

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE VERNACULAR NARRATIVE BETWEEN ARCHIVE AND EXPERIMENT

#### ARCHIVAL NARRATIVES

In one of the most celebrated passages of *Tristan*, the literary excursus, Heinrich von Veldeke is presented as the inaugurator of the splendid vernacular eloquence that Gottfried sees all around him and before which he is struck dumb (4726–50). What Gottfried considers to be a beginning, however, might appear to the historian of literature as the end of a long development, for Veldeke's *Eneasroman* is in many ways the culmination of a narrative tradition reaching back to the middle of the eleventh century, when the *Ezzolied* marks the recommencement of the writing down of literature in German after a break of some 150 years. It is a tradition of narrative whose orientation is overwhelmingly historiographic, though this does not mean that in the century or so that separates the *Ezzolied* from the *Eneasroman* there had not been change and evolution. A recent survey by Gisela Vollmann-Profe of literature written in German between 1050 and 1170<sup>1</sup> draws attention to how in that period the narrative tradition develops from an initial preoccupation with *historia salutis*, with the course of history understood in theological terms as the unfolding of God's plan for mankind, to a new interest, becoming dominant from the 1130s, in *historia mundana*, the history of human affairs in their purely worldly dimension, without reference to their eschatological or soteriological significance. This shift of emphasis reflects the changing sociology of literary production and consumption. Up until the 1130s, literature in the vernacular was produced predominantly by clerics for those with little or no Latin — the lay aristocracy, but also nuns, and men and women who, without actually being in holy orders, devoted themselves to a religious life: communities of lay brothers, recluses and the like. The period 1050–1130 is thus characteristically one of clerical production and lay consumption. But after that laymen come to play a more active part in literary life, commissioning works and constituting an audience sufficiently confirmed in its secular self-awareness as to be interested in a literary representation of its world and its concerns.

*Historia salutis* is the theme of the biblical narratives that flourished in the vernacular in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries; to this tradition belong works such as the *Altdeutsche Genesis* and *Exodus*, the *Vorauer Bücher Mosis*, the *Ezzolied*, and the New Testament narratives of Frau Ava. These works focus on what, from a Christian point of view, is the only historical narrative of real significance: the story of God's dealings with mankind and the world, beginning with the creation, continuing through humanity's fall and redemption, and culminating in the end of the world and man's salvation. Within this grand soteriological schema the story of men and their institutions has no weight of its own; human affairs are regarded as transient and have meaning only in so far as they may be read as indexes of the unfolding of the master narrative. In order to bring about this link between *historia mundana* and *historia divina* Christian authors such as Jerome, Augustine, Isidore, and Bede schematized the course of human affairs into teleological sequences, such as the six *aetates mundi* or the four kingdoms, which run from the creation of the world to its destruction. For all these authors human history had already reached the last stage, the sixth age or the fourth kingdom, which preceded the appearance of the Antichrist, the second coming and the end of the world.<sup>2</sup>

The subordination of secular history to the soteriological schema is illustrated by the *Annolied*, a work probably written around 1080 to commemorate Anno, Bishop of Cologne, who died in 1075. It recounts his career as ruler of that city and as regent for Heinrich IV. The subject is thus taken from *historia mundana*, and from the very recent past. But the author approaches his secular theme by way of *historia salutis*. The poem begins with an account of the creation and fall, of Christ's incarnation and mankind's redemption. Both of the canonical schemata of human history, the six ages of the world and the four kingdoms, are cited,<sup>3</sup> in a way that enables the author to circle in on Anno and Cologne. The sixth, post-incarnation age is the epoch in which men live *sub gratia*, and the propagation of this message is the task of the saints and office-holders of the Church, foremost among them Anno. The succession of kingdoms culminates in the Roman Empire, and during the reign of Augustus fall the birth of Christ and the foundation of Cologne, the scene of Anno's career, the narration of which begins only now, after some thirty-three strophes of eschatological and universal historical exposition which make up almost two thirds of the entire poem. Within this setting, Anno's life has no significance in itself; the author refers to it as a 'bispil' (34, 3), and indeed Anno's good works and the miracles that occur after his death are to be read as signs of the efficacy of God's grace in the world and its availability to all who seek it: 'ci diu daz wir verstûntin/des rîchin godis gûte' (49, 21–22). The narrative, having focused for a while on the actions of Anno in the world, returns to the level of *historia salutis* with the concluding episode, the story of Volprecht, whose sight is miraculously restored after he was blinded for doubting Anno's holiness (46–48). Volprecht is

in the grip of the devil when he utters his blasphemies against the now deceased bishop, and his cure is a triumph of God's power over Satan: 'sô scône ist diu godis craft' (48, 14). At the beginning of the *Annolied* it had been narrated how Lucifer had held sway over mankind for five ages of the world, from Adam until the incarnation, when his dominion was broken by God's sacrifice (3–4); the miracle demonstrates the living reality of God's grace, now, in the sixth age. The final stage of God's grand design is in sight, and it behoves every man to make a choice: either God and salvation or the devil and damnation. With its closing demonstration of the saving power of grace, the *Annolied* encourages each and every man to realize the universal historical process in himself.<sup>4</sup>

In the narrative literature produced in Germany from around 1140 up until the time of Veldeke secular history, which in the *Annolied* is subordinated to *historia divina*, comes to hold the stage in its own right. Roman imperial history (which for writers of the day continued into the present political reality of the empire) constituted the theme of works such as the *Kaiserchronik*, the *Rolandslied*, and Heinrich von Veldeke's *Eneasroman*. More remote ancient history provided the subject-matter of the various surviving versions of the *Alexanderlied*, and of a work that takes us beyond Veldeke into the time of Gottfried's *Tristan*, Herbart von Fritzlar's *Liet von Troye*, written at some time between 1210 and 1220. This period of German literature is also characterized by the first intensive reception of romance and epic from France: the *Alexanderlied*, *Rolandslied*, *Eneasroman*, and *Liet von Troye* are all adapted from Old French models.<sup>5</sup> The Old French (and Anglo-Norman) narrative tradition of the twelfth century was, like the German, overwhelmingly historiographic, although the emphasis seems always to have been on profane history: the *chansons de geste* recount the deeds of the kings and nobles of France, while ancient Troy, Greece, and Rome provide the theme of the so-called *romans antiques*, and Wace's romances chronicle the history of Britain and the lives of the dukes of Normandy.<sup>6</sup>

The new orientation to *historia mundana*, and to the flourishing secular and vernacular literature of France, reflects the increased participation of laymen in cultural life. According to Vollmann-Profe (pp. 81–82, 105–12, 193–94), *historia salutis* always contained within it the seeds of this turn to *historia mundana*: it required only a concentration of narrative interest on the sixth *aetas mundi* or the fourth kingdom for the all-embracing teleological design to recede into the background and the history of human affairs and institutions to acquire a specific gravity of its own. Such a change of perspective is, moreover, merely a stage in a process in which vernacular narrative gradually shakes off first theological schemata, and then any historiographic orientation whatsoever, in order to reach the goal of independent literary fiction. This goal is realized with the rise of the Arthurian romance in German in the last two decades of the twelfth century. Vollmann-Profe represents this evolutionary and emancipatory progress of vernacular narrative from history to fiction as a smooth, linear development,

which appears to be no less teleological and inevitable than the theologians' schemata of the six ages or the four kingdoms. The end of the process is visible even at its very beginning, when the preference shown by authors of biblical epics for material drawn from the Old Testament rather than the New is said to betoken an incipient desire for narratorial freedom:

Diese Texte (sc. des Alten Testaments) gehören zwar auch zum Kanon der inspirierten Schriften, sie enthalten jedoch nicht die Worte Jesu selbst, sind daher weniger sakrosankt als die Bücher des Neuen Testaments. Dies ermöglicht dem volkssprachigen Bibelepiker eine etwas größere Freiheit im Umgang mit der Quelle. Beschäftigung mit dem Alten Testament signalisiert *auch* das Streben nach erzählerischer Emanzipation. In der Zuwendung zu den Büchern des Alten Bundes zeichnet sich der Beginn einer literarischen Entwicklung ab, die von der nachdichtenden Wiedergabe der biblisch abgesicherten Geschichte zur dichterischen Darstellung von Profangeschichte und von dort zur Erfindung profaner Geschichten fortschreiten wird: Bibeldichtung, Darstellung der nachchristlichen Heilsgeschichte ('Kaiserchronik'), Profangeschichte mit biblischem Anknüpfungspunkt ('Alexanderlied'), Antikenroman, Artusroman — das sind die Stationen, die die Epik des 12. Jahrhunderts in raschem Lauf durchheilt. (pp. 90–91)

There can be no doubt that between 1050 and 1170 a process of secularization has taken place, affecting the nature of the material susceptible of narrative treatment and modifying the ideological outlook of texts in line with the expectations and interests of a changing audience. Nevertheless there are reasons why one might be skeptical about Vollmann-Profe's account of the evolution of vernacular narrative in this period. Her teleology presupposes, as we saw, that the end of the process is already present at its beginning, in the authors' desire to cast off the restraints imposed on their freedom by theology and history. In accordance with a sort of Whig interpretation of literary history, the development of vernacular narrative in Germany is seen as the story of the progressive realization of this emancipatory desire, a process that reaches fulfilment in the telos of literary fiction. Individual texts of the transitional period therefore break down into a mixture of old and new, of backward-looking and forward-looking traits.<sup>7</sup> The difficulty with this view is that it encourages a mode of interpretation that values texts above all for their forward-looking features, while the elements of the old, where they persist, are in danger of being written off as the dead weight of a tradition that is in the process of withering away.

In fact it seems that contrary to what is implied by Vollmann-Profe's model these remnants of an outmoded ideology remained productive throughout the twelfth century as a means of ordering and shaping narrative. Vollmann-Profe herself acknowledges that in the *Kaiserchronik*, a work that in her view has already moved on from 'Heilsgeschichte' to attain the stage of 'religiös durchdachte Profangeschichte', and in whose narrative technique she discerns the anticipation of the *bele conjointure* of Chrétien de Troyes (pp. 46, 111), the narrated events are nevertheless rendered significant through their being set in a framework of divine history: the popes and emperors whose careers are

chronicled in this work are saved or damned, according to how they have performed God's will.<sup>8</sup> She also points out that the story of Alexander, the founder of the third of the four canonical kingdoms, is integrated into the schema of universal history in virtue of the position of the *Alexanderlied* in the Vorau manuscript, where it is placed between the Old Testament narratives and Frau Ava's life of Jesus (p. 207). Walter Haug and Alois Wolf have also drawn attention to the continuing religious orientation of German vernacular narrative in the pre-classical period, which is often more pronounced than in the Old French models for this literature, where these exist: Haug describes the reception of the Roland and Alexander stories in Germany as part of a process of 'geistliche Umformulierung profaner Typen' (pp. 75–90), and Wolf charts a similar process of theologically inspired historicization at work in the German adaptations of the *romans antiques* (pp. 309–22). All of this suggests that theological schemata were not moribund, but very much alive. Wolf in particular argues that with the coronation of Barbarossa as emperor in 1155 such schemata received a new lease of life, as Hohenstaufen propaganda disseminated the idea of a *sacrum imperium* (the term was first used in 1157). The idea of the empire as the earthly fulfilment of God's plan for human history was further impressed on lay consciousness by the canonization of Charlemagne in 1165 (Wolf, pp. 41–61). That the history of the empire was understood as part of *historia salutis*, that the laymen who made this history were to be considered as actors in God's plan for mankind is brought out by Wolf in his reading of Heinrich von Veldeke's representation of the Aeneas story (pp. 319–22). At the end of the *Eneasroman* Aeneas is enthroned as the new king in Italy; there follows a description of the celebrations accompanying his coronation, and then the enumeration of Roman kings and emperors down to the time of Augustus, during whose reign, Veldeke adds, Christ's incarnation and passion occurred, which redeemed mankind from the fall.<sup>9</sup> The narrative thus concludes in the sixth and final *aetas mundi*. Veldeke does more than bring the history of the world up to date, however, for he also gives various signs that the contemporary political order in Germany stands for not just the continuity of the empire founded by Aeneas, but also its supersession in the new age of grace inaugurated by the incarnation. Thus the court festivities at Aeneas's coronation are contrasted with the still greater pomp of the court held by his successor Barbarossa at Mainz in 1184, the splendour of which will be talked about until doomsday (13222–52). A clearer signal still is the burial of Pallas. Veldeke describes how Evander put in his son's tomb a lamp, which never ceased to burn until Barbarossa arrived in Rome to be anointed. When the grave was opened for the emperor to see, the light went out (8350–408). The coronation of Frederick Barbarossa is the dawning of a new day, a renewal of the *sacrum imperium* in the last age of the world. Neither of these signals, the comparison with Barbarossa's court and the extinction of Pallas's lamp, is suggested by the *Roman d'Eneas*. Their addition demonstrates

how, in a work that was completed in the 1180s, eschatological and soteriological habits of thought continued to be productive as a way of making sense of the history of the secular political institution that was the empire.

