chanson de geste*, proposed that the saint's life was indeed the inspiration of the epics.²⁴ The assonanced, decasyllabic lines and *laisses* of the early saint's life poems (the *Séquence de sainte Eulalie*, and the earliest version of the *Vie de saint Alexis*, for example) are all marks of the *chanson de geste*.²⁵ These early lives were probably intended for a listening audience, as opposed to a reading public. In a time when the Catholic Church opposed many forms of secular entertainment, those that sang the deeds of princes and saints were exempt from the censure which fell upon other performers.²⁶ Many of the works themselves note their musical aspects, of which this line from *La Chanson de Roland* is but one example: "male chançon n'en deit estre cantee" (1466). This musicality was possibly an aide in their dissemination. As the *jongleur* sang of the saints or epic heroes people became interested in seeing the places associated with them, and therefore might be inclined to make a pilgrimage to those spots. Through their travels the tales would be retold and their popularity increased.

J.D.M. Ford notes that "it is not unlikely that, having marked the first successful attempts of French to prove its fitness for literary expression, [the lives of saints] prepared the way for and furnished literary models for the *chanson de geste*."²⁷ Maurice Wilmotte was another of the proponents who supported this theory that hagiography came first:

²⁴ Elliott 6.

²⁵ *Gormont et Isembert* and the *Pélerinage de Charlemagne* are two exceptions to the use of decasyllabic lines, written in octosyllabic and dodecasyllabic lines respectively.

²⁶ Elliott 3-4.

²⁷ J.D.M. Ford, "The Saint's Life in the Vernacular Literature of the Middle Ages," Catholic Historical Review 17 (1932), 269.

Déjà on a vu que dans *Eulaie* dans la *Passion* et dans le *Satin-Léger* on percevait quelque chose de cette émotion profonde et contenue, que les vies latines de saints en très grand nombre, avaient permis de goûter aux clercs et à une élite. Dans le *Saint-Alexis* et la cantilène de *Sainte-Foy* il manque peu de chose pour que nous possédions l'équivalent populaire de la narration parfaite. Thème général, détails épisodiques, science de l'image, vocabulaire, tout est là, et nos premiers épiques, lorsqu'ils se hasardent à décrire des passions plus profanes, et notamment lorsqu'ils dessinent leurs premiers profils de femme, n'innovent guère, si on les confronte avec leurs modèles de la littérature édifiante.²⁸

However, not all scholars subscribe to this theory. Traditionalists, such as Gaston Paris and Pio Rajna, identify the origins of the *chanson de geste* not in hagiography, but in oral poems composed at the time of or shortly after the events that they portrayed. Jongleurs then spread these tales through their performances, giving them a much wider diffusion than the saint's life. Arguing that epic poems existed before they were committed to manuscript form, traditionalists contend that it was the epic that influenced the saint's life. Nonetheless, textual evidence is not on the side of the traditionalists, as the earliest extant texts of the saints' lives predate those of the *chanson de geste*. This is the view to which I hold and which I will discuss further in the section on form and content.

²⁸ Maurice Wilmotte, *L'Epopée française* (Paris, 1939), 161-2.

Romance

Medieval romance shares many qualities with the saint's life, including the mystique of the hero's birth; his youth of innocence; a quest; and a period of quiet contemplation or easement into a new life. While this romance pattern resembles that of the saint's life in basic structure, what distinguishes it from the latter is the presence of more details in each phase. In the romance, for example, during the hero's youth or in the completion of his quest there might be a series of preparatory minor adventures culminating in the major episode and the resolution of the phase.

The content of early romance, as of the saint's life, found its inspiration in Latin originals. Such romances as *Le Roman de Troie* and *Le Roman d'Alexandre* are two such cases in point. To assure his audience of the authenticity of his material Benoit de Sainte-Maure writes in *Le Roman de Troie*:

Qui vuet saveir e qui entent,
Sachiez de mieuz l'en est sovent.
De bien ne puet nus trop oïr
Ne trop saveir ne retenir;
Ne nus ne se deit atargier
De bien faire ne d'enseignier;
E qui plus set, e plus deit faire:
De ço ne se deit nus retraire.
E por ço me vueil travailler
En une estoire commencier,
Que de latin, ou jo la truis,
Se j'ai le sen e se jo puis,
La voudrai si en romanz metre
Que cil qui n'entendent la letre
Se puissent deduire el romanz:
Mout est l'estoire riche e granz
E de grant uevre et de grant fait.²⁹

²⁹ Benoit de Sainte-Maure, *Le Roman de Troie*, ed. Léopold Constans, SATF (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1904), ll. 25-41.

Early romancers and hagiographers felt it necessary to confirm the authenticity of their tales to their audiences. Such confirmation lent an air of credibility to their work: yet even so their real motivations for writing were often quite different. Whereas hagiographers sought to instruct and edify, the romancers sought to “present delight and lessons which without exception apply to one’s social relations with one’s fellows in *this* world.”³⁰ The *Roman d’Alexandre* gives an insight into what the audience was expected to take away from the romance tale:

De conoistre raison d’amer et de haïr
De ses amis garder et chierement tenir,
Des anemis grever, q’uns n’en puist eslargir,
Des laidures vengier et des biens fes merir,
De haster qant lieus et a terme soffrir,
Oïés dont le premier bonnement a loisir.³¹ (II. 3-8)

These romances say relatively little about serving God, the narrow way or the salvation of the soul, all stock elements found in most hagiographical works. With the emphasis on cultural and worldly virtues these works are more attuned to the expectations of their intended audience, the nobility of the court.

In contrast to the *chanson de geste*, whose *laisses* and frequent calls to “Oyez” and “Ecoutez” seem to indicate that they were performed orally for a varied audience, the writers of romance targeted their work more narrowly for the court, having it read or performed for a smaller audience. The character of the audience is reflected in the style of the romance: its plurality of perspectives, elements of narration added to aid in the flow of the story, and perhaps one of the most telling aspects, the increased use

³⁰ Margaret Hurley, “Saints’ Legends and Romance Again: Secularization of Structure and Motif,” *Genre* 8 (1975), 63.

³¹ Alexander de Paris, *Le Roman d’Alexandre*, ed. Laurence Harf-Lancner, *Lettres Gothiques* (Paris: Brodard et Taupin, 1994).

of dialogue.³² This increased use of direct discourse is an important development because it allows a fuller individualization of the characters while it permits the members of the audience to identify not only with the hero in his quest for his own identity but also with the supporting characters whom they see as reflecting their own positions or influence at the court.

The level of development afforded the characters of romance stands in stark contrast with that of the *chanson de geste*. The *chansons* present their characters as types, that is to say, as uni-dimensional characters used to illustrate a given ideal. The most famous example is the line from *La Chanson de Roland*: “Rolant est proz e Oliver est sage” (1093). In it one finds the ancient tradition of the hero’s being accompanied by a companion who complements him by supplying the qualities that the hero himself lacks.³³ Roland represents the strength of Christendom (and France), while Oliver embodies a source of conventional wisdom. In describing his hero as a type, the narrator defines him by his universally-recognized actions, rather than through any lengthy description of his physical or mental qualities. If a writer were to take the qualities of both heroes and fuse them into one new character, the result would present a character more typical of the romances. In the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* we see a division of the heroes similar to that of the *chanson de geste* – Josaphaz, the physical doer; Barlaam, the spiritual thinker. This aspect will be treated in more detail in Chapter 3.

³² While dialogue is present in the *chansons de geste*, its use is limited and tends to reinforce the perception of the characters as types, instead of fully realized personas. Witness the exchanges between Roland and Oliver in *La Chanson de Roland*.

³³ Achilles and Patrocle, Orestes and Pylade, Eneas and Achate are also well-known examples.

Of Form and Content

The redactors of the medieval saint's life, having established the authenticity of their story's content, turned to the question of what form would best serve their presentation. Early saints' lives, up to approximately the first half of the twelfth century, mirrored the form of the *chanson de geste* (*Séquence de sainte Eulalie*, *La vie de saint Léger*, *Jonas*, *Vie de saint Alexis*); from the second half of the twelfth century onward they mirrored the romance (certain versions of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* (see below), *Life of Cuthbert*, *Life of Benedict*, *Life of Anthony*).³⁴

As has been noted above, there is a close relationship between the form of the *chanson de geste* and the early saint's life. Both are "cantus gestulis," songs about deeds, sharing similarities of verse form.³⁵ Organizing the material into *laisses* and making use of formulae allowed the performer to expand or contract the *chanson* to fit his audience. By careful arrangements of the *laisses*, inserting or omitting elements as required, the performer tailored his recital to satisfy the audience's desires. For example, if the audience desired to hear tales of combat, the performer duly expanded those sections while possibly reducing those parts of the *chanson* recounting the court adventures.

To facilitate this expansion of the material, the performer, or *jongleur*, relied on certain formulae for the different episodes of the *chanson*. For example, in the case of combat scenes, a typical formula might be the following: the meeting of the opponents and their description, taunting, description of blows given and received,

³⁴ For a detailed discussion of this division, see Charles F. Altman, "Two Types of Opposition and the Structure of Latin Saints' Lives," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 6 NS (1976) 1-11.

the realization that the outcome is pre-ordained and the resolution of the combat. He then repeated this formula by changing the names of the two combatants. Gui de Cambrai makes innovative use of this technique in his retelling of the debate, between the false Barlaam (real name, Nachor) and the pagan priest. During the debate Nachor, whose resemblance to the holy hermit Barlaam had previously been established (ll. 4912-19), defeats in turn the pagan priests assembled by Avenir. The physical combat has been replaced by the verbal, with a detailed description preceding it bearing a striking similarity to those found in the *chansons de geste*:

Uns des autres rectoriens,
Ki molt ert contre crestiens,
Uns lons, uns magres, uns kenus,
Mais richement estoit vestus
D'un samit et d'un siglaton,
Et si estoit frere Plathon;
Rich chapel et cief avoit,
Et environ trechiés estoit;
Molt ert hideus en sa figure;
La barbe avoit à la chainture,
Trechie estoit en maint reploi.
Molt par estoit de pute loy.
Il regarde par grant orguel,
Car del surcil af.le l'uel.
En sa main tint .i. bastonciel,
A l'autre affaite son chapiel.
Molt a parlé iréement: (ll. 6597-6613)

This description is not unlike that of one of the combatants from *La Chanson de Roland*:

Un duc i est, si ad num Falsaron;
Icil er frere al rei Marsiliun.
Il tint la tere Dathun e Balbiun.
Suz cel nen at plus encrisme felun.
Entre les dous oilz mult out large le front,
Grant demi pied mesurer i pout hom. (ll. 1213-18)

³⁵ Elliott 6.

Having thus established the appearance of the combatants, Gui then describes their verbal, as opposed to physical, combat:

Molt a parlé iréement:
"Di va!" fait il, "à moi entent:
Li feus est dex; che ses tu bien;
Che sevent tout li crestien;
Car grant mestier souvent lor a;
Ja nus ichou ne desdira.
A maint besoiing la gent secourt
Et s'enbielist tant mainte cort,
Car il fait cuire les mangiers
Et les gens caufe volentiers.
En mil manieres nous äie;
Dont est chou voirs, nel mescroi mie,
Que le feus est dex voirement,
Car il secourt toute la gent." (ll. 6613-26)

The priest, who asserts that fire is god, is only one of a series of priests of the pagan religion. Representing the elements, Greek gods, and others, these figures are systematically defeated by Nachor with a response that is as deadly as any thrust of the sword:

Nachor respont: "Atarge .i. poi;
Ne te poist mie, entent à moi:
Dex fist le feu, sans nul mentir,
Pour chou k'il doie omme servir.
De liu en liu le puet porter
Li hom ki velt feu alumer;
Et s'en cuist on toutes les cars.
Je vous di bien.....
..on volt faire diu d'un keu!
Che n'avint onques en nul leu,
Ne il n'est drois k'ensi avigne.
Maistre, de diu vous vous resouvigne!
Don ne puet on le feu estaindre?
C'est malvais dex c'om puet destraindre!
Ki le corront, cil le destraint.
Jou ne sai rien ki diu estraint.
Por chou le pruis jou par raison,
Selonc le vraie entension,

Ke feus n'est dex, ne nient n'i a,
Mais Nostre Sire le crea."

(ll. 6627-46)

This interesting take on the standard battle scene from the *chanson de geste* would not only capture the attention of the intended audience, but also allowed Gui to highlight his knowledge of classical mythology.

The early saints' lives, such as the *Séquence de saint Eulalie* and the early versions of the *Vie de saint Alexis*, were, like the *chansons de geste*, also composed in decasyllabic verse, grouped into assonanced laisses. There is no mistaking the similarities between the two forms, nor between the related content of the early saint's life and the *chanson de geste*.

The *chanson de geste* revolves around the exploits of a hero, who may or may not represent an historical figure. Generally depicted as larger than life, the hero exemplifies one particular trait or characteristic, and is complemented by his companion who is also a type. Individually they are uni-dimensional, but taken together they form a whole. This duplexed hero is then contrasted with his polar opposite. One common example is the contrast of Saracen and Christian, the resolution of the contrast is a major component of the *chanson* and the heroism displayed is one of its distinguishing characteristics.

The first saints' lives told the story of early Christian heroes. Rather than entertain, they were intended to change lives, as explained above. Yet this goal, while admirable, often had the unintended effect of reducing the saint, like the epic hero, to a mere type, limited to an example for others to follow. The typical martyr, missionary, miracle-worker, or tyrant became the stock characters of the stories. Of these characters, the two most common types are the martyr and the confessor. The

martyr bore witness to his faith through his (or her) death, the confessor through his (or her) life. Each of these types favored expression through the epic style or that of the romance.

Because the martyr's life portrayed virtue in conflict with vice, it found expression in the epic style that was later employed by the *chanson de geste*. As has been pointed out by Charles F. Altman consists of three principle parts:

1. A dialogue in which a government representative attempts to induce a Christian to recant his beliefs or to sacrifice to the pagan gods. This dialogue serves to identify the values of the *passio* not with the individuals portrayed, but with the groups and religions they represent.
2. Persecution and actual martyrdom, involving the exemplification of virtue and vice through the opposition of the two parties.
3. A support system for each side, including a deity and a sympathetic group.³⁶

The story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* exhibits all three of these elements to a certain degree. For example, there are the attempts by King Avenir and his advisors to convert Josaphaz back to their pagan ways; the threat of martyrdom if the saints cannot defend their faith in the debate with the king's advisors; and the support provided each side – Avenir has his advisors, and Josaphaz has Barlaam's instruction. Furthermore, given the elements just enumerated, the *passio* and the epic share a basic plot, which "operates by the removal of all those who represent exceptions to

³⁶ Altman 2.

the dominant ideology."³⁷ King Avenir's attempted removal of the Christians from his kingdom furnishes us with a prime example.

From the twelfth century onward, however, there is a noticeable movement away from the forced parallelism of structure in the early saints' lives to a sort of realism in legends that "weave about historical characters a tissue of imagination, more or less probable of itself but entirely lacking in documentary authority."³⁸ The *vita* meets the romance. The saint no longer seeks to destroy his secular opponents, but to "transcend secular cares."³⁹ Like the hero of the romance, the saint is now different from, and better than, his contemporaries. But instead of embarking on a quest, or a series of quests, to prove his worth, as Erec does in *Erec et Enide*, the saint seeks to withdraw from society in order to perfect himself and his service to God. This aspect perhaps more than any other marks the character of Josaphaz and grants credence to the call for classifying his story as a saint's life.

In sum, the question of genre as it applies to the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* is of central importance to this study: *Barlaam et Josaphaz* exhibits elements of the *chanson de geste*: the diametrical opposition of the saint and his antagonist, the splitting of the hero into component parts, and its use of formulaic expression. It also shows features of romance: the saint set apart from society, his gradual withdrawal from society to achieve his goal. Finally, it includes elements of hagiography: Josaphaz's birth, isolated childhood, instructions by Barlaam. Is it indeed possible to classify this saint's story as belonging to only one genre? It is the contention of this

³⁷ Altman 2.

³⁸ Gerould 31.

³⁹ Altman 4.

study that the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz*, depending on the author of each particular version, is hagiographical, while it is also epic and similar to those stories modern scholars now regard as romance. Each of the authors treated in this study approached the story from a particular point of view, writing for the expectations of a particular audience and molding the story and altering its generic characteristics to suit his literary, artistic, and ideological agenda.

Chapter Two The Redactors

Once translated into Latin, in approximately 1048 CE, the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* enjoyed a success rarely seen for a saint's life. The tale, which quickly spread throughout Western Europe, survives in eight versions contained in over 100 manuscripts.¹ Such an exceptional diffusion brought it to the attention of no fewer than three Old French redactors, probably clerics, definitely men educated in the Church, who independently undertook its translation into the vernacular during the period of 1180-1225 CE. In their hands this one story is transformed into three very different stories reflective of the cultural milieu in which the redactors were writing.

The story of the men who translated *Barlaam et Josaphaz* is in some ways no less interesting than the story itself. The Latin version, with its relatively consistent rules of grammar, remains basically identical among the surviving Latin versions, with the eight versions categorized by Sonet naturally coming together under the classification of the saint's life. Yet these men – an anonymous author writing on the continent, an Anglo-Norman poet named Chardri, and Gui de Cambrai, also writing on the continent – saw in this saint's story the opportunity to instruct, entertain, or increase their own personal popularity. Depending upon their individual motives for writing, the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* finds itself on the borders of several genres, and a closer examination of the men who translated it is essential in order to

¹ For the most complete listing to date of the known Latin manuscripts, see Jean Sonet, S.J., *Le Roman de Barlaam et Josaphat* Volume I (Paris: Editions J. Vrin, 1949), 71-116.

understand its proper place, or places, in the corpus of medieval French literature.

The Anonymous Author

Of the five known manuscripts containing the anonymous verse version of the story – Besançon, 552; Carpentras, 473; Monte Cassino, 329; Tours, 949; and Cividale de friuli, Fegio Museo Archeologico, Busta 24 – only Tours 949 remains intact, containing a clear beginning and end. Unfortunately none of these manuscripts name the author, and we have no other reference, historical or literary, to help discover his identity. Paul Meyer first referred to this version as “anonyme”² and Edward C. Armstrong and Jean Sonet have retained this epithet in their respective studies. This is the most commonly accepted form of reference for this author.

While it is possible that the redactor named himself in the original copy,³ close examination of the text seems to indicate that the author himself chose to remain anonymous:

Por celui dovient tuit proier
Clerc e borjois e chevalier –
Soit evesques o clerc o prestre,
Deus li otroit l'amor celestre! –
Qui de cez deus mist en mimore. (12207-11)

While Armstrong sees in these lines an indication that the redactor is a man of the Church who refuses even to indicate his place in the hierarchy,⁴ Sonet interprets the enumeration of the three estates – “Clerc e borjois e chevalier” – as an indication that

² Quoted in Sonet, Vol. 1: 176.

³ Edward C. Armstrong, The French Metrical Versions of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* With Especial Reference to the Termination in Gui de Cambai, (New York: Elliot Monographs 10, 1922), 3.

⁴ Armstrong 3.

the author “n’est pas religieux.”⁵ While the author’s harsh critique of monks towards the end of his work (lines 11559-64) and his extended exposition of the duties of priesthood suggest that he might have been a cleric, his enumeration of the moral obligations of the priesthood (lines 10601-32) indicates that he was, in fact, a layman. Lines 10601-2 state: “Si est des prelaz e des prestres / Qui de nos, laie genz sont mestres.” By seeming to include himself in the laity, “Qui de nos, laie genz...” the redactor sets himself apart from the clergy, as Sonet suggests.⁶ These lines are also important in that they offer the reader a rare glimpse into the author’s thinking, an element he has taken great pains to conceal as a rule. In this passage he assigns to the priests and prelates the responsibility of acting as an example to their congregation. Like the Devil, if the priest openly does wrong everyone can see it, and it is not something he feels the people need to see. For if the priest does wrong, then his congregation is certainly going to do the same. This will give the Devil power over them, making them do his will and leading them into Hell. Instead, the priests are to be a light and example to the world and guard themselves against evil; for by doing good they will draw the people back to God. Though still lacking a definitive name for our redactor, we can reasonably assert that although not a man of the Church himself, he was a man with deeply held convictions as to their responsibilities.

The redactor’s anonymity further prevents us from associating him with any other literary work that would help classify him as a certain type of writer. But given his familiarity with the canons of versification Armstrong states:

⁵ Sonet 447.

⁶ Sonet 447.

[I]t is improbable that he was a tyro in literary composition... It is surprising to see the accuracy and completeness with which as a rule he succeed in transposing, down to the last qualifier, Latin sentences into smooth and natural French verse, free from traces of the effort that must have lain behind it.⁷

Such faithful adherence to the text is generally not characteristic of one writing for self-glorification, but rather is indicative of a redactor whose intent is not announced. There is no name associated with this work that has come down to us, nor is there a list of other works this redactor might have also composed, as in the case of other writers, such as Chrétien de Troyes and Marie de France. This redactor thus provides a stark contrast with another redactor in our study, Gui de Cambrai. No stranger to self-promotion, Gui names himself twice in his version and is not averse to displaying his own literary prowess.

Yet regardless of whether or not this redactor did indeed desire to remain anonymous, he does claim to be the first to translate into French a story that was at the time “gaires coneüe” (l. 12). He claims to be motivated to instruct and edify (l. 38), wanting nothing more than to write down what is in his memory:

Li cuers me dit et amoneste
Que en romans mete la geste
E les vies de deus ermites
Si com ges ai el cuer escrites (ll. 1-4)

Here, in comparison to the other redactors, he claims to be led by his heart, and sincerely wishes to share the benefits of hearing and following the examples set forth in the story with the common people. This is in vivid contrast with many other writers

⁷ Armstrong 4.

of the day, notably Gui de Cambrai in this study, who often dedicated their work to an influential or wealthy patron. The lack of a dedication, however, in the anonymous version, does much to reinforce its author's contention that he aims solely to instruct and edify. When writing for a patron, or on commission, an author often feels obligated to include favorable comments about his benefactor in the story (for example, a count might be favorably compared to the hero of the story, either by description or by noting shared qualities; a countess might be compared to the heroine or queen) thus making any work run the risk of being reduced to a tool of propaganda. An example of this is found in Chrétien de Troyes *Le Conte du Graal* where Chrétien describes his patron, Count Philip of Flanders (ll. 11-15):

Qu'il le fet por le plus prodome
Qui soit an l'empire de Rome :
C'est li cuens Phelipes de Flandres,
Qui mialx valt ne fist Alixandres,
Cil que l'an dit qui tant fu buens.

