

OBSERVATIONS ON THE BESTE GLATISSANT
IN THE *TRISTAN EN PROSE*

The Beste Glatissant has periodically fascinated modern scholars of Arthurian literature, perhaps partly because the beast appears in a variety of contexts and forms. The description of this composite beast varies significantly in different romances. Sometimes Perceval or Pellinor, sometimes Palamède pursues the beast. Texts such as the *Perlesvaus* present the beast as a metaphor for the Old and New Laws and associate it with the Grail Quest, but later texts link the beast with the Devil, the "enemie." While several of these aspects of the Beste Glatissant's portrayal have drawn attention, the meaning and role of this animal in the principal versions of the *Tristan en prose* remain unstudied. An examination of the Beste Glatissant in Versions I and II of the *Tristan en prose*¹ reveals that the *Tristan* author is responsible for significant developments in the beast's presentation and that these developments are linked particularly to the discussion of love in that romance.

Previous studies of the Beste Glatissant have focused almost exclusively on literature other than the *Tristan*.² W. A. Nitze examines the occurrence of the beast in the *Perlesvaus* and in the Gerbert *Continuation*, studying in particular the possible origins of the beast in Celtic, oriental, and other sources.³ His main comment on the *Tristan en prose* concerns the beast's "demonic origin" (p. 418), which Nitze takes as further support for his remarks about orientalism.⁴ Linette Muir particularly concentrates upon the link between the Beste Glatissant's portrayal in the minor versions of the *Tristan* and in the *Merlin*, *Perleवास*, the Gerbert *Continuation*, *Perceforest*, and the Spanish and Portuguese *Demandas*.⁵ Her choice of *Tristan* texts reveals her interest in the Beste's portrayal in later Arthurian romances, but she does not explore Versions I and II of the *Tristan*. Edina Bozóky's discussion of the Beste Glatissant reviews the same literature as the two previous scholars, but concentrates on the role of the beast, specifically the connection between the Beste and the theme of questing.⁶ Claude Roussel⁷ studies the changes of form the Beste Glatissant undergoes in its history. Roussel also associates the Beste with the theme of questing and restates the animal's evolution from a religious allegory to a fearsome, even diabolical animal.

These studies share several traits and reveal the need for further study of the Beste Glatissant as it appears in the *Tristan*. Modern scholars are primarily interested in such texts as the *Perlesvaus*, the Gerbert *Continuation*, the *Merlin*, the Spanish and Portuguese *Demandas*, and the *Perceforest*. When they mention the *Tristan en prose* they cite a few minor manuscripts⁸ which give the portrayals most clearly connected to the evolution of the Beste Glatissant from religious allegory to fantastic but diabolical beast. Their comments give little evidence that they know the major versions of

the *Tristan*. All of their interests are legitimate, but our knowledge and appreciation of the role and nature of the Beste Glatissant is incomplete without a study of this animal's presence in major texts of the *Tristan*. An examination of the Beste's appearances in Versions I and II of the *Tristan* reveals that this beast differs from ones found in the texts commonly cited. In particular, the beast's description differs in context, in content, or in symbolism from that of other Bestes Glatissant; Palamède's pursuit of the animal is closely related to his pursuit of Iseut; and most importantly, the identification of a non-Christian knight as the quester for the beast recasts this pursuit as a counterpart to the more famous quest for the Grail.

The circumstances under which the Beste appears in Versions I and II distinguish it from its other presentations. For example, Versions I and II give no history for the Beste Glatissant, no indication of its origins or its fate, unlike the minor versions of the *Tristan*.⁹ Also, Versions I and II, unlike manuscripts B.N. 112 and 343, do not state that the Beste caused the death of Palamède's eleven brothers. In fact, Palamède's brother Sephar actually appears in Versions I and II. Even when Esclabor, Palamède's father, mentions that Palamède is his only surviving son (336: 302c), he says nothing about how the others died. Finally, the only stated reason for Palamède's pursuit of the Beste Glatissant is that he wishes to learn why it yelps (336: 303a).¹⁰ Thus the motif of vengeance so important in B.N. 112 and 343 is entirely absent from the major versions, as is the connection between the beast and major figures associated with the Grail quest (especially Perceval and Galaad).