The persistence of eschatological references even in the narrative literature of the late twelfth century suggests that the laity, who came to exert ever more influence on literary life, wanted to see their world, their institutions and affairs, themselves indeed, represented as instruments and agents in the grand narrative of *historia salutis*. This constitutes a sacralization of worldly affairs and might therefore be taken as evidence for the continued subordination of the secular realm to the ideological hegemony of the Church. Such sacralization conceals however a declaration of lay independence: God's plan for history is fulfilled in a secular institution, the state, which can lead mankind to salvation without the Church. Marianne Ott-Meimberg, who has studied the *Rolandslied* in the context of the cult of Charlemagne, remarks on the interests of laymen in the canonization of this emperor, at Frederick Barbarossa's request, by the antipope Paschal III on 29 December 1165:

Der Wunsch, eigene Ansprüche und eigenes — durchaus laikales — Selbstbewußtsein auf diesem Wege selbständig, aber doch im Reflex auf die vorgegebenen kirchlichen Muster und Möglichkeiten von Legitimität, in Vorbild- und Identifikationsfiguren zu manifestieren, war offensichtlich im Adel besonders groß . . . Die Anknüpfung an Karl den Großen, der Versuch, an seiner spezifischen Heiligkeit, an seinem Heil, teilzuhaben, erscheint als Chiffre, als Modell für die Möglichkeit zur Versicherung und Legitimierung von Laienheil — hier eines höchsten, imperialen Anspruchs zwar, aber eben doch laikal im wesentlichen und autark von päpstlich-kanonischen Heiligkeits- und Heilsformen.<sup>10</sup>

Narrative literature in German from the *Ezzolied* to Veldeke is, we have seen, predominantly historical in subject-matter, and this matter, which is presented in accordance with soteriological and eschatological schemata, is derived from sources. Here the vernacular narrative follows the norms that obtain in historical writing in Latin. Historiography is the written reconstruction of the past in and for the present. Knowledge of history is accumulated in a vast archive, the sum of the narratives inherited from the past, and the historian is an archivist, someone who deals in sources, finding and evaluating them, making them speak to his contemporaries. The poetics of historiography consists in engaging the reader in a representation of the past pieced together out of and — a crucial point — guaranteed by sources. Medieval historiographers ranked different types of source according to their reliability: the most trustworthy historical reports were those of eyewitnesses; next came written documents; least reliable was the evidence of hearsay.<sup>11</sup> The preference for eyewitness accounts stemmed from the belief that there was an original connexion between history and vision, a belief that could invoke the authority of Isidore of Seville. In the *Etymologiae* he derives the Latin word *historia* from the Greek *apo tou historein*, meaning 'to see' or 'know', and explains:

Apud veteres nemo conscribebat historiam, nisi is qui interfuisset, et ea quae conscribenda essent vidisset. Melius enim oculis quae fiunt deprehendimus, quam quae auditione colligimus. Quae enim viderentur, sine mendacio proferentur.<sup>12</sup>

According to Isidore, eyewitnesses enjoyed greatest authority because of their temporal priority (the ancient historians observed the events they described at first hand) and also because of the assumed superiority of sight over hearing in general. This second argument, about the comparative reliability of different modes of perception, could also explain why historians preferred written sources to oral ones: taking in something with the eyes, as a reader does, is more accurate than listening.<sup>13</sup> The Isidorean etymology was repeated by later authors, who maintained the belief it implied in an essential connexion between history and eyewitness report.<sup>14</sup>

The attitude of Isidore and later writers to historical sources and their relative authority informs much of the topics of medieval Latin historiography. The overall purpose of such topics — chiefly exordial, but by no means confined to the prefaces of historical writings — is to signal the genre to the reader and to encourage him to interpret the work in the right way; thus, for instance, it is conventional for the historian to declare the past to be a source of useful instruction for the present.<sup>15</sup> Within the general topics of historiography, there is a set of specialized *topoi* that authors use in order to indicate their sources and vouch for their reliability (see Simon, especially part II, pp. 89–94). These *topoi* are more than a description of the historian's way of working, telling us about what sources he used and how; they are also an instrument of poetics, for their purpose is to ensure that the reader will believe what is written. Thus Einhard, in the preface to his life of Charlemagne, presents himself as the most reliable source of all, an eyewitness: 'quando mihi conscius eram nullum ea veracius quam me scribere posse, quibus ipse interfui, quaeque praesens oculata, ut dicunt, fide cognovi'.<sup>16</sup> Here author and source are one, as was the case with the first historians mentioned by Isidore. The same is maintained by the author of an eleventh-century chronicle of the monastery of St-Mihiel near Verdun, a work that is especially interesting because it refers to the entire range of sources, from visual to oral, and organizes and selects its material accordingly. A large part of the chronicle is devoted to the history of the monastery during the author's lifetime; he insists on the veracity of his account of miracles performed there, for he and others witnessed them in person.<sup>17</sup> When it comes to an event that the writer could not have seen himself, the transfer of the relics of St Anatole from Cahors to St-Mihiel, which occurred during the abbacy of Ermengaud in the reign of Charlemagne, the necessary authority is provided by a book kept in the monastery church.<sup>18</sup> For the remote history of the foundation however there are no written sources: 'De abbatibus autem qui loco preuerant ante tempora Karoli Magni, nichil scriptum invenimus' (p. 7). In the prologue the author states that the uncertainty surrounding accounts of the monastery's earliest days

has constrained him to be brief in this respect: 'Antiquiora vero a fidelibus viris narrata, vera vel verisimilia idcirco decrevi abbrevianda, quia nullius eorum preter unius, dico autem Zmaragdi, scripto vel visu vel auditu perceperim'.<sup>19</sup> Taken together with author's later reference to the lack of written sources for the pre-Carolingian period, this statement must mean that the writer has seen fit to abbreviate the 'antiquiora a fidelibus viris narrata' because these are unverifiable oral reports; at any rate he concludes his exposition of the monastery's history 'usque a nostra tempora' with the remark 'sola ea quae scripto potius quam relatu colligere potuimus, simpliciter at succincte perstrinximus' (p. 13). The prologue refers to the three ways of ascertaining historical truth: seeing, reading, hearing; the author of this chronicle gives pride of place to recent history, what he can see in other words, and for the earlier periods, where he is obliged to rely on the two other modes of historical cognition, he gives preference to reading, even though this principle means he will be severely restricted in what he can say, given the dearth of written sources. Similarly, Widukind had to rely almost entirely on oral testimony for the earliest history of the Saxons and is careful to introduce a measure of critical distance between himself and this material,<sup>20</sup> while Gozwin evidently felt uneasy about undertaking to write the life of St Albanus on the basis of scanty evidence, for he recounts how he was reassured by his elders that there was no need to scruple 'cum pene hystoria vel chronica magis audita quam visa denarret'.<sup>21</sup> Gozwin's scruples on the one hand and his elders' pragmatism on the other are a microcosm of medieval historiography at large, theoretically distrustful of an oral tradition it nevertheless could not avoid using; on such occasions the practice was often justified by emphasizing the reliability of the witnesses or even by appealing to the example of the evangelists.<sup>22</sup>

Like the Latin historiographers, the authors of vernacular narratives based on historical material mediate between the archive of the past and the audience in the present. Like the Latin historiographers, French and German poets discriminate between seeing, reading, and hearing as pathways to historical truth, deploying the same topics in a poetic strategy in which the reliability of the sources inherited from the past is supposed to guarantee the credibility of the present narrative.<sup>23</sup> Eyewitness evidence is claimed by Benoît de Saint-Maure as the foundation of his *Roman de Troie*. In the prologue he declares that he intends to tell the true story of the Trojan War ('la verité'), not according to Homer who, he says, lived over a hundred years after the event, but as it was chronicled by a certain Dares who, because he was an eyewitness, wrote the historical truth, 'de l'estoire le veir escrit'.<sup>24</sup> From seeing we pass to writing; Benoît goes on to relate how Dares's history was translated from Greek into Latin by Cornelius, a kinsman of Sallust, and that this is the version he has followed (lines 45–144). We thus have a continuous line of descent running from the authoritative original vision, through an unimpeachable written tradition, to Benoît's

narrative. Sight and script are also allied in Herbot von Fritzlar's adaptation of the *Roman de Troie*; like Benoît the German author prefers Dares to Homer because the former 'da mit was gewesen/Ds screip in uñ liz in lesen'.<sup>25</sup> The author of the second redaction of the *Moniage Guillaume*, one of the cycle of *chansons de geste* devoted to the exploits of William of Orange, is rather like the historian of St-Mihiel, for whom the next most reliable source after eyewitness evidence is the written 'libellus' safely stored in the church archives; he reassures his public that 'l'estoire en est el role a Saint Denis'.<sup>26</sup> The Strassburg *Alexander* and the *Rolandslied* similarly place their narratives within the security of a written tradition preserved by clerics; in the prologue to the former work the author, 'pfaffe Lamprecht', claims to recount the story 'alse daz buch saget',<sup>27</sup> while in the epilogue to the latter work the writer, a cleric named Konrad, relates how he translated the French book into Latin, and from Latin into German, without adding or omitting anything, thus guaranteeing the integrity of his text within a written tradition.<sup>28</sup> Veldeke's narrative of classical history, the *Eneasroman*, is also presented as the latest link in a chain of writing, which in its own way also runs from Latin through French into German; at the end of the work Heinrich says he read the story he has narrated in a French book, which in turn was based on Virgil's truthful account (lines 13506–15). The *Kaiserchronik* and Wace's *Roman de Brut* are also characterized by a clerical insistence on working from written sources, which they confront with the third mode of learning about the past, hearing. Both of these works narrate a succession of rulers, the Roman kings and popes on the one hand and the kings of Britain on the other, and for both writing is what guarantees the truth of this historiographic and genealogical project: the past has been reconstructed on the basis of what is contained in books, and is vouchsafed to the present in the form of another book. The author of the *Kaiserchronik* (possibly a Regensburg cleric)<sup>29</sup> calls his work a 'buoch' in the prologue and underlines its continuity with Latin historiography by designating it more specifically still as a *cronica*;<sup>30</sup> for him books evidently constitute the only admissible way of reconstructing the past accurately; attacking what is presumably an oral tradition, that Attila and Theoderic were contemporaries, the author maintains that it is reliably attested that Theoderic was born some forty-three years after Attila's death and challenges whoever thinks otherwise to adduce a written source as proof: 'der haize daz buoch vür tragen' (line 14178). In the prologue to the *Roman de Brut* Wace — who describes himself elsewhere as a cleric at the Plantagenet court<sup>31</sup> — signals the historiographic genre by stating the genealogical theme of the work,<sup>32</sup> then reinforces this with a specific archival *topos*: the author is telling the truth, he has translated his narrative from a book (commonly supposed to be Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*).<sup>33</sup> Wace also draws a contrast between the reliability of writing on the one hand and the unreliability of hearing on the other. Narrating the adventures of King Arthur that supposedly took place in

the twelve years of peace following the king's first conquests, Wace adopts a cautious attitude to these reports:

Ne tut mençunge, ne tut veir,  
 Tut folie ne tut saveir.  
 Tant unt li cunteür cunté  
 E li fableür tant flablé  
 Pur le cuntes anbeleter,  
 Que tut unt fait fable sembler. (lines 9793–98)