The redactor's claim to be the first to translate it into French seems to be justified, based on chronology (in the case of Chardri) and internal references (in the case of Gui de Cambrai). Jean Sonet, the first to extensively study the anonymous version, assigns to it a date in the first quarter of the thirteenth century, possibly even before 1215.⁸ Unfortunately, one cannot use linguistic markers to identify the author, owing to the lack of other works that can be reliably attributed to him. His anonymity thus lends credence to the theory that his intent in writing this version of the story was to instruct his audience.

⁸ Sonet, 477. However, M. Dominica Legge in Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 194, states that Chardri was probably

Chardri

We know little more of our second redactor – Chardri – than we do of the anonymous redactor. He is the only known Anglo-Norman writer to treat the story of Barlaam and Josaphaz, but there are precious few clues to his identity, either in the story proper or in the two other works ascribed to him, *Le Petit Plet* and *Les Sept Dormanz*.⁹

While the “Anglo-French versions of saints’ lives are, in the majority of cases, written either by women for their own sex or are intended for women,”¹⁰ the traditional anti-feminism of the clergy is in evidence in both *La vie de seint Josaphaz* and *Le Petit Plet*, suggesting that Chardri was a man. In the former, after excising most of the instructional material found in the Latin, Chardri keeps the episode of Josaphaz’s temptation by the young women, who were sent by Teodas to enflame his heart and bring him under their control (ll. 1821-23). The temptresses willingly undertake the task at hand and almost succeeds, with the chief temptress – skillfully playing upon his desire to share his new faith with those around him – offering to become a Christian if he will do one thing for her:

the first to translate it, as it is the simplest version and is the only verse version to not include the name of Barlaam in its title.

⁹ Chardri and his works were first mentioned in 1800, by Abbé de la Rue in *Archeology* XIII (1800), 234. Chardri names himself in both *La vie de seint Josaphaz* and *Les Sept Dormanz*, but not in *Le Petit Plet*. However, the latter’s inclusion with the other two works, and its common linguistic and orthographic features seem to indicate that it, too, was penned by Chardri. See Brian S. Merrilees, ed., *Le Petit Plet*, by Chardri (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970), xxviii-xxix.

¹⁰ A.T. Baker, “Saints’ Lives Written in Anglo-French: Their Historical, Social and Literary Importance,” *Essays by Divers Hands*, Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature of the United Kingdom n.s. Volume IV (London: Oxford UP, 1924), 121.

Josaphaz, oez ma resun.
 Pur Deu ki suffri passion,
 Pur sa duce mere Marie,
 Fetes une ren ke l'en vus prie.
 Sauvez ma tendre juvente,
 Si vus i poez mettre entente.
 Crestienne volenters devendrai,
 E od vus baptizae serraï,
 Se vus grantez tant ke entre nus
 En pusse aver l'amur de vus.
 Nature ad mut mis s'entente
 Ke fusse bele, minnote, e gente.
 Mun quor, mun cors ore vus otroi;
 Fetes ta volenté de mei.
 Mut en dussez tenir grant plet
 Del dun ke jo vus ai ici fet.
 Deu vus en savera mut bon gré
 Quant un alme est par tei sauvé;
 Por change de la vostre amur
 Ma alme enverrez al haut seinur.

(ll. 1869-88)

In this case, the woman speaks reasonably, playing upon Josaphaz's desires to spread the good news. Such subtlety calls to mind the temptation in the Garden of Eden, first with the smooth words of Satan to Eve, then hers to Adam, bringing about the fall of Man. This depiction of women as sly and conniving, while effective, is more serious in tone than his other notable treatment of them in *Le Petit Plet*. In this short work, presenting a dialogue between a youth and an old man but with the traditional roles of age/wisdom and youth/experience reversed, Chardri's critique of women (ll. 1213-84) takes on a more playful tone than that found in *La vie de seint Josaphaz*. Of women, the voice of the youth in *Le Petit Plet*, states in part:

Quant tant pleinne voste amie,
 N'est pas merveille, si fous se i fie;
 Si ele fu sage, bele e curteise,
 Bone serreit, si ne deveneist maveise.
 N'ad suz cel home ki seit vivant
 Ke ele ne deceive par beau semblant.
 Ele vus fet de feble fort,

Ele vus fet de dreit le tort,
 Ele vus fet de freit le chaut,
 Ele vus fet de bas le haut,
 Ele vus fet de blanc le neir,
 De la folie vus fra le saveir.
 Quanke vulez, fra la cuntraire
 Femme, quant serra demaleire. (ll. 1213-26)

Yet regardless of the tone, serious or playful, the low esteem in which Chardri held women is evident. Such sentiments were not uncommon among the male clergy and lend credence to the belief that Chardri was a member of that number.

The clues that do exist in his works – dialect and topographical and geographical references, particularly in *Le Petit Plet* (ll. 1271-2 and 1279-80) seem to indicate that Chardri was an Anglo-Norman, writing in the western or southwestern part of England. Unfortunately, attempts to learn his identity from local documents of the area have borne little fruit. The records do list a Chardri and a Wellelmus de Chardri, but neither can be convincingly linked to the author of *La vie de seint Josaphaz*.¹¹ Timothy Rutledge quotes E.G. Stanely as having proposed that “Chardri” is really an anagram for “Richard” as his name always appears as Chardri, and never Chardry.¹² Although an interesting theory, the lack of further evidence makes it a weak argument.

Chardri probably composed *La vie de seint Josaphaz* in the first years of the thirteenth century, before the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215. This council, organized by Pope Innocent III, seems to have had a greater effect in England than on the

¹¹ See John Koch, ed. *Chardry's Josaphaz, Set Dormanz und Petit Plet*, (1879; Wiesbaden, 1968), xx-xv.

¹² Timothy James Stuart Rutledge, “A Critical Edition of *La Vie de Seint Josaphaz*, A Thirteenth-Century Poem by the Anglo-Norman Poet Chardri,” Diss. University of Toronto, 1973, 5.

continent, producing a “flood of writings of an encyclopedic and didactic nature.”¹³ If such is the case, it would establish a possible *terminus ad quo* for the redaction of between 1212 and 1215. These dates would put it in line with the chronology as set forth by Brian S. Merrilees.¹⁴ According to Merrilees, the first work was probably *Le Petit Plet*. It is the most secular and taken alone, its freer, more playful style could lead one to assume that Chardri was a *jongleur*, an itinerant performer and/or composer who often accompanied his performances with a musical instrument. At 1,780 verses, roughly half the length of his *La vie de seint Josaphaz*, it too makes use of classical sources, such as the *Disticha catonis* and the dialogue from *De remediis fortuitorum*.¹⁵ His remaining two works, *La Vie des Set Dormanz* and *La vie de seint Josaphaz*, are more hagiographic in nature and, as Chardri states in *La Vie des Set Dormanz*:

Ne voil pas en fables d'Ovide
 Seinnurs, mettre mun estuide
 Ne ja, sachez, ne Parerum
 Ne de Tristram ne de Galerun
 Ne de Renart ne de Hersente
 Ne voil pas mettre m'entente. (ll. 51-6)

The author's turn away from secular literature – for example, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, *Tristram*, *Roman de Renart*, and others – and towards the hagiographical seems to indicate that Chardri was connected in some way to the Church; possibly he was a cleric. Thus his work could have been influenced by a “more conservative superior.”¹⁶

Also of note is that Chardri omitted archaic themes and references to several

¹³ Rutledge 110.

¹⁴ Brian S. Merrilees, ed. *Le Petit Plet* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970), xxxii.

¹⁵ Merrilees xxiv.

¹⁶ Rutledge 7.

heresies that are found in the Greek version. The original Greek translator saw in the story an opportunity to combat several heresies plaguing the early Church, such as Arianism¹⁷ and the veneration of images. His digressions on these matters survive in the later Latin translation, even though these heresies were effectively eliminated and no longer a serious threat to the Church. This circumstance possibly facilitated Chardri's decision to not include all such matters in his retelling of the tale.

Whereas the anonymous version of the story is important for its faithful adherence to the source material, Chardri's is notable for its brevity. It is contained in two manuscripts – London, British Library, Cotton Caligula A. IX (generally considered the older of the two) and Oxford, Jesus College, 29 (generally considered the more accurate). While the anonymous version and that of Gui de Cambrai encompass approximately 13,000 lines of verse, Chardri's version is told in an economical 2,954 verses. This economy of verse is achieved by eliminating almost entirely the parables and teachings which helped make the Latin version of the story so popular.

One might wonder why a redactor would knowingly omit what are arguably the most popular aspects of the story. One possible explanation is that the story, which he entitles simply *La vie de seint Josaphaz*, was itself viewed by Chardri as an exemplum, and thus the parables were no longer relevant to his purpose.¹⁸ His

¹⁷ Arianism: A heresy born of the teaching of the priest Alexandri Arius (approx. 256-336 CE). He introduced in his writings a strong distinction between the persons of the Trinity with only the Father being eternal. Thus the Son does not have the same divine nature as the Father, and the holy Spirit proceeds from just the Father, and not from the Father and the Son. This heresy was condemned in 325 by the Nicean Council, which defined the Son as equal to the Father.

¹⁸ Legge 195.

introduction seems to bear this point out:

Ki vout a nul ben aentendre
Par essample poet mut aprendre
La dreite veie de salu.
Ceo ad l'en suventefeiz veu
Ke genz sunt par un respit
Amendez plus ke par l'escrit
Austin u de saint Gregoire. (ll. 1-7)

Chardri “resolves to accommodate his uplifting message to his listeners’ imaginations rather than to their intellects.”¹⁹ This decision will affect both his stylistic and structural choices. He reduces the instruction of the hermit Barlaam to only 178 lines (702-880), the pagan philosophers’ response in the grand debate is reduced to two lines (ll. 1515-16), and Nachor, as the false Barlaam, defends Christianity in only 25 lines (ll. 1517-42). These episodes are far shorter than those in the anonymous version and that of Gui de Cambrai where they occupy several hundred lines. At the close of his work Chardri again reminds his audience of his purpose in writing:

Ke plus tost orrium chanter
De Rolant u de Oliver
E les batailles des duze pers
Orrum mut plus volenters,
Ke ne frium, si cum jo quid,
La passiun de Jhesu Crist. (ll. 2933-38)

Chardri viewed the work itself as an edifying tale, one from which his audience could profit. Thus any further instruction included therein would only risk confusing his audience, and losing their interest. I will examine Chardri’s choice to omit these parables in Chapter 4.

Gui de Cambrai

The third and final version, is that of Gui de Cambrai.²⁰ Gui's version provides the most information on its author and takes liberties with the source material, using it as a thread from which he weaves a story which he feels would appeal to his audience, and is preserved in three manuscripts – Brussels, KBR 10 468 (1215); Monte Cassino 329; and Paris BNF, fr 1553.

Of the three redactors, Gui provides the most information about himself; indeed, he names himself twice in his redaction of the story:

Guyos, ki dist et ki raconte
Et ke l'estoire a si menée
Ke en roumanch l'a translatée,
Fenist ichi de lor martyre. (ll. 5328-31)

Guys de Cambry, ki l'a rimée.
Et en roumanch l'a translatée
Dis que li rois assis estoit
Al parlement que il tenoit. (ll. 6215-18)

There is no doubt that Gui wants to be given credit for this work, indicative of one who chose writing as his main profession. Proud of his abilities, he alone of the three verse redactors goes into detail as to how he came to receive the source material:

Et uns Jehans le nous presta;
En Arouaise l'emprunta.
Cil Jehans ert d'Arras doiens;
Je cuic k'il ert bons crestiens;
Haus hom estoit, de grant nobleche
Et de parage et de hauteche.
L'estoire ama de Baleham;
De Jehan vint chi par Jehan. (ll. 6207-14)

¹⁹ Rutledge 30.

²⁰ Edward C. Armstrong's study The French Metrical Versions of Barlaam and Josaphat with Especial Reference to the Termination in Gui de Cambrai provides some of the most detailed research into this author. What follows in this section is in large part a résumé of his findings.

Gui's description of his source material possibly represents an attempt, as was the case with other saint's lives (such as *La vie de sainte Eulalie*) translated into the vernacular from the Latin, to lend an air of legitimacy to his work. Any work written in Latin, the *lingua franca* of the Church, carried a certain spiritual authority and therefore was held to be true. Gui's attention to this detail, therefore, could indicate the authority with which he desired to support his work.

With the aim to "attract a larger audience by adhering less closely to the *Historia* [Gui] introduced classical allusion and medieval epic accessories"²¹ to his work, but apparently without the success he sought as his version does not appear to have been as widely circulated as that of the anonymous version. Such classical allusion, as will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5, further indicate that Gui was writing for an aristocratic, well-educated audience, one that would more fully appreciate his efforts. As such he had a very different agenda from Chardri and the author of the anonymous version in composing his work.

Its limited circulation might have also been due in part to the likelihood that Gui wrote on commission. This possibility is supported by the fact that of the three redactors being considered in this study, he is the only one to have dedicated his work to a patron, Gilles de Marquais, and to his wife, Marie:

Mais (por Gillon, qui'st de Marcais,
Por emmioldrer lui et sa vie,
Por sa feme qu'a nom Marie,
Est ceste estoire commencie; (ll. 30-3)

²¹ Armstrong, 85.

Gui's dedication to Gilles and his wife is similar to the dedication in another of his works, the *Vengeance Alexandre*:

Ces vers ai commeciés por le conte et portrais
Qui tint cuite Clermons par deseure Biauvais.
Damedex li soinst joie, victore onor et pais!

En non al vaillant conte a cui Clermons apent,
Et por simon son frere, saciés seürement,
Sont cist ver ici fait qui ci sont en present.
Guis de Cambrai les fist en lor tesemognement
Qui por cest oeuvre ara guerdon bel et gent.
D'Alixandre viut dire et de son vengeance.

This work, a continuation of the *Roman d'Alexandre*, has little in common with its source material and has been dismissed by most scholars as a tale created out of whole cloth, with little merit. Gui's liberties with his source at this date foreshadow the freedom he will exercise in composing his version of *Barlaam et Josaphaz*, and given the similarities of the two dedications, there is little doubt that Gui is the author of both works. Armstrong proposes that the dedications are to persons of the same family, who live in the same general area, though this conclusion is not definitive.²² Paul Meyer has argued that these two works did have a common author, but, while Gui was well known and the town of Cambrai was important, the connection between them is only probable, not certain.²³

²² Armstrong, 51.

²³ Paul Meyer, *Alexandre le Grand dans la littérature française* (Paris: F. Viewez, 1886), 256-7.

More recently, Martin Gosman has addressed this question of authorship, noting, with Armstrong, that “rien n’est cependant sûr;”²⁴ however, if one examines the probable dates of composition for both pieces (before 1190 for the *Vengeance* and probably after 1214 for *Barlaam et Josaphaz*²⁵) the following hypothesis proposes itself: Gui composed his version of the Barlaam story approximately 20-30 years after the *Vengeance*, and it is incomplete owing to his death. If these dates are correct, and we assume that Gui wrote the *Vengeance* at the beginning of his literary career,²⁶ then Gui may be the author of both works. Confirmation of this hypothesis requires further linguistic and stylistic research.

Gui’s version of the *Barlaam et Josaphaz* story, unlike the versions of Chardri and the anonymous author, was itself revised, probably by a later scribe who saw in it a possibility to advance his own agenda. In his hands, Gui’s original prologue was redistributed throughout the work²⁷ and four digressions – passages in which the second redactor attacks the clergy and the nobility – inserted into the thread of the story. As to the identity of this copyist, Armstrong posits an interesting theory,

²⁴ Martin Gosman, *La Légende d’Alexandre le Grand dans la littérature française du 12^e siècle*, (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997), 127.

²⁵ A later date than that implied by Meyer for the composition of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* is particularly attractive and well supported. See Armstrong, 33-46. However, not all scholars agree. Bernard Gicquel, in his article “Chronologie et composition du *Balaham et Josaphas* de Gui de Cambrai,” *Romania* 107 (1986), 113-23, contests Armstrong’s conclusions and argues for a date falling during the last decade of the twelfth century.

²⁶ This possibility does deserve consideration. The *Roman d’Alexandre* was a known work (albeit unfinished), and as such might naturally attract new writers eager to make a place for themselves.

²⁷ For a probable reconstruction of Gui’s original prologue, see Armstrong, 26-7.

specifically that this scribe was a Cistercian, possibly from the monastery of Vaucelles, near the Cambrésis. He cites as evidence lines 12984-86:

Nes en l'ordene de Clerevaus
Ne trovroit on ja mais .i. moigne
Ke voir disans fust sans mençoigne.

The digressions result perhaps from the scribe's devotion to Saint Bernard of Clairvaux and the harsh monastic rules he established. This scribe saw the Cistercians of his day as weak, disregarding the rules he himself held dear, and he took the opportunity of copying the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* as a means to attack them.

These digressions pose several very interesting questions. If Gui wrote his version of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* on the commission of Gilles de Marquis, why would a scribe attack the very public for which it was intended? Further, given that Gui had an aristocratic audience in mind when composing his work, why would a scribe choose to insert attacks on the monks and clergy? This is clearly a different writer than Gui de Cambrai, and the reasons for including these digressions will be examined in detail in Chapter 5.

Chapter Three The Texts

At its heart, the story of Barlaam and Josaphaz is hagiographical. It recounts the lives of two saints,¹ offers a model for the masses to follow, and attempts to instruct and edify its audience. In the hands of the anonymous redactor it retains all of these functions, and in other hands it becomes much more – a romance in the case of Chardri, or an epic or romance in the case of Gui de Cambrai. Both Gui and Chardri's aim in translating this story goes beyond the mere instruction of the faithful; they also aim to entertain. Both Gui and Chardri's unique interpretation of the source material creates in effect a story that can be classified into not one, but three different genres. This multi-genre nature separates the story of Barlaam and Josaphaz from other saint's lives and is the subject of this chapter.

The Introductions as an Indicator of Genre

The modern reader of the medieval French verse versions of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* need look no further than the opening of the three respective versions in order to gain a clear indication of the genre to which each belongs. The fact that they all are composed in octosyllabic couplets indicates that the redactors intended their work to be received aurally, either performed by a *jongleur* or read from a book.²

¹ The saints Barlaam and Josaphaz are now viewed as inauthentic by the Catholic Church. The saints in this tale should not be confused with other saints of the same names.

² Evelyn B. Vitz notes in her article "Rethinking Old French Literature: The Orality of the Octosyllabic Couplet" *Romanic Review* LVXXII 4 (1986) 308-10: "[T]here is very good reason to believe that the octo is a *pre-literary* form [and that it] imposed itself in most narrative genres, and indeed in almost every sort of discourse, both in Norman England and in France."

Verses such as the following indicate the act of listening/hearing: “Ki vout a nul bien aentendre / Par essample poet aprendre” (Chardri, ll. 1-2); “Dont bon essample puissent prendre / Cil qui a bien volent entendre” (Anonyme, ll. 39-40); and “Oïr poés bien et entendre / Que’l ciel devra à la fin prendre” (Gui, ll. 35-6). This story is one to be performed, read aloud and not quietly in contemplation.

With several different genres using the octosyllabic form, it is also necessary to examine the content of these introductions to arrive at an indication of which genre should actually be assigned to the work. In the anonymous version the redactor explicitly states that he is writing about Barlaam and Josaphaz (l. 41) and the state of affairs for those choosing the life of the holy hermits:

En estoient li grant convent
De sis vint moines o de cent:
Lor cors, o l’ues d’obedience
Sozmemoient en patience.
Li autre, par les lieux sauvages,
Se metoient es ermitages
Ou n’avoient tote lor vie
D’ome solaz ne compaignie
Eins ert lor conversations
Entre loppars, entre lions.
Erbes magioient e racines
Qu’il trovoient por le gastines
E sofroient, sans couverture,
La nuit, le gel e la freidure
E, sans ombre, la grant ardor
Avoient de solail le jor (ll. 71-86)

This elaboration, emphasizing as it does the hardships of the hermits, demonstrates to the audience that Josaphaz was willing to lead the life of an ascetic in order to better serve God. Furthermore, this embellishment represents a slight departure from the Latin source material, where one reads only that the monks took to the desert, forsaking everything in search of a divine dispensation. By providing details such as

surviving among the lions and leopards, eating herbs and roots, and enduring darkness and the cold, the redactor paints a vivid picture of the hardships the holy men were willing to endure in order to be closer to God. This emphasis on the outer versus the inner, or the physical versus the spiritual, will remain a characteristic of this saint's tale.

Chardri's introduction, though making mention of "La dreite veie de salu" (l. 3), tells the audience that people will learn more from a good tale than from the holy writings of St. Augustine and St. Gregory (ll. 5-7). Probably thinking of the romances of Chrétien de Troyes (from which Chardri borrowed certain ideas and in some cases whole verses)³, Chardri knows that his labor will not be in vain (l. 12), for he has seen the effect of a good tale many times before. Chardri here shows an indebtedness to the introduction in Chrétien's *Le Conte del Graal*, where Chrétien uses the Biblical story of the sower (Matthew 13: 3-23, Mark 4: 3-20, Luke 8: 5-15) to clarify the relationship between the poet and his audience:

Qui petit seme petit quialt,
et qui auques recoillir vialt,
an tel leu sa semance espande
que fruit a cent doubles li rande;
car an terre qui rien ne vaut
bone semance i seche et faut.
Crestiens seme et fet semence
d'un romans que il ancomance
et si le seme an si bon leu
qu'il ne puet estre sanz grant preu,
qu'il le fet por le plus prodome
qui soit an l'empire de Rome... (ll. 1-12)⁴

It is likely that Chardri knew of Chrétien's work, for he writes:

³ The similarities between Chardri's and Chrétien's verses will be discussed below.

⁴ Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Contes del Graal*, Félix Lecoy, ed. (Paris: Champion, 1990).

