

# **THE 13<sup>TH</sup>-CENTURY “CONSTANCE” TALES**

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**THOMAS R. LEEK**

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### **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to the memory of my late grandmother, Marjorie Debeque Leek, and to her academic work. In retirement she earned a Bachelor's in Anthropology from CSU Bakersfield and nearly completed her Master's thesis on the founding and development of Shafter, California, a farming community in the vicinity of Bakersfield.

#### ABSTRACT

Four texts from the 13<sup>th</sup> century make up the first attestations of the “Constance” plot, a version of ATU 706 “The Father who Wanted to Marry his Daughter.” This dissertation harmonizes a comparative investigation of these tales with an analysis of the cultural milieu of the Middle Ages. The figure of the sexually persecuted and exiled daughter comes to the forefront of popular culture as discourse on repentance centers around the correction of monstrous sins. In the “Constance” tales, the daughter reconciles her repentant father and husband, between whom power is transferred on account of the heroine’s suffering. A thematically similar anecdote in the *Chronicle of Morea* points toward an international motif of an errant daughter benefiting the man she marries against her father’s initial wishes.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	v
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	vi
<b>SECTION 1</b>	<b>1</b>
Introduction to the Sources and the Scholarship	
<i>Chapter One: The Individual Texts</i>	4
<i>Chapter Two: History of the Scholarship</i>	35
<i>Chapter Three: Romance, Historiography, and Wondertales</i>	60
<b>SECTION 2</b>	<b>73</b>
The Motifs and Structure of the “Constance” Group	
<i>Chapter Four: The Persecuted Queen under the Threat of Incest</i>	83
<i>Chapter Five: Themes and Functions</i>	107
<b>SECTION 3</b>	<b>130</b>
The Historical Context	
<i>Chapter Six: The Historical Purpose of the Individual Versions</i>	135
<i>Chapter Seven: The Persecuted Queen and Roman Identity</i>	163
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>174</b>
<i>Primary Material</i>	175
<i>Secondary Material</i>	180

## LIST OF TABLES

<i>Table 1: Plot Comparison of the Four 13<sup>th</sup>-Century “Constance” Tales</i>	76
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## LIST OF FIGURES

*Figure 1: Gough's Genealogy of the "Constance Saga"*

42



## **Section I**

Introduction to the Sources and the Scholarship

Since the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a tale type has been forged by students of folklore and medieval literature that early on was named for the heroine of one version: Constance, of Trevet's version (in *Sources and Analogues of the Canterbury Tales* 2005, 297-329). The topic of this dissertation centers on the 13<sup>th</sup>-century attestations of this tale type (ATU 706), this title will be retained for the sake of convenience and brevity even though the name "Constance" did not appear until the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

The driving question behind the following work is informed by the observation that the first four versions of the "Constance" group were created within a few decades of each other with little or no apparent literary exchange between the authors. This situation implies the popularity of an early form of the "Constance" story in French and German speaking lands. However, it is misleading to speak of a single form of the tale, for the "Constance" group was almost certainly distributed orally. It is not unlikely that Constance's story was recorded in works now lost. The prologue of the Austrian *Mai und Beafloer* indicates that the author's material originated in a chronicle. This is an unverifiable claim on the part of the author, but the tale came from somewhere and spread throughout Western Europe. A lost chronicle is a plausible source; it is conceivable that a chronicle also stands behind *La Roman de la Manekine*, in which case our tales may share a direct literary antecedent.

That the "Constance" group originated from oral story telling is uncontroversial. Indeed, the majority of non-scholarly medieval literature has roots in oral traditions. However, since the Grimms first described German folktales as the

remnants of Germanic mythology (*KHM* 1985, 4), there has been a tendency for scholars to search for the origins of the “Constance” group in antiquity instead of in the immediate context of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. This dissertation does not dispense with the traditional approach. Persecuted queens were popular fodder for storytellers in medieval literature, and the tradition of wronged women is old. The “Constance” group is a distinctive variation on this long-lived theme. The question is not whether the “Constance” group has its origins in the environment of 12<sup>th</sup>- and 13<sup>th</sup>-century Europe. That is taken for granted. Our exploration of these tales seeks to find if the characteristic features of the “Constance” group can be attributed to any cultural, social, or political developments in the period of the High Middle Ages.

To address this question entails in the first section a description of the individual extant versions of the “Constance” group, an exploration of the scholarship on these texts, as well as a look at larger questions on the historical study of folklore and their application to the “Constance” tales. The second section is dedicated to an examination of the motifs of persecuted queens from the 13<sup>th</sup> century and earlier, so that the “Constance” group may be placed in the context of other persecuted queen tales and differentiated from them. Through an analysis of the ends toward which each author molded the common material, section three attempts to offer an explanation of the “Constance” cycle’s sudden appearance.