The important word is *fable*, which in Old French exordial topics is often invoked in order to dismiss rival versions of the story as mendacious; the term is frequently contrasted with *verité* or *estoire*, to which the authors lay claim (see Mölk under 'fable'). In the *Etymologiae* (i.40.1.) Isidore places before his exposition of *historia*, etymologically connected with sight, an explanation of the term *fabula*, etymologically connected with speech: 'Fabulas poetae a fando nominaverunt, quia non sunt res factae, sed tantum loquendo fictae'. Wace's attitude to his material in the *Roman de Brut* thus rests on an implied contrast between writing, truth, and history on the one hand, and hearsay, falsehood, and fable on the other; although he does not go so far as to condemn the stories of Arthur's adventures outright, his skepticism indicates that he certainly fears they may be untrue because they are orally transmitted.<sup>34</sup> William of Malmesbury, commenting on Geoffrey of Monmouth, Wace's source, is more forthright: 'Hic est Artur de quo Britonum nugae hodieque delirant; dignus plane quem non fallaces somniarent fabulae, sed veraces praedicarent historiae'.<sup>35</sup> It has been suggested that Wace's comments are a toned-down reproduction of William's stinging criticism.<sup>36</sup>

Behind the topics of source reference and evaluation found in Latin and vernacular writing alike lies an attitude to narration that may be termed 'archival'. This attitude involves more than the authors' willingness to tell only the stories that are stored in and whose authenticity is assured by the archive of sources, whether these are eyewitness reports, written evidence or mere hearsay. It involves the belief that what can be told, together with its meaning, is a fixed quantity, determined in advance by God, who has planned the course of human history from beginning to end. As Max Wehrli has put it: 'Die Zeit ist geschaffen, endlich, sozusagen räumlich überblickbar'.<sup>37</sup> Time is like an archive, an enclosed space where all the events that have happened or will happen are stored and catalogued according to a system of God's devising. Narrative, which is a representation of time, is therefore not a matter of open-ended speculation, but a retrieval of the contents of this archive and a demonstration of its finite order. Source references and allusions to soteriological schemata are the hallmarks of archival narratives; the former establish that the narrative's content is being called up from the archive, the latter assign to the individual events their proper place in the divine architectonics of history.

The archival orientation of vernacular narrative in the eleventh and twelfth centuries is a reflexion of the inclinations and attitudes of the authors on the one hand, and of the interests of the audience on the other. Increasingly scholarship has come to lay emphasis on the important role played by clerical authors in the emergence of a written court literature during this period.<sup>38</sup> The medieval Latin designation *clericus* was not restricted to men in holy orders, but could refer to anyone, even laymen, who had been educated in a Church school; it is not surprising therefore that *clerici* should have been writing literature at the court, as well as in the cloister. The authors of the *Alexanderlied* (line 4) and the *Rolandlied* (line 9079) style themselves 'pfaffe', and Herbort von Fritzlar calls himself a 'gelarter schulere' (*Liet von Troye*, line 18451); in the case of authors who are not as explicit about their status, but who, like Veldeke or the anonymous compiler of the *Kaiserchronik*, reveal that they are competent in the written medium and work from written, especially Latin, sources, it may be assumed that they too are *clerici* and *litterati*.<sup>39</sup> The similarities that we noted between the archival topics of vernacular literature on the one hand and Latin historiography on the other may thus be accounted for by the common educational background of Latin and vernacular writers. The bookish approach of these authors, their respect for authority and tradition enshrined in writing, is part of the archival mentality. For these clerkly writers the material world does not constitute an open field of investigation about which new information may be discovered by a process of experimental inquiry; on the contrary, the world is made up of a finite set of truths to be retrieved from authoritative books.<sup>40</sup>

The historiographic orientation of German narrative in the eleventh and twelfth centuries can be explained only in part by the mentality and educational background of its authors, important though this is. Doubtless clerics carried over into the vernacular the bookish attitudes and methods they had acquired in the Latin schools. But this still begs the question of why they should have done so at all. A satisfactory answer can be given only if one assumes that the authors' obsession with the past was matched by an interest in history on the 'reception side', among the lay nobles whose involvement in literary life, as a public and also as patrons, was steadily growing. Attempts to explain the rise of a vernacular historiographic tradition exclusively from the 'production side' ring somewhat hollow: a tradition so persistent and so widespread cannot be put down to inveterate clerical habit alone, nor is it in my view sufficient to argue that rigoristic condemnation of profane letters led authors to prefer the *res factae* of history to the *res fictae* of poetry, for one imagines that those who took seriously the Church's dictum 'Prohibetur Christianus legere figmenta poetarum' would not have been prominent among the audience for profane literature in the vernacular.<sup>41</sup> The point I want to make is, then, that the audience too must be considered as carriers of the archival mentality expressed in the literature they read or listened to.

My argument that any explanation of the rise of a historiographic narrative tradition in the vernacular needs to take into account not only the clerical training of the authors, but also the interests of the laymen or *illiterati* who constituted the audience for this kind of literature brings us back to a point that was made earlier, in a different context. I suggested that the change in emphasis from *historia salutis* to *historia mundana* reflected an increasing cultural self-awareness among laymen, who were becoming interested in hearing how the history of their world and their institutions fitted into the divine scheme, who desired in other words to hear about the role they played as subjects in the historical process. I also suggested that this change in emphasis was perhaps not adequately described as a teleological progress from theological tutelage to fictional freedom, but that it was more appropriate to think of it as a process in which the laity came to take possession of the history that had previously been the exclusive domain of the clerics (see above, pp. 17–20). In order to develop this point I wish to focus on one work where the author's clerkly mentality and the patron's fascination with history coincide.

In the epilogue to the *Rolandslied* the author, who identifies himself as 'phaffe Chunrat' and describes how he translated the work from French into Latin, and thence into German, names as the instigators of this work of translation 'der herzog Hainrich' and 'di edele herzoginne,/aines richen chûniges barn' (lines 9016–25, 9079–83). It is now generally accepted that the reference is to Heinrich der Löwe, Duke of Saxony, and his wife Matilda, daughter of Henry II of England, and that the *Rolandslied* was written around 1170.<sup>42</sup> All the art patronized by Heinrich — literature, painting, architecture — has as its hallmark an archaistic imperial style. It testifies to his regal and imperial pretensions, and the retrospective style reveals how he stabilized his self-image, and made it cohere, by constantly embedding it in history, tradition, and lineage. Thus, whenever Heinrich is named as the benefactor of a work he is presented as the descendant and kinsman of kings and emperors, as in the Helmarshausen Gospel, commissioned by him for the cathedral of St Blasius at Brunswick, the illustrations of which hark back to the imperial style of late Ottonian book-painting, while the cathedral itself is consciously modelled on that at Goslar, built by emperor Heinrich III.<sup>43</sup> In Heinrich der Löwe we have an outstanding example of a lay prince who seeks to exploit history in order to shore up his self-understanding and the legitimacy of his rule in the present. At a time when the idea of the *sacrum imperium* was being spread by Hohenstaufen propaganda, Heinrich was also seeking to be represented as a leading actor on the stage of universal history, depicting himself as direct continuator of an imperial tradition of self-representation. This is a patron with a desire for history, a salient case of a layman who wanted access to the Latin scholarship of the *clerici*, so much so that it is reported of him that he had works of history collected, written down, and read to him.<sup>44</sup>

The *Rolandslied* presents an idealized view of the empire as the earthly institution through which the divine will is realized. The function of the empire is the defence and propagation of Christianity, a task set it by God, and it is the emperor, Charlemagne, who occupies the key position of intermediary between God and men: God sends an angel to Charlemagne, instructing him to fight the infidel in Spain, Charlemagne passes the message on to the paladins, who in turn gather their troops (53–176).<sup>45</sup> In the epilogue (9039–45) Konrad identifies Heinrich with Charlemagne by comparing him with David, the prototype of the Christian ruler: nobody may be more fittingly likened to David than Duke Heinrich, to whom God has granted success in defeating his enemies, honouring Christendom and converting pagans (the allusion is probably to his campaigns against the Slavs). Heinrich's success as a defender of the faith makes him like David, and also, therefore, like Charlemagne, to whom the by-name David was regularly given.<sup>46</sup> Heinrich is thus represented as the direct continuator of the imperial office; he is praised as a just and God-fearing ruler in words echoing David's resolutions in Psalm 101 (9050–65; cf. Bertau, pp. 11–12). Even the commissioning of the *Rolandslied* is depicted as though it were an imperial gesture, intended for the good of the realm: 'da ist daz riche wol mit geret' (9034). Konrad brings the epilogue to a close with a request for prayers for his patron and for the souls of all believers (9086–90), which is derived from a similar prayer in the *Kaiserchronik* (lines 17165–69), for the soul of emperor Lothar, Heinrich's grandfather.

We see then that the representation of imperial history in the *Rolandslied* serves its patron's attempts at self-definition as a Christian ruler in the present.<sup>47</sup> But this is complicated by the fact that in addition to the network of references identifying Heinrich with Charlemagne and David there are also allusions that connect him not with the emperor, but with his foremost liegeman, Roland. Heinrich's emblem, the lion, is also featured on Roland's shield (3986), and Roland's sword, Durndart, is said to contain, among other holy relics, those of St Blasius (6875). This detail, which is not in the *Chanson de Roland*,<sup>48</sup> must have been added by Konrad deliberately, for St Blasius was Heinrich's patron saint; the Cathedral at Brunswick is dedicated to him, as is the church at Heinrich's palace in Dankwarderode, and in the Helmarshausen Gospel Heinrich is depicted handing the book over to the saint. In 1173, moreover, Heinrich presented the cathedral with several relics of St Blasius. Roland is therefore identified with Heinrich by being protected by the same saint. There is, then, an ambivalence in the *Rolandslied*, for its patron is identified with both the emperor and his vassal. In this connexion the fate of Roland's sword, Durndart, becomes interesting. It does not remain with Roland, but circulates throughout the entire hierarchy of the empire: an angel brings it from God to Charlemagne, with the instruction that he should hand it on to Roland; when he dies, the sword returns to Charlemagne, who hands it to another vassal 'in Rölantes stat' (6863–69;

7767–70). Just as Durndart circulates between emperor and liegeman, so Heinrich, associated with the sword through the allusion to the Blasius relics, is a ‘free floater’ in the political order, identified now with the ruler, now with the vassal.

This ambivalent status reflects the real position of the territorial princes in Germany, of whom Heinrich was among the foremost: technically vassals of the king, they increasingly consolidated their own territorial rule at the expense of the monarchy, and in their exercise of power came to resemble kings themselves. It could be said, with Vollmann-Profe (*Wiederbeginn volkssprachiger Schriftlichkeit*, pp. 135–36), that the *Rolandslied* addresses itself to this political reality. For her the intention of the work is not to establish any claim of Heinrich’s to be emperor in place of Barbarossa; rather its message is that the exercise of temporal sovereignty is not exclusively the right of the monarch, but may also be devolved to the princes (and here it is relevant to note that the *Rolandslied* consistently depicts Charlemagne as an emperor who seeks his princes’ advice and rules with their consent and co-operation). Accordingly the identification of Heinrich with rulers such as Charlemagne and David, far from insinuating that the duke ought to be emperor, serves to establish his kingly qualification and thus his fitness to wield the temporal sword, while the emphasis on his concern for the honour of the empire, his motive for commissioning Konrad to translate the *Rolandslied*, is intended as a reassurance that he will wield that sword not out of self-interest, but for the higher good of the state. One could pursue Vollmann-Profe’s line of argument further and interpret the association of Heinrich with Roland as yet another reassurance that with the power he legitimately wields the duke wishes to serve the state, not supplant its head. Ott-Meimberg on the other hand is cautious about identifying the message of the *Rolandslied* so closely with the political ambitions of its patron. She reads the work on a more general level, as the expression of the aspirations of an entire princely-artistocratic class, whose number would naturally include Duke Heinrich (*Kreuzzugsepos*, pp. 261–75). For her the central message of the *Rolandslied* is the sanctification of the state, ‘daz riche’, understood not as an abstract concept, but in personal terms, as the collective of nobles who direct the affairs of state (see especially p. 272). The work is a celebration of princely confidence in their role in carrying out the divine will and bringing mankind closer to salvation by propagating and defending the faith, independently of the church, through their own secular institution, the state. According to this reading, the *Rolandslied* would still be an articulation of Heinrich’s personal ambitions, but only because these are in any case a particular instance of the interests of an entire class of laymen, to whose sense of self as agents in the historical process this work of clerical authorship gives powerful expression.