Si l'un n'en vout nul plet tenir
Un autre ert par aventure
Ki mut i mettra sa cure;
Tant l'amera par druerie
K'il amendra sa sote vie. (ll. 18-22)

The resemblance between the two passages is subtle.⁵ Chrétien's allusion to the parable of the sower and to sowing and reaping (II Corinthians 9: 6) suggests his conviction that some in his audience will understand the tale he is about to relate, while others will fail to do so (ll. 1-2). Chrétien affirms however that this tale will fall on fertile ground, and that it cannot fail to be bountiful, for he has composed this work for the most worthy man in the Roman Empire, Count Philip of Flanders. Chardri's introductory verses, moreover, while not for a single patron whose acceptance is assured, affirm the same idea: "If one man does not wish to learn from it, then there will be another, who will pay attention to it; and he will like it so much that he will change his foolish life."⁶ Both writers equate their audience with the different soils of the parable and hope that their tales will fall on fertile ground.

Clearly Chardri sought to emulate Chrétien's work and treated his version of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* as a romance modeled after an author he clearly admired. Thus in accordance with his desire to emulate Chrétien's romances, Chardri forgoes much of the doctrinal teaching as well as the parables in order to concentrate on the narrative of the main story.

Mindful that the source material concerned the story of a saint, Chardri does include a short reminder of how God created the world and all that is in it:

⁵ For more on Chrétien's prologue, see Keith Busby, *Perceval (Le Conte du Graal)* (London: Grant & Cutler Ltd., 1999) 12-13.

⁶ Rutledge 265.

Quant Deu, ki fist tut le munde
E cel e terre a la runde,
E tutes les choses ki i sunt
En fu, en eir, en mer parfunt, (ll. 25-8)

He goes on to tell the audience how the Christian faith spread throughout the lands (ll. 58-78). This elaboration continues the theme found in the parable of the sower, laying the foundation for the tale that he is about to tell. The Christian faith arrives in far off India where it finds fruitful soil in the young prince Josaphaz.

The introduction in Gui's version presents the modern reader with certain problems. As Gui's work was the only rendition of the three verse versions to undergo extensive revision,⁷ his introduction appears to have been broken down and redistributed throughout the work by a later copyist. Armstrong has attempted to reconstruct Gui's probable introduction by analyzing the text, and searching out the verses that, in his opinion, would recreate what Gui had originally written. This effort, while plausible, has not met with wide acceptance by other scholars.⁸ Nonetheless, the introduction that has come down to us still provides an indication of the type of work that Gui was attempting to achieve.

Gui leads one to think that he is starting to write a romance, with the joy that is born out of the sorrows of the hero: "De grant dolor naist molt grans joie / Bonne est la vie dolereuse" (ll. 6-7). Romance heroes, unlike those of the epic whose actions are almost by definition heroic, only become a hero after undergoing a string of adventures, often sorrowful either to themselves or their friends and loved ones. It is the successful resolution of these adventures that leads to glory and new identification

⁷ See Chapter 5.

⁸ See Appendix D for a further discussion of the introduction in Gui's work.

as a hero. However, Gui immediately discards this perception by writing:

Petit vaut hui l'umainne gloire.
L'umaine gloire est decevable.
Mais cil qui servent au diable,
N'entendent pas à Deu servir. (ll. 10-13)

Calling into question human glory, rejecting it as the work of the devil, Gui states that all those who engage in such pursuits are disappointed in their efforts (l. 17). At this point the readers do not know, unless they have heard about the tale beforehand, whether they will be treated to a saint's life or a romance.

Gui's introduction, as contained in the surviving manuscripts, states that he does not want to go into a long prologue, for his intended audience is known, but would rather begin the tale: "Ne vuel pas long prologue faire, / Ains vuel à l'estoire venir" (ll. 18-19). He describes Josaphaz's father, king Avenir, in unflattering terms, and then almost as an afterthought, contrasts him with Gilles and Marie de Marcais, the patrons who had commissioned this tale (ll. 30-34). After this brief aside he suddenly recommences with his tale.

This somewhat abrupt beginning is alleviated in the hypothetical reconstruction proposed by Armstrong, where the dedication is collected in one place. In this version, the count is portrayed as a knight with no peer, loyal to his lord. The count's standing will furthermore be enhanced through his hearing of the tale that Gui is about to tell. This reconstruction puts the story closer to those found in romance, similar to the comparison with the introduction found in Chrétien's *Le conte du graal* cited above. Although it appears that Gui will be treating the story of Barlaam and Josaphaz as a romance, he goes farther still and incorporates elements of the epic into his work, as will be discussed below.

These introductions reveal much about the kind of work each redactor strove to achieve in the retelling of this tale. The version by the anonymous author, as with the Latin version, seeks to exhort its listeners to imitate the two saints, Barlaam and Josaphaz, focusing on the spiritual. It is clearly a hagiographical work. Chardri's version seeks to provide a memorable story, influenced by and modeled on the work of Chétien de Troyes. Gui's version, if we accept the reconstructed introduction, is more closely aligned with the contemporaneous romance, though as his story progresses it also incorporates elements of the epic.

Barlaam et Josaphaz as a Hagiographical Work

Utilizing the template proposed by Régis Boyer as a guide, one finds that the story of Barlaam and Josaphaz is hagiographical, meeting the criteria indicative of a saint's life.⁹ Chardri, alone of the three redactors, appears to understand that it is Josaphaz who is the central character of the story, and states before his introduction: "Ici cumence la vie de Seint Josaphaz." His tale is the story of Josaphaz, not Barlaam, and the stages of this figure's life conform to those commonly seen in other saint's lives.

In the Latin original and all three old French verse versions, Josaphaz's origins are typical for a saint's life. He comes from a noble family (his father is a king), and while across the corpus of medieval saints' lives the saint's family is generally good, it can range over a wide spectrum in terms of human qualities. In the case of Josaphaz, his father, Avenir, is described as "un mout poesteiz seignor...De

⁹ See Chapter 1, p. 10.

grant pris e de grant renom, / Bien fait de cors, fier de corage, / De bon semblant, de bel aage” (Anonymous, ll. 100-4); with the emphasis on Avenir’s outward appearance. By contrast, both Chardri and Gui also stress his worldly qualities, and specifically his wealth: “Un rei ki fu de mut grant sens...Riche e puissant si out assez. / Joie terrienne out a plenté, / Trestut a sa volenté” (Chardri ll. 79-83); “Molt estoit renommés par tout. / Cil de son regne estoient tout...Riches d’avoir, riches d’amis / Riches d’ounour...” (Gui, ll. 85-91). However, like the Saracens in *La Chanson de Roland*, he knew nothing of the Christian faith, living the life of a pagan and doing many deeds considered evil from this view: “De nostre foi ne savoit rien / Ainz menoit vie de païen” (Anonymous, ll. 117-18); “Fors tant ke ne sout ke Deu fu” (Chardri, l. 85); “Avoit en Ynde .i. malvais roi” (Gui, l. 74). What appears to be a typical saint’s family is thus set up as an antagonistic force for the saint. Rather than provide him with support and encouragement, Josaphaz’s family will try to thwart all that he tries to do and become.

By portraying Josaphaz’s family, specifically his father, king Avenir, as opposing the faith that Josaphaz will follow, the story also shows that outer beauty, in one who is not committed to the service of God, can often hide an inner evil.¹⁰

¹⁰ See the parable of the four coffins in chapter 4. Also note the description of Lucifer in Ezekiel 28: 15-17: “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou has sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.” Though physically beautiful, he was corrupted inside. The same can be said of Avenir, the similarities of the descriptions indicating that the battle to take place between father and son will be spiritual.

Furthermore, Avenir's vehement opposition to his son lays the foundation for the physical father to become the spiritual son by the end of the tale. A prisoner to what the flesh has to offer, he will succumb to what the spirit can provide.

As the medieval saint's life is often described as mirroring the Saviour, Josaphaz's birth is similar to that of Christ in that it has been ordained and blessed by God:

La roïne, si com Deu plot,
Qui grosse estoit, un ble fiz ot.
Deus sot bien quelz il devoit estre
Car de tel biauté le fist naistre (Anonymous, ll. 417-20)

Every child is born for a purpose and Josaphaz's birth is no exception. Chardri, noting that "Truver ne pout l'em sun per" (l. 170) sets Josaphaz apart from other men, as none are his equal; for who could equal one specially ordained by God? Even so, Gui stresses the potential conflict between father and son, rendering their struggle human, with all that it entails. Writing "Tes fils ki est nés de ta femme" (l. 42) the implication that father will turn against his own flesh and blood and establishing a future family power struggle, makes the story more acceptable to Gui's intended audience. The tension between father and son is obviously further heightened when Avenir declares war on Josaphaz. Gui's version is thus the only one of the three versions in verse in which Josaphaz will accomplish through force of arms what is achieved through spiritual means in the others.

The celebration of Josaphaz's birth and the subsequent prediction by the astronomers, another staple of saint's lives, is modeled after the visit by the Magi to

the newborn Christ,¹¹ the Annunciation made to Mary before the birth,¹² and the collected Old Testament prophecies concerning the birth of Christ.¹³ This episode also affords the three redactors the opportunity to define further the direction they wish to take the story.

Whereas the Christ is born in humble surroundings, and praise is given to God; after the birth of Josaphaz, Avenir hosts a great feast to give thanks to his gods: “E a deus rendre le service” (Anonymous l. 446); “E por ses deus graces rendre;” (Chardri l. 179); “A tous ses dex grases en rent” (Gui l. 389). The emphasis on “gods” in the plural in Chardri and Gui’s versions is important in that it underscores to the audience Avenir’s paganism. The pagan/Christian conflict is common to the saint’s life, and provides a focal point in the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz*.¹⁴ Gui in particular seizes upon this conflict to further prepare Avenir as the quintessential adversary to his son, writing:

Fols est li rois et plains d’errour;
Ne connut pas son creatour
A cui il deüst merchi rendre.
Li dyables en lui engendre
La volenté de mescreanche.
De son fil et de sa naissanche.
Velt mener joie et faire feste.
Maint tor, maint buef, mainte autre beste
A fait li rois sacrefier
Por ses dex reconcilier. (ll. 392-400)

¹¹ Matthew 2:2-11.

¹² Luke 1:26-37.

¹³ Prophecy/Fulfillment: Michah 5: 2/Matthew 2: 1-6, Luke 2: 1-20; Isaiah 7: 14/Matthew 1: 18-25, Luke 1: 26-38; Deuteronomy 18: 15, 18, 19, John 7: 40 etc.

¹⁴ The pagan/Christian conflict is also an element in some *chansons de geste*. However, many *chansons de geste* focus on earthly, family disputes with the religious conflict serving a secondary function.

Images of the Old Testament sacrifices by the pagan enemies of Israel may not have been far from his mind: one thinks of the contest between Elijah and the priests of Baal as recounted in I Kings 18: 16–40. In this passage the gods did not answer the priests' prayers and were subsequently destroyed by the God of Israel. This defeat is a foreshadowing of the defeat to come to Avenir and his pagan priests as they fail to ensure that Josaphaz follows their pagan ways.¹⁵ In the Anonymous version, it is not only just to false gods that Avenir makes obeisance, but also to devils: “Al sacrifice del diable” (l. 454); “Por les diables saolier” (l. 464). Such depictions serve to paint Avenir in a most unfavorable light, further highlighting the opposition between father and son.

The astronomers, as counterfeit prophets, prophesy the young prince's future. The source material, as well as the Anonymous author and Gui give their number as being fifty-five, though I have been unable to determine the significance of this number. The anonymous version describes their preparations in detail, contrasting them with the simple prayers for guidance offered by the Christians:

A lor persone, a lor aage
 Ert bien semblant qu'il fussent sage
 Si erent il de la science
 D'astronomie, d'ingramance.
 ...
 Cil ont lor livres mout cerchiez
 E maint fuelz ont recierchiez,
 E as estoiles regardé. (ll. 477-80, 487-89)

Using the wisdom of Man, they try in vain to determine the will of God for the child; and as one they tell their king what he wants to hear:

¹⁵ Cf. Nachor, as the false Barlaam, successfully defends Christianity; Josaphaz successfully avoids the temptation of the possessed princess, and, in Gui's work, the

**“Sire,” font il “ensi nos semble:
tant com home puet apercevoir,
Ne de proece ne d’avoir
Ne fu, bien a passé mil anz,
En cest país, rois si pussanz,
Ne plus cortois ne miaus senez
Que cest enfez que cos avez.”** (ll. 492-98)

This scene is almost the same as that described in Gui’s version. Both redactors follow their source closely at this point, with the effect of advancing the story on to the next episode. Only Chardri parcels the pagans’ prophecy among four representatives, each recounting a separate prediction, that he will be strong and powerful, valiant... (ll. 193-202). This division is his own invention and it contributes to the ambiance of the feast, with each of the astronomers proposing his prophecy over those of his colleagues.

If the feast episode were to end here it would necessitate the creation of a conversion episode, possibly similar to that of Saul on the road to Tarsus.¹⁶ At this point in the narrative, the young prince is destined to become a pagan king, yet the story is about a saint and therefore a scene detailing his conversion will need to be, and is inserted at a future point. However, there is one astronomer who does not go along with his colleagues and announces to the king what he truly believes will happen to his son. In the anonymous version this is the chief astronomer, described as “Un en i ot qui sembloit estre / Sor toz autres sires et mestre” (ll. 499-500), whereas Chardri applies to this astronomer the attributes of a medieval sage:

**Quant un veil hume se leva.
La barbe out blanche cume flur,
Si rega[r]da tut entur,**

victory of Josaphaz over his father’s army.

¹⁶ Acts 9: 2-10.

De regardure sulement
Fist tuz teisir cummunement;
Sa porture e sun bel age
Les fist teisir, mut semblout sage. (ll. 206-12)

This description harkens back to those of Charlemagne in *La Chanson de Roland*:

“Blanche ad la barbe e tut flurit le chef, / Gent ad le cors e le cuntendant fier,” (ll. 117-18), among others). He is the respected elder, above the politics of the court, who can freely advise without fear of repercussion:

Cil dist: “Sire, n’en pensez pas;
Jo vus dirrai ignelepas
De ceo ke vei e ceo k’en sai,
De ren ne vus mentirai,
L’enfant ke vus ici veez
Mut hautement ert curunez
D’autre reaume ke de cestu;
Si me su ben aparceu
Crestien ert trestut sanz faille
Ne mentira pas ma devinaille.
Le reaume dunt il ert sire
Vaudra meuz ke nul empire.
Baptizez ert a chef de tur,
Ne poet avoir autre retur.” (ll. 213-26)

His tone is calm and authoritative, and after making his pronouncement he falls silent (l. 227), leaving the king to ponder this new development.

A common element in the saint’s life, the prophetic wise ones at the birth of the saint, often provides the impetus for the story to advance in a new direction. In the case of Josaphaz, it allows the tension to build as it clearly sets father against son and affords Avenir the opportunity to try to avoid the inevitable, as the story continues into the next two stages of the hagiographic template set forth by Boyer, the childhood and education of the saint.

As a child Josapahz does not exhibit any serious defects that transformed into

virtues over the course of the story; rather, he becomes a virtuous child, who instinctively acts in accordance with God's will despite the efforts of his father. Hearing how his son is destined to become a Christian, Avenir attempts to set him up as an anti-hermit: instead of an ascetic life of denial, Avenir has constructed a tower, far from town and filled with every kind of luxury (Anonymous, ll. 537-68; Chardri, ll. 233-62; Gui, 439-98). Josaphaz is surrounded by servants who are instructed not to let him learn of any of the ills that befall mankind, such as old age, poverty, and death. And for a time the plan appears to work, with Josaphaz, like the Christ, growing in wisdom and stature and favor with God and Man.¹⁷ The anonymous version takes pains to describe his growth during these years, noting his appearance and keen mind, establishing him as an intellectual whose thirst for knowledge would lead to him to God (ll. 721-46), and elaborating his source material to a certain extent in order to highlight qualities that would appeal to the courtly audience of his day, such as language ability, indicating a learned individual: "Il ot apris diverz langages / De Persant, d'Arabiz, de Greus / E l'escriture des Caudeus." (ll. 738-40).

Wealth is meaningless, however, if one is hollow inside, and as the audience might expect, Josaphaz questions his situation, finally asking his father if he can leave his enclosure and see the world (Anonymous, ll. 833-64, Chardri, 443-588; Gui, ll. 810-912). Realizing that Josaphaz must be exposed to the world eventually, Avenir relents and allows him to leave the tower, although only with companions who are instructed to keep him from seeing the evils of Mankind. Predictably they fail, and Josaphaz's eyes are opened and he sees everything that Avenir had hoped to keep

¹⁷ Luke 2: 52.

from him. This revelation prepares Josaphaz to receive the instruction that will be offered to him by Barlaam, a holy hermit who is called by God to lead Josaphaz to the Christian faith. The archetypal wise man, Barlaam instructs Josaphaz in the doctrines of the Church¹⁸ and after the seed has taken root leaves him to apply them for himself.

This theme is not uncommon to the saint's life, and provides the author with another opportunity to demonstrate how the saint is like Christ. With the departure of Barlaam, the young Christian Josaphaz is left to his own devices to survive in his father's pagan world. He must take the lessons that Barlaam had taught and apply them to his situation. Whereas Christ was tempted in the desert,¹⁹ Josaphaz will be tempted in his palace by a possessed princess and by the power that Avenir bequeaths to him when he gives over to his rule half in the kingdom in the belief that a Christian king will make a poor ruler. By successfully applying the lessons learned from Barlaam, Josaphaz will overcome these temptations and prosper. His success, thanks to this faithful following of the word of God will, in turn, lead Avenir and the rest of the kingdom to accept the Christian faith. It is upon the successful application of the lessons taught by Barlaam that Josaphaz is finally allowed to depart into the desert to serve his God. After many years of service, Josaphaz is permitted to enter Heaven, wherein he then crowns his father in their new spiritual realm. His body is taken back to the city and many miracles are attested to its holiness.

¹⁸ The instruction of Barlaam is treated separately in Chapter 4, as it is important enough to warrant its own chapter. While some of the instruction is based on biblical parables of Christ, others are based on Eastern stories. *Barlaam et Josaphaz* thus marks the first time that one faith's teachings are used to explain/defend another faith's beliefs.

¹⁹ Matthew 4: 1-11, Luke 4: 1-13.

The story of Barlaam and Josaphaz bears several characteristics of the saint's life: a noble birth, prophecies of becoming a Christian, a special childhood and subsequent education that prepares the saint for overcoming inevitable trials and tribulations, the successful defense of the faith against all opposition, and the service of God. All these elements mark this tale as belonging, at least in part, to the genre modern scholars call the saint's life.

Barlaam et Josaphaz as a Romance Work

As mentioned briefly above, the saint's life shares many qualities with romance: the mystic of the hero's birth; his youth of innocence; a quest; a period of contemplation or easement into a new life.²⁰ While the structure is similar, it is the details of presentation that distinguish the two. Of the three versions in verse of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* no work better fits the template of romance than that of Chardri, and it is to that genre to which his work can be said to most aptly to belong.

Chardri's version of the tale leaves out almost entirely the parables and instructive discourses in order not to interrupt the flow of the narrative.²¹ Knowing that people often prefer a good story to a moralizing one, he wants to tell a tale that they will remember and find inspirational in and of itself.

²⁰ See above pp. 13f.

²¹ Chardri omits the story of the martyrdom of the two monks, Josaphaz's question of the pagan sages, a long discourse by an abbot on relics, while he shortens the debate between Nachor and the pagan priests.

Chardri keeps the episodic structure of the source material, thus making his version more like a romance. With the hero advancing from one stage to the next, yet each episode is considerably condensed, giving just enough information to convey the central thought before moving on to the next episode. In addition, no one character dominates a given episode. Rather, each episode has at least a rudimentary dialogue with an exchange of ideas or points of view. Such dialogue is designed not to convey a detailed exposition of Church doctrine, but is rather intended to advance the story. In fact, all the elements included in the tale are there for one purpose, to advance the story.

The question of fatherhood is one of the salient points of this saint's life. While Avenir is Josaphaz's physical father, it is Barlaam who will be his true, spiritual father, providing him with the proper instruction necessary to do God's will. Thus the idea of fatherhood becomes ambiguous, as it does again when Josaphaz realizes that he is to be, in turn, the spiritual father to Avenir, as foretold first by Barlaam and then in a vision:

Si vus ne sauverez tun pere e tel,
Si ert merveilles, par ma fei,
K'il ert vostre pere charnel
E vus le soen spirituel. (ll. 835-38)

E dient ke l'autre li enveit
Ke sun pere curuné en seit,
Ke par lui li seit dunee,
Ke par lui fu sa aime sauvee. (ll. 2809-12)

The concept of parentage is a staple of romance, with one of the most famous examples being that of Galahad and Lancelot. Galahad is the pure, spiritual son who accomplishes that which his father was unable to achieve due to his transgressions.

The effect created by Chardri is thus one of a son maturing spiritually beyond his father and in turn reaching out to save him.

As mentioned in the previous section,²² the true prophecy regarding Josaphaz's birth is given by the chief astronomer whose countenance is not unlike that recorded for Charlemagne, underscoring Chrétien's influence upon Chardri. Announcing that Josaphaz will become a Christian, he is in effect telling the audience the ending of the story. The question now becomes not if Josaphaz will become a Christian, but when and how will he do so, given his father's attempts to keep him his destiny from him.

Josaphaz's youth in the tower is also not unlike the life of Chrétien's Perceval. Like Avenir, who locked away his son to keep him ignorant of worldly ills, Perceval's mother also raised her son far from court and exposure to the knights:

Biax dolz filz, de chevalerie
vos cuidoie si bien garder
que ja n'an oïssiez parler
ne que ja nul n'an veïssiez! (*Perceval*, ll. 406-9)

Josaphaz's desire to learn more about the world outside thus parallels that of Perceval's hope to learn more about becoming a knight. Yet where Perceval left his mother in order to learn more about knighthood and Arthur's court, Josaphaz does not seek out Barlaam. Rather, upon learning of the ills of the world Josaphaz enters a state of contemplation "as befits a Christian ascetic."²³ Contemplating what he has seen, Josaphaz is at the point of despair crying out:

... "Keke l'en die,
Mut est amere ceste vie!

²² See above, p. 49.

²³ Rutledge 16.