## Chapter One

### The Individual Texts

The “Constance” group is made up of a series of romances, histories, legends and folktales that all share a general plot type. Their attestation stretches from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Recent adjustments in the dates of composition for the stories have revealed that the earliest of them were likely recorded within two to four decades of each other. With some caveats, it is also safe to say that the first four attestations arose independently of each other. With this situation, the opportunity is available to describe and compare the four 13<sup>th</sup>-century variants without resort to diachronic arguments. The synchronic analysis of a plot’s structure does not exclude the consideration of historic developments within a tale; but the analysis of form is, as Propp held, a prerequisite for historical and critical inquiry (Propp 1984, 78). The following is a description of the four 13<sup>th</sup>-century works central to my study of the “Constance” group: Philippe de Remi’s *Le Roman de la Manekine*, Matthew Paris’s “Life of Offa I,” the anonymous *Mai und Beaflor*, and Jans Enikel’s “The Daughter of the King of Russia.”

#### *Le Roman de la Manekine*

As is often the case with particular works of medieval literature, the time frame for the composition of *La Manekine* is uncertain. Scholars working with the “Constance Saga” (as it has traditionally been labeled) before the 1980s followed Suchier’s dating of the text to ca. 1270. In 1981 Bernard Gicquel published an article

linking the work of the German poet Rudolf von Ems to the verse romances composed under the name of Philippe de Remi Sire de Beaumanoir. In doing so, Gicquel made a distinction between Philippe de Beaumanoir *père*, who late in life became Sire de Beaumanoir (prior to this he was “de Remi”), and Philippe de Beaumanoir *fils*, who inherited his title. The implication was that the verse romances should be attributed to the father, while the legal works belong indubitably to the son (Gicquel 1981, 310). Sargent-Baur, though rejecting the link to Rudolf von Ems, confirmed Gicquel’s attribution of the romances to Philippe *père*, dating the text to 1230-1240. But the dates are still disputed (in Philippe de Remi 1999, 90-91), because linguistic and poetic differences between the first and the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century are not reliable differentiators.

The lone manuscript in which the text is found, Paris BNF fr. 1588, was copied at earliest in 1278, but more likely ca. 1300. The decoration of the manuscript, according to Roger Middleton, “corresponds to work done at Arras in the last decade of the 13<sup>th</sup> century or the first decade or so of the next”<sup>1</sup> (in Philippe de Remi 1999, 42). The manuscript is commonly thought to have been created on the occasion of the death of Philippe de Beaumanoir *fils*. With the single exception of the final entry, this manuscript only contains works composed either by himself or his father. It may be thought of as a collected works, composed perhaps as a celebration of the family’s literary accomplishments.

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<sup>1</sup> 1278 is the date of a tournament that seems to have taken place in Hem-Monacu, which is depicted in the manuscript.

The second part of Philippe *père*'s name stems from his father, Petrus de Remin, a knight "who took an active part in the Battle of Bouvines (1214)..." (in Philippe de Remi 1999, 71) and owned land near the village of Remi. Both the son and the grandson of Petrus engaged in literary, as well as political and administrative activities, which is the source of confusion concerning the authorship of *La Manekine* and other works by one or the other.

The case for Philippe *père* as author of the verse romances is strong but not definite. It is known that the son signed his works as Philippe de Beaumanoir. But only one work in BNF 1588, *Salus d'amour*, is signed in this manner (Sargent-Baur in Philippe de Remi 1999, 89). *Salus d'amour* was possibly written by the son, but, just as likely, written by the father after 1255, when the father's title "de Beaumanoir" was initially used. However, the name "de Remi" is used in the first line of *La Manekine*, and the son would have no reason to use it if he had something more prestigious available. Sargent-Baur also points out that in the time that Philippe de Beaumanoir *fils* was active, the shift to prose had already taken place, while verse romances such as *La Manekine* were still written earlier in the century when Philippe *père* would have composed his work.

Philippe began by expressing his desire to compose an edifying romance, though he had never before undertaken such a task. The initial setting of this romance is the kingdom of Hungary where a king rules with his queen, who is a princess from Armenia. The royal couple has one daughter, Joïe. Soon the queen is on her deathbed. She extracts a promise from her husband that he will only remarry

if he can find a woman who resembles her. She wants to prevent the birth of a male heir, so that Joïe may inherit the throne. Joïe grows into a beautiful and virtuous young woman of sixteen, who is especially devoted to the Virgin Mary.

However, the barons of the country do not see a daughter as a fitting successor to the throne and accordingly urge the king to marry again for the purpose of producing a male heir. Revealing the promise he had made to his late wife, the king refuses the barons' request, but permits them to search for an eligible woman, a task at which they fail. The barons reconvene, this time with the clergy. An unnamed baron examines Joïe while serving her during a court feast: "La domoisele a regardee, / Qui ert blanc et encoulouree; / Avis li est ce soit sa mere / Fors que de tant que plus jone ere (Philippe de Remi, lines 309-12)."<sup>2</sup> He then suggests to the court that the king will never find a wife unless it can be arranged for him to marry his daughter. Initially the king rejects the proposal, albeit weakly, but then allows that he will consider the matter until Candlemas. When he meets his daughter afterwards, they only exchange pleasantries, though the father's mind cannot help but notice her beauty and grace. Reason tells the king to leave the scene, but Joïe is more beautiful than Helen of Troy and the destruction brought upon the Trojans by such beauty will visit this king as well. Reason loses the battle, and Love takes hold of the king. At their next meeting he proposes the arrangement to Joïe, who, as expected, is horrified. She argues that it would be better to die than lose her soul. The king, however,

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<sup>2</sup> "He has looked at the young lady, / Who