It does not fall within the scope of this survey of archival narratives to reconcile differences over the interpretation of the *Rolandslied*. But whether one

identifies its message with the personal ambitions of Heinrich der Löwe, or more generally with the political ideology of the class of princes to which he belongs,<sup>49</sup> the most important point for us to register is that in the *Rolandslied* we have evidence of how the author's clerical conception of history and the aspirations of a lay public coincided in an interest in the past as the guarantor of aristocratic legitimacy in the present. Konrad's clerical training, which he emphasizes in his description of his activity as translator, allows him access to the stories contained in the archive of history, and his technical competence, thus established, in reading, narrating, and interpreting history is matched on the reception side by a desire on the part of the lay patron and public to see themselves represented as actors in that history. The *Rolandslied* shows them how God's plan is realized in the institution of the 'riche', which they constitute. In other words, it assures them of their special place in the archive of the divine order. The *Rolandslied* indicates therefore that the mentality associated with archival narratives was alive in lay aristocratic circles in Germany around 1170, at a time when Hartmann von Aue was importing something radically different onto the literary scene.

#### EXPERIMENTAL NARRATIVES

Mîn her Hartman von Ouwe,  
vrou Ginôvêr, iuwer vrouwe,  
und iuwer herre, der kûnec Artûs,  
den kumt ein mîn gast ze hûs.

With these words Wolfram announces the arrival of Parzival at the court of King Arthur.<sup>50</sup> His identification of the Arthurian world with Hartmann von Aue is a reminder that it was this author that introduced the Arthurian romance into Germany, first with *Erec* (c. 1185) and then *Iwein* (c. 1200), both of them adaptations of romances by Chrétien de Troyes.

The Arthurian romance, inaugurated by Chrétien in France and brought by Hartmann to Germany, represents a departure from the tradition of archival narrative whose outlines we have been tracing. It is a world of adventure and fairy-tale, removed from history, not readily locatable in real time and space, inassimilable to the universalizing schemata of the four kingdoms and the six ages.<sup>51</sup> The literary evolution of the *matière de Bretagne* is characterized by a process of dehistoricization, in the course of which an initial concentration on the figure of the king as historical, national hero gives way to an interest in the fictional adventures of the knights of the Round Table.<sup>52</sup> The first written manifestations of the legend of King Arthur represent him as a British king who ruled at the time of the Saxon invasions in the early sixth century. In this guise he appears in literature from the *Historia Britonum* in the ninth century to Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* and Wace's translation of that influential work,

the *Geste des Bretons*, or *Roman de Brut*, in the twelfth.<sup>53</sup> In the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, written around 1135–38, Arthur is integrated into a line of British kings supposedly beginning with Brutus, grandson of Aeneas, and ending with Cadwallader, who is said to have died in 689 (the date of Arthur's own death is given as 542).<sup>54</sup> Geoffrey synchronizes his history of the British kings with events in world history, from the fall of Troy to the arrival of Augustine in Britain in 689. Although these cross-references are principally to kings and judges of the Old Testament and Roman emperors, leading figures in *historia mundana* in other words, Geoffrey also makes connexions with important stations in *historia salutis*: the prophecies of Isaiah, the birth of Christ, the spread of the Christian faith by missionaries sent from Rome (II, 15; IV, 11, 19; XI, 12). Arthur is thus given his historical place, not only in the lineage of the kings of Britain, but also in the soteriological scheme of universal history. It is with Chrétien that the decisive turn from history is made. In his Arthurian romances the Arthur of historical tradition, the heroic *dux bellorum*, is relegated to the background, where he is a passive and pacific figure, a *primus inter pares* among the knights of the Round Table, whose deeds, unreported by Geoffrey and by Wace, provide the narrative with its focus.<sup>55</sup> It is precisely these deeds that Wace — who introduced the idea of the Round Table — scrupled to recount (see above, p. 24). The 'fables', 'merveilles' and 'aventures' of Arthur are, however, the starting-point for Chrétien. With him Arthurian narrative is removed from the archive of history and opened up to adventure and experiment.

Archival narratives are characterized by their preference for historical subjects and the belief that all history fits into and confirms a universal pattern determined from the outset by God. Theirs is a poetics of boundedness: the stories that can be told are limited to the ones safely stored in the archive of sources, and the meaning of these stories is arrived at through their integration into a closed schema of interpretation. Archival narrative is therefore a question of deriving the subject-matter together with its significance from a fixed store of knowledge. With the Arthurian romance, by contrast, meaning is not locked up in an archive, waiting to be recalled by the authors and their public; it is what is created in the course of narration itself, which accordingly takes on an open-ended, experimental quality. This has been convincingly demonstrated by Haug, whose account of the poetics of Arthurian romance forms the basis of what follows (*Literaturtheorie*, pp. 91–130).

The Arthurian romance, in the form created by Chrétien, typically narrates the encounters between a knightly hero and an other: women with whom he falls in love, adversaries, and obstacles, often inhuman and magical, which he must overcome in combat. Love and deeds of arms are constitutive of the knight's mode of existence. His encounters in both of these spheres are not narrated in a random, purely additive fashion, but organized into a structure, which gives them shape and reveals their sense as the story unfolds. A significant

design is perceptible in both the spatial and the temporal arrangement of the narrative, and the features of this design are alternation, cycle, and repetition. The action alternates between two scenes, the court and the outside world. The court, the point of departure and return for the hero, is the domain where love and chivalry are made into social values through the institutions of marriage, the Round Table and kingship. The public ceremonies and festivities, the seemingly ceaseless round of weddings, coronations, tournaments, and entertainments in which courtly life consists, underline the fact that the knight lives out his erotic and aggressive drives within the representative forms of an ideal social order. By contrast, the world outside the court, typically an enchanted forest, where the hero's encounters with the other take place, is markedly anti-social. It is a realm where erotic and martial energies dominate as absolute ends in themselves, as demonic and destructive forces. In *Erec et Enide*, for instance, the forest through which the hero rides is populated by violent predators: the robbers who threaten his life, the giants who torture the knight they hold captive, the counts who desire Enide and are prepared to use force to obtain her. The spatial design of the romance, with its alternation between court and other world, social and anti-social space, brings home to the reader the ambivalence of eros and aggression, allowing him or her to experience these drives as now civilizational, now destructive. The other world functions as a sort of primal scene of civilization, where play the elemental forces that are sublimated in the institutions and representations of the courtly order. The narrative is set in train when the stability of this order is imperilled by the forces of the other world, by a return of the repressed, as it were, which prompts the hero to leave the court and confront the threat. This brings us to the second feature of romance structure. The spatial alternation is projected along a temporal axis by the knight's passage from court to other world and back in a cycle of departure, adventure, and return. In his adventures the knight defeats the anti-social forces of the other world and acquires a wife, increased honour at the court, and sovereignty. Erec marries Enide and at the end of the story succeeds his father as king of Estre-Gales, Yvain marries Laudine and becomes lord of her realm, Perceval marries Blanche-flor and (to go by Wolfram) eventually becomes Grail king. The sense that unfolds with the cycle is one of how victories over the other world accumulate as cultural capital; it might be said that the Arthurian romance is a fictional account of the process of civilization. The fiction is enacted on two levels, the social and the individual. This double aspect is introduced into the texture of the narrative by the third design feature, repetition. The romance usually contains two cycles of departure, adventure, and return, so that the narrative repeats itself. It is not a question of telling the same story twice, but of a structural repetition that allows one to recognize significant changes of accent from one cycle to the next. In the first cycle, the impetus to adventure comes from without, when the courtly order is unsettled by a representative of the

other world. At the beginning of *Erec et Enide* an act of aggression, when Yder's dwarf strikes one of Guinevere's ladies-in-waiting, impels the hero to leave the court in order to make up for the shame he incurs in not avenging this slight on the spot, for he is unarmed.<sup>56</sup> In *Yvain* the hero sets off after hearing how another knight of the Round Table, his cousin Calogrenant, was defeated in combat by the guardian of a magical fountain; Yvain's expressed motive is to avenge his kinsman's shame.<sup>57</sup> The second cycle, by contrast to the first, is set in motion by an inner crisis, with no provocation from outside. The hero lapses into anti-social behaviour, as when Erec's obsessive love for Enide causes him to neglect chivalry and damages his courtly honour,<sup>58</sup> or when Yvain's addiction to tournaments brings shame upon him because he forgets his wife Laudine.<sup>59</sup> Love and the impulse to knightly action have become compulsive, absolute demands, as they are in the other world. It is as though its anarchic forces have come to dwell within the knight. If the first cycle is external, concerned with injuries that are inflicted on the courtly world from outside its domain, in the second cycle the threat has been internalized, for this time the problems — again involving loss of honour — arise out of the behavioural dysfunctions of one of the court's leading representatives. If the first cycle is about civilization, the second is about socialization, the enactment of the civilizing process in the individual.<sup>60</sup>

The structural design of Arthurian romance is what makes it possible to trace a meaning in the narrative. Its function is thus analogous to the soteriological schemata such as the four kingdoms or the *aetates mundi* in historiographic literature. Unlike them, however, it was a literary construction from the outset, created with the genre of romance.<sup>61</sup> In the prologue to *Erec et Enide* Chrétien introduces himself to his public as the author who 'tret d'un conte d'avanture/ une molt bele conjointure' (13–14). A few lines later he accuses professional storytellers ('cil qui de conter vivre vuelent') of garbling and corrupting ('depecier et corronpre') the tale of Erec (21–22). The term 'conjointure' has been much discussed, but whatever its origins or appropriate translation, the context makes clear that it refers to the putting together of the narrative in a coherent whole, a process in other words of drawing structure and significance out of the disorder and confusion of the raw material.<sup>62</sup> To the shapeless narration of his predecessors and rivals Chrétien opposes an ordered design, which he presents as a distinctive achievement of his; the prologue concludes with the boast that *his* telling of the story of Erec will last to the end of Christendom (23–26).<sup>63</sup> The poetics of the 'conjointure' marks a complete break with archival poetics, just as the incorporation of the *matière de Bretagne* into the narrative tradition meant a turn away from historical themes. In archival and historiographic narratives the seat of meaning is located outside the text, in a transcendental schema, and in other texts, the sources that guarantee the present book's integrity. In romance significance is produced out of the text's internal

resources, by the progressive unfolding of the narrative structure with its alternations, cycles, repetitions.<sup>64</sup> Without a transcendental frame, these textual operations enter the foreground; the aesthetic experience of them becomes the indispensable precondition for the apperception of meaning. Because it is dependent on the progressive experience of the text, meaning itself becomes a process; it is not something already known that can be pointed to, as when an event is assigned its place in the providential order of human history, but something that has to be created out of the experience of literature. The poetics of the Arthurian romance is experimental, in the sense that it requires a 'going through' the text in order to trace a significance that is not already given.<sup>65</sup>

In accordance with the new experimental poetics, the Arthurian romances of Chrétien largely dispense with the apparatus of source references, the archival topics, that we found in historiographic literature.<sup>66</sup> In neither *Yvain* nor the *Chevalier de la Charrete* does Chrétien allude to a written source,<sup>67</sup> and the same is true of *Erec et Enide*, if one disregards the one passage where the author states that he has taken his description of the robe worn by Erec on his coronation from Macrobius.<sup>68</sup> This reference cannot however underpin the whole story, only the truth of the appearance of Erec's robe which, embroidered with the figures of the quadrivium, constitutes the most clerkly passage in the romance.<sup>69</sup> The lack of references to written sources presumably reflects the fact that Chrétien was reworking stories that circulated in oral tradition, putting them into writing for the first time.<sup>70</sup> The existence of such a tradition outside the 'historical' treatment of Arthur by Geoffrey and Wace is suggested by Wace's own comments about the fabulous tales told by 'conteür' and 'fableür' as well as by Chrétien's own disparaging remarks about other storytellers in the prologue to *Erec et Enide*.<sup>71</sup> However, the two other romances (disregarding *Guillaume d'Angleterre*, which may not be by Chrétien) do purport to have written sources. In the prologue to *Cligès* Chrétien claims that the story is contained in a book in the library of the cathedral of St-Pierre at Beauvais, and this guarantees its truth,<sup>72</sup> while the prologue to *Perceval* states that the source of the Grail story is a book obtained for the author by his patron, Count Philip of Flanders.<sup>73</sup> Neither of these books has been successfully identified,<sup>74</sup> but this question is of less interest to us than the fact there should be some romances by Chrétien that claim to have a basis in written sources and others that do not. Both *Cligès* and *Perceval* stand apart from the other romances as more clerkly in their themes. The story of Cligès and Alexander, emperors of Constantinople, is located in the identifiably historical and imperial world of Greece and Germany and therefore has an affinity with the *roman antique*; the quest of the Grail, with its Christian symbolism and messianic overtones, points towards transcendent truths of religion. It seems then that for narratives that move within the traditionally clerical domains of history and religion, Chrétien is prepared to continue the convention of guaranteeing their truth by archival

means; the absence of book-references from the other romances indicates that these fall outside the purview of the archive.<sup>75</sup>