**Quant cuvent a tuz murir,
Nul ne poet par el partir.”**

(ll. 651-54)

With his mind psychologically at its lowest point, with its internal barriers broken down, Josaphaz is ready to receive Barlaam and the instruction he brings. In keeping with his desire to keep the story uppermost in the mind of his audience, Chardri reduces Barlaam’s teaching to a mere 178 lines (ll. 702-880).²⁴ With his new-found Christian faith Josaphaz is thus ready to face the coming trials and temptations that will manifest themselves in the episodes of Nachor and his false teaching and in the sorcery of the devils whom Teodas summons to possess the young princess sent to tempt the young prince.

Chardri’s treatment of the debate between Nachor and Avenir’s priests is slightly more personable than that found in his source material, further characterizing his work more properly as a romance. Nachor sets out to dupe the young Josaphaz by impersonating his trusted mentor, Barlaam. But thanks to the discernment provided Josaphaz from the teaching of the true Barlaam, Nachor is found out and confronted with his mendacity. Knowing that he can no longer deceive Josaphaz, Nachor agrees to defend the Christian faith to the best of his abilities in the coming debate with Avenir’s pagan priests. While both Gui and the anonymous redactor devote several hundred verse to this debate, Chardri pares it down to economical 25 lines (ll. 1527-

²⁴ These are the lines as given in Sonet. However, the actual instruction of Barlaam occurs in lines 710-44, 792-851.

42).²⁵ Despite its brevity, Chardri includes an insight in its aftermath that is not found in the other versions, a remark on Nachor's eyes: "Des oilz suvent li cluina sus / K'il suffrit k'il fut conclus" (ll. 1557-58). This detail is one that might typically be found in a romance, in which the author goes on at length to describe his characters, with details about the eyes providing a window into the character's soul. Details such as this mark the work as a romance.

Adhering to his decision to forgo the parables and Church doctrines Chardri also omits the parable on the evils of women told by Theodas to Avenir in an effort to convince him that Josaphaz can be tempted through the flesh to leave the Christian faith. Instead, he prefers to simply present the resulting episode. With the "malignus spiritus" of the source material personified by "Amur" (l. 1808), Chardri elevates the conflict from a temptation of the flesh to a more spiritual plane. By defeating the spirit he defeats the women and proves himself ready to take on the mantle of a holy man, and bring about the salvation of his father.

In Chardri's version of *La vie de seint Josaphaz*, the progression of the protagonist is not unlike that of the hero of the romances. From his unusual birth and childhood, through his specialized education, to his overcoming trials of the flesh and the spirit the parallels are striking. Influenced by the works of Chrétien de Troyes, Chardri has set out to create a romance that not only entertains, but also edifies.

²⁵ Numbers as given in Sonet. I would contend that the debate episode goes from 1515-1610.

Barlaam et Josaphaz as a Romance or Epic Work

Like the romance, the epic hero also shares certain qualities with the protagonist of the saint's life.²⁶ Beyond the similarities of form found in the earliest *vitae*, there is also in *Barlaam et Josaphaz* a similar of the hero, and in this regard the version of Gui de Cambrai successfully melds the two genres. Working from his Latin source material, Gui incorporates elements of the *chansons de geste*, including a battle scene where Josaphaz achieves through force of arms that which is achieved through peaceful means in the other two versions. Gui, writing on commission for a courtly audience, probably decided on these narrative elements as the ones that would enjoy the most favorable reception.

In addition to the battle scene, other epic elements that are present in Gui's work are his descriptions of the principle characters; the splitting of the hero into types;²⁷ and the individual (intellectual) contest (debate) between Nachor and the pagan priests. Gui's work also contains features – the debate of the body and soul, and several digressions, for example – not found in the other verse versions. These special features will be treated in Chapter 5.

Gui's description of the characters in the story presents a mix of the conventions used in romance and epic, namely providing details, physical and emotional, and using lists or repetitions of adjectives. For example, Avenir is described as follows:

El tans de la premiere foi
Avoit en Ynde .i. malvais roi.

²⁶ See above, p. 11f.

²⁷ While *Barlaam* and *Josaphaz* can be viewed as two parts of a whole in the two other verse versions, it is in Gui's version that this difference is most pronounced.

Poi prisoit Diu et sa poissanche,
 Car il cuidoit que sa sciënche
 Et ses avoires venist d'autrui
 Et abondast que de chelui
 Ki tout cria et ki tout donne.
 Rois Avenir en sa couronne
 Se delite molt et opose,
 Car il cuide que nule chose
 Ne li puist nuire ne retraire
 Nes .i. vouloir de son affaire.
 Molt estoit renommés par tout.
 Cil de son regne estoient tout
 Apparillié à son servise,
 Mais c'estoit contre Saint Eglise
 Tous sormontoit ses anemis:
 Riches d'avoir, riches d'amis
 Riches d'ounour, povres de sens.
 ...
 Wide estoit l'ame et plains li cors.
 Li cors ert plains de son delit
 Et l'ame avoit molt crüel lit.
 En cil delit tempest avoit,
 Car li delis apeticoit
 De chou que l'ame ert en pechié,
 Dont li cors ert en grant daintié.

(73-108)

This description of Avenir, similar to descriptions found in the romance and epic, is important in that it establishes Avenir as the future opponent of Josaphaz. He is defined by his worth, yet this cannot comfort him as his soul is empty. He is a physical ruler with no depth, he is a *type*.

As Avenir is a type, he must be opposed by another type, and in this regard Barlaam and Josaphaz receive similar treatment. Both are types, not unlike Roland and Oliver in *La Chanson de Roland*. Just as there can be no Roland without his Oliver, Josaphaz cannot exist without his Barlaam. Barlaam is the thinker while Josaphaz is the doer. The two are intricately linked and their behavior is “not literal

but figural.”²⁸ Barlaam is not tempted, presumably because he is already devoted to a life of poverty and service to God. Instead, he becomes the spiritual mentor to Josaphaz, functioning as his teacher (instructing Josaphaz about Church doctrine through parables), his priest (his ascetic life and service to God are held up as examples for Josaphaz to follow), and his saintly king (through the knowledge given to Josaphaz, Avenir, the pagan king is converted²⁹). The Barlaam-Josaphaz pair will defeat in turn Nachor, the false teacher, Teodas, the evil priest, and Avenir, the pagan king.

One of the signature characteristics of the *chanson de geste* is the epic battle scene, where the heroes defeat their adversaries in series of set battles using formulaic expressions and structural patterns that facilitate the repetition of the battle with slight variations. Gui makes use of this device twice in his version of *Barlaam et Josaphaz*. The first episode tells of Nachor, discovered as the false Barlaam by Josaphaz and forced to defend the Christian faith against Avenir’s pagan priests (ll. 6379-7888); the second takes place in the climatic battle scene at the end of the piece (ll. 9801-11174). Having conquered the spiritual battle in the debate, the Barlaam half of the Barlaam-Josaphaz character is completed. Gui thus needs to include a physical battle scene in order to make Josaphaz complete as well. It is only when these two halves have completed their tasks can the now unified Barlaam-Josaphaz fully begin his service to God. Gui’s treatment of these scenes will be treated in further detail in chapter 5.

²⁸ Rutledge p. 13.

²⁹ Avenir’s kingship is based on worldly wealth, Barlaam’s is based on the spiritual. By sharing his wisdom with Josaphaz, the son is able to conquer the father and bring about a change in his value system. Thus Barlaam defeats Avenir through Josaphaz, one king defeating another.

These epic influences, and the further embellishments that he provides, help to prove that Gui was indeed writing for an aristocratic audience. Such an audience would likely provide a willing ear for his tale and possibly assure his fame as a writer.

While the basic story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* is hagiographical, in the hands of these talented writers it has expanded to cross genre lines, taking on the qualities of romance or epic as befit the intended audience. As such, *Barlaam et Josaphaz* is not one work but three, a fact which further contributed to its popularity.

Chapter Four The Parables

The Latin version of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* includes ten parables, most of which are of Eastern origin.¹ They represent perhaps the first instance in which one religion is used to defend the tenets of another, in this case Buddhism defending Christianity. The use of apologues for teaching of moral doctrine is not new, and indeed, it predates the introduction of Christianity, being a popular form of instruction in Eastern cultures. The first systematic use of apologues is found in the homelies “in Evangelia” of Gregory, sometime before 604 CE.² Yet it was not until the end of the twelfth or beginning of the thirteenth century, about the time of the composition of the French vernacular verse versions of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* that the exempla began to have been used in sermons.³ Their incorporation helped to satisfy the appetite of a people who were becoming accustomed to literature as entertainment and developing a love for tales.

Of the three French redactors whose work is the subject of this study, two – the anonymous redactor and Gui de Cambrai – follow their Latin source material with only slight changes, reflecting the type of work they had originally conceived. The anonymous version sought to instruct, using the parables to impart lessons that would help the audience better understand Church doctrine. Gui de Cambrai, while

¹ See Ernst Kuhn, “Barlaam und Joasaph: Eine bibliographisch-literargeschichtliche Studie,” *Verlag der königlichen Akademie* 20 (1893) 1-87, and Paul Devos, “Les origines du ‘Barlaam et Josaphaz’ Grec,” *Analecta Bollandiana* 75 (1957), 83-104.

² Jacques de Vitry, *The Exempla*, ed. Thomas Frederick Crane (London: David Nutt, 1890) xviii.

³ de Vitry, xix.

preserving the instructional value of the parables, also enhanced their entertainment value.

Alone among the three, Chardri chose to reduce or eliminate virtually all references to the parables in his version, summarizing their instruction in only 180 lines. This reduction of instructional material is in keeping with Chardri's treatment of the story itself as an exemplum. By restricting himself only to the thread of the story, Chardri hoped to present his audience with a tale that would be both entertaining and instructional in and of itself. For this reason, the present chapter will only concern itself with how the parables are treated in the anonymous version and that of Gui de Cambrai.

The parables – sometimes referred to as examples, or exemplam, – are “short narrative(s) used to illustrate a moral point.”⁴ In this role, they function as devices, and in the Greek and Latin versions serve to help the young prince Josaphaz to better understand the teachings of Barlaam. Both the anonymous author and Gui de Cambrai include the parables in their translations, but their treatment of these short narratives differs in accordance with their intended goals in translating this saint's life into the vernacular. The anonymous author tended to avoid elaboration, except in certain instances where he felt that it would benefit the audience. Gui de Cambrai, on the other hand, showed himself willing to amplify the parables and given the choice of entertaining versus instructing his audience, he tended to follow the guidance set forth by Horace that literature should be *dulce et utile*.

⁴ John D. Lyons, Exemplum: The Rhetoric of Example in Early Modern France and Italy (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1989), 9.

Appearances can be deceiving

The first three parables are all concerned with the distinction between appearance and reality, on both literal and figurative levels. While the literal level can serve as an instruction to the audience, it is the figurative level that carries the more important message inherent in the parable. This dual nature of the parables helped contribute to their popularity – many of the parables had a certain success outside of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* – and added to the staying power of this saint's tale.

The first parable, "The Trumpet of Death," and the second, "The Four Coffins," are often considered as one single parable divided into two episodes and are treated as such in the Latin version of the story,⁵ as well as in the collection of *contes* by Nicole Bozon and Jehan de Condé.⁶ Also included in the *Gesta Romanorum*, chapters 143 and 251, they are treated separately, with the tale of the four coffins serving as the conclusion for another tale. In the first parable, a king goes out with his nobles and comes upon two monks whose poor physical condition stands in stark contrast to that of the king. Nonetheless, the king treats them with honor, and is in turn criticized by his nobles and notably by his own brother. That night the king sends his herald to sound his horn at his brother's house, thus telling everyone that the unfortunate brother is to be put to death. To avoid this fate the brother dresses himself

⁵ Sonet 12.

⁶ Sonet 12.

in rags and humbles himself before the king. His actions thus mirror physically those of the king humbling himself before the monks. The brother sees the worldly authority of the king who, in turn, recognizes the spiritual authority of the monks. Seeing the humility of his brother, the king chides him for being critical and forgives him.

Both the anonymous author and Gui de Cambrai closely follow their source material, but they choose to emphasize different aspects of the tale. In keeping with his desire to instruct, the anonymous author gives only enough description of the two parties to highlight their differences: the king rides beautiful, fresh horses (ll. 1401-2) while the monks he encounters are pale and wan, their clothes dirty and ragged. Gui, on the other hand, spends more time detailing their differences, describing the king as follows:

Il fu uns rois molt glorieus,
Qui dras avoit molt precieus
Et chevaugoit molt richement
A tout roial aornement,
A molt grant gent, a molt grant joie. (1355-59)

Gui's vocabulary is directed clearly towards an aristocratic audience, one that would approve of how richly the king is attired. His description of the two monks is no less detailed. They are "Maigres, descaus, povres et nus; / Chascuns ert porvrement vestus" (ll. 1361-2). While Gui could have achieved the same effect with a simpler description, his elaboration beyond the minimum necessary underscores his intent to entertain. Gui further enhances the entertainment value through the use of dialogue. The anonymous redactor uses dialogue sparingly, amplifying it only when it will

enhance the value of the lesson. For example, in the text below, the anonymous author uses simple narration to advance the story without distracting from its lesson:

Le corneor fait apeler
E devant l'uis son frere aler.
Por corner ilueques l'envoie
Tant que tote la vile l'oie. (ll. 1450-54)

In comparison, Gui describes the same scene thusly:

Li rois manda son cornëor.
La buisine li fait baillier
Dont il soloit les mors nonchier.
“Va,” dist i rois, “corne, cornere,
Devant son huis la mort mon frere.
Par la buisine k'il ora,
Pora savoir que il morra.” (ll. 1390-96)

Gui's addition of dialogue dramatizes the scene and makes it more entertaining.

Gui and the anonymous author treat the reconciliation scene in slightly different terms as well, with Gui seeking to entertain and the anonymous author seeking to instruct. In just 19 lines (ll. 1419-48) the anonymous redactor has the king chastise and instruct (indicated by the word “sermon” in line 1464 and “Ensi l'estruit;...” in line 1483), then forgives his brother before telling how he will treat the other nobles who were also critical of his actions. Gui expands the discourse by almost half (ll. 1465-82), taking the basic instruction of the king and making it personal (note the increased use of the pronoun “je” or its variations) and decrying how his brother blamed him. For the courtly audience, whose appreciation of the importance of family ties within the noble class was probably familiar to Gui, this familiar exchange would have more relevance than a straightforward instruction of the source material.

Having thus informed his brother of his reasons for paying homage to the two monks, the king then turns his attentions to those nobles who were with him that day and who had also criticized his actions. The tale logically segues into the second parable, which begins with the king having four caskets prepared. The first two are very ornate on the outside, but the interiors are filled with garbage and decaying human remains. The second two are plain on the outside, yet the insides are filled with wondrous treasures. The king summons the other nobles before him and asks them to choose the better set of caskets. To a man they agree that they ornate caskets are better, and the king chastises them for seeing with their eyes and not their hearts. The king then orders the caskets opened, thereby proving his point and instructs his nobles in the errors of their ways.

In this parable the anonymous author tries his hand at slightly embellishing his work in order to enhance its instructional value. Instead of using generic terms such as “gems,” or “wealth” to describe the contents of the two ugly caskets, he states that the king has filled them with

...genmnes molt eslites,
Rubiz, jaconges, margarites
E esmeraudes molt vaillenz
E ongnemenz, soes flairenz. (ll. 1501-4)

Such an elaboration might be seen to reflect his interpretation of the joys that fill those who belong to Christ, regardless of their physical, earthly situation. Such joy is multifaceted, affecting every area of their life, and this is reflected in the variety of gems. Or the anonymous author might simply be allowing himself the opportunity to use a little creative license, there is no way to be certain.

By contrast, the ugly caskets in Gui's version are simply filled "de fin or" (l. 1456). While an elaboration of the treasures contained therein could arguably be more entertaining, Gui's choice not to do so has the effect of a joke being played on unwitting recipients. The nobles who criticized the king chose poorly and are held up for ridicule by their peers. This somewhat comical ending, and not the symbolic representation of the wealth of knowing God, is apparently what Gui was striving for and has succeeded in achieving.

The two authors likewise treat the edification of the critical nobles in different fashions. By allegorizing the beautiful caskets, the anonymous author describes the false façade of vicious nobles:

Car tes est biaux en mi la face
E bien vetuz de dras orins,
De siglatons e d'estorins,
Qui est dedans mal entechiez,
Plains de vices e de pechiez. (ll. 1528-32)

The allegory is then emphasized by the king when he states:

"Ensi vait," fait li rois, "de cels
Qui vestiment ont preciels
E dedans sunt plain de charoigne,
De cui puor chascun s'esloigne
Car les pechiez qui en eus sont
A Damedeu puis les font!" (ll. 1541-46)

This emphasis on the allegory is necessary for the anonymous author's purpose of edification. The juxtaposition of the interior wealth of the caskets with the exterior wealth of the nobles may have reminded the audience of Christ's condemnation of the Pharisees: "Woe to you Pharisees! For ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of

them” (Luke 11: 43–44).⁷ The nobles, unlike their king, would have preferred that the two monks pay homage to them, rather than seeing their king abase himself at the monks’ feet. Their outer glory hid moral faults that could only lead to problems in the kingdom later on. The chastisement of the nobles thus serves to teach that appearances can be deceiving, that hidden vice is harmful both to society and to one’s own salvation.

Gui’s treatment of the nobles is noticeably more intimate. After the nobles decide that the beautiful caskets are the more valuable, the king answers them “isnielement” (l. 1471), creating a sense of immediacy, a sense of a conversation to which Gui’s audience is made privy. While both versions chastise the nobles for seeing with the body’s eyes, Gui goes a step further, indirectly addressing his audience when he states “C’on tient souvent por vil tel homme / U il a plus de bien qu’en Romme” (ll. 1478-79). By comparing the two monks’ inner beauty to the wealth of Rome, once the most powerful city in the Western world, Gui gives his audience the impression that the monks have an almost limitless interior wealth that dwarfs that of the nobles. This comparison would not be lost upon aristocrats in the audience, who, like the nobles, are exhorted to learn from this lesson (ll. 1509-13).

The third parable of the fowler and the nightingale completes a trilogy in which the stories focus variously on family, society, and self. These three parables call into question the elements that an aristocratic audience would consider important for the smooth functioning of the court. The family unit of the king and his brother is

⁷ Numbers 19: 16 states that those who touch a grave are unclean. Just as the Pharisees made others unclean through their spiritual rottenness, the critical nobles ran the risk of corrupting others through their hypocrisy.

the most basic, for it is the foundation upon which the rest of the noble class is based. The social unit of the king and his nobles is questioned next, for it is essential to the welfare of the kingdom. Finally, in the third parable, the decisions and motivations of the individual are questioned, for in the end it is the decisions that one makes that determines the role to be played in society.

The parable of the fowler and the nightingale enjoyed considerable popularity during the Middle Ages. It “appeared in medieval manuscript collections that also included fabliaux, contes, and dits,”⁸ giving rise to many questions concerning its genre.⁹ Besides the version of the tale found in the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz*, this parable can be found, in varying lengths, in the *Disciplina Clericalis*, the *Chastoiement*, *Trois Savoirs*, and *Donnei des Amants*.¹⁰

In contrast to the first two parables where the emphasis is on the actions taken by the king’s brother and the nobles and how these actions would be interpreted by society, this parable’s real meaning is found in the precepts of the bird. In this tale, a fowler captures a small bird that ransoms itself by telling him three wise sayings: Never try to attain the unattainable, never regret what is gone and past, and never believe the unbelievable. Upon its release the bird wants to test how well the fowler grasped these precepts. It flies to a tree and taunts him, claiming to have in its belly a pearl the size of an ostrich egg. The fowler tries to recapture the bird, who then explains the precepts that the fowler so quickly forgot. The optimism of the first two

⁸ Lenora D. Wolfgang, *Le Lai de l’Oiselet An Old French Poem of the Thirteenth Century*, (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1990), 20.

⁹ Given that discussion of the genre of this tale is beyond the scope of the current study; readers are referred to the work of Lenora D. Wolfgang, cited above.

¹⁰ Wolfgang 7-20.

parables – that the lesson imparted can be learned and followed – is in the third changed to pessimism, that the lesson can also be forgotten.

As with the other parables, Gui takes this one and makes it more intimate. The fowler is wise in the ways of the world, having caught the bird. Yet contrary to the admonition of Christ – “And he said unto them, ‘He that hath ears to hear, let him hear’” (Mark 4: 9) – he does not take the advice of the bird to heart. Like the king’s brother, and the nobles of the court, the fowler regards the world as it pertains to his position in it, and sees the bird only in terms described by the world, namely as a source of nourishment (l. 2256). If he had truly taken to heart the bird’s instruction, he would have understood the impossibility of its statements (e.g., a small bird could not possibly hold an egg that was bigger than its body). He was deceived by its appearance because he saw something that would benefit him. The failure of the fowler to look beyond his own world and concerns puts him in the same situation as the king’s brother and the nobles. Each is guilty of looking only at the surface and not discerning the truth that lies beneath.

Both Gui and the anonymous author demonstrate clearly the dichotomy of the interior versus the exterior in the first three parables. One must look not with the eyes of the body, but with the eyes of the heart and mind to see the real worth contained within.

The True Allegories

The next three parables, “The Man and the Unicorn,” “The Man and Three Friends,” and “King for a Year,” are true allegories in that the surface narrative exists

only to support the ethical material which is the real burden of the story. The original intent is clearly to instruct, and while the anonymous author continues to remain focused on the lesson, Gui tries to make the parables more entertaining.

The first of the second trilogy of parables, "The Man and the Unicorn," enjoyed a popularity second only to that of the "Fowler and the Nightingale" during the middle ages. In addition to the version found in the *Gesta Romanorum*, authors such as Eudes de Cheriton, Humbert de Romans, Jacques de Vitry, Jacques de Voragine, Jean de Capoue and Vincent de Beauvais include it in their works.¹¹ During the instruction of Josaphaz, Barlaam uses this tale to describe those who love the world and its earthly pleasures. They are, he says, like a man chased by a unicorn. In his flight he goes over a cliff and grasps at an overhanging tree. When he looks down he sees a fire-breathing dragon waiting to devour him. Looking back towards the tree, he sees two mice, one white and one black, gnawing at its roots and four other beasts¹² begin to menace him. Yet in spite of the gravity of his situation, he catches a drop of honey as it falls from the branch, and forgets about all of his troubles.