In addition to a different context for the beast's presentation, the *Tristan* contains important innovations in the beast's description. Though most texts present the beast as a fantastic animal, the descriptions vary greatly, as the following passages reveal:

une beste blanche comme nois neigee, e estoit graindre d'un lievre e mendre d'un gorpil. La beste vint en la lande tote esfree[e], car ele avoit .xii. chaines dedand sun ventre, qui glatissoient autresi dedenz li comme chenerie de bois. (*Perlesvaus*, ll. 5494-5498)¹¹

Une beste grant a merveille.
Perchevaus toz s'en esmerveille
Que de demander est refrains,
Car la beste, qui tote est prains,
S'en va par devant lui fuiaint,
Et dedans li vont abaient
Si faon, con chien qui glatissent
(Gerbert *Continuation*, vv. 8379-8385)¹²

elle estoit diverse seur toutes les autres bestes: car ele estoit blanche comme noif et avoit teste et col de berbis, si avoit pié de chien et quisses, et estoient noir comme carbon, et si avoit le pis et le crepon et le cors de goupil et keue de lyon. (*Estoire del Saint Graal*)¹³

une beste mult grant que estoit la plus divers que onques fust veu de sa figure, car tant estoit divers, laide e orible e estraunge e grant a desmesure. E plus se merveille lui rois d'une chose, car la beste que prainz estoit s'en venoit grant oire a la fontaigne e aloient abaiaint et glatissant dedans son ventre si faon. (*Suite Huth du Merlin*)¹⁴

piez de cerf et cuisses et queue de lyon et corps de lyepart et teste de serpent et yssoit de lui un glatissement si grant comment se .xx. chens glatissent dedans lui. (*Tristan*, B.N. 335: 138a)¹⁵

elle a teste et col de serpent barbellee et refraingné, les yeux luisans comme charboncle, la bouche ardant qu'il semble que feu en saille. Les oreilles droictes comme ung levrier, corps et queue de lyon. Sur le dos auprès des espaulles avoit une voilles reflambissans comme rayz de souleil, et sur le faiz de la crouppe pareillent. Jambes avoit et pies de cerf. Le pommel (?) estoit de diverses manieres taché, car toutes les couleurs du monde y estoient. Le regard de ses yeulx estoit qu'il semblast que ce feussent deux torches. Ces dens estoient plus grans que d'un grant sengler. (Post-Vulgate *Queste* B.N. 112)¹⁶

Ceste beste avoit teste de serpent et le col d'une beste que les Sarrasins nomment Dogglor (var. Dagglor), et estoit ce col tant merueilleux que toutes les couleurs du monde y apparoissoient ordonnéement assises et compassées, et vous advertiz que la reverberation des couleurs qui se entremesloient au ray du soleil estoit tant delectable que tous ceulz qui la veoient en ce point oubloient tous autres deduictz, ne jamais d'icelle veue ne se feussent voulu departir ... Encore avecques ce il sembloit parfois à tous ceulz qui la regardoient dans ce flamboyement de couleurs qu'ilz veissent pucelles, dames et damoiselles ou chevaliers, selon ce que le courages de ceulz qui la regardoient estoient affectez. Et lors ilz estoient tellement daviz en ce tant plaisant regard qu'il n'y avoit en eulx sens ne adviz" (*Perceforest*)¹⁷

Comparison of these texts reveals that the Beste of the *Tristan* occupies a key position in the development of the animal from a fantastic, but not composite, beast whose appearance carries religious symbolism to a demonic, composite beast which entrances its observers. In the texts earlier than or contemporary to the *Tristan*, only the beast of the *Estoire* is a composite beast, and its composite parts do not correspond to those of the animal in the *Tristan*. The tail alone is the same in both descriptions. In the *Perlesvaus*, the Gerbert *Continuation*, the *Tristan* (though "comment se" allows ambiguity), and the *Huth Merlin*, the yelping comes from within; in other texts the beast herself yelps or hounds pursuing the beast yelp. The diabolical qualities of the Beste, its iridescence and entrancing nature are missing from the main versions of the *Tristan* and seem to be later authors' additions to the beast's portrayal, as the passages from the Post-Vulgate *Queste* (e.g. B.N. 112) and *Perceforest* suggest. Only manuscripts B.N. 112, 24400, and 343 of the *Tristan* contain the features which have attracted the most attention, both from modern scholars and from writers of later medieval texts treating the Beste Glatissant.¹⁸ Since the *Tristan* author created rather than borrowed this description, we should suspect that this choice has implications for the narrative.