Hartmann certainly understood the principles of experimental poetics, for both *Erec* and *Iwein* preserve Chrétien's 'conjointure', tightening it up even,<sup>76</sup> and in the prologue to *Iwein* he makes what Haug describes as a programmatic declaration of allegiance to the new poetics (*Literaturtheorie*, pp. 118–26). There he states that he would not want to live at the time of Arthur and the Round Table if it meant having to forego the stories that are told about them nowadays.<sup>77</sup> Literature is superior to history. It therefore seems at first sight anomalous that Hartmann should include archival references in both of his romances, when neither of the French models contains any such reference. In *Iwein* he introduces himself in the prologue as 'ein rîter, der gelêret was/unde ez an den buochen las . . . der tihte diz maere' (21–30), and in *Erec* the narration is interspersed with assurances of the type 'als ich ez (an sînem buoche) las', 'ob uns daz buoch niht liuget'.<sup>78</sup> The difference between Chrétien and Hartmann in this respect reflects not a process of 're-archivalization', however, but the fact that the German author does have a written source for his Arthurian romances, for Chrétien has put oral tradition into writing (Green, 'Oral Poetry', p. 208).

Hans Robert Jauss has spoken of a rediscovery of fiction in the twelfth century, a development that for him embraces the vernacular romance as well as the Latin cosmographic epics of Bernard Silvestris and Alan of Lille, and in which he discerns the repetition of certain poetic principles that characterized fiction when it was discovered for the first time by the Greeks.<sup>79</sup> In the new, experimental poetics of romance Haug also sees a rediscovery of fiction (*Literaturtheorie*, pp. 91, 105), but unlike Jauss, he insists on the fundamental difference between this medieval, vernacular species of fiction and other modes of imaginative writing, both classical Greek and medieval Latin. The difference between the poetics of romance and classical theories of fiction turns on the concept of verisimilitude. According to Aristotle's famous distinction, historiography is factual, chronicling what actually happened, while poetry is fictitious yet verisimilar, recounting what might have happened, in accordance with the principles of likelihood (*to eikos*) and necessity (*to anankaion*). The truth of history is limited and particular, whereas poetic representation can transcend the contingencies of time and space to arrive at a universal validity; fiction is thus superior to reality.<sup>80</sup> For Haug, the Aristotelian principle of verisimilitude is irrelevant to the poetics of medieval romance because — quite apart from the fact that the *Poetics* was hardly known in the Middle Ages — the medieval genre depends on the exploitation of the fantastic and non-verisimilar in order to produce a meaning.<sup>81</sup> Aristotle (*Poetics*, 1451b, 1461b), associates *poiësis* very closely with philosophy and exemplarity: the universality of fiction makes it more philosophical and serious (*philosophôteron kai spoudaioteron*) than history, and the credible representation of the improbable is said to be preferable to what

is probable but incredible, because it is capable of expressing an exemplary ideal (*paradeigma*). The notion that fictional representation is readable in moral or philosophical terms reappears in certain theories of *fabula* from late antiquity onwards; for Haug it is the inapplicability of these theories to the romance that constitutes the second of his dividing lines, that between vernacular and Latin varieties of fiction in the Middle Ages. In late classical times Isidore, Priscian, and Macrobius all describe *fabula* as *fictio* that can nevertheless have a true meaning. Priscian is the most radical, defining fable as 'oratio ficta verisimili dispositione imaginem exhibens veritatis';<sup>82</sup> Isidore and Macrobius recognize truth only in certain species of the genre, the former in those fables that can be interpreted 'ad naturam rerum' or 'ad mores hominum',<sup>83</sup> the latter in the divine myths of Hesiod and Orpheus and the mystical ideas of the Pythagoreans, which he calls *narratio fabulosa* in order to distinguish them from the completely mendacious *fabula*.<sup>84</sup> In the twelfth century this philosophically ennobled concept of *narratio fabulosa* was taken up by Bernard Silvestris and re-named *integumentum*. In his commentary on Martianus Capella he distinguishes between that term and *allegoria*: the latter is a historical narrative containing a true meaning different from the outward appearance, the former is a fictitious narrative that encloses a true meaning ('sub fabulosa narratione verum claudens intellectum').<sup>85</sup> The integumental theory found practical application in Bernard's commentary on the *Aeneid*, which he reads as a veiled philosophical message about the nature of human life,<sup>86</sup> and in his own and Alan of Lille's Neo-Platonist epics, the *Cosmographia*, the *Anticlaudianus*, and the *De Planctu Naturae*.<sup>87</sup>

Basic to all of these theories and practices of fable and integument is the idea that the exterior, invented narrative contains a kernel of truth, a *sensus moralis* or *philosophica veritas*, which is uncovered by exegesis (Alan of Lille speaks of the 'dulcior nucleus veritatis' concealed beneath the surface of falsehood).<sup>88</sup> It has been suggested that the romance — whose rise is roughly contemporary with the philosophical epics of the school of Chartres — is also amenable to moral or philosophical interpretation.<sup>89</sup> Support for such a view comes from two sources. On the one hand there are statements by the authors themselves that appear to invite a moral exegesis of the romance, as when, for instance, Hartmann mentions the *lêre* to be derived from the example of King Arthur (*Iwein*, line 4); on the other hand there is the early thirteenth-century testimony of Thomasin von Zerklare who, conceding the didactic usefulness of otherwise mendacious adventures, explains their truth-value by means of a vestimentary metaphor which could be taken to imply that romances are constructed as *integumenta*.<sup>90</sup> Against the temptation to assimilate romance to the theoretical tradition of integument and fable Haug argues that a careful, contextual reading of authorial statements reveals not an unequivocal commitment to a didactic programme, moral or philosophical, but rather an attempt to express the new

poetics of the romance through the inherited terminology of Latin theory; he also argues that Thomasin von Zerklære's position is a reductive misrepresentation or misunderstanding of the new poetics; and most important of all, he argues that romances are not open to moral or integumental exegesis because their significance cannot be reduced to didactic maxims or philosophical dogma.<sup>91</sup> The meaning of episodes such as Erec's combat with Mabonagrain (the adventure of the 'Joie de la Court') or Yvain's madness is not concealed underneath the fictional surface, waiting to be discovered and restated as a moral truth; it can only be intuited through an appreciation of the place these events have in the narrative cycle, of the parallels and contrasts between them and certain earlier scenes they repeat. Such an intuition arises out of the reader's experience of the romance's structural design.<sup>92</sup> In other words, experience of the literary medium is an indispensable and irreducible constituent of meaning. By contrast, in the *integumentum* fiction is negated at the moment of exegetical revelation: once the truth has been arrived at, the wraps that veiled it can be discarded, and aesthetics is dislodged by epistemology.

I would like to conclude this section with a few remarks on the sociological background to the Arthurian romance. In the discussion of archival narratives I suggested that vernacular epics with *historia mundana* as their theme reflected the clerkly mentality of the authors on the one hand and the interests of the aristocratic patrons on the other (see above, pp. 26–29). The question therefore arises whether the romance, whose representation of the profane world dispenses with history and eschatology, is the product of a different configuration of interests. So far as we can tell, the sociology of authorship and patronship is the same for the first romances as it was for archival narratives. Chrétien presents himself in the prologue to *Cligès* as a *homo litteratus*, the heir to the knowledge of the ancients, whose 'chevalerie' and 'clergie' now reside and flourish in France;<sup>93</sup> Hartmann describes himself as 'ein rîter, der gelêret was', as a *miles* and *clericus* in other words, a combination that is not so odd if one supposes that he might have been destined for ecclesiastical office but, for whatever reason, returned to the lay estate.<sup>94</sup> Marie de France, Countess of Champagne and daughter of Louis VII, and Philip, Count of Flanders are named as the patrons of *Lancelot* and *Perceval* respectively;<sup>95</sup> for Hartmann we have no information, but there is much to be said for the view that his patron is to be sought among the dukes of Zähringen.<sup>96</sup> The theory has been advanced that the romance nevertheless also reflects the interests of laymen lower down the social scale than the aristocratic grandees who commissioned works of this genre. For France, Erich Köhler has argued that Chrétien's romances represent what is, from the point of view of the high aristocracy, an ideal feudal order, one with a weak monarchy, but that these aristocrats also sought to accommodate the lesser nobility by involving them in a vision of chivalry that transcended all distinctions of rank;<sup>97</sup> for Germany, Gerd Kaiser has attempted to show that

Hartmann adapted Chrétien from the perspective of the *ministeriales*, for instance emphasizing Erec's service as a knight at the expense of his monarchic functions, in order to facilitate that group's identification with the hero.<sup>98</sup> The difficulty with these hypotheses is that we know very little about the sociological composition of the audiences for vernacular literature. Bumke's researches on the court of Hermann of Thuringia suggest that only a fairly small and exclusive circle of people, perhaps no more than twenty to twenty-five in number, was intimately involved in literary life at the court: the patron and his family, court clerics, important functionaries and their wives, and certain other noblemen who were the lord's closest advisers. The participation of other social groups would have been intermittent, for they would have augmented the regular audience for courtly literature only on special festive occasions, and would therefore have had little chance of hearing a long narrative work in its entirety (*Höfische Kultur*, pp. 702–04). If this pattern is typical of other courts, then one may have to conclude that the involvement of minor nobles and *ministeriales* in courtly romance was marginal.

#### GOTTFRIED VON STRASSBURG: *POETA* OR *HISTORIOGRAPHUS*?

Vernacular narrative before Gottfried contains two tendencies: the one, archival, deals in a fixed form of truth that can stand independently of the experience of its textual representation; the other, experimental, creates a meaning out of the aesthetic experience of a text's internal structure. The question is: with which of these tendencies are we to identify Gottfried's poetics? Haug assigns *Tristan* to the experimental mode, though he acknowledges that this work does not possess the structure typical of the Arthurian romances of Hartmann and Chrétien (*Literaturtheorie*, pp. 191, 193, 207, 213). Nevertheless Gottfried's eucharistic analogy in the prologue and his discussion in the literary excursus of the relationship between words and meaning are said by Haug to represent Gottfried's attempt to describe the poetics of an autonomous literary language whose meaning is realized in the process of its reception (pp. 210–11, 214–16). Moreover, the missing structure of Arthurian romance finds its functionally identical counterpart in Gottfried's use of repetition and figural associations to encourage the experimental construction of a meaning through the aesthetic experience of parallels and divergences (pp. 217–21). Sawicki, by contrast, emphasizes the archival topics in Gottfried's prologue and insists that the author wished to be considered as a *historiographus* rather than a *poeta*.<sup>99</sup> His position is shared by Boesch, Knapp, and Huber.<sup>100</sup>

Any new inquiry into Gottfried's poetics — such as the present study — must take into account the existence of these opposed positions. If in the following chapters I do not set about trying to disprove the one side or the other, this is because I think that the very fact that scholarship has been able to support

mutually contradictory conclusions may be an indication that Gottfried's literary technique is more complex than the argumentative structure of 'either *historiographus* or *poeta*' can reveal. On the one hand there is the Gottfried who refuses to include everything that has been narrated about Tristan's exploits in exile, declaring:

die fabelen, die hier under sint,  
die sol ich werfen an den wint:  
mir ist doch mit der warheit  
ein michel arbeit uf geleit (18463–66).