The allegory is quite clear: The unicorn represents Death, pursuing Man; the tree is life to which all men cling; the mice nibble away at the tree just as day and night slowly consume the life of Man. The dragon represents Hell, waiting to devour those who fall and the four beasts are the four humors which, when out of balance, bring about Man's end. Yet despite everything persecuting the man, he still takes joy in the things of the world, symbolized by the drop of honey.

¹¹ Sonet 37.

¹² Usually depicted as snakes.

The anonymous author treats this story (ll. 2471-2500) much in the same manner as his Latin source material. It is an instructional piece, and the anonymous author retells it in a straightforward fashion. Each section of the tale is described in such a way as to imply that it will be explained shortly. The unicorn, the man, the tree, and mice and all the other animals are nothing more than devices; their use is to edify, not entertain.

However, it should be noted the way in which Gui handles the same tale. The man does not simply flee the unicorn, but “molt trestost s’en fuit” (l. 2630); the unicorn does not simply chase him, but “le velt prendre” (l. 2631). Tensions are raised accordingly. As regards the tree, Gui describes it as follows:

...biax et gens,
Et les brances par là dedens
Ierent bieles et bien assises
Et de molt riche fruit porprises;
Si biaux ne fu ne ains ne puis. (ll. 2637-41)

Life, for Gui’s audience, is not the harsh existence of the peasants, but one that is beautiful and has much to offer.

Gui also personalizes the tale by describing the man’s confusion as he perceives his predicament:

Que li dragons l’englouterà;
Et s’il en fin à l’issir tent,
Li unicornes, ki l’atent,
Li moustre bien et li proument,
S’il là defors od lui se met,
Il li fera tel compaignie
Dont il pora perdre la vie. (ll. 2654-60)

This inner thought process, missing from the anonymous version, is included by Gui to make the scene more entertaining. Instead of instructing his audience, Gui is telling

the tale through the man's eyes, and thus affording his audience the opportunity to put themselves in his situation. The parable has now become one in which the audience can participate, instead of passively being instructed.

Gui continues in this fashion when he relates how the man takes comfort in the fruit of the tree. The drop of honey, while sweet, is too small and insignificant for Gui's audience. Instead the tree bears fruit which Gui describes as follows:

Le fruit ù la douchors gisoit,
Ke la douchours bien pries atоче
Desci k'as levres de sa boche.
Esgarde et voit; à la coulor
S'aperchut bien de la douchor,
Car la douchours ki del fruit naist,
Savoure l'omme et si le paist.
Li hom en est en grant desir
Et la douchours li fait queillir.
Pour chou k'il puet queillir le fruit,
Sa paour change en grant deduit.
Por le fruit et por la douchour
Oublie toute sa paour.
De l'arbre ne se velt estordre. (ll. 2670-83)

This life has more than a mere drop of honey to offer to Gui's listeners. Writing for the nobility, Gui understood that they would appreciate the good that life has to offer and hence his extended description of the fruit and the man's appreciation of it. In fact, the man finds life so good that he does not want to leave it. The man becomes so complacent in his life that he does not know when he is dead and he is devoured by the dragon (ll. 2707-9). This simple tale of instruction becomes in Gui's hands an entertaining tale. Its moral remains intact, but its presentation is more palatable than that of the anonymous version.

In the parable of "The Man and Three Friends," the animals of the previous parable are replaced by men, rendering this tale more pertinent to the audience.

Barlaam tells Josaphaz that there once was a man who had three friends, two of whom he loved greatly and one to whom he showed little respect or courtesy. One day the king sent word that the man would be summoned before him to settle accounts. Frightened, the man goes first to one friend then another for assistance, only to be refused each time. In desperation he humbles himself before the third friend and asked for his assistance. Much to his surprise and relief the third friend agreed to his request.

This tale also enjoyed no small amount of popularity during the middle ages and is also found in the works of Jacques de Vitry, Jean de Capoue, Martinus Polonus, Vincent de Beauvais, the *Magnum Speculum Exemplorum* and the *Gesta Romanorum*. Of these variations, particular note should be made of that in the *Gesta Romanorum*. In that version of the tale, the man is the son of the king and instead of owing money, he tests his friends by pretending to have killed a man, and asking their assistance in hiding the body. The friends then behave as described above. By making the man the son of the king, the *Gesta Romanorum* strengthens the tie to Christian teaching – the king is God and the son is any Christian.¹³ Replacing the supposed murder with the repayment of a debt in the *Barlaam* version, on the other hand, brings it more in line with Christ's teachings, as money figures prominently in several of his teachings.

This tale continues the theme brought forth in the fourth parable, that is, the vanity of the world and the things therein. Once again, the anonymous version's

¹³ The man in Gui's version might also be the son of a king. Line 2765 of Appel's edition reads "D'un roi ki .i. prouvoit avoit" but the lacuna in line 2766 hinders its confirmation. There is also the possibility that the man is a knight, see ll. 2783-88.

presentation, while faithful to its Latin source, is unremarkable. It presents the elements of the parable in a straightforward fashion with a minimum of dialogue. After briefly telling how much the man loved his two favorite friends, the anonymous author describes the contempt in which the third friend was held:

Ne n'amoit pas le tierz itant,
Ne an ovre ne an samblant:
A lui ne mostroit amistié
Ne tel honor de la moitié
Ne li portoit com il deüst
Ne ja nel veüst qu'il peüst
Ne bele chiere ne feüst
Por qoi devant lui le veist. (ll. 2627-34)

This level of detail could be read as a subtle attempt to foreshadow the role that the third friend would play in the resolution of the story. In describing the man's love for his two friends by stating "Que se l'un d'els perdu eüst / A paines puis vivre peüst" (2621-22), he makes clear their dominant position in the relationship and he makes their pending betrayal all the more evident.

The exact amount that the man owed is stated as 10,000 talents in the Latin source, yet the anonymous author translated it simply as "wealth" ('avoir" l. 2640). The exact amount is less important than the fact that the man is beholden to money. The notion that money will not always be there is reflected in the first friend's response to help:

Cil li respont: "N'ai mais a toi
Ne amistié ne alience.
Ja mar auras an moi fience.
Mais va aillors querre conseil;
Autres amis ai que ge voil
Des or servir e annorer
Car avec aus voil demorer." (ll. 2658-64)

Trusting in money – and by extension the things of the world – the man comes up lacking, receiving only rags from his most trusted friend (I. 2666).

The response from the second friend is no less discouraging. Despite having been showered with wealth from the man, he has his own cares to concern him and agrees only to accompany him for a little way, ostensibly for moral support, but then returns to his own affaires. In both instances the exchanges reveal a dependent relationship. First the man details all that he has done for his friends only to be rebuffed by them point by point. It is only the third friend who breaks this pattern. Instead of turning the man away, the third friend points out the small things that the man has done for him and says he will doubly repay his kindness. The pattern now becomes one of statement and amplification. In keeping Barlaam's parable simple, with minimum dialogue, the anonymous author ensures that the audience's focus rests on the lesson to be imparted.

Gui, on the other hand, takes certain liberties to make his version of the parable more entertaining. Like the anonymous author, Gui tries his hand at foreshadowing the role the third friend will play in the resolution of the tale. Yet unlike the dry tone employed by his contemporary, Gui's approach is more like that of a confidant, as if Barlaam is trying to hint to Josaphaz the outcome. Barlaam explains the relationship between the man and the third friend as follows:

Le douta plus k'il ne l'amast;
Mais ja nul jor ne le doutast,
S'il ne s'eust en bonne foi
K'il li p'eust aidier al roi. (II. 2777-80)

Having hinted at the conclusion, Gui then describes the man summoned by the king in terms that are less than flattering:

Parjures fu por iaus souvent,
S'en trespasa maint sairement,
Et s'en menti sa foi maint jor
Vers ses voisins, vers son signor,
A mainte gent en fist maint tort
Et s'en fist maint livrer à mort.

(ll. 2783-88)

The man is so desperate to keep his friends, or has earned their friendship through a *quid pro quo*, that he would do almost anything to avoid the dissolution of their relationship. And the lengths to which this man would go to be a friend makes his betrayal by others all the more striking.

The depth to which the man in Gui's version has fallen is further reinforced in his request to his first friend. Instead of owing the king 10,000 talents, this man has done wrong by his king, spending the king's wealth on his friend. Now that he is the one who needs help, his friend dismisses him:

... "Che m'est à vis,
Ne sai dont soie tes amis.
Che fu ja voirs que je t'amai;
Mais ja mais jor ne t'amerai.
De t'amistié sui tous lassés."

(ll. 2831-35)

Given all that the man had done for his friend, this brusque dismissal would resonate with an audience well acquainted with feudal obligations, evoking a range of emotions from sympathy to laughter.

With the predicament of the man firmly established, Gui reduces the exchange with the second friend. His dismissal takes just five lines (ll. 2857-61), allowing Gui to proceed to the third and final friend and to the resolution of the parable.

Gui devotes several lines to describing the man as he goes to his final friend. He is "dolans," "son chef enclin," "confondus," "tristes," and "plains d'anui," (ll. 2881-85). Thus, his prior arrogance is now replaced by humility and shame. His

subsequent actions convey his regret for his prior treatment of the third friend; there is no need for him to say anything, and indeed he remains silent. It is this friend who embraces him, and offers the first words, telling how he will support him before the king:

“Amis, tu m’as amé molt poi;
Mais nequedent devant le roi
Te conduirai à mon pooir,
Se jou conduit i puis avoir.
Ja n’i seras trop entrepris,
Se jou ne sui premerains pris;
Pour toi irai devant à cort:
Se li rois ne me tient trop cort,
Por nule rien ke puisse avoir
Ne t’i lairai nul mal avoir.” (ll. 2895-904)

The third friend, though previously mistreated by the man, speaks first and thus reinforces his innate goodness. Barlaam reveals the reason for his goodness, explaining that the third man represents a Christian (l. 2974), and the king before whom he will lead the man is the Lord.

The parable of the “King for a Year” brings to a conclusion the trilogy of parables on the vanity of the world. After stories concerning the individual (“The Man and the Unicorn”) and a social unit of (“The Man and Three Friends”), the court is now invoked in this parable. This tale, also found in the works of Jacques de Vitry, Jacques de Voragine, Vincent de Beauvais, the *Magnum Speculum Exemplorum*, *Paratus*, *Sermones de Tempore*, the *Gesta Romanorum* as well as in several other sources, tells the custom of a certain country that always chooses an outsider for its king, and then only for a year. During this year the king has complete freedom to indulge himself as pleases, but when the year has passed he loses everything that he was given and is exiled, naked, to an isolated island.

Continuing the education of Josaphaz – and by extension the audience who by now has become comfortable with the pattern of instruction presented by Barlaam – the anonymous author again presents the tale more as a learning tool, instead of a story in its own right. The man chosen as king is moved from scene to scene, not speaking, and is described as “Un vaillant hom e molt sené, / Qui ert de bone providance” (ll. 2884-85), noting that he does not become prideful over his newfound wealth (l. 2889). But nothing is noted of his physical appearance or other characteristics. Given the intent of the anonymous author, further descriptions are unneeded. All the necessary elements to establish his role in the tale and the purpose that he will serve in its resolution are provided in a few select lines. His sense and upbringing will provide him the insight he will need so as not to be taken in by the apparent good will of his new kingdom.

Contrast this with Gui’s description:

Un roi fisent à icel tens
 Ki molt estoit plains de grant sens.
 De grant voisdie s’apensa;
 Le regne tint et requelli;
 Ainc por chou ne se forjöi,
 Ains esgarda en sa pensée
 Les coustumes de la contrée. (ll. 3053-60)

The new king in Gui’s version has common sense, as in the anonymous version, but the word “voisdie” can also imply that the man was “cunning,.” Rather than treat the man simply as an educational tool, Gui imagines him as someone who will outsmart the people of the country at their own game. Furthermore, this king is proactive; he constantly keeps in mind the customs of his new country (ll. 3053-54) and wonders what he is to do (ll. 3085-86). Gui portrays a man who, wary of his situation, plots to

finish better off compared to those that went before him. Such a portrait would undoubtedly appeal to a courtly audience that was well aware of the machinations necessary to survive the politics of the court.

The anonymous version, by contrast, treats the man almost as a child who must be guided in the right direction. The author introduces the image of the learned counselor who is “Molt vesié e de grants sens” (l. 2907), and who will advise the new king on how to handle his situation. The king remains merely a person to be acted upon and who will do as instructed.

Gui’s proactive king takes counsel (l. 3087) and then acts upon it, shipping his wealth (not just the gold and silver, but also the gems, drapes, and other goods) overseas to the isle where he will be exiled. By his cunning he has outwitted the people using their own rules, and now can enjoy the his profits.

The moral of the story – that it is better to store up goods in heaven, where they will last forever, than on earth, where they are fleeting – is quite clear in the anonymous version and thus fulfills that author’s desire to instruct his audience. In Gui’s version the moral is still there, but given Gui’s elaboration on the man’s character and his proactive stance, the emphasis shifts from storing up goods in heaven to getting ahead by one’s own skills. The clever man is a staple of medieval literature, and Gui uses that figure to transform an instructional tale into one that would be more attractive to his audience.

The Personal Parables

The final part of Josaphaz's instructional trilogy is made up of a collection of parables that can be applied directly to the young prince and his life. As such, the detailed explanations of the earlier parables are replaced by a brief explanation as to how the lesson can be applied to Josaphaz. The general nature of these last parables – “The King and the Couple,” “The Rich Youth and the Poor Maiden,” and “The Tame Gazelle” – again provides both redactors the opportunity to depart from their Latin source, highlighting elements that they feel merit further attention, and asserting their own originality.

The first of the personal parables, that of “The King and the Couple,” is a Latin story that is also included in the *exemplum* of Jacques de Vitry. This parable tells of a good and honest, but pagan, king and his Christian counselor who go for a tour of the city (in Jacques de Vitry, he goes with soldiers). The counselor, though he loved his king, feared sharing the Gospel with him for fear of putting their friendship in jeopardy. Coming upon a poor man and his wife, who, despite their hardship, showed an unbounded happiness that hardly seemed fitting given their circumstances. This situation provided the counselor the opportunity he sought to share the Gospel with his king, who wondered why it had been hidden from him for so long. Once acquainted with the Gospel, the king lived not only a good life, but a holy one. The comparison of the social classes, both wealthy and poor, is again an underlying element of the parable, now applied to a personal level. In explaining the tale to Josaphaz, Barlaam implies that this situation is similar to that of Josaphaz and his father; the anecdote foreshadows events to come.

The anonymous author, in stark contrast to his earlier renditions of parables, considerably shortened and modified this tale. The descriptions of the principle characters remain short and functional: The king is a “prodom e bons sire” (l. 3158), and his counselor is noted as having loved and held him dear; and the couple that originally provides the catalyst for the king’s instruction is eliminated from the tale. Instead, the anonymous author uses the situation at the king’s court to provide the counselor an opportunity to instruct the king:

Il n’iert pas de ces conseilliers,
Qui molt aiment e tiennent chiers
Plusors seignors e mainte dame,
Qui lor honissent cors e arme
Mais a cel port sunt arivé
Que mains sunt prosié que privé.
Tant fist cil dont est la parole,
Tant tint son seignor a escole
Por mostrer ceste vanité,
Cest ombre, ceste fauseté
De cest siecle, de ceste vie,
Que il nel fors conseille mie. (ll. 3169-80)

This situation foreshadows the trials that Josaphaz will soon face. As the counselor shows the king the “vanité,” “ombre,” and “fauseté” of this life (ll. 3177-79), Josaphaz understands that he must do the same in his dealings with his father.

While the anonymous author felt it necessary to shorten this parable, Gui saw in it an opportunity to provide his audience with another glimpse into his craft. Instead of a flat description of the king, Gui describes him as follows:

Haus hom estoit, de grant nobleche,
Et si avoit une proueche:
Il estoit molt de bon affaire,
Envers son peuple deboinaire;
Preudom ert, mais tant i falloit
Ke il en Diu pas ne creoit. (ll. 3467-72)

Gui brings out the qualities of a king that his courtly audience would appreciate: “grant nobleche,” “proueche,” “deboinaire.” The counselor also receives similar treatment:

Od lui avoit .j. consillier
K’il amoit molt et tenoit chier.
Cil estoit sages et vaillans
Et si estoit en Diu creans. (ll. 3473-76)

This is in perfect accordance with the other parables where Gui tends to develop his characters where his source material does not. Such development makes their stories more believable and allows his audience to immerse themselves in the story. However, one of the elements that distinguishes this parable from the others in Gui’s work are the two lists describing the wealth of Christians. These lists are not unlike those found in the *chanson de geste* where writers would enumerate many of the qualities or accomplishments of the heroes, and which could be shortened or lengthened as desired according to the performance.

Gui retains the impoverished couple in his version of the parable and when the king and his counselor happen upon them while wandering through the city the king marvels at their happiness:

Ne vivons pas à si grant hait
Com cil povres là dedens fait.
Il mainne joie en sa misere;
En son parastre devient pere;
Il est molt riches en besoigne
Et veritables en mençoigne;
Il est molt larges en poverte
Et bien couvers en descouverte;
Il est en larmes molt rians
Et sans avoir riches manans,
Et sans conseil bien consilliés
Et sans ajue bien aidiés;
Il est riches sans point d’avoir

Et puet assés sans nul pooir;
 Il est sages, si ne set rien;
 Il a assés, si n'a nul bien;
 Il vit, non fait, anchois devie;
 Onques n'amames nostre vie
 Tant com cist fait en son endroit;
 En sa misere se dechoit. (ll. 3555-74)

This list of paradoxes, with its anaphora “Il est...” and “Et sans...” draws attention to the differences between the couple and their circumstances. They are at the same time in and above the poverty of their life, much as the Christian is in the world yet not of the world. This is truly a marvel to the king, and when he queries his counselor as to how this could be, the counselor answers with a list of his own:

Amis, li regnes de lassus
 Valt miex que quanqu'il a cha jus.
 Là est richoise sans poverté
 Et plus merite que deserte;
 Là a grant joie sans dolour
 Et grant richoise sans paour
 Et grant amor tot sans losenge
 Et grant onnor sans nul calenge
 Grant signorie sans merage
 Et sans avoir grant hyretage;
 Et sans paour de mort a vivre
 Et sans prison estre delivre
 Et sans folie assés savoir
 Et sans damage assés avoir.
 Cil ki conquerre chou pora,
 Joie et honor tous jors ara,
 Et si ara l'eternité
 Ki proumise est par vértié. (ll. 3617-34)

Here the anaphora of “Et grant...sans,” and “Sans...” provides a counterpoint to the observations of the king. The counselor acknowledges the couple's lack, but also confirms their wealth. The king, desiring to share this same happiness, commands his counselor never again to hide such truths from him, but to remind him of them every day. Barlaam's charge to Josaphaz, and hence to Avenir, is clear:

Aussi te di jou voirement,
S'il ert auchuns ki à ton pere
Seüst mostrer bonne matere
Et entreduire et castier,
Il se feroit tost baptisier
Et si lairoit sa mescreanche,
Dont s'ame gist en fort balanche. (ll. 3684-90)

The anonymous author used this tale to emphasize the trials that await Josaphaz as he prepares to share the Gospel with his father. His instruction is short and to the point. Though Gui uses this tale to highlight his talents as a writer, by underscoring the differences between the couple and their surroundings Gui highlights another aspect of the tale, that true happiness comes from the inside rather than from the outside when one follows Christ. Regardless of the physical situation Josaphaz will find himself in which he can be assured of eternal happiness. That Gui is able to do this in an entertaining manner confirms his talents as a writer.

The second of the personal parables, "The Rich Youth and the Poor Maiden," continues the theme contrasting spiritual wealth with the wealth of the world. It is also found in the works of Jacques de Voragine, Jacques de Vignay and Vincent de Beauvais, though it is strangely absent from Jacques de Vitry and the *Gesta Romanorum*. In this tale a young prince loses his inheritance because of his refusal to marry the princess whom his father had chosen for him. When he meets a peasant girl singing praises to God, he falls in love with her for her goodness and virtue. Once he has proven the quality of his devotion to the girl's father, he is granted not only the maiden's hand but also a large treasure that her father had set aside for the man who would love his daughter for her holiness and not her money.

This parable again shows the anonymous redactor straying from the source material whereas Gui, while still embellishing the tale to make it entertaining, adheres more closely to the thread of the story. The anonymous redactor, in an effort to arrive quickly at the heart of the story, takes just seven lines (ll. 3203-9) to introduce the young prince, the proposed marriage, and the prince's flight. Almost no effort is spent describing the young prince or his potential bride to be. Again, the characters in the tale are props used for the edification of the audience. In contrast, Gui carefully amplifies the description of the characters, making the story more palatable to his audience. The young prince is: "...riches et biaux, / Fils à riche homme et fils à sage, / Et molt estoit de haut parage" (ll. 3704-6). The future father-in-law and bride chosen by the king are described as:

Avoit .i. homme molt nobile;
Haus hom estoit, de grant nobleche,
De sens, d'ounor et de pröeche,
Molt richement se maintenoit.
Une molt biele fille avoit;
Toutes celes de la cité
Passoit d'avoir et de bialté. (ll. 3708-14)

These descriptions would suggest to Gui's audience that the couple was a perfect match. Yet the prince does not want to marry her. Gui further develops the character of the prince by providing a reason for his flight that goes beyond the simple one given in the source material. Gui states that, upon hearing the news of the arranged marriage;

Li jovenenchiaus, quant chou öi,
Plus tost qu'il pot, si s'en füi.
Molt fu dolans de la nouviele,
Car il haoit la damoisiele
Pour chou qu'ele ne creoit mie;
Ne volt avoir en sa baillie

**Femme ki en Diu ne criest
Et sa creanche ne jehist.**

(ll. 3719-26)

This description, in addition to showing the importance of faith in God to the young prince, elevates the character of the princess above the two-dimensional image given in the source material. This level of detail also facilitates the comparison between the princess and the poor maiden, and explains the young prince's preference for the latter. In developing the characters of the parable above the level required for imparting a lesson, Gui makes his version more entertaining than those of his contemporaries.