Though an allegorical interpretation of the Beste's description in the *Tristan* would be inappropriate since with few exceptions the distinctive material of the *Tristan* (the part not taken directly from the Vulgate *Queste*) is devoid of any such commentary,¹⁹ the references to particular animals belong to the ensemble of motifs associated with theme of love. For example, frequent references to the snake in the *Tristan en prose* link this animal with passion and emphasize the view that passion is the result of pride. This link is most clear in Palamède's descriptions of love during the Quest. Palamède addresses love, saying "vous fusiez nee por le destrui-

ment del monde. Voir li serpent qi notre premier pere Adam gieta de cel paradis terrien fust il montez au celestien vous norri et alaita. Amor, amor cil serpenz vous norri et alaita et nous autres. Et por ce estez vous si mencongiere car le diable qi vous norri n'ot oncquez si menconges non..." (757: 174b; 336: 140c-d).²⁰ In Palamède's analysis, Amor causes Palamède to desire Iseut out of pride, just as the serpent tempted Adam to disobey God out of pride. Both Palamède and Adam suffer exile for their sin—Adam from Paradise, Palamède from Iseut. Since the snake is associated with pride, the first sin,²¹ the author of the *Tristan* appropriately used the snake for the Beste's head.

The deer's feet, which give the Beste Glatissant its characteristic swiftness and illusiveness, recall the common use of the deer as an animal whose pursuit in medieval literature functions as a metaphor for discovery. Indeed, the beast in the *Tristan* is forever sought and never caught, just like the *cerfs* in the romance, whether other-worldly or not. But the hunter's failure to catch his prey is secondary to the discovery he makes, generally of something he would rather not know related to his frustrations in love. Kahedin's love monologue illustrates this point. During Tristan's madness, Palamède, Kahedin, and Lancelot meet accidentally at night in the forest of Morois, where Palamède has been chasing the Beste Glatissant. As Palamède listens to Kahedin's lament, which reiterates many things he himself said in his love monologue earlier (756: 133ff.; 335: 160), Palamède learns that Kahedin too loves Iseut just as intensely as he does. An even more painful revelation awaits: Kahedin concludes his lament by reminding Palamède that neither of them can ever expect to win Iseut (756: 172; 335: 203).

The beast's legs and tail (lion) and body (leopard) carry both complex allusions well known to the medieval world and also symbolism more specific to the *Tristan*. Versions I and II both contain repeated references to Palamède and Tristan as lion and leopard, particularly as they fight.²² These characterizations suggest the knight's prowess and fierceness in battle, their unflagging dedication to their goals, their chivalric superiority. They also underscore important thematic material by linking the conflicts between Tristan and Palamède to similar situations in the prehistory. The episodes featuring Tristan and Palamède share with the material of the prehistory the general idea of a leopard (Palamède, Sador, Pelias) trying to steal the beloved of a lion (Tristan, Pelias, Canor).²³ The conflicts which determine the relationship between Palamède and Tristan and shape much of the narrative—rivalry in love, the dominance of pride—echo the conflicts and weakness of the characters who predate the two knights. The references to lion and leopard thus both characterize the two men most central to the *Tristan* story and strengthen the discussion of love which focuses on those men. In addition, the leopard is described in medieval bestiaries as an animal of mixed parentage, lion and pard. Because it is the offspring of an unnatural coupling it sometimes symbolizes adultery.²⁴ Its association

with Palamède is thus appropriate, since Palamède's goal is to win another man's beloved.

Indeed, the different parts of the animal reflect important motifs in the romance. In addition, Palamède's pursuit of the beast has a specific narrative role: it is closely related to his frustrated pursuit of Iseut. Palamède himself indicates that his queste for the Beste is a substitute for the quest for Iseut. After Tristan and Iseut arrive at Joyeuse Garde, Palamède appears in pursuit of the Beste. When Palamède learns that Iseut has come to Logres and is staying at the Joyeuse Garde, he recalls the last time he saw Iseut: she banished Palamède from her presence, specifying that he must not try to see her "devant que je [Iseut] soie ou reyaume de Logres" (Curtis: P511).²⁵ Palamède's reaction to news that Iseut is now in Logres is decisive and immediate: "puys qe a la Joyeuse Garde est venue la biaute et la rose del monde, celle qui passe de biaute toutes celles qi orent vive, or sachiez qe je me tieng a beneure de ces nouvelles. Des orez mais *vous lai je la queste de la beste glatissant car en autre queste me metrai*" (My emphasis. 757: 99b; 336: 6d). In Version II the narrative voice makes clear that the "autre queste" is the quest for Iseut: "En tel maniere comme je vous compte s'en va Palamed querant toutesvoies qui nouvelles lui die de monsieur Tristan et de madame Yseut. Or est entres en une queste ou ja nul bien ne lui en vendra jour de sa vie" (336: 11a).