This reads like an archivist's rejection of *res fictae* or *fabulae* in favour of the *res factae* or *historia* preserved in reliable sources. On the other hand, however, there is the narrator who is prepared to argue that the duel between Morold and Tristan was a battle of armies, 'swie ich doch daz nie gelas/an Tristandes maere' (6874–75). Here, the narrative leaves the archive behind and becomes experimental.<sup>101</sup>

The hypothesis from which I shall be working in the following chapters is that Gottfried's narrative poetics involves taking material he considered archival and treating it in an experimental way. From a story whose foundations are perceived and presented as history he derives meanings that, in the final analysis, are generated in the interplay of the textual and empirical experience of his readers and listeners. In this experiment with the material, history, what is found in the archive, is not effaced; it is the precondition for experiment.

The plausibility of this hypothesis is suggested in the first place by what Haug says about the different positions in which Gottfried and Chrétien found themselves with regard to the matter of their romances: 'Gottfried sieht sich nicht wie Chrétien beim "Erec" einer mündlichen Überlieferung konfrontiert, die er erst auf die schriftliche Stufe heben und dabei über eine strukturelle Konzeption mit Sinn erfüllen müßte. Er kann sich vielmehr in eine schon etablierte schriftliterarische Tradition stellen' (*Literaturtheorie*, p. 207). As Gottfried acknowledges in his prologue, there already exist written versions of the story of Tristan and Isolde, among them the romance of Thomas (131–54); his position is therefore comparable to that of the historian, working from written sources he has taken from the archive. His obligation to these sources will naturally impose constraints on any experimentation with his material he may wish to undertake. The idea that Gottfried's poetics in some way weds archival and experimental principles of narration also gains in plausibility when one considers the direction taken by the romance in the thirteenth century after Gottfried. There, fictional characters and scenarios are combined with historical and eschatological references: Konrad Fleck makes Flore and Blanscheflur into the grandparents of Charlemagne;<sup>102</sup> Albrecht, author of the *Jüngerer Titurel*, traces the grail dynasty back to ancient Troy and Rome, and identifies the grail itself with the vessel used by Christ at the Last Supper;<sup>103</sup> Rudolf von Ems sets

the story of *Der guote Gerhart* in the Holy Roman Empire under the reign of Otto and the kingdom of England under William.<sup>104</sup> It is important to distinguish the different ways in which history and fiction are combined in these and other texts; in some a fictional narrative is implanted in history,<sup>105</sup> in others an archivally secured *fundamentum historiae* is poeticized.<sup>106</sup> But what matters for us is the general point that in the years after Gottfried the vernacular narrative attempted to accommodate the two tendencies of archive and experiment, for this gives us encouragement to seek the same accommodation in the work of an author who, for several of these narrative poets of the thirteenth century, was a revered and respected model.<sup>107</sup>

## NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. *Wiederbeginn volkssprachiger Schriftlichkeit im hohen Mittelalter (1050/60–1160/70)*, Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von den Anfängen bis zum Beginn der Neuzeit (Königstein, 1986). The following is a necessarily oversimplified summary of the aspects of this book I consider most important for my discussion; see especially pp. 15–47, 81–112, 115–37, 193–232. For a survey of the same period that also emphasizes the historical orientation of narrative see Max Wehrli, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur vom frühen Mittelalter bis zum Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts*, (Stuttgart, 1980), pp. 134–202.
2. The six ages, set out by Isidore, Bede, and Augustine, are: 1. from Adam to Noah, 2. Noah to Abraham, 3. Abraham to David, 4. David to the Babylonian captivity, 5. captivity to incarnation, 6. incarnation to the end of the world. See Roderick Schmidt, 'Aetates mundi: Die Weltalter als Gliederungsprinzip der Geschichte', *ZfK*, 67 (1955/56), 288–317. The four kingdoms, derived from Jerome's exegesis of Daniel's dream of the four beasts (Daniel 7), are the empires of Babylon, Persia, Macedonia, and Rome.
3. *Das Annolied*, edited by Eberhard Nellmann (Stuttgart, 1975), 4, 4; 11, 1–16, 12. Further references to this edition will be given in the text.
4. The poem's final concentration of interest on the individual as the place where the universal historical process is realized has occasioned divergent interpretations. Vollmann-Profe, pp. 106–09, reads the end of the *Annolied* as the sign of a lack of confidence in the ideology of *historia salutis*. Anno fails to assert himself in this world, cannot prevent political catastrophe and, when internecine strife breaks out in the empire, desires only to die (40). There is a sense, therefore, of how the history of the world is a process whose logic is impenetrable and autonomous, resistant to integration into God's plan: *historia divina* and *historia mundana* cannot be co-ordinated. Instead of showing all human society progressing towards the ultimate goal of history, the author retreats to a solution on the personal level: let every man do what is right for him in order to find his individual path to salvation. The interpretation of Walter Haug, *Literaturtheorie im deutschen Mittelalter*, pp. 60–66, on the other hand, does not suppose any fracture in the mantle of *historia salutis*, or any contradiction in the way in which the poem changes perspective from the general to the individual. Haug reads the depiction of chaos in the empire in strophe 40 as a sign of the approaching end of the sixth age (which reading would reintegrate the history of the world into the divine schema): precisely now, when the end of humanity is at hand, the time has come for making individual choices. The inference I draw from Haug's reading is that the *Annolied* represents a Christian account of the role of the human subject in the objective historical process, an account in which the orthodox insistence on the freedom of the human will is balanced with faith in God's providence: as history progresses according to plan, so men are faced with personal choices.
5. On the political, economic and cultural background to Franco-German literary relations see Joachim Bumke, *Höfische Kultur: Literatur und Gesellschaft im hohen Mittelalter*, pp. 83–136.
6. See Reto R. Bezzola, *Les Origines et la formation de la littérature courtoise en occident (500–1200)*, 3 vols, Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, 218, 313, 319–20 (Paris, 1944–63), II, 485–526, III, I, 126–39, 150–75; Alois Wolf, *Deutsche Kultur im Hochmittelalter 1150–1250* (Essen, 1986), pp. 259–65, 269–74, 292–97.
7. See for instance her interpretations of the *Annolied*, p. 109, and the *Kaiserchronik*, pp. 111–12.
8. p. 106; see also Haug, *Literaturtheorie*, pp. 66–70.

9. *Eneide*, edited by Gabriele Schieb and Theodor Frings, DTM, 58–59, 2 vols (Berlin, 1964–65), lines 13120–428. Further references will be given in the text.
10. Marianne Ott-Meimberg, *Kreuzzugešepos oder Staatsroman? Strukturen adliger Heilsversicherung im deutschen Rolandslied*, MTU, 70 (Munich, 1980), pp. 264, 267. On the sacralization of the state under Barbarossa and its concealed secularization Ott-Meimberg quotes the historian Theodor Mayer: 'Für Friedrich war also das regnum selbständig neben dem sacerdotium, es war unmittelbar zu Gott und infolgedessen heilig. Diese Auffassung lag der Heiligsprechung Karls des Großen zugrunde, . . . denn Karl war der ideale Repräsentant des regnum. Damit war der Staat als solcher in die sakrale Sphäre gehoben, nicht mehr wie früher als Glied einer sakralen, von Staat und Kirche gebildeten Einheit . . . Man könnte den Vorgang als die Kanonisation des Staates bezeichnen, in der praktischen Auswirkung aber bedeutete er eine Säkularisierung' (p. 265).
11. Marie Schulz, *Die Lehre von der historischen Methode bei den Geschichtschreibern des Mittelalters, (VI.–XIII. Jahrhundert)*, Abhandlungen zur Mittleren und Neueren Geschichte, 13 (Berlin and Leipzig, 1909), pp. 15–42.
12. *Etymologiae*, edited by W. M. Lindsay, 2 vols (Oxford, 1911), 1.41.1.
13. D. H. Green, 'Oral Poetry and Written Composition. (An Aspect of the Feud between Gottfried and Wolfram)', in D. H. Green and L. P. Johnson, *Approaches to Wolfram von Eschenbach: Five Essays*, Mikrokosmos, 5 (Berne, Frankfurt, Las Vegas, 1978), pp. 195–96.
14. Otto von Freising, *Gesta Friderici I. imperatoris*, edited by G. Waitz, MGH Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum (Hanover and Leipzig, 1912), II, 41 ('Nam antiquorum mos fuisse traditur, ut illi, qui res ipsas prout gestae fuerunt sensibus perceperant, earundem scriptores existerent. Unde et hystoria ab hysteron, quod in Greco "videre" sonat, appellari consuevit'); Bernard of Utrecht, *Commentum in Theodolum*, in R. B. C. Huygens, *Accessus ad auctores. Bernard d'Utrecht. Conrad d'Hirsau: Dialogus super auctores* (Leiden, 1970), p. 63 ('historia . . . tracta apo to ystorin id est videre: solos enim fieri rem videntes olim scribere licebat'); Conrad of Hirsau, *Dialogus uper auctores*, in Huygens (1970), p. 75 ('historia . . . res visa, res gesta: historin enim grece, latine visio dicitur, unde historiografus rei visae scriptor dicitur').
15. On topics of historiography see Gertrud Simon, 'Untersuchungen zur Topik der Widmungsbriefe mittelalterlicher Geschichtsschreiber bis zum Ende des 12. Jahrhunderts', 2 parts, *AJD*, 4 (1958), 52–119, and 5 (1959), 73–153.
16. *Vita Karoli Magni*, edited by G. H. Pertz, MGH Scriptores, 2 (Hanover, 1829), p. 443. The phrase 'ut dicunt' indicates that 'oculata fide' is a *topos*; see Schulz, p. 16.
17. *Chronique et chartes de l'abbaye de Saint-Mihiel*, edited by A. Lesort, Mettensia, 6 (Paris, 1909), p. 21: 'Nec duorum aut trium eget testimonio; pene omnibus circumquaque degentibus notum quod referre in primis volumus miraculum'; p. 23: 'Si quis in hoc fit dubius, cottidiano visu et alloquio est enim in promptu, cum ea confabulando poterit nosse plenius'; p. 35: a miracle took place in the outhouse 'ubi et ego qui haec scribo, pre angustia loci, noviter incepti quiescebam'.
18. p. 7: 'in quodam ipsius ecclesiae libello legitur'.
19. p. 2: Smaragdus was abbot during the reign of Louis the Pious.
20. Widukind of Corvey, *Sachsengeschichte*, edited by G. Waitz, MGH Scriptores, 3 (Hanover, 1839), p. 417: 'Et primum quidem de origine statuque gentis pauca expediam, solam pene famam sequens in hac parte, nimia vetustate omnem fere certitudinem obscurante'.
21. Gozwin, *Passio sancti Albani martyris*, edited by O. Holder-Egger, MGH Scriptores, 15 (Hanover, 1887), p. 986. Of his sources Gozwin relates: 'quae hac illac per sedas dispersa erant et quae sanu seniorum fide auctore didiceram in unum stilo subserviente collegi' (ibid.).
22. Schulz, pp. 27–31, 36–42; Simon, part II, pp. 91–92.
23. Examples, with varying degrees of interpretation, for the period up to and including the thirteenth century, are to be found in: Albert Blumenröder, 'Die Quellenberufungen in der mittelhochdeutschen Dichtung' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Marburg, 1922); Bruno Boesch, *Die Kunstsanschauung in der mittelhochdeutschen Dichtung von der Blütezeit bis zum Meistergesang* (Berne and Leipzig, 1936), pp. 75–88; Xenja von Ertzdorff, 'Die Wahrheit der höfischen Romane des Mittelalters', *ZfPh*, 86 (1967), 375–89; D. H. Green, 'Oral Poetry and Written Composition'; Käthe Iwand, *Die Schlüsse der mittelhochdeutschen Epen*, Germanische Studien, 16 (Berlin, 1922), pp. 117–36; Fritz Peter Knapp, 'Historische Wahrheit und poetische Lüge', pp. 596–605; Carl Lofmark, *The Authority of the Source in Middle High German Narrative Poetry*, Bithell Series of Dissertations, 5 (London, 1981), pp. 35–47; Ulrich Mölk, *Französische Literaturästhetik des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts: Prologe — Exkurse — Epiloge*, Sammlung Romanischer Übungstexte, 54 (Tübingen, 1969); F. P. Pickering, *Augustinus oder Boethius? Geschichtsschreibung und epische Dichtung im Mittelalter* —