It is in the meeting of the young maiden that the anonymous author makes his most radical departure from the source material. Unlike the source material and Gui's version, in which the maiden recounts how God has given gifts to the great and poor and should be praised for his goodness, the anonymous redactor has the maiden embark upon a long discourse on the life of Christ (ll. 3227-98). This change reveals the anonymous redactor's true intent in writing this tale. The maiden is nothing more than a porte-parole for religious instruction. On the other hand, Gui does not change the speech of the maiden in any significant way. The fact that she loves God is enough to plant in the mind of Gui's audience that she is a virtuous girl, and one that would be more desirable to the young prince as a wife, given his rejection of the qualities embodied by the princess.

Gui's tendency to amplify reasserts itself when the young prince asks for the maiden's hand in marriage. The maiden's father is reluctant to let his daughter leave, stressing her station and his own desire for her company. In a clever play on words, Gui writes:

Car ne t'i pues apparilier
Se tu m'i vels descompaignier.
Seus sui et seule est ma compaigne,
Et s'uns autres s'i acompaigne,
Nel prendra pas à compaignon
Por que nous doi descompaignon.
Ja por nule autre compaignie
Ne sera de moi departie. (ll. 3821-28)

This *jeux de mots*, based on “compaigne,” provides a comic element to the dialogue and, as with the lists provided in the previous parable, has the effect of diminishing, though not eliminating the moral of the story.¹⁴

“The Tame Gazelle” brings to a close the instructional trilogy of personal parables, and of the nine parables discussed so far, it had the least circulation outside of *Barlaam et Josaphaz*. Jean Sonet notes: “Cette parabole du *Barlaam et Josaphat* n’a pas survécu: elle ne fut pas retenue par les compilations latines médiévales.”¹⁵ It tells the story of a young gazelle raised by a noble. When the animal has grown it follows its desire to go into the wild to be with others of its kind. The noble who raised it gives chase, recaptures it, and causes great harm to the herd the gazelle had joined.

Recounted just before Barlaam’s return to the desert, it is suitably short, and its instruction to Josaphaz is clear: If Josaphaz leaves for the desert with Barlaam, his father will give chase, recapture the young prince, and persecute the monks. It would be far better for Josaphaz to stay in his tower and await the task God has prepared for him. The treatment of this particular parable highlights the differences between the

¹⁴ The virtue of the maiden in this tale also provides a sharp contrast with the seductive powers of the pagan princess in the final parable.

¹⁵ Sonet 47.

anonymous author and Gui's approach to the story. The anonymous redactor recounts it in only 29 lines (ll. 3671-700), in his usual, straightforward manner. Gui's version loses the effects of a parable, having instead the tone of a confidant giving advice to a trusted friend.

The trilogy of parable trilogies slowly exposes Josaphaz to several beliefs of the Christian faith, among them the ideas that appearances can be deceiving and that inner happiness comes from God and is more important than the physical happiness the world offers. The order of the parables in each trilogy reflects not so much a progression but rather an overview of those elements affecting one's situation, culminating in the last trilogy of parables that have direct application to Josaphaz's life. And while both the anonymous author and Gui de Cambrai adhered to this outlook in their work, the anonymous author treated the characters in the parables as props or devices for the advancement of the parable and lesson it imparted. Few lines are given over to description other than those necessary to establish a stock character to illustrate the point. Keeping the moral of the story foremost in mind, the anonymous author avails himself of every opportunity to educate his audience. In writing to accommodate the need of his audience for a work that was entertaining, Gui was probably not as compelled to emphasize the morals of the parables told. Instead, it is apparent that he took pains to transform the parables into tales that were entertaining first, and then instructional. His detailed descriptions of the characters; his enumeration of certain scenes reminiscent of the *chanson de geste*; the *jeux de mots*; all indicate a writer more concerned with his audience's acceptance and enjoyment of his work than of the instructional value it contained.

The Anti-Parable

The last parable in the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* is “The Prince and the Devils who Deceive Men.” Also contained in the work of Jacques de Vitry, the *Historia* and several other compilations, it came into its own after appearing in Boccaccio’s *Decameron*. In contrast to the nine previous tales, this parable has a meaning that “lies in the surface narrative; it is available to the eyes of the sense, even as it teaches the loves of the sense.”¹⁶ It is, in almost every aspect, the opposite of the first nine parables told by Barlaam. Instead of being told by Barlaam, it is told by Théodas, Avenir’s evil sorcerer. Instead of being told to a neophyte Christian, it is told to a king well-versed in the tenets of the pagan faith. Rather than instruct the listener in the ways of the Lord, it sets forth a stratagem for converting the prince to the king’s pagan beliefs.

This parable tells the story of Josaphaz as it could have been. A powerful king, long without an heir, finally has a son. He summons his astronomers and seers and has them prophesy the child’s future. They say he must be sequestered for ten years, seeing neither the sun nor fire.¹⁷ Upon the completion of the ten years the young prince is shown all the wealth of the kingdom – gold, silver, animals – and when he is presented with women, he asks what might they be and is told that they

¹⁶ Bolton 364.

¹⁷ Twelve years in the original. Both ten and twelve are numbers symbolizing perfection. Twelve is readily associated with the Apostles, the tribes of Israel, the twelve gates of Heaven, the twelve fruits of Heaven, etc. Ten represents order and completeness as well as worldly leaders as seen in the ten horns on the beast in Revelation 12: 3. As this parable is counter to those previously mentioned, both

are devils who deceive men. After seeing all there was to be had in the world, his father asks him which pleased him most and he replied “the devils who deceive men.” By ending the parable with a line which is, for all intents and purposes, a punch line, the story shows the contempt that the pagans held for sound instruction. The contrast with Josaphaz, who chose to be counseled by Barlaam, and who took its lessons to heart, is unmistakable. Théodas’ telling is a reflection of his view of the world. He inhabits a world where the senses reign and the pleasures of the here and now are more to be desired than the intangible rewards of a future after-life.

Even both the anonymous author and Gui de Cambrai follow their established *modus scribendi*. The former continues his practice of few elaborations. Gui’s version has some elaboration, namely in the listing of all things available to the young prince in the kingdom (one line in the anonymous version, nine lines in Gui’s), but in comparison with his earlier treatment of the parables, he demonstrates a remarkable restraint here. A more important difference appears when the young prince inquires about the women he sees. The anonymous version states that it is the king’s seneschal who, jokingly, tells him that the women are devils (ll. 7676-84). By having one so close to the king inform the prince on the nature of women – as opposed to an unidentified joker (“gabere” l. 8495 in Gui’s version – the anonymous author foreshadows Avenir’s use of the young princesses to tempt his son and convert him back to their pagan gods. The contrast between the parable and the life of Josaphaz is evident and would not be lost upon the intended audience.

redactors could have chosen ten instead of twelve to distinguish it from the divine nature of Josaphaz and emphasize the worldly nature of the parable’s young prince.

By having an unknown¹⁸ describe the women, Gui diminishes the wisdom of the prince, who can be advised by common men in the service of the court. This easily swayed prince can now be contrasted with the wise Josaphaz, reinforcing an implied association of Christianity with wisdom, and Paganism with foolishness.

The parable of the “The Prince and the devils who deceive men” has only a shallow moral to impart, for its meaning remains on its surface. Furthermore, it is also the only parable that becomes literal, when Theodas has the demons he has summoned possess the princesses before they go to meet Josaphaz. The word has become deed and is immediately put into effect by Avenir. It thus emphasizes the opposite of everything that Barlaam has taught and thereby shows the folly of Avenir’s court. Worldly wealth is contrasted with, and considered secondary to, sensual desire. Josaphaz would have considered both as versions of cupidity and secondary to a heavenly reward. Avenir has built his court upon sand, upon the fleeting pleasures of the world. With such a foundation it can not stand, and Josaphaz must establish it on a firm foundation.

The parables of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* are an integral part of the story. They instruct not only Josaphaz, but also the audience, as in the anonymous version, at the same time that they entertain, as with Gui. The parables also provide an analysis of the individual and social unit (the physically wealthy compared to the spiritually poor, the nobility with the aristocracy, the spiritually wealthy with the physically poor, etc.) and how they interact, one with another. That several of the parables lived

¹⁸ He is a spearman in the Latin source.

on beyond the saint's life, either on their own or as part of other works, attests to their popularity and helps to explain the success of *Barlaam et Josaphaz*.

Chapter Five

Additions to and Amplifications of the Version of Gui de Cambrai

Gui de Cambrai's version contains several episodes and elaborations that set it apart from the other two Old French versions in verse of *Barlaam et Josaphaz*: the elaboration of the debate between Nachor and the pagan priests (ll. 6379-7888), the inclusion of an epic battle scene (ll. 9801-11174), the "Debate Between the Body and Soul" (ll. 11943-12572), and four digressions (ll. 4967-5043, 7080-7122, 11397-11428, and 12935-13280) which apparently have nothing directly to do with the story itself and attack the very public for whom the work was presumably commissioned, namely the people of the court – barons, vavassors, knights and upper levels of the clergy, who thought themselves to be aristocratic in their own way. These episodes are important to the study of Gui's version in that they confirm – through their subject matter and compositional style – that Gui wrote for a courtly audience, one whose values and mores he well understood, as evidenced by his previous writings, such as his *Vengeance d'Alexandre*.

The Making of a Hero

Barlaam et Josaphaz depicts the hero as overcoming the challenges posed by his father through peaceful resistance and much prayer, converting the kingdom before departing into the desert to lead the life of a holy hermit. Josaphaz's conduct in relation to his father stresses his innate goodness and the superiority of his beliefs. Gui's version of the story, however, has Josaphaz succeed in converting his father and the rest of his kingdom through force of arms, not prayer. Gui's battle scene, 1,373 lines in length, could, if separated from the story proper, be considered a part of

a *chanson de geste*; such is the epic influence upon his work.

The epic battle scene is not the only element that separates Gui's work from that of his contemporaries. As a professional writer, Gui was probably acquainted the classical tradition of splitting the hero into two characters, each displaying a distinct aspect of that figure. Yet heroic tradition, at the time of Gui's composition, was slowly giving way to a new hero, that of the romance, and this provided Gui with an ideal situation to showcase his writing talents. Not only would there be a battle scene in the epic tradition reflecting the physical prowess of Josaphaz, Gui would transform the philosophical debate between Nachor (as a false Barlaam, representing the instruction of Josaphaz) and Avenir's pagan priests into an epic battle, where words replaced swords. Gui then takes the development one step further, for after Josaphaz proves himself both mentally and physically, Gui then introduces the debate of the body and the soul to fuse these two component parts into one, a heroic and holy figure.

The Debate

The debate in the source material is in fact not so much a debate as an oration that is, the *Apology of Aristides*.¹ After Nachor announces himself as Barlaam, he launches into a monologue in which he discredits idolaters (Chaldeans), Jews, and Greeks, putting forth the Christian faith as the one true faith. This oratory is

¹ For a history of this document and its subsequent incorporation into the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz*, see Allan Menzies D.D. ed. The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to AD 325, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), 259-279, and Robert Lee Wolff, "The Apology of Aristides – A Re-examination," Harvard Theological Review 30 (1937), 233-47.

straightforward in its theology, as first one religion then another is disproved through Christian teaching. In Gui's version, this debate becomes a necessary part of the self-realization of the Barlaam half of the Barlaam-Josaphaz character.² Avenir and his pagan forces must first be conquered in the spiritual realm before they can take on the physical realm. Gui accomplishes this act, not through a simple, long speech, but through mental combat in the style of the *chanson de geste*, which Josaphaz will later duplicate physically in his war with Avenir.

For this intellectual battle words replace swords, allowing Gui the opportunity to display his knowledge of mythology, and to use his rhetorical skills to the fullest. Not content with simply naming the Greek gods as given in his source material, Gui lists the gods of the Chaldeans as well as their priests. To transform the debate into a battle Gui makes use of two formulae: the first has an unnamed pagan priest espouse his belief, to which Nachor replies. This gesture is akin to a military operation in which the general sends forth the lower level troops before committing his more senior, experienced, soldiers. Once the debate intensifies, however, Gui starts providing names and descriptions of Nachor's opponents:

Tanthaplamos se leva sus;
A hicel mot ne targa plus.
De ses dex est molt corechiés
Que Nachor a si laidengiés.
Caldeus etoit, bons clers et sages,
Et si savoit molt de langages;
D'Ynde moienne nés estoit;
De trestous ars assées savoit.
De la lune avoit son diu fait

² Even though it is Nachor who is actually speaking, he is doing so as Barlaam, Josaphaz's spiritual mentor. Motivated to save his life, his defense is so spirited and eloquent that it could have been spoken by the real Barlaam, and for all intents and purposes, he does become the real Barlaam in this scene.

(Et sachiés bien tout entresait
Que li Caldeu lor dex faisoient
Des elemens k'il aouroient). (ll. 6773-84)

There is no one priest for each of the other religions; rather each component of the religion is treated separately, having its own priests/advocates, though in practical terms they are merely variations on a theme, giving reign to Gui's creativity. For example Gui states that Plathon (l. 6602) is the priest for the god of Fire (l. 6615), Varro (l. 6647) is the priest for the god of Wind, Tanthaplamos (l. 6773) is the priest for the god of the Moon (l. 6781), etc. As with the hero from the *chanson de geste*, Nachor defeats each of his opponents in turn, proving the superiority of Josaphaz's religion compared to that of his father.

The Battle

The second battle scene could have been borrowed from a number of *chansons de geste*. The recruiting of warriors for each side (ll. 9987-10018, for example), the advice given to both Avenir and Josaphaz by their counselors (ll. 9859-9877, 10019-84 are just two examples of stock motifs), and the list of heroes joining Josaphaz's cause (ll. 10147-10162) are all stock tools in retelling an epic battle. Also in line with the epic tradition, Gui makes use of repetitions, such as in lines 10282-86, which contribute to portraying the battle as truly epic in scope. This battle scene mirrors the spiritual battle between Nachor and the pagan priests, with its successful resolution completing Barlaam-Josaphaz's actualization.

The battle begins in line 9801, and continues for 1,373 lines, fully ten percent of the total length of the text. Josaphaz has vanquished the pagan priests through the

efforts of Nachor, and overcome the challenges set before him by Aracis and Theodas, Avenir's evil counselors. He has ruled his half of the kingdom for twenty years, converting all his populace to Christianity and exhorting them in the service of God. Avenir and his counselors find this situation unacceptable, and heeding the advice of Aracis, Avenir prepares to wage war upon his son. Avenir's decision to go to war allows Gui to incorporate several elements of the *chanson de geste*: opposing councils, individual combat, capture and conversion of the enemy, the fighting cleric and treason.³

One naturally wonders why Gui would include an epic battle in a work essentially hagiographical in nature. Writing on commission from Gilles de Marquais, Gui probably chose to include this episode, not only for the reason mentioned above, to complete the Barlaam-Josaphaz character, but also as a more exciting end to what is a rather long work, with the aim of rewarding the continued interest of his audience. If the chronology is correct and Gui wrote his version some time after the battle of Bouvines (1214 AD), in which Gilles is known to have participated, such a scene would have special relevance to his audience.

However, a third reason for introducing the battle scene is to afford Gui the opportunity to include the debate between the body and soul. Having spiritually defeated Avenir and his forces through the debate between Nachor and the pagan priest, and physically vanquishing Avenir's forces on the field of battle, Barlaam-

³ For examples from the *chanson de geste*, see, for example *La Chanson de Roland*: Charlemagne and Marsile; the Twelve Peers in battle, Blancandrin's saying that Charles will be open to almost any suggestion that will convert the Saracens (similar to the Princess's rationale in her temptation of Josaphaz), Bramimonde's conversion,

Josaphaz is now united as a single character. As such, he passes into the desert in search of his mentor and spends two years undergoing the hardships of a holy hermit. This passage is necessary to purify and temper Josaphaz as a new born saint.

As Avenir notes the increased number of churches and chapels constructed in the country, he fears that his people have gone over to the cause of Josaphaz. Though not eager for it, war seems the only solution to the problem: “Or cuide bien faire par guere / Çou qu’il ne peut ainc exploitier / Ne par douçor ne par proier” (ll. 9826-28). Aracis, his counselor, confirms this state of affairs by stating of Josaphaz that “Il n’est pas fius, mais anemis” (l. 9877), to which Avenir replies, “Vostre consaus m’a mis en guere” (l. 9882). This council parallels that of Josaphaz and his advisors, much as the council afforded Charlemagne is contrasted with that of Marsile in *La Chanson de Roland*. Clearly, Josaphaz cannot return his lands to his father and the pagan ways, and replies to his father’s demands:

Se grans maus m’en devoit venir,
Dites le roi et son barné,
Ne moverai de la cité
Ne por guere ne por assut. (ll.9951-55)

Both sides, committed to war, assemble their forces. Here again, Gui makes use of subtle descriptions that highlight Avenir’s grounding in the physical world, reminding his audience that Avenir is an earthly king. In order to do that, Gui needs to lay the groundwork of all that Josaphaz will conquer. Avenir assembles his forces in ten

the Archbishop Turpin fighting beside Roland. Other *chansons de geste* to consult are *Le Voyage de Charlemagne à Jérusalem et à Constantinople*, and *Huon de Bordeaux*.

days, a reminder of his worldly power.⁴ This help comes from many exotic places such as “Bisante,” “Coustantinoble,” “Atenes,” which not only add color to the description but also imply that Avenir exerts a vast influence, and that his power extends beyond his own kingdom’s borders. In addition to originating in these exotic locales, the arriving forces also carry their own pagan gods with them, subtly underscoring the religious nature of the battle. In terms of the overall battle, the addition of these kings is a necessary element in Gui’s version, for not only do they reflect the patterns of other *chansons de geste*, they also allow Josaphaz’s coming victory to be seen not just in terms of father and son, but also as the victory of the one God over the gods of the world. This conflict between Josaphaz’s one true God and those of the pagans is underscored when Avenir establishes his pagan camp and altars to the pagan gods on the same spot where the apostle Thomas had previously established the first church in India. While Josaphaz hears mass, the pagans honor their gods, and this juxtaposition encourages one to understand the coming battle on more than one level. Given that the spiritual battle has already been won, the mentioning of the false gods at the site of the physical battle indicates that Josaphaz’s victory is a foregone conclusion.

This secondary theme of opposing religions is necessary to the physical battle in that it allows Gui to complete the destruction of the pagan gods that was begun by Nachor in the debate with the priests. Intellectually they have already been defeated, now it must be carried out physically as well. If the pagan gods were not present at

⁴ The number ten is important in the Bible in terms of representing worldly order. Note the ten horns on the Beast of Revelation representing the completeness of world government (Rev. 12:3).

the battle, then Josaphaz's victory would only be seen in the one-dimensional terms of a son's victory over his father. The fact that the pagan kings do bring their gods with them reminds the audience of Josaphaz's prior victory and with his defeat of Avenir his triumph is complete.

In the *chansons de geste* the treatment of the Saracens is generally respectful, their main fault lying in their lack of faith in God. The opposing forces must have the appearance of at least physical equality so that the Christians must trust to the Lord to supply the extra strength needed for victory. Gui describes such balance of military might. Compare lines 10295-96 ("Li rois del Coine le fait bien; / Bon chevalier i a païen") with line 960 from *La Chanson de Roland* ("N'i ad païen de tel chevalerie.") Only their faith distinguishes the pagan from the Christian knight. This similarity will benefit them upon their conversion, thereby making it easier for them to go forth and defend their new faith.

Once the battle is joined, the similarities with the *chansons de geste* are unmistakable. This is important in that this physical battle is the mirror of the spiritual battle fought earlier. By focusing on such details as the individual combatants and their equipment – for example "Un molt rice ceval grigois / Meillor nen ot ne quens ne rois" (ll. 10223-24) – Gui enlivens the battle between father and son, providing it with a personal touch against all the symbolism going on around them. Yet whereas Nachor verbally smote his opponents, the carnage here, as in the *chansons de geste*, is much more graphic:

Mains cors gist en la praerie
Dont l'ame est grant pieç'a partie,
Mains puins, mains pies, mainte boele,
Et mainte teste sans cervelle;

Et mains cevas i est estans,
Et mains ferus parmi les flans,
Et mains sans resnes escapés
Et mains ocis et mains navrés.

(ll. 10279-86)

Scenes like this one would undoubtedly be familiar to a courtly audience, such as that which takes place one at the court of Gilles des Marquais. Probably familiar with other *chansons de geste*, Gui's audience could appreciate the details that he provides and look upon his version of the tale more as entertainment than edification.

In order to effectively incorporate an epic scene into his work, Gui borrowed several character-types from other *chansons de geste*, such as the Archbishop Turpin from *La Chanson de Roland*. Like Turpin, Josaphaz's councilor, "l'arceveskes," blesses the troops and even joins in the battle:

Et l'arceveskes, qui bien seut,
Se la bataille n'est vaincue,
Crestientés sera perdue,
Maint coup i a de brant doné.
Molt i avoit bon courouné!
Bien se contient en la bataille,
Que il i ront tant mainte maille
Et tant maint elme i enbara
Et tant païen i souvina.

(ll. 10352-60)

The "arceveske" has no need of a name in Gui's version. He could therefore represent any cleric from any *chanson de geste*. "L'arceveske," like so many other characters in Gui's tale, is merely a two-dimensional character created for a purpose, as are the characters in the *chansons de geste*.⁵

⁵ Later medieval romances devoted more lines not only to the physical appearance of the characters, but also to their psychological and emotional development.

An episode of capture and betrayal embodies another staple of the *chansons de geste*, of which perhaps the most famous example is found in the treachery of Ganelon. In Gui's version, Aracis, the counselor to the king, refuses to believe that the battle is lost (ll. 10763-66) and takes desperate measures to ensure that the final victory will go to Avenir and their gods. Defeated by Miradex in single combat, he professes to convert. Yet his conversion is false and Aracis attempts to betray Josaphaz, but his actions are futile. Finding no strength in their gods, the pagan kings surrender and convert to Josaphaz's superior faith. Their willingness to forsake their beliefs is contrasted with the steadfastness of the monks, who gladly suffered martyrdom and exile for what they believed. Just as the pleasures of the world are fleeting, so too is one's faith in a false god when confronted with all that the one God has to offer.