Version II further reinforces the link between the Beste and Iseut in Palamède's mind. Palamède learns that Iseut is in Logres when he encounters Brehus and Tristan, both incognito. When Tristan and Brehus try to take over Palamède's chase, he resists, saying that he does not want a knight lesser than he to pursue the beast (336: 6b). This response recalls Palamède's reaction to Iseut when she banishes him from her presence: Palamède asks Iseut never to love someone less worthy than he (Curtis: P511). Palamède's reaction is consistent with that of other knights. For example, when Dynadan, Gaheriet, and Tristan want to claim Brunor le Noir's beloved he protests: he would rather fight than give her up (336: 39b-40b; 757: 127c-22a). Then when Tristan defeats Brunor and prepares to give the lady to either Dynadan or Gaheriet, Brunor again protests. He can accept losing the lady to a better knight, but not to a lesser one. Palamède's attitude toward the Beste Glatissant is thus consistent with knights' attitudes toward their beloved. Brehus reinforces the link between the Beste and Iseut by cautioning Palamède that his possessive attitude toward the beast resembles Marc's attitude toward Iseut and could have the same consequence: because Marc, in Brehus' analogy, wanted Iseut too much, he lost her as well as his land and honor (336: 6b). As the text concludes this incident, which overtly links Iseut and the Beste, the narrative voice echoes Brehus' ominous remark and underscores the futility of Palamède's quest for Iseut:

Or est [Palamède] entres en une queste ou ja nul bien ne lui en vendra jour de sa vie. Courous et ire et mal talent, rancune, travail, douleur et villaines paroles em puet il asses avoir et nulle autre chose. Car de madame Yseut amer si coralment comme il l'aime ne lui puet il nul bien venir. Il em puet avoir la haine et la male volente de monsieur Tristan. Et por ce ne l'amora pas la royne Yseut; encore l'en haira plus par adventure puis q'elle saura que messire Tristan aura male volonte envers lui" (336: 11a).

Thus for Palamède, Iseut and the Beste are closely related. Palamède's preferred activity is seeking Iseut. While he is banned from her presence (until she reaches Logres), Palamède pursues a fantastic, illusory, and elusive creature. Upon hearing that Iseut is in Logres and that his banishment is over, Palamède leaves the secondary quest for the principal one. The Beste's monstrous form, in particular the leopard's body with a serpent's head, recalls that Palamède's interest in Iseut is an obsessive, unnatural, prideful pursuit. Finally, the result of both quests is the same: Palamède catches neither the Beste nor Iseut.

The preceding paragraphs reveal that the author of the *Tristan en prose* is responsible for two important developments in the presentation of the Beste Glatissant: the beast is a composite animal whose various parts refer to important thematic material, and Palamède's pursuit of the animal is closely related to his frustrated pursuit of Iseut. A third development also occurs in the *Tristan*: the identification of the beast with a non-Christian knight. The association of Palamède with the Beste Glatissant distinguishes the *Tristan* from earlier or contemporaneous texts which feature the Beste. In Versions I and II, Palamède is the only knight identified with this animal, the only Chevalier à la Beste Glatissant. Unlike the *Perleवास*, the *Gerbert Continuation*, and the *Suite Huth du Merlin*, the *Tristan en prose* does not link to the beast Perceval, his father Pellinor, or any other knight associated with the Grail quest. This change is intriguing because Palamède is both a newcomer to the Arthurian world, beginning with the *Tristan en prose*, and he is the only major non-Christian knight in the romance.²⁶ Rather than associate the Beste with the Grail Quest and with Perceval in particular, the *Tristan* links the Saracen Palamède with the Beste and omits the explicite connection of this animal to the Quest. The beast's appearance or fate is not a religious allegory as in the *Perleवास* or *Continuation*; neither does the beast have enchanting or demonic characteristics as in the minor *Tristan* manuscripts, the *Perceforest*, and the *Demandas*, texts which postdate the major *Tristan* versions. Instead, as Palamède and the narrative voice indicate, the animal symbolizes Palamède's obsession with Iseut. With this shift, the *Tristan* author recasts the connection between the pursuer and the beast into terms consistent with other aspects of the *Tristan*. Here and elsewhere in the *Tristan*, the author devalues the Grail quest (often through the use of ironic juxtaposition), subordinating it to the worldly pursuits of Tristan and others.²⁷ Further study of Palamède's religious stance reveals that Palamède's interest in Iseut, both literally and symbolically represented by the Beste Glatissant, serves as a corollary to and a commentary on the other knight's quest for the Grail.