- und in der Neuzeit, PhStQ, 39, 80, 2 vols (Berlin, 1967–76), II, 146–68; Uwe Pörksen, *Der Erzähler im mittelhochdeutschen Epos: Formen seines Hervortretens bei Lamprecht, Konrad, Hartmann, in Wolframs Willehalm und in den 'Spielmannsepen'*, PhStQ, 58 (Berlin, 1971), pp. 60–75; A. Roßmann, 'Wort und Begriff der Wahrheit in der frühmittelhochdeutschen Literatur' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Tübingen, 1953).
24. *Le Roman de Troie* edited by Leopold Constans, SATF, 6 vols (Paris, 1904–12), lines 30–44. Dares Phrygius, author of a history of the Trojan War which is in fact a sixth-century adaptation of an earlier Greek romance (see Rudolf Helm, *Der antike Roman* (Göttingen, 1956), p. 21), enjoyed a certain prestige in the Middle Ages because of his supposed status as eyewitness; Isidore mentions him as the first gentile historian (*Etymologiae*, I.42.1.).
  25. Herbot von Fritzlar, *Liet von Troie*, edited by G. K. Frommann, BDNL, 5 (Quedlinburg and Leipzig, 1837), lines 54–55.
  26. *Les Deux Rédactions en vers du Moniage Guillaume: Chansons de geste du XIIe siècle*, edited by Wilhelm Cloetta, SATF, 2 vols (Paris, 1906–11), line 4. The archives of the abbey of St-Denis are also mentioned as authority in *Berte aus grans piés*, the narrative of Charlemagne's mother written up in the thirteenth century by Adenet le Roi from a redaction that dates back to the twelfth century; Adenet claims he knew a monk at St-Denis named Savari who showed him a 'livre as estoires' containing the story of Bertha and Pippin (*Berte aus grans piés*, edited by U. T. Holmes, Jr, University of Carolina Studies in the Romance Languages and Literatures, 6 (Chapel Hill, 1946), lines 6–11).
  27. *Das Alexanderlied des Pfaffen Lamprecht*, edited by Irene Ruttman (Darmstadt, 1974), lines 4–7.
  28. *Das Rolandslied des Pfaffen Konrad*, edited by Carl Wesle, revised by P. Wapnewski, ATB, 69 (Tübingen, 1967), lines 9079–85: 'ich haize der phaffe Chunrat./also iz an dem bûche gescribin stat/in franczischer zungen./so han ich iz in die latine bedwngin./danne in di tusiske gekeret./ich nehän der nicht an gemeret./ich nehän dir nicht uber haben'.
  29. See *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon*, edited by Kurt Ruh (Berlin, 1978–), vol. IV, cols 951–52.
  30. *Die Kaiserchronik eines Regensburger Geistlichen*, edited by Edward Schröder, MGH Deutsche Chroniken, I, 1 (Hanover, 1892), lines 15–23: 'Ein buoch ist ze diute getihet, / daz uns Rômîsches rîches wol berihet, / gehaizzen ist iz crônîcâ. / iz chundet uns dâ / von den bâbesen unt von den chunigen, / baidiu guoten unt ubelen, / die vor uns wâren / unt Rômîsches rîches phlâgen / unze an disen hiutegen tac'. On *chronica* as a genre of medieval historiography see Herbert Grundmann, *Geschichtsschreibung im Mittelalter: Gattungen — Epochen — Eigenart* (Göttingen, 1965), pp. 18–27.
  31. *Le Roman de Rou*, edited by A. J. Holden, SATF, 3 vols (Paris, 1970–73), II, 36 (III, lines 179–80).
  32. *Le Roman de Brut*, edited by I. Arnold, SATF, 2 vols (Paris, 1938–40), lines 1–6: 'Ki vult oir e vult saveir / De rei en rei e d'eir en eir / Ki cil furent e dunt il vindrent / Ki Engleterre primes tindrent, / Quels reis i ad en ordre eü, / Ki anceis e ki puis i fu.'
  33. Lines 7–9: 'Maistre Wace l'ad translatee / Ki en conte la verité. / Si cum li livres le devise.'
  34. Green, 'Oral Poetry and Written Composition', pp. 202–03. Not all usages of the term *fabula* equate it in an uncomplicated manner with oral tradition and falsehood, however; see below, p. 35.
  35. *Gesta regum Anglorum*, edited by W. Stubbs, 2 vols (London, 1887–89), I, 11 (Book I, chapter 8).
  36. M. Delbouille, 'Le Témoignage de Wace sur la légende arthurienne', *Romania*, 74 (1953), 179.
  37. *Literatur im deutschen Mittelalter*, p. 97.
  38. For French see Bezzola, *Les Origines et la formation de la littérature courtoise*, I, xviii–xxi, and II, 129–39, 243; for Germany, Lofmark, pp. 19–32; Bumke, *Höfische Kultur*, pp. 682–85.
  39. See note 11 to Chapter One above for the synonymy of *clericus* and *litteratus*.
  40. Ernst Robert Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*, p. 65: 'Medizin lernt man aus Galen, Weltgeschichte aus Orosius'; Wehrli, *Literatur*, pp. 95–104.
  41. These arguments, that the historiographic orientation of early vernacular narrative is attributable to the clerical mentality of the authors and rigoristic condemnation of profane letters, are implicit in Lofmark, p. 19: 'The early poets, who created and established the courtly tradition, were either clerics or men of clerical training. . . . Respect for written authority was especially important for men trained in the religion of a book'; p. 31: 'Vernacular literature might become more secular, and its authors no longer be clerics, but still it had to compete with clerical literature and be measured by clerical standards of truth, seriousness, and moral value. In this way the clerical tradition continued to exert its influence on courtly poetry'. For the rigoristic position see L. Gompf, 'Figmenta poetarum', in *Literatur und Sprache im*

- europäischen Mittelalter: Festschrift für Karl Langosch*, edited by A. Önnersfors, J. Rathofer, F. Wagner (Darmstadt, 1973).
42. See Dieter Karttschoke, *Die Datierung des deutschen Rolandsliedes*, Germanistische Abhandlungen, 9 (Stuttgart, 1965); Joachim Bumke, *Mäzene im Mittelalter: Die Gönner und Auftraggeber der höfischen Literatur in Deutschland 1150–1300* (Munich, 1979), pp. 85–91.
  43. See Karl Bertau, 'Das deutsche Rolandslied und die Repräsentationskunst Heinrichs des Löwen', *Der Deutschunterricht*, 20, ii (1968), 13; Wolf, *Deutsche Kultur im Hochmittelalter*, pp. 57–59.
  44. 'Antiqua scripta conicorum colligi praecipit et conscribi et coram recitari', Gerhard von Stederburg, cited by Bumke, *Höfische Kultur*, p. 608.
  45. Bertau, 'Das deutsche Rolandslied', p. 13: 'Es ist wie bei einem ins Wasser geworfenen Stein, der immer weitere Kreise um sich zieht.'
  46. Bertau, p. 10; Wolf, *Deutsche Kultur*, p. 54.
  47. Wehrli, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*, p. 198: 'Dessen (sc. Heinrichs) Interesse an dem Stoff . . . lag im Wunsch, die eigene Abkunft von Karl und den eigenen imperialen Herrscherrang zu demonstrieren.'
  48. Compare *La Chanson de Roland*, edited by F. Whitehead (Oxford, 1975), lines 2346–48.
  49. Vollmann-Profe does go in the direction of Ott-Meimberg's interpretation when she writes: 'Aus dem Gesagten folgt, daß das "Rolandslied" . . . welfische oder allgemeiner: fürstliche Interessen vertritt' (p. 137).
  50. Wolfram von Eschenbach, *Parzival*, edited by Albert Leitzmann, revised by W. Deinert, ATB, 12–14, 3 vols (Tübingen, 1961–65); 143, 21–24.
  51. Wehrli, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*, pp. 272–80, especially p. 273: 'In der Tat bedeutet der Artusroman die Befreiung der Erzähler von aller geschichtlicher Bindung'; Wolf, *Deutsche Kultur im Hochmittelalter*, pp. 322–31. In this survey I am concerned with the dominant features of the archival and experimental tendencies; it is not my intention to deny the occurrence of fantastic and wondrous elements in historical epics, for instance the Alexander story. On this see D. H. Green, 'The Alexanderlied and the Emergence of the Romance', *GLL*, 28 (1975), 246–63; Haug, *Literaturtheorie*, pp. 83–89.
  52. Wehrli, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*, p. 273; Kurt Ruh, *Höfische Epik des deutschen Mittelalters*, Grundlagen der Germanistik, 7, 25, 2 vols (Berlin, 1977, 1980), i, 100.
  53. See Edmond Faral, *La Légende arthurienne: Études et documents*, Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, 255–57, 3 vols (Paris, 1929); Bezzola, *Les Origines et la formation de la littérature courtoise*, ii, 527–48, iii, i, 126–39; Karl O. Brogsitter, *Artusepik*, Sammlung Metzler, 38 (Stuttgart, 1965), pp. 20–38; Ruh, *Höfische Epik*, i, 97–101.
  54. Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britanniae*, edited by Acton Griscom (London, 1929), xi, 2.
  55. Jean Frappier, *Chrétien de Troyes* (Paris, 1957), p. 35; Ruh, *Höfische Epik*, i, 100–01.
  56. *Erec et Enide*, edited by Mario Roques, CFMA, 80 (Paris, 1978), lines 245–46: 'Que, se je puis, je vangerai/ma honte.'
  57. *Le Chevalier au lion (Yvain)*, edited by Mario Roques, CFMA, 89 (Paris, 1971), line 589: 'G'irai vostre honte vangier.'
  58. Lines 2430–31, 2459: 'Mes tant l'ama Erec d'amors,/que d'armes mes ne li chaloit . . . Tant fu blasmez de totes genz.'
  59. Lines 2672–703; Yvain's 'blasme' comes when, in the presence of Arthur's court, a messenger from Laudine denounces his treachery, lines 2718–75.
  60. See Haug's analysis of the structure of *Erec et Enide*, *Literaturtheorie*, pp. 93–100. Of fundamental importance for the structure of Arthurian romance are Reto R. Bezzola, *Le Sens de l'aventure et de l'amour (Chrétien de Troyes)*, (Paris, 1947), especially pp. 75–247, and Erich Köhler, *Ideal und Wirklichkeit in der höfischen Epik: Studien zur Form der frühen Artus- und Graldichtung*, *ZfPh Beihefte*, 97, second edition (Tübingen, 1970), pp. 236–61.
  61. Haug, *Literaturtheorie*, p. 92; Hans Fromm, 'Doppelweg', in *Werk-Typ-Situation: Studien zu poetologischen Bedingungen in der älteren deutschen Literatur*, edited by I. Glier, W. Haug, B. Wachinger (Stuttgart, 1969), pp. 64–79.
  62. See Gerold Hilty, 'Zum Erec-Prolog von Chrétien de Troyes', in *Philologica Romanica: Erhard Lommatzsch gewidmet*, edited by E. von Richthofen, M. Bambeck, H. H. Christmann (Munich, 1975), pp. 249–51 (with comprehensive references to secondary literature) and, following him, Haug, *Literaturtheorie*, pp. 101–02.
  63. See Haug, *Literaturtheorie*, p. 103; Hilty, p. 251, refers to the 'conjointure' as a 'Schöpfungsakt' by Chrétien.
  64. Ruh, *Höfische Epik*, i, 163: '(Der Artusroman) lebt aus der dichterischen Kraft, das eine unmittelbar im andern, den *san* in der *matiere*, das Geistige im Sinnlichen, das Transzendente im Irdischen sichtbar zu machen.'

65. See the interpretation of Iwein's madness in Haug, *Literaturtheorie*, pp. 129–30.
66. Haug, p. 92: 'Was immer in Quellen vorausliegen mag, es wird in der Weise über sie verfügt, daß sie in erster Linie als Motivfundus dienen.'
67. *Yvain* contains no information about sources; the prologue to the *Charrete* recounts how the patroness, Marie de Champagne, provided the author with 'matiere et san', without however specifying the form of this material; *Le Chevalier de la Charrete*, edited by Mario Roques, CFMA, 86 (Paris, 1978), lines 26–27.
68. Lines 6674–80: 'Lisant trovomes an l'estoire / la description de la robe, / si an trai a garant Macrobe / qui an l'estoire mist s'antante, / qui l'antandî, que je ne mante. / Macrobe m'anseigne a descrivre, / si con je l'ai trovê el livre.' The reference is presumably to Macrobius's commentary on the *Somnium Scipionis*. It is not clear whether the 'conte d'avanture' mentioned by Chrétien in the prologue (line 13) was already in book-form before he turned it into his 'conjointure'.
69. Green, 'Oral Poetry and Written Composition', p. 203, however suggests that 'by appealing to the written testimony of Macrobius over such a detail Chrétien may hope to insinuate that his whole work enjoys a similar authority'.
70. Green, p. 207. In the *Charrete* Chrétien calls his own work, the treatment of the 'matiere et san' given him by his patroness, a 'livre' (line 25).
71. For the existence of the *matière de Bretagne* in oral and possibly also written traditions before Chrétien and independently of Geoffrey, see Frappier, *Chrétien de Troyes*, pp. 36–61.
72. *Cligès*, edited by Alexandre Micha, CFMA, 84 (Paris, 1978), lines 18–24: 'Ceste estoire trovons escrite, / Que conter vos vuel et retraire. / En un des livres de l'aumaire / Mon seignor saint Pere a Biauvez; / De la fu li contes estreuz / Qui tesmoinge l'estoire a voire: / Por ce fet ele mialz a croire.' Compare the prologues to the *Moniage Guillaume* and *Berte aus grans piés*, note 26 above.
73. *Le Conte du Graal (Perceval)*, edited by Félix Lecoy, CFMA, 100, 103, 2 vols (Paris, 1975), lines 66–67: 'Ce est li contes del graal, / don li cuens li baille le livre.'
74. There exist analogues to the story of Cligès, though it is not certain in what form Chrétien's book might have contained them; see p. ix of Micha's edition. Recent interpretations of the *Perceval* prologue suggest perspectives in which the question of the source-book's identity becomes irrelevant: Roger Dragonetti, *La Vie de la lettre au Moyen Age (Le Conte du Graal)* (Paris, 1980), p. 119; Rupert T. Pickens, 'Le Conte du Graal (Perceval)', in *The Romances of Chrétien de Troyes: A Symposium*, edited by D. Kelly (Lexington, 1985), pp. 241–42.
75. Green, 'Oral Poetry and Written Composition', pp. 207–08.
76. See Hugo Kuhn, 'Erec', in *Festschrift Paul Kluckhohn und Hermann Schneider* (Tübingen, 1948), pp. 122–47; Ruh, *Höfische Epik*, I, 116–41.
77. *Iwein*, edited by G. F. Benecke and K. Lachmann, revised by L. Wolff, seventh edition (Berlin, 1968), lines 54–57.
78. *Erec*, edited by A. Leitzmann, revised by L. Wolff, ATB, 39, fourth edition (Tübingen, 1967), lines 7491, 8698, 9019, 9723. On Hartmann's source references see Pörksen, pp. 69–70.
79. H. R. Jauss, 'Zur historischen Genese der Scheidung von Fiktion und Realität', in *Funktionen des Fiktiven*, edited by D. Henrich and W. Iser, *Poetik und Hermeneutik*, x (Munich, 1983), pp. 423–31, especially p. 429.
80. Aristotle, *Poetics*, edited by D. W. Lucas, (Oxford, 1968), 1451b.
81. Haug, *Literaturtheorie*, pp. 105–06. For the medieval reception of the *Poetics* see Klopsch, pp. 40–41.
82. Priscian, *Praeexercitamina*, in Karl Halm, *Rhetores latini minores* (Leipzig, 1863), p. 551.
83. Isidore, *Etymologiae*, I.40.3–6: 'Fabulas poetae quasdam delectandi causa finxerunt, quasdam ad naturam rerum, nonnullas ad mores hominum interpretati sunt . . . Ad naturam rerum fabulas fingunt, ut "Vulcanus claudus", quia per naturam numquam rectus est ignis . . . Ad mores, ut apud Horatium mus loquitur muri et mustela vulpeculae, ut per narrationem fictam ad id quod agitur verax significatio referatur.'
84. Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, edited by J. Willis (Leipzig, 1963), I.2.9: 'In quibusdam enim et argumentum ex ficto locatur et per mendacia ipse relationis ordo contexitur, ut sunt illae Aesopi fabulae elegantia fictionis illustres, at in aliis argumentum quidem fundatur veri soliditate sed haec ipsa veritas per quaedam composita et ficta profertur, et hoc iam vocatur narratio fabulosa, non fabula, ut sunt caerimoniarum sacra, ut Hesiodi et Orphei quae de deorum progenie actuve narrantur, ut mystica Pythagoreorum sensa referuntur.'
85. Edouard Jeuneau, 'Note sur l'École de Chartres', *Studi medievali*, third series, 5, ii (1964), p. 856: 'Est autem allegoria oratio sub historica narratione verum et ab exteriori diversum involvens intellectum, ut de lucta Iacob. Integumentum vero est oratio sub fabulosa narratione

- verum claudens intellectum, ut de Orpheo . . . Allegoria quidem divina pagine, integumentum vero philosophice competit.'
86. *Commentary on the First Six Books of the 'Aeneid' of Vergil*, edited by Julian Ward Jones and Elizabeth Frances Jones (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1977), p. 3: 'Scribit ergo in quantum est philosophus humane vite naturam. Modus agendi talis est: sub integumento describit quid agat vel quid paciatur humanus spiritus in humano corpore temporaliter positus'; compare Bernard's commentary on Martianus Capella: 'Virgilius humani spiritus temporalem cum corpore vitam describens integumentis usus est' (Jeauneau, p. 856).
  87. See Hennig Brinkmann, 'Verhüllung (integumentum) als literarische Darstellungsform im Mittelalter', in *Der Begriff der Repraesentatio im Mittelalter: Stellvertretung, Symbol, Zeichen, Bild*, edited by A. Zimmermann, *Miscellanea Mediaevalia*, 8 (Berlin and New York, 1971), pp. 314–39; Knapp, 'Historische Wahrheit und poetische Lüge', pp. 611–24; Peter Dronke, *Fabula: Explorations into the Uses of Myth in Mediaeval Platonism*, *Mittellateinische Studien und Texte*, 9 (Leiden and Cologne, 1974); P. Demats, *Fabula: Trois études de mythographie antique et medievale* (Geneva, 1973); Winthrop Wetherbee, *Platonism and Poetry in the Twelfth Century: The Literary Influence of the School of Chartres* (Princeton, 1972).
  88. Alan de Lille, *De Planctu Naturae*, in *The Anglo-Latin Satirical Poets and Epigrammatists of the Twelfth Century*, vol. II, edited by T. Wright (London, 1872), p. 465.
  89. Ottmar Carls, 'Die Auffassung der Wahrheit im "Tristan" Gottfrieds von Straßburg', *ZfPh*, 93 (1974), 11–34, especially p. 14; Jauss, 'Zur historischen Genese', p. 429; Wolfgang Dittmann, 'Dune hâst niht wâr, Hartman! Zum Begriff der wârheit in Hartmanns "Iwein"', in *Festgabe für Ulrich Pretzel*, edited by W. Simon, W. Bachofer, W. Dittmann (Berlin, 1963), pp. 150–61; Lofmark, pp. 137–42.
  90. *Der Wälsche Gast*, edited by H. Rückert, BDNL, 30 (Quedlinburg, 1852), lines 1118–26: 'Die äventiure sint gekleit / dicke mit lüge harte schöne: / diu lüge ist ir gezierte kröne. / ich schilt die äventiure niht, / swie uns ze liegen geschiht / von der äventiure rât, / wan si bezeichnenunge hât / der zuht und der wârheit: / daz wâr man mit lüge kleit'. See C. S. Jaeger, *Medieval Humanism in Gottfried von Strassburg's Tristan und Isolde*, (Heidelberg, 1977), pp. 153–79, who attempts a complete integumental reading of Gottfried, and Brinkmann, 'Verhüllung', p. 322.
  91. Haug, *Literaturtheorie*, pp. 103–05, 124–26, 222–34. On Thomasin, whose account of romance poetics is in any case not integumental in the strict sense, because he places its didactic message on a lower level than the 'tiefe sinne' (line 1108) of genuine philosophical speculation, see also Knapp, 'Historische Wahrheit und poetische Lüge', pp. 610–11, 623–24. A reading of Gottfried within the framework of contemporary philosophical concerns is offered by R. A. Wisbey, 'The *renovatio amoris* in Gottfried's *Tristan*', in *London German Studies*, vol. I, edited by C. V. Bock, Publications of the Institute of Germanic Studies, 26 (London, 1980), pp. 1–66.
  92. Haug, *Literaturtheorie*, pp. 96–97, 130.
  93. *Cligès*, lines 1–42. On Chrétien's learning and education see Frappier, *Chrétien de Troyes*, pp. 9, 16–21.
  94. *Iwein*, line 21; see Bumke, *Höfische Kultur*, pp. 683–84 and Peter Wapnewski, *Hartmann von Aue*, Sammlung Metzler, 17, seventh edition (Stuttgart, 1979), pp. 13–15.
  95. *Le Chevalier de la Charrete*, line 1; *Le Conte du Graal*, lines 13, 64.
  96. Ruh, *Höfische Epik*, I, 108–09; Bumke, *Mäzene im Mittelalter*, p. 172.
  97. Köhler, *Ideal und Wirklichkeit in der höfischen Epik*, pp. 5–36.
  98. Kaiser, *Textauslegung und gesellschaftliche Selbstdeutung: Aspekte einer sozialgeschichtlichen Interpretation von Hartmanns Artusepen* (Frankfurt, 1973).
  99. Sawicki, *Gottfried von Straßburg und die Poetik des Mittelalters*, p. 158.
  100. Boesch, p. 75; Knapp, 'Historische Wahrheit und poetische Lüge', p. 600 (both citing Sawicki, though Knapp wonders how seriously Gottfried wanted his archival topics to be taken); Christopher Huber, *Gottfried von Straßburg, 'Tristan und Isolde': Eine Einführung* (Munich and Zurich, 1986), p. 36.
  101. I discuss this passage at greater length in Chapter Six, pp. 104–07 below.
  102. *Flore und Blancheftur*, edited by Emil Sommer, BDNL, 12 (Quedlinburg and Leipzig, 1849), lines 307, 7858.
  103. Albrecht von Scharfenberg, *Der Jüngere Titurel*, edited by Werner Wolf, DTM, 45, 55/61, 2 vols (Berlin, 1955–68), strophes 89–94, 6166–74.
  104. *Der guote Gerhart*, edited by John A. Asher, ATB, 56 (Tübingen, 1971), lines 80–86, 1743–44.
  105. Alfred Ebenbauer, 'Das Dilemma mit der Wahrheit: Gedanken zum "historisierenden Roman" des 13. Jahrhunderts', in *Geschichtsbewußtsein in der deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters: Tübinger Colloquium 1983*, edited by Christoph Gerhardt, Nigel F. Palmer, Burghart Wachinger (Tübingen, 1985), pp. 69–71; Joachim Heinze, *Wandlungen und Neuansätze im 13. Jahrhundert (1220/30–1280/90)*, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von den Anfängen bis zum Beginn der Neuzeit*, vol. II, part 2 (Königstein, 1984), pp. 135–50.

106. Helmut Brackert, *Rudolf von Ems: Dichtung und Geschichte* (Heidelberg, 1968).
107. The eulogies of 'meister Gotfrit' by narrative poets of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries are conveniently anthologized in Günther Schweikle, *Dichter über Dichter in mittelhochdeutscher Literatur*, Deutsche Texte, 12 (Tübingen, 1970), pp. 18–19, 24 (Rudolf von Ems), p. 56 (Konrad von Würzburg), p. 59 (Konrad von Stoffeln), pp. 67–69 (Heinrich von Freiberg, Johann von Würzburg).