Gui de Cambrai's decision to include this battle scene was necessary to resolve the development of the Barlaam-Josaphaz character. Once both the Barlaam/Nachor and Josaphaz components have won their respective battles, Josaphaz is ready to become a fully individualized character. Josaphaz has learned and assimilated the teachings of Barlaam, and has vanquished his father both spiritually and physically. He is now poised to become a true, saintly king. But first the new Josaphaz must prove himself through the debate of the body and soul.

The Debate of the Body and Soul

The new Josaphaz now must decide whether he will continue his quest to serve God or follow the ways of the world. Like his teacher Barlaam (and like the

Christ), Josaphaz goes into the desert where he wanders for two years (l. 11929). This number is particularly significant, for it represents one year of purification for each of the component halves (the spiritual and the physical) of the old Josaphaz. Before the new, singular, Josaphaz excludes all distraction from his service to God, he is in effect two, and his time in the desert is necessary to bring them together in his new life.

Gui saw Josaphaz's two years in the desert, not only as a time of trial, but also as a vehicle by which he could include the debate of the body and soul. This debate is one of several debates that were quite popular in both Latin and vernacular medieval literature.⁶ Among the various debates were those of the "knight and cleric," "wine and water," and "body and soul." The largest of category in this group is the body and soul debates. In these debates "either the Soul argues with the Body from a position of moral superiority or it shares guilt with the Body."⁷ Gui's version of the body and soul debate falls clearly in the first category, that of the superior soul.

Gui's version of the story of Josaphaz is arguably the most entertaining, yet it also essentially proves the superiority of the soul almost from the beginning of the text: the monks who were martyred, the parable of the caskets, the debate, and Josaphaz's escape from the temptations of the princess all point to the soul's position of authority. Despite the implied superiority of the spiritual, the debate that rages between Josaphaz's soul and body is "dure et fors," (l. 11944).

⁶ For more on the medieval debates between body and soul, see Michel-André Bossy, "Medieval Debates of Body and Soul," *Comparative Literature* 28 (1976), 144-63, and Th. Batiouchkof, "Le Débat de l'ame et du corps," *Romania* 20 (1891), 1-55, 513-78, among others.

⁷ Bossy 145.

Gui effectively uses anaphora to secure the audience's attention:

**Ensi vient Yozaphas et va,
Ensi atorne son corage,
Ensi oirre par l'ermitaige,
Ensi aoure Diu et sert,
Ensi s'en vait par le desert. (ll. 11934-38)**

The repetitions of "Ensi" help create the impression of passing time, reminding the audience of the duration of the hardships that the young king now endures. It also provides a backdrop for the reproaches that the body will deliver to the soul in a series of long declamations which begin the debate.

Throughout his young life Josaphaz had been spared the trials and tribulations that plagued many of the kingdom's subjects. Sequestered in a tower far from the ills of the common man, his body was pampered and he delighted in the pleasures of the world, with every physical need satisfied. Josaphaz now finds himself fighting internally against that which he had fought so hard externally. Having enjoyed a life of privilege, the Body sets the debate in motion by lamenting its current state of affairs. Through a series of long declamations it accuses the Soul of killing it by depriving it of worldly pleasures. Such an attachment to the pleasures of the physical world was an impediment to the early Christians,⁸ causing many to lose their faith. And just as the Israelites, having left Egypt for the Promised Land, look back upon their years of captivity with fondness when the harshness of the desert journey afflicts them,⁹ so too does the Body look back upon its pre-conversion days with longing. In speaking with the Soul it states:

A moi t'estoies mariée,

⁸ See Matthew 6: 24, 19: 16-24; Mark 10: 17-24.

⁹ See Exodus 16: 3; 17: 3; Numbers 20: 3-5, 21: 5 etc.

Mais tu desfais le mariaige,
 Car tu me fais trop grant damage.
 Tu m'as tolue ma nobleche,
 Ma signorie et ma rikeche
 Et mon deduit et mon delit,
 M'aise, m'onnor, mon sœef lit,
 Ma biele table et mes biaux mes,
 Et mes serghans et mes varlés,
 Ki ja servirent devant
 Si com' il couvenoit à roi.
 U sont li mes, ù sont li vin
 Et li hanap, ki sont d'or fin?
 U est li argens et li ors
 Dont tous combles ert mes tresors?
 U sont li rice drap de soie
 Dont jo sovent vetus estoie?
 U sont li riche servitour
 Ki me servoient nuit et jor?
 Tout est gasté, tout est perdu,
 Par tout me truis dolant et nu. (ll. 11970-90)

The Soul responds at length to the Body's complaints repeating the lesson of the fleeting glory of earthly wealth first mentioned in the parables. The debate now begins a new transformation. The previous conflict of Barlaam/Josaphaz against Avenir becomes mirrored between the body and the soul. However, instead of the long parables previously employed by Barlaam to instruct Josaphaz, the Soul uses short, declarative statements that prompt the Body to further questioning. The following exchange is a typical example:

Corps: "Comment? Sont dont cil tormenté
 Ki en cest siecle sont finé
 Et ki là fors ont le deduit?"
 Ame: "Certes, ôil, si com jou cuit;
 Tormenté sont, et s'est à droit,
 Puis que li siecles les dechoit
 Et il s'en vont sans repentir."
 Corps: "Puis que li hon vient al morir,
 S'il se repent, sera il suas?"
 Ame: "Oïl, che cuit, de tos ses maus.
 Mais sachs bien, tels repentanche

This dialectical form of instruction quickly completes the education of the Body, continually emphasizing the salient points that were already taught in the parables. The accelerated pacing allows the audience to perceive the Body and Soul not as abstract ideas, but real protagonists. There is no need for the Soul's instruction to go into details for it has only to see that the new, whole figure of Josaphaz can fully internalize the teachings. Just as Josaphaz's earlier acceptance of the teachings of Barlaam allowed the story to advance, so too does the Body's acceptance of the teachings of the Soul. Now, having unified his own body and soul, the young king Josaphaz can unite with Barlaam in the desert, serving God.

The Four Digressions

The *Barlaam et Josaphaz* of Gui de Cambrai is also notable for the four digressions that it contains ll. 4967-5043, 7080-7122, 11397-11428, and 12935-13280. These digressions, not part of Gui's original composition and having nothing to do with the story proper, attack moral laxity in every class of people, including that class for which Gui composed his work. If the digressions were to be removed from the text, the story would flow in an uninterrupted manner. Probably inserted by a later scribe,¹⁰ the attacks detailed in these digressions demonstrate a vehemence that appears unsuitable for a work that is based upon the life of a saint. By specifically attacking the classes that were the most likely to have access to and read this work,

¹⁰ The identity of this scribe remains unknown. It is possible that he is the same one who appended the conclusion from the Anonymous Version to Gui's work, which was left incomplete.

the digressions raise some interesting points. It is probable that the scribe was not writing for the original audience that originally commissioned the work from Gui. Therefore this later scribe could be including these digressions for his own pleasure, or possibly for someone who was sympathetic to his views. Or, possibly knowing that his work would, in turn, be copied itself, the scribe inserted these digressions in order to leave a message for those who would read, or copy, his work at a later date. These points, while intriguing, are difficult if not impossible to prove, as this scribe provides only inferential information on himself.

While it is clear from the text and the tone that Gui wrote for a courtly audience, one can not discount the possibility that this work would be appreciated by a clerical audience as well. Many clergy, especially those of the upper echelons, pictured themselves as aristocracy, regardless of whether they were or were not nobly born. That this could be the case is implied in one of the digressions, as will be shown below.

The author of the digressions makes no mention of himself or of any affiliation. Lines 12984-86 indicate that he is critical of the monks of Clairvaux, as they do not measure up to his own expectations: "Nes en l'ordene de Clerevauz / Ne trovroit on ja mais .i. moigne / Ki voir disans fust sans mençoigne." Given this remark, Armstrong conjectures that he was possibly of the Cistercian order, more specifically the monastery of Vaucelles, given its relative closeness to Cambrai;¹¹ but this hypothesis remains uncertain, for further evidence is lacking.

The four digressions mince few words in their condemnation of both the

¹¹ Armstrong, pp. 30-1.

clergy and nobility. Yet given the poem's dedication to a noble family, they seem strikingly out of place. The later scribe, perhaps realizing for whom Gui's work was originally dedicated, tried to attenuate his criticism, of which lines 13261-80 offer one example, serving as a rough transition and acknowledging the dedicatees, Gilles de Marquais and his wife, while at the same time criticizing their contemporaries:

Tant com'il est mont d'ounor,
Tant en font hui li vavasor
(Et s'en sont il molt recrèu
Selonc ichou que j'ai vëu).
Plus font de bien que li baron,
Car il sont viaus bon compaignon
Et biel parolent à la gent
Et se conroient biel et gent
Et se tiennent lor cors plus chier
Et de vestir et de cauchier.
Et chascuns selonc sa riqueche
Demainne assés grignor nobleche
Ke ne fachent ne roi ne conte,
Ki tout cest siecle ont mis à honte.
Li vavasour sont li plus preu,
S'il .i. petit erent mains leu
De devorer le povre gent.
Et si n'en pueent il noient,
Car ù que soit, lor couvient prendre
Chou qu'à honor voellent despendre. (ll. 13261-80)

Despite the allowances made for the patrons of the work, the virulence of the attack in each digression is more striking. The first digression is found in lines 4967-5043, in the episode where Avenir and Aracis devise a scheme in which Nachor will impersonate the holy hermit Barlaam in the debate defending Christianity against the king's pagan's beliefs. The plan to have Nachor deliberately lose the debate provides the redactor with the perfect vehicle to launch his attack against the scheming of the nobility. Decrying the present day kings and counts who covet false rewards and look only to the satisfaction of their own desires, the copyist states that they will receive

only evil from their dishonor. The people must not trust in them, for they are evil and fallen, and they torment the poor without mercy. But for doing evil to their own people they will be judged and condemned. After this condemnation the copyist calls upon the nobility to repent, pointing out how this earthly existence comes and goes and that what they fail to do in this life they will pay for in the next. There are many identifiable allusions to the Bible in these passages. For example, regarding the nobility's desire for wealth and prestige, the redactor possibly had in mind verses such as Matthew 19:30, wherein Christ states: "But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first;" Mark 10:31: "But many that are first shall be last; and the last first;" Luke 12:21: "So is he that lyeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God"; and the story of the rich man and Lazarus,¹² also found in Luke 16:19-31. Just as the Pharisees falsely equated wealth with righteousness,¹³ so do the nobility, charges the redactor, and he, condemns them, not for being wealthy, but for how they use their wealth:

De prendre tos les faus loiers
Por achater riches mangiers,
Des riches dras lor cors vester
Et sans pitié à gré servir. (ll. 4969-72)

After criticizing the conduct of the nobility amongst themselves, the redactor then condemns their actions towards their subjects: "Departir à la povre gent, / Cui il font vivre à grant torment / et si n'ont d'iaus nule merchi" (ll. 4989-91). He tells them that their actions will condemn them before God:

¹² This Lazarus is not to be confused with the Lazarus whom Christ raised from the dead in John 11.

¹³ Luke 16:14. The story of the rich man was intended to startle them and force them to question their values.

Et si n'ont d'iaus nule merchi
Et Dex, ki passion souffri
Ara grant tort, s'il a pitié
Des haus barons, ki sont jugié
Par lor mëisme jugement
Quant il font mal à povre gent. (ll. 4991-96)

Again the allusions to the teaching of Jesus are clear, particularly to the parable of the unforgiving debtor found in Matthew 18:23-35. The redactor implies that the same fate that befell the unforgiving servant awaits the nobility for their actions. Such criticism is not unique to the saint's life, but is also found in other genres, including the fabliaux, where one finds that "[t]hose who trust in the fact that they possess power, or money, or a wife, can be guaranteed humiliation, loss, or cuckolding..."¹⁴ This passage seems to suggest that the redactor saw himself as the self-appointed judge of the aristocracy. Yet what could explain such animosity towards the audience? It is possible that this redactor was a zealot who saw everything in the starkest terms, and would condemn anyone who fell short of his ideals. Unfortunately we know little of the identity of this later scribe and can only speculate on his reasons for these attacks.

Having seen the ways in which Gui attempted to employ classical themes in his version, the redactor evidently felt compelled to try his hand doing the same. This gesture was probably to prove himself Gui's equal, even though he wrote merely to augment Gui's work. The redactor brings up not only Herod and Pilate, but also Nero and Lucien, men long dead and relegated to history, but the actions of the nobility assure him that they are indeed alive and well:

¹⁴ "Fabliaux," The New Oxford Companion to Literature in French, 1995 ed.

On dist Herodes et Noïrons
 Et Pylates et Luciens
 Estoient mort; mais c'est mençoigne
 Que je vous di bien sans alonge
 Ke cent Herodes trouveroi
 Par le päis, si jes querroie
 Pylates et Herodes vit,
 Car souvent sont à grant delit
 Et en Franche et en Lombardie. (II. 5005-13)

For the redactor, they live in the evil of his contemporaries. Such corruption, in his opinion, extends even up to the king: "Tant com li rois est à Paris / Et Pylates, che m'est à vis, / Est molt sire de Vermendois" (II. 5015-17). This comparison with the rulers of the past is a good effort at biblical allusion, but it lacks the subtlety and ease with which Gui is able to interweave classical elements in his work. The redactor's attempts to identify contemporary officials as evil men akin to sinners from the past also paint him as one ill at ease with the society in which he must live. Finally, having made his point, the redactor attempts to return to the major thread of the story by reminding the audience how evil leads to ruin:

Desci qu'a la Noire Montaigne A Baleham trachié et quis; Nel pot trover, che m'est avis. En la montaigne dont jou di A esgardé, si a choisi Trois cens hermites et molt plus Ki en la roke la dessus Menoient vie d'ermitage, Li hermite, ki sont salvage, S'esmerveillent ki cil estoient Ki si griement les porsivoient Et apriés iaus s'en vont en queste Con li brakes apriés la beste, Ki crie quant il l'a trouvée.	(I. 4958) (I. 4965) (I. 5044) (II. 4958-5049, less the digression)
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The removal of this digression has no negative effect on the story, but rather provides for a coherent reading that more closely follows the Latin original.

Whereas in the first digression the redactor attacked the nobility in general for their actions and the treatment of their subjects, his second digression becomes more specific, accusing certain classes – the knights and clerics – of the sin of sodomy. These accusations were not uncommon, as “overt homosexuality was traditionally allowed among royalty... [in] the cases of Edward II of England, Frederick II of Prussia and Henry III of France.”¹⁵ Clerics were also regarded among the most common offenders. Peter Damian spoke extensively against it at the Council of Reims and in his tract the *Liber Gomorrhianus*. Examples such as these, as well as verses such as Leviticus 18:22 and Romans 1:27, undoubtedly were familiar to the redactor and not far from his mind when he composed this tirade.

The unknown scribe is able to insert the second digression more smoothly than his previous one, for it comes during Nachor’s defense of Christianity against the priests of Avenir. After reading how Gui names several pagan gods such as “Dané,” “Leda,” “Anthyopem,” “Semelem,” “Zethon,” “Apollo,” among others, the scribe sees an opportunity to launch his attack after lines 7078-79: “Ki avoit non Ganymedes. / Cis estoit maistre sodomites.”¹⁶

The redactor, bemoaning that homosexuals chase after the wrong beauty, goes on to state:

¹⁵ Michael Goodich, The Unmentionable Vice (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio Inc., 1979) xii.

¹⁶ Ganymede, a Trojan, was the son of Tros and Callirrhoe; called the most beautiful of mortal men, he was abducted by Zeus who made him cupbearer to the Gods. The

Vous ki desnaturés nature
 Ki fausés toute sa droiture
 Car entendes .i. por ichi
 C'onques n'ait Dex de vous merchi
 Tant com vous estes entechié
 De si desnaturel pechié. (ll. 7085-90)

The redactor clearly saw the sin of homosexuality as a problem that must be faced. Yet he tempers his attack against his countrymen, reminding his audience that as a case of perverse *translatio studii*, this sin is not unique to France, but comes from the Greeks. "Felon Roman felon franchois! /Ceste malisce est des Grigois" (ll. 7009-10). Even so, it has not altered its behavior and its appearance in Champagne is still just as damnable. Events at the end of the twelfth century, however, seem to indicate that this later scribe was the last of a dying breed. Reforms such as those instituted by Alain de Lille in his *Liber poenitentialis*, while still condemning this sin against nature, recommend less harsh treatment for those found guilty.¹⁷

After the attack, the copyist again must resort to a brief summary to resume the thread of the story. Just as the first digression could be removed from the story with no noticeable effects on the narrative, so too can this digression be safely excised from the text, to bring together two lines that rime and flow well together.

Od lui estoit uns biax varlés (7077)
 Ki avoit non Ganymedés.
 Cis estoit maistre sodomites (7079)
 Et enchanteres et crites. (ll. 7077-130 less the digression)

The third digression, the shortest of the four (ll. 11397-11428), takes Avenir's death as a pretext to call upon all sinners to repent. It points out the great evil which

sexual implications of his abduction were clearly understood by medieval commentators.

¹⁷ Goodich 35.

Avenir had committed: “Cis rois fu molt criueus et faus / Et fist al siecle tant mains maus” (ll. 114303-4).¹⁸ Yet while Avenir was indeed evil in the beginning of the tale, he repented and was forgiven. The redactor uses this occasion to call upon his audience not to wait until they are about to die to repent, but to do so at once:

Mais dementrués que vous vivés,
Faites bien, si comme cis fist
Dont ceste estoire conte et dist,
Car par les biens k’il fist el monde
Fist il son cors de pechié monde.
Ensi mondés com’il monda,
Car en cest monde si monda
Et tant fist par amendement:
Del mont issi tout monnement. (ll. 11420-29)

Clearly the redactor is attempting to elicit a change in the behavior of Gui’s targeted audience. Such an obvious concern in a story in which Gui seldom addresses his audience directly clearly stands out and marks this redactor as one who, while opinionated, appears to have had a genuine concern for the eternal salvation of the audience. And as with the other two digressions, should this passage be removed, a smooth reading of the text would still be possible.

The final digression is the longest of the four, 345 lines (ll. 12935-13280), and also the most virulent in tone. Lines 12938-40 indicate that the story has drawn to a close, awaiting only a suitable conclusion: “Mais vous, ki estes anemi / Nostre Signor, n’entendés mie / De Yozaphas s’oeuvre et sa vie!” This was one last opportunity to attack and call to repent those whom he saw as the source of much of the evil in the world, namely the nobility, the Pope, the Church and its members,

¹⁸ The evil that Avenir committed, and his repentance, is also mentioned during the debate of the Body and Soul, see above.

monks and society as a whole. All are taken to task for the woes he believes are caused at their hands.

The attacks begin with the nobility, whose actions the scribe neither approves of nor understands. Rather than using their positions of power and privilege for good, they are selfish and look only to satisfy their own needs:

Vous haut baron, et vous signor,
Ki tant castel et tante tour
Et ki tenés tante cité
Chi n'avés vous gaires pensé!
Vous ki vestés les dras de soie
Car esgardés com povre joie
Et por de bien en cest siecle a!
Tes i est nés, mar i entra
Por coi naski qui ne fait bien? (ll. 12941-49)

This attack against nobles who hold so many castles and cities is yet another instance which confirms that Gui was writing for a courtly audience.

In this final digression there is a noticeable lack of allusions to the Bible and its stories. Those included are veiled, possibly understood only by those members of the Church who read this story. If such is the case, the redactor seems to have known that this tale would be seen and or copied by other members of the clergy, and counted on them to understand the full import of his words. The attacks in this digression are more direct, with an almost personal tone. Continuing the attack on the nobility he writes:

Vostre palais et vostres sales
Remainent molt wides et pales
Car vous haés le compaignie
D'onnor et de chevalrie
Li trahitour, le losengier
Sont vostre maistre-despensier
Cil vous mainnent à recelée
Al fu devant la chiminé. (ll. 13097-104)

By disdaining all things honorable, their palaces and halls are nothing but a shell, lacking the inner soul that comes from following Christ. They are so consumed with amassing their own wealth that they will commit any sin, even going so far as to kill their own: “Car resgardés à la vostre ocire” (l. 13113).

The subjects of the aristocracy fare none too well and are viewed as nothing more than sources of income, never beneficiaries (ll. 13152-56), and the nobles’ sins are so great that the redactor suggests a Crusade is in order by which they may redeem themselves and regain their friendship with God:¹⁹

Quant Damerdeu et s’amistié
Avés perdu par tel maniere
Envoisie est cele baniere
Ki à Damas devoit aler
Pour paenime conquer. (ll. 13134-38)

However, his pleas fall on deaf ears, as the nobility love their own country, and hence their own power, more than they love God and doing his will (ll. 13142-46). In the redactor’s eyes they fear the one who can take their earthly life, but not the one who can take their soul. This is contrary to Luke 12:4-5: “And I say unto you my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you. Fear him.” Seeing only the here and now, they have lost sight of the end and the prize it has to offer them. The redactor

¹⁹ In order to advance the aims of the Church, going on a Crusade was touted as means of redemption, and would shorten the time one would spend in Purgatory before entering paradise. While there is no biblical evidence that Purgatory exists, apart from an inference in the non-canonical book of 2 Maccabees 12:42-45, it was commonly thought that all righteous souls had to spend time there to be purified before entering God’s presence.

probably thought that they had also forgotten Psalm 24:1: “The Earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.”

The actions of the nobles have even corrupted their families, the basic social unit upon which temporal power was based. In this scribe’s eyes, every member was intent on amassing personal power. Yet if these attacks against the nobles are particularly harsh, they are minor in comparison with those launched against the Church and its clergy, who saw themselves, as mentioned above, as an aristocracy in their own right. According to the scribe, as men of God the prelates are responsible not only for spreading the Gospel, but also for the instruction and edification of the flock. As such, they are held to higher standards than the common man. The redactor sets himself up as judge, and his condemnation is severe, especially against those monks from Clairvaux:

Bien entendés sainte escripture
Mais n’en volés faire noient
Encontre vostre entendement
Faits les maus et les enghiens. (ll. 13052-55)

The crisis in the Church has come about through a loss of Faith: “Foi? Dex! c’est vois, Fois est perie / Car Trahisons et Felonnie” (ll. 12963-64). Seeing the power being accumulated by the nobility, certain men of the cloth sought to do the same for themselves regarding things spiritual. Instead of preaching the Gospel, they have become preachers of evil:

Et li prelat de Sainte eglise
Sont hui cest jor prelat de mal
Devenu sont symonial
Chascuns ki a riens en baillie
Est mais symons et symonie

Mescreant sont et sodomite
Nature en iaus tot claimme cuite.