In both Versions I and II of the *Tristan* the author organizes the narrative around the knights' preoccupation with love. Though the two Versions differ in their treatment of the Grail Quest, the result is the same: obsessed with love, the central characters can never overcome their moral imperfections and rise above their mundane existence. Even the story of Galaad's achievement of the Quest (Version II) is juxtaposed to the ongoing adventures of Tristan, Palamède, and others, with the result that the Quest *shares* the narrative with the worldly adventures rather than overshadow them.²⁸ Palamède is as much a part of the mundane adventures as Tristan and others, the only difference being that his non-Christian state gives his disinterest in the Quest a different explanation.

But examination of Palamède's attitude toward his faith reveals that he is more similar to the wayward Arthurian knights than one might at first think. Palamède's own thoughts indicate a curious link between Christianity and his devotion to Iseut. The text specifies that Palamède is a Saracen, and a firmly entrenched one—Palamède's father and eleven brothers all converted to Christianity but not Palamède (757: 147c). Throughout all of Version I and most of Version II, Palamède has no interest in conversion; indeed in Version II he actively resists it even when Arthur, Galaad, and others expressly encourage him. Yet Palamède would consider conversion for one particular purpose: to have Iseut (Curtis: P328). Indeed, Palamède's faith, which he claims to value, is actually an item to be bartered to acquire his beloved Iseut: "il n'est riens ou monde qu'il ne feïst por li [Iseut] avoir, nes sa loi guerpi. Et ce estoit la riens ou monde que il feïst plus a enviz, mes totevoies la guerpiroit il por avoir Yseut, s'il poist estre" (Curtis: P328).²⁹ Though Palamède's religious orientation differs from that of the Arthurian knights, his twisted moral stance resembles theirs: Palamède fits perfectly into this world where the temptations of "chevalerie terrienne" draw the characters away from the path of "chevalerie celestielle."

The *Tristan* author structures the romance as an interplay between two incompatible types of quest, one spiritual and the other worldly. It is thus significant that in a romance where the theme of questing is so important, Palamède characterizes his pursuit both of the Beste Glatissant and of Iseut as quest.³⁰ In this light, the question of Palamède's religious identity and the role of Palamède's quest in relationship to the other, religious, quest demand more attention. Bozóky's observation that the pursuit of the Beste Glatissant occurs as a companion quest to the Grail Quest is valid in a particular sense for the *Tristan*.³¹ This is not to say that Palamède seeks the Beste Glatissant *while* and *because* the others seek the Graal; Palamède's search for the Beste begins long before the Quest,³² soon after his first major disappointment with Iseut. Rather, Palamède the Saracen pursues the Beste (symbolizing Iseut) as Christian knights pursue the Grail.

The literary context in which the *Tristan* developed supports this analy-

sis. Though the Beste appears in the major versions of the *Tristan* with no history or introduction, the audience likely knew the Beste from the *Perlesvaus* and Gerbert *Continuation*. In these texts the Beste is directly, overtly associated with the Grail Quest. The *Tristan* therefore grew out of a literary context in which the Beste had a specific relationship to the Quest. For the author of the *Tristan* to introduce the beast into the romance calls forth the prior associations and provides the author with material to use and alter for his own purposes.³³ In both the *Perlesvaus* and the *Continuation*, the Beste represents conflicts between worldly and spiritual/religious preoccupations, as the Roi Ermite explains. Likewise Palamède's obsession with Iseut, which the Beste here symbolizes, also signals a conflict between two spiritual paths--Palamède values his Saracen identity, but he would trade it to win Iseut, the wife of Marc and beloved of Tristan. In the *Tristan*, consequently, the Beste's presence and Palamède's attitude toward it represent modifications to, but not a total departure from, the Beste's use in these other texts.

Another characteristic links the two quests: Palamède fails in his quest for the same reasons that all but the three special knights (Galaad, Perceval, Bohort) fail in the Grail Quest. To a great extent, Palamède and his search for the Beste Glatissant symbolize the basic problem which lies at the heart of the Arthurian world. Though Palamède indicates at one point that he seeks the Beste to learn why it yelps, the reader learns from other indications in the text that Palamède actually pursues the Beste as a substitute for Iseut. Palamède seeks what he cannot find, as Dynadan observes (757: 144c; 336: 77b). His all-consuming goal is to win Iseut and he thinks he can achieve that by out-performing Tristan and/or converting to Christianity. But Palamède's logic contains a fatal flaw: he assumes that he can win Iseut, when in fact the effect of the love potion means that Iseut will never love anyone other than Tristan, regardless of the other suitor's qualities. While awaiting the chance to win Iseut, Palamède pursues the Beste. Likewise Arthur's knights depart on the Quest, all assuming that they are equally qualified to achieve it. As the text of the *Queste*, which Version II retains, makes clear, only Galaad, Perceval, and Bohort are sufficiently virtuous to achieve the quest; all others must fail because of their moral defects. The basic pride of Palamède and the other knights accounts for their blindness toward their situation and their dedication to a goal which is beyond their capacity to attain.

The portrayal of the Beste Glatissant in the *Tristan en prose* underscores one of the major issues of Versions I and II: the importance of the quest for Iseut as an counterpart to the spiritual quest for the Grail. Thus Palamède's quest must be understood in conjunction with the Grail Quest and must be understood both literally, as the quest for the Beste, and figuratively, as the quest for Iseut. In this way the reader can see how the author at once adds to the development of the theme of frustrated love and juxtaposes this theme to the questing theme. With the exception of the Grail

heroes (Galaad, Perceval, Bohort), everyone in the *Tristan* is engaged in a hopeless quest, and it is hopeless because the questers do not understand their moral insufficiencies. They all, indeed, seek what they cannot find. While some of the most unusual and most well-known details about the Beste Glatissant are absent from Versions I and II, the connection between the Beste and the quest for meaning in the *Tristan* makes the animal noteworthy for our understanding of the romance as well as for our understanding of the beast.

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Notes

1. The reader should recall that the *Tristan en prose* exists in two major Versions and several minor ones. Versions I and II give almost identical renditions of the first half of the romance, but differ significantly in the second half, particularly in their treatment of the Grail Quest. For a detailed explanation of these distinctions see Emmanuèle Baumgartner, *Le "Tristan en prose," essai d'interprétation d'un roman médiéval* (Genève: Droz, 1975), 29-87 (cited as *Essai*).

2. Since no complete version of the *Tristan en prose* has been edited, we will refer particularly to certain manuscripts of the *Tristan*. For Version I, we will cite manuscripts B.N. 756-757; for Version II, we will cite B.N. 335-336. Baumgartner and others designate both of these texts as reliable renditions of the two major versions of the *Tristan*. See Baumgartner, *Essai*. In some cases we can cite Renée Curtis' edition of Carpentras 404, which contains the same material as the first parts of B.N. 756 and B.N. 335, and is the only edited manuscript available. See Renée L. Curtis, *Le Roman de Tristan en prose*, 3 vols. (Vol. I--München: Max Hueber, 1963. Vol. II--Leiden: Brill, 1970. Vol. III--Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1985). Where appropriate we will give paragraph references to the standard outline of the content of the *Tristan*, Eilert Löseth's *Le Roman en prose de Tristan* (1891; reprint ed., New York: Burt Franklin, 1970). Löseth's outline generally follows B.N. 756-757 and B.N. 335-336 but indicates many variants as well. An edition of Version II is in preparation, and the first volume is available. See *Tristan en prose, Tome I: Des aventures de Lancelot à la fin de la "Folie Tristan"*, ed. Philippe Ménard (Genève: Droz, 1987). This edition is based on Vienne 2542, which corresponds to the text of B.N. 335-336.

3. William A. Nitze, "The Beste Glatissant in Arthurian Romance," *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* 56 (1936), 409-18.

4. Nitze's and others' information about the demonic origins of the Beste occurs in Löseth P615, which summarizes content of B.N. 24400. The same material occurs in B.N. 112. See Cedric E. Pickford, *L'Évolution du roman arthurien en prose vers la fin du moyen âge d'après le manuscrit 112 du fonds français de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (Paris: Nizet, 1959), 317.