(ll. 12966-72)

Charges of simony against the clergy date back to biblical times and were not uncommon in the Middle Ages.²⁰ Church offices were often bought and sold, and in order to recoup their expenses the clergy would charge their faithful for the sacraments or rituals. This practice was undoubtedly present, if not rampant, in the area in which the scribe was working in order to provoke such wrath.

While the monks of Clairvaux were the local recipients of the redactor's ire, the real source of their decadence could only be Rome. If the head of the Church, to which the faithful look for guidance, is corrupt, then they will be as well. This corruption is particularly difficult for the redactor to accept, as he believes the Church to be the bride of Christ. Yet like the wife of the prophet Hosea, this wife is a prostitute and has sold herself for trinkets:

Or ies tu femme de bordel
Ki por hainture u por aniel
Fait à l'omme tout son plaisir
Tu commences gens à trahir
Et par droiture et par raison
Es ore chiés de trahison
Ki chiés fus de crestiienté
Mais crestien sont remüé.

(ll. 12997-13004)

²⁰ See 1 Samuel 1-4. Hophni and Phinehas were two priests that were killed for taking offerings to God for their own use. See Geoffrey Barraclough, The Medieval Papacy (New York, 1968) 71, 81-82, 174: "...Guido of Arezzo began to agitate against what he called the 'simony' of the German kings, and branded lay investiture of bishops as heresy." And "In March 1074 a Roman synod ordered the deposition of simoniacal priests...a new Roman synod promulgated the famous decree against lay investiture: "If anyone in future receives a bishopric or abbey from the hands of any layman, he is under no circumstances to be ranked among the bishops, and we exclude him from the grace of St. Peter..." Boniface IX was the most well-known of the simoniacs.

The measure of the redactor's anger against the Church is shown by his comparison of it to the Jews. Accused of having killed Christ and loathed for their practice of loaning money with interest, the Jews were often depicted as the lowest level of society. To juxtapose the Church with a synagogue would be a serious insult and an indication of the level of contempt in which it was held by the redactor: "Saint Eglise est et mate et mue / Car Synagoge est devenue" (ll. 13023-24).

The scribe takes pains throughout his attacks to note that the evil-doers have been warned and yet refuse to hear. His writing echoes Christ's teachings of the four soils – as an indicator of where the Gospel would be favorably received – and Barlaam's hopes for the instruction that he will provide Josaphaz, when he admonishes the audience, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Mark 4:9). According to the scribe, too many clerics do not hear the Gospel because they are more interested in selling it. Though such sales were rationalized as necessary to promote the word of God, the scribe asserts that God was opposed to such things: "De chou se plaint Dex nostre sire / K'il est adies par toi vendus" (ll. 13010-11).

Although not written by Gui, the digressions are nonetheless an important part of the text, as it has been transmitted to us and as at least one medieval audience knew it. The digressions' attacks against the nobility appear to support the theory that Gui did indeed write for an aristocratic audience, and that it would probably be accessible to members of the Church as well.

Chapter Six Conclusion

The three old French versions in verse of the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* occupy an important place in medieval French literature. Based upon the life of a saint, the verse versions blur genre boundaries and thus call into question the modern method of classification for medieval literary works. While a majority of saints' lives are easily grouped together in one genre, that of the saint's life, the three versions of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* can be classified separately: one as hagiographical, one as romance, and one as romance/epic.

In exploring this issue I first examined each of the authors in turn and found that their story is almost as fascinating as the tale they told. I tried to show how their background, or what we know of it, influenced the final product of their labors. Of the three, the anonymous author remained most faithful to his source, hiding behind a cloak of anonymity, seeking to edify his audience. Chardri, writing in England, viewed the tale itself as an edifying story, reducing or eliminating altogether the parables while Gui de Cambrai, by all accounts a professional writer working on commission, wrote a tale that allowed him to demonstrate his literary prowess. Each man brought unique skills to his work and his outlook, as well as his intended audience, can be divined from his particular version of the story.

I then examined the style of the authors of the three verse versions of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* and found that their differences of style are as varied as the audiences the authors intended to reach. The anonymous author, in keeping close to his source material and aiming to instruct his audience, relies on *sermocinatio*. The extended monologues of Barlaam as he explains Church doctrine to the young Josaphaz are

clearly those of a teacher to his student, imparting one lesson after another. The characters in this version are not so much individuals as they are means for dispensing knowledge, advancing the story through a series of discrete episodes.

Chardri's style is notable for its economy of words. He deftly moves his characters through the tale, trusting that their actions provide sufficient religious instruction. Relying on basic character descriptions and formulae that were stock phrases in medieval romance, the personages in Chardri's work fulfill that genre's typical roles.

Of the three authors, Gui de Cambrai alone makes extensive use of *inventio*, not only in his treatment of the parables contained in *Barlaam et Josaphaz* and the religious debate, but in his addition of the battle scenes between father and son, and the debate of body and soul. Not being a part of the source material, these last two episodes mark Gui as a talented writer who, by inserting them into his version of the work, elevated the saint's life genre into something new. Instead of simply edifying, it also was entertaining. These episodes, contributed to the development of the characters in Gui's version, enabling them to be depicted beyond the mere two dimensions that were typical of other works in this genre.

The style of each of the three versions in verse also affect the perception of the genre to which it belongs, and in this study I hope to have shed a small amount of light onto this subject. By examining what today's scholars mean by genre, and more specifically what is meant when referring to hagiography, romance and epic, and how they relate to or on occasion share similar qualities, I tried to establish a baseline by which one could categorize the different versions. Being based upon a saint's life, all

three works could be listed as hagiographical, yet upon closer examination two of the three versions – those of Chardri and Gui de Cambrai – appeared to fit into a second category as well.

It is in this marriage of the author to his work that I hoped to have made a significant contribution to the study of this saint's life. By studying the content of the story as each author told it, looking at the vocabulary, the additions and deletions, and digressions, I tried to show how each author had a preconceived audience in mind when he composed his work. Writing to instruct, entertain, or achieve a combination of the two, each author succeeded in composing a work best suited for the audience that he was trying to reach. In doing so, they have bequeathed to future scholars works on which research will surely prove rewarding.

Appendix A

The Story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz*

The story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* follows that of the Buddha, and is summarized below:

In the early years of the Christian Church there lived in India a powerful king by the name of Avenir. Handsome and brave, he was a pagan and vehemently opposed to the Christian faith, ordering the persecution of the Christians, especially the monks whom he saw as the main proponents of the new faith in his land. His persecutions were so severe that only those monks who were able to flee to the desert were able to survive. Once rid of the Christians and their new faith, a period of calm pervaded the kingdom.

During this time of tranquility Josaphaz, Avenir's long desired son, was born. To celebrate his birth, the king invited all of his counts, barons, knights and bourgeois to a great feast at the temple of his gods. Also among the invitees were fifty-five astrologers who were to foretell the boy's future. Almost unanimously they told the king that Josaphaz will become the most powerful, wisest and most loved king the country has ever known. However, one astrologer took the king aside and told him that while it was true that Josaphaz is destined to be a powerful king, he will also embrace the Christian faith. Upon hearing this Avenir decided to have a castle built, far away from the town, where his son would have no contact with any but those approved by the king.

Once Josaphaz came of age, Avenir surrounded him with companions and teachers with the instruction – upon pain of death – that Josaphaz never learn of the evils that can befall man (poverty, old age, illness and death) nor of the Christians and

their faith. Having thus secured his son, Avenir undertook a final purge to rid the kingdom of the last of the Christians.

Despite these precautions, Josaphaz wondered at his constrained existence in the castle, and, after careful questioning of his seneschal, learned of the hatred his father held for the Christians. Upon Avenir's next visit, Josaphaz questioned the necessity of his isolation and prevailed upon his father to let him travel outside his prison. Though Avenir ordered his attendants to accompany his son, in order to shield him from the ills of man, Josaphaz met, in succession, a blind man, a leper, and an old man, and spent much time in contemplation.

Now that Josaphaz was in the proper frame of mind, God sent the holy hermit, Barlaam, to instruct him. Posing as a merchant with a precious stone for the prince, Barlaam gained admittance to the castle and began to teach Josaphaz about the Christian faith, mainly through the use of parables. (These parables, of Eastern origin, played an important part in the popularity of the tale throughout Western Europe.) At the end of his instruction, Josaphaz was baptized.

Avenir learned of his son's conversion and set out to bring him back into the pagan fold. He arranged a debate between Barlaam and his pagan priests, but when Barlaam eluded capture Avenir forced Nachor, one of his subjects to impersonate the holy man. Josaphaz learned of the deception and convinced Nachor that he must win the debate on pain of torture. Nachor then delivered the famed "Apology of Aristide," and vanquished the pagan priests. In the process, Nachor was himself converted and left for the desert in order to better serve his Lord.

Having failed to convert his son back to the ancient ways, Avenir, under the advice of Arachie, one of his counselors, gave half of his kingdom to his son; believing that a Christian will lack the fortitude to rule effectively. When Josaphaz's kingdom prospered, Avenir conceded, and was converted. Turning the rest of his kingdom over to his son, Avenir went into the desert to live out the rest of his days.

Josaphaz wanted to return to the desert as well and left his kingdom in the hands of his trusted advisor, Barachie, who ruled it wisely. Josaphaz returned to his former master and remained with him for the rest of his days, in the service of his Lord.

Appendix B

The Story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz*, Its Origins and Voyage to the West

The narrative of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* had a long history before finding its way into western literature. Based on the life of Siddhartha Gautama, later known as the Buddha, it tells the tale of the son of a local ruler on the slopes of the Himalayas at the turn of the fifth and sixth centuries CE. First written as the *Lalita Vistiara* and then translated into Pehlavi some time in the seventh century, this version possibly played a part in the struggle between the Metropolitan See of the Eastern Nestorian Church and the Seleucia-Ctesiphon Catholicoate, in northern India, in order to secure independence for their own Catholicoate. To achieve this, it would first be necessary to cast doubt on the traditional story of how the Apostle Thomas brought the Christian faith to India after the death and resurrection of the Christ:

“To Simon was allotted Rome, and to John Ephesus; to Thomas India, and to Addaeus the country of the Assyrians. And, when they were sent each one of them to the district which had been allotted to him, they devoted themselves to bring the several countries to discipleship.”¹

This tradition is reinforced by certain Manichaen documents, such as the Acta Thomae, by the Syrian writer Ephraim, and the church historian Eusebius.² By perceiving in the story of Josaphaz the opportunity to show that Christianity came to India before Thomas, the Nestorians hoped that “their tradition was equal to that of

¹ Ancient Syrian Documents, in Vol. VIII of The Ante-Nicene fathers, ed. Alexander Roberts and J. Donaldson (American Edition; 10 vols; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), 656. Cited in Vinton Harry Shumway, “Eastern Christianity in India to 900 AD with Special Consideration of the Historiography of the St. Thomas Tradition.” Master's Theses, University of Oklahoma, 1967, 11.

² Shumway 13-16.

the Western Church.”³ Even at this early date, one can see the manipulation of the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* to further one group’s ideological aims.

Out of the Pehlavi came an Arabic version, telling the story of *Belawhar et Buddasf* some time between 750 and 900 CE. This version gave rise to two Georgian translations, in the late ninth or early tenth century, namely a long version, entitled the *Balavariani*, and a shorter work, entitled *The Wisdom of Balahvar*. It has been postulated that the *Balavariani* was probably the original of the two Georgian versions, and written by a Byzantine writer called John Mochus.⁴ From this Georgian version came the Greek, and there has arisen a decidedly contentious debate as to the identity of the Greek author, as summarized below.

Scholars have proposed three different authors for the Greek version of the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz*: An anonymous author writing around 600 CE, St. John of Damascus (676-749 CE) and St. Euthymius (d. 1027/8 CE). Each of these proposed attributions has its supporters, as well as its detractors and will be examined in turn.

Of the three, the anonymous author has the weakest case. His case was first proposed by Krumbachor and Kuhn in their examinations of the Greek and Georgian versions of the tale.⁵ However, Kuhn’s ignorance of Georgian and later work by Peeters called into question this theory. Subsequently, the anonymous author can not be a viable candidate because the supporting material is insufficient.

³ Shumway 13.

⁴ Shumway 13.

⁵ Robert Lee Wolf. “Barlaam and Iosaph,” Harvard Theological Review 32 (1939), 135.

St. John of Damascus' case is based on a late manuscript tradition. This manuscript, beginning with "Barlaam and Ioasaph, An Edifying Story from the Inner Land of the Ethiopians, called the Land of the Indians, thence brought to the Holy City by John the Monk an Honourable Man and a Virtuous of the Monastery of St. Saba."⁶ However, "no manuscript dating from before 1500 names John of Damascus as the author."⁷ Owing to the fact that John of Damascus did retire and die at St. Saba, he was identified by copyists as the John of the title. This attribution then became tradition.

Franz Dölger took up the case of John of Damascus in his work Der griechische Barlaam-Roman-ein Werk des H. Johannes von Damaskos. However, this did not win wide acceptance due to the author's "contradictory and tendentious mode of argument, and his lack of knowledge about the problems of Georgian language and literature."⁸

Another point against John of Damascus as the author is that the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* contains works, or excerpts, from stories to which John could not have had access, such as the tenth-century version of Simeon the Metaphrast's *Passion of St. Catherine*.⁹ While use of a tenth-century work would normally discount the possibility of an eight-century author, one can not ignore the possibility that the Saint Catherine material was inserted at a later date. However, further proof is lacking. While Rutledge agrees with naming John as the author, after having

⁶ Wolf 131.

⁷ Wolf 132.

⁸ Lang 25.

⁹ Lang 132.

examined the available material¹⁰ I must disagree, and instead attribute the story to hand of St. Euthymius.

An Athonite monk, from the monastery of St. Athanasius, Euthymius was identified as the author, and Georgian the source language in manuscript Marc. VII, 26, and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale 1771. A prolific writer, Euthymius had also translated the Bible, the Apocrypha, evegetics, dogmatics, polemics, ascetus and various hagiographica. Scattered excerpts from Euthymius's Life of St. Catherine, the Martyrdom of St. Eustratius and the Apology of Aristides (which has survived in no other work, either in whole or in part) point to an author who was well read and well skilled as a translator, two qualities that would be very useful in bringing the story of *Barlaam et Josaphaz* to the western world. Today, a consensus has been formed for the acceptance of St. Euthymius as the Greek author of *Barlaam et Josaphaz*, though many more years of debate will pass before this question is finally put to rest.

From the Greek, the story was translated into Latin under the title "Hystoria Barlaae et Iosaphat de Interiori Aethiopia Deducta per Venerabilem Monachum Monaasterii Sancti Sabae in Helium Urbem et Translata inEolico per Eufinium Sanctium Virum." This work was done in approximately 1048 CE, most certainly by a someone connected to the Church. The translation exists in some eighty manuscripts of varying length, and these attest to the popularity of the legend.¹¹

¹⁰ See bibliography.

¹¹ For a complete listing of these manuscripts see Le Roman de Barlaam et Josaphaz, Vol. I, (Paris: Editions J. Vrin, 1949), 71-116.

Appendix C Timeline

BCE

- 1215 Birth of Siddharta Gautama, later known as Buddha, in Lumbini, a village near the modern border between India and Nepal.

CE

- 525-31 First version of debate between religions, by Scheda Regia of Agapetus.
- 620-38 Debate on the relation of human and divine will.
- 633 Cyrus of Alexandria's Nine Articles.
- 676 Birth of John of Damascus.
- 749 Death of John of Damascus.
- 750-900 Arabic version.
- 1000 Greek version.
- 1021 Death of St. Jean the Hagiorite
- 1027/8 Death of Euthymius.
- 1042-45 St. Georges the Hagiorite wrote the life of Euthymius.
- 1048 Latin translation
- 1180~ Anonymous verse version.
- 1215 Verse version by Chardri.
Verse version by Gui de Cambrai.
- 1612 Diego de Corto makes the connection between *Barlaam et Josaphaz* and the Buddha. This is forgotten until...
- 1859 Laboulaye & Liebrecht again make the connection between the two stories.
- 1864 Edition of Gui de Cambrai's version by Meyer and Zotenberg.
- 1879 Edition of Chardri's version by Koch.
- 1886 Zotenberg's studies of the Greek version.
- 1889 Harris discovers a Syriac manuscript containing the *Apology of Aristedes*.
- 1893 Kuhn's study.
- 1907 Edition of Gui de Cambrai's version by Appel.
- 1950 Edition of the anonymous author's version by Sonet.
- 1953 Dölger proposes John of Damascus as the author.
- 1973 Edition of Chardri's version by Rutledge

Appendix D The Introduction of Gui de Cambrai

Due to the contamination of Gui's work by a later scribe it is theorized that the original introduction was split up and inserted piecemeal throughout the story. Both Edward C. Armstrong and Carl Appel have attempted to reconstruct Gui's original introduction. The results of their efforts are given below.

Armstrong's Version¹

Por Guillon, qui est de Marcais,	30
Et sa feme qu'a non Marie	32
Est ceste estoire commencie.	33
S'onnours, ses sens, sa compaignie	13292
Fait a proisier et a loër.	
N'i voel pas longhes demorer,	
Que jou ne samble losengier,	13295
Mais je ne sai nul chevalier	
Ki si bien sache [s']ounor faire,	
Ne cui donner ne cui retraire,	
Ne plus loiaus soit a signor.	
De tant l'ai jou gaitié maint jor,	13300
C'ainc ne l'oï .i. jour mesdire	
K'il ne desist: "Preus est mes sire,"	
En maint liu l'a rescous souvent,	
Car on parole laidement	
Et des contes et des barons	
(S'il l'ont forfait, c'est bien raisons).	13306
Il est assez de haut linage.	13313
La dame rest et preus et sage	
Et sans orgueil et desmesure:	
En li ne me[n]t pas noureture.	
Por lui, por li ai l'uevre emprise.	13317
.....	13318
.....	13319
Mesire Giles de Markais	13320
En ert apriés sa mort nommés	
Tant com durra crestiientés,	
Et sa femme, cela Marie	
Ki par bonne evre se Marie	

¹ Edward C. Armstrong, The French Metrical Versions of Barlaam and Josaphat, (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1922), 26-7

A Damerdiu, nostre signor.	13325
Cil en prient le creator	
Ki ceste hystoire oïr vorront	
Et tout cil ki l'escouteront	
Que de lor ames ait merchi	
Cil ki en crois por nous pendi,	13330
Et de chelui ki le trouva,	
Ki le traita et ki l'ouvra,	
Et si nous doinst tous bonne vie	
Et nous meche en sa compaignie!	13334
Signor, car entednés al conte	13342
.....	13342a
Et a l'ystoire que je fas	13343
D'avenir et de Yozaphas	13344
Jadis...	37

Appel's Version²

Qui bien commence et qui bein sert,	
Guerredon au doble desert.	
Et qui bien sert, si gart comment	
Bon-los de bon commencement	
Son service fait et emploie.	5
De grant dolor naist molt grans joie.	
Bonne est la vie dolereuse	
Dont on atent la glorieuse;	
Car, si con conte ceste estoire,	
Petit vaut hui l'umainne gloire.	10
L'umaine gloire est decevable,	
Mais cil qui servent au diable,	
N'entendent pas à Deu servir	
Par mesfait cuident deservir	
Ce qu'à paine deserviroit	15
Cil qui bien fait, à son endroit.	
Decëu sunt en lor afaire.	
Ne vuel pas long prologue faire,	
Ains vuel à l'estoire venir	
De Josaphas et d'Avenir	20
Je vous di voir; ne vous menc pas.	
Jehans, uns vesques de Damas,	
Le translata molt hautement,	
Car il le sot bien vraiment;	
Et uns Jehans le nous presta;	25
En Arouaise l'emprunta.	

² Appel, Carl. Rev. of The French Metrical Versions of Barlaam and Josaphat, by Edward C. Armstrong. Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie 40 (1925), 359-66.

Cil Jehans ert d'Arras doiens;
 Je cuic k'il ert bons crestiens;
 Haus hom estoit, de grant nobleche
 Et de parage et de hauteche. 30
 L'estoire ama de Baleham;
 De Jehan vint chi par Jehan.
 Guys de Cambray, ki l'a rimée
 Et en roumanch l'a trnaslatée
 35

 Por Gillon, qui est de Markais,
 Et sa feme, qu'a non Marie,
 Est ceste estoire commence. 40
 S'onnours, ses sens sa compaignie
 Fait a proisier et a loër
 N'i voel pas longhes demorer,
 Que jou ne samble losengier; 45
 Ne je ne sai nul chevalier
 Ki si bien sache hounor faire
 Ne cui donner ne cui retraire,
 Ne plus loiaus soit à signor.
 De tant l'ai jou gaitié maint jor, 50
 C'ainc ne l'öi .i. jour mesdire,
 K'il ne desist: "Preus est mes sire."
 En maint lieu l'a rescous souvent,
 Car on parole laidement
 Et des contes et des barons 55
 (S'il l'ont forfait, c'est bien raisons).
 Il est assés de haut linage.
 La dame rest et preus et sage
 Et sans orgueil et desmesure.
 En li ne ment pas noureture. 60
 Por lui, por li ai l'uevre emprise
 Qui molt est prés de la fin mise.
 La renommée n'ert ja mais.
 Mesire Gilles de Markais
 En ert apries sa mort nommés 65
 Tant com durra crestientés,
 Et sa femme, cele Marie,
 Ki par bonne evre se marie
 A Damerdiu, nostre signor.
 Cil em prient le creator 70
 Ki ceste hystoire oïr vorront
 Et tout cil ki l'escouteront,
 Que de lor ames ait merchi

Cil ki en crois por nous pendi,	
Et de chelui ki le trouva	75
Ki le trata et ki l'ouvra	
Et si nous doinst tous bonne vie	
Et nous meche en sa compaignie!	
.....	
Signor, car entendés al conte	80
Et à l'ystoire que jo fas	
D'Avenir et de Yozaphas.	
Jadis, au tans des anciens,	
Estoit molt maus, mais que li biens	
Florisçoit plus et ert en face.	85
Etc.	

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