5. Linette Ross Muir, "The Questing Beast: Its Origins and Development," *Orpheus* 4 (1957), 24-32. The *Tristan* texts she cites are B.N. 112, 343, and 24400.

6. Edina Bozóky, "La 'Bête Glatissant' et le Graal: les transformations d'un thème allégorique dans quelques romans arthuriens," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 88 (1974), 127-48. Unfortunately some of Bozóky's observations are of questionable accuracy in general and are misleading for the *Tristan* in particular. For example, Bozóky asserts that the Quest motif for the Beste Glatissant occurs for the first time in the *Suite du Merlin* (p. 137). Given the uncertainty of dating the *Suite*, the Vulgate cycle, and the two versions of the *Prose Tristan*, this assertion is at best speculative. Second, Bozóky argues that the quest for the Beste Glatissant is part of a "vision initiatique" (p. 135). Again, this analysis reveals a superficial knowledge of the main versions of the *Tristan*, since in both Versions I and II, Palamède's interest in the Beste Glatissant begins long before the Grail Quest and occurs in a different context.

7. Claude Roussel, "Le jeu des formes et des couleurs: observations sur "La beste glatissant"," *Romania* 104 (1983), 49-82.

8. Especially B.N. 24400, 112, 343.
9. B.N. 112 and 24400 are unusual in that they give accounts of the Beste's origin. Löseth gives the following summary of B.N. 24400's account: "La fille du roi *Ypomenes* [*Hypomenes* in B.N. 112] aime son frère, qui la repousse, voulant garder sa chasteté pour plaire à Dieu. Elle va se tuer, lorsque le diable, sous la forme d'un bel homme, lui promet de l'aider si elle veut lui accorder son pucelage; elle y consent, aime désormais le diable et hait son frère, qu'elle veut mettre à mort. Le diable lui conseille de trouver moyen d'accuser son frère d'avoir voulu la prendre de force. Elle réussit, et le roi emprisonne son fils. Les barons le condamnent à mort, et la demoiselle exige qu'il soit livré à des chiens *effamez de .VII. jour*. Cela est exécuté, après que l'inculpé a prédit que sa soeur mettra au monde une bête dans le ventre de laquelle glapiront toujours des chiens pour rappeler la honteuse mort qu'elle lui fait subir. La demoiselle accouche de la bête; ses dames en meurent d'épouvante. Le roi la force enfin de tout avouer et la fait mourir" (Löseth P615; citation of B.N. 24400: 241a-d). For a citation of B.N. 112 (Livre IV, 151d-152b) see Fanni Bogdanow, *The Romance of the Grail: A Study of the Structure and Genesis of a Thirteenth-Century Arthurian Prose Romance* (Manchester, Eng.: Manchester University Press, 1966), 125-6 (cited as *Romance*).
10. This reason is absent from B.N. 756-757.
11. *Li Haut Livre du Graal: Perlesvaus*, ed. William A. Nitze and T. Atkinson Jenkins, 2 vols. (1932-37; reprint ed., New York: Phaeton Press, 1972) (cited as *Perlesvaus*).
12. Gerbert de Montreuil, *La Continuation de Perceval*, vol. II, ed. Mary Williams (Paris: Champion, 1925) (cited as Gerbert *Continuation*).
13. Cited in Roussel, *op. cit.*, p. 59. The citation is from *The Vulgate Version of the Arthurian Romances, vol. 1, L'Estoire del Saint Graal*, ed. H.O. Sommer (Washington: Carnegie Institution, 1909), 8-9. This animal has no barking associated with it.
14. Cited in Bogdanow, *Romance*, p. 124.
15. The description noted in 336: 132a-b is essentially the same except that one characteristic is added: "col avoit d'une beste que l'en appelloit dolce en son langage ..." The pertinent passage in Version I occurs at 756: 115b.
16. Cited in Muir, *op. cit.* p. 26.
17. Cited on p. 376 of L.-F. Flûtre, "Etudes sur Le Roman de *Perceforêt*," *Romania* 89 (1968), 355-86.
18. These later features include the story of the beast's origins and its violent end, the reason Palamède chases the beast, additional physical features. These additions become important elements in the works posterior to the *Tristan*, such as *Guiron le Courtois*, the Spanish and Portuguese *Demandas*, and *Perceforest*.
19. A few instances of allegorical or overtly symbolic material occur in the prehistory (Apollo's dreams, the giant's enigmas) and in Tristan's dreams. But there is nothing similar to the Roi Hermite's explanation to Perceval of the beast's meaning. See *Perlesvaus* ll. 5983-6026 and the Gerbert *Continuation*, vv. 8427, 8626ff. In addition, the *Tristan* author did not exploit the patently religious interpretations of the various animals which bestiaries well known to thirteenth-century society contain. See for example Theobaldi, *Physiologus*, ed. P. T. Eden (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1972); and Charles Cahier and Arthur Martin, *Mélanges d'Archéologie, d'histoire et de littérature*, vols. I-IV (Paris: Poussielque-Rusand, 1847-56). This characteristic is consistent with the *Tristan* author's general tendency to avoid allegorical and otherworldly material, even when it is present in his sources or in his intellectual milieu.
20. Kahedin also associates the serpent with love as he and Palamède talk of their hopeless love for Iseut: "Palamèdes! Palamèdes! fait Kahedins, d'autre leu vient l'enclœüre. Celi meïsmes serpent qui m'a feru vous a point dusques au cuer" (Curtis, P908).
21. The association of the snake with the original sin and with lust is well established. See, for example, Gertrud Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, 2 vols. Trans. Janet Seligman (German ed. 1966; English ed., Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1971). See especially I: 40-41, 108-109; II: 112-113. See also Emile Mâle, *L'Art religieux du XIIe siècle en France: étude sur les origines de l'iconographie du moyen âge* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1953), esp. 373-76.
22. Although the text occasionally uses these images for other people--Arthur or Lancelot, for example--the terms commonly refer to Tristan and Palamède. In the *Lancelot en prose*, Gauvain's vision in which a serpent and lion represent Arthur and Lancelot seems not to be related to the issue under discussion here (*Lancelot*, ed. Alexandre Micha, t. II. (Genève: Droz, 1978), 380-81).
23. One of the riddles associated with Tristan's ancestors Pelias and Sador characterizes these adversaries as lion and leopard (Curtis: P111; Löseth: P11). And in Canor's dream (Curtis: P20; Löseth: P2) predicting his conflicts with Sador and their deaths, lion and leo-

pard symbolize the opponents. For a more detailed discussion of this point, see my article, "Observations on the Importance of the Prehistory in the *Tristan en prose*", forthcoming in *Romania*.

24. See Beryl Rowland, *Animals with Human Faces: A Guide to Animal Symbolism* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1973), 116. See also *The Bestiary: A Book of Beasts, Being a Translation from a Latin Bestiary of the Twelfth Century*, ed. T. H. White (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1960), 13-14.

25. Ironically, at this time Iseut does not dream that one day she will be in Logres.

26. It is perhaps significant that Palamède himself has been little studied. To this author's knowledge, only Baumgartner devotes serious attention to Palamède (*Essai*, pp. 246-52). Even Baumgartner's remarks are limited, however. She analyzes his role as a frustrated lover, but does not explore his greater importance for the romance.

27. Baumgartner (*Essai*) discusses this aspect of the *Tristan*, as does Colette-Anne Van Coolput in *Aventures quérant et le sens du monde* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1986) (cited as *Aventures*).

28. For more on this see Van Coolput's *Aventures*.

29. Other passages in the romance reiterate Palamède's attitude. Palamède's reaction to news that an evil lord is about to execute Tristan is a mixture of sorrow (that such a fine knight should die) and hope (that he can now win Iseut's love). Palamède, thinking that his greatest dream is about to come true, plans to convert and work hard to attract Iseut through deeds (336: 162d; 757: 199c). Similarly, when Palamède learns that Marc has taken Iseut back to Cornwall, he plans to return to Cornwall to be with his beloved (336: 299d).

30. For a more complete study of this theme, see Van Coolput's *Aventures*.

31. See Bozóky, *op. cit.* pp. 143-44.

32. 336: 343c specifies that Palamède seeks the Beste Glatissant for fourteen years.

33. The *Tristan* author frequently uses this technique. For example, such characters as Lancelot, Gauvain, Perceval, and many others appear with no effort to establish their personalities or histories. Likewise the narrative voice on occasion refers the reader to events in Robert de Boron's works. And the author in Version I uses the Grail Quest in much the same way—he refers to it, as if the audience knew the story, then sabotages its meaning by keeping it in the background and emphasizing the further mundane adventures of Tristan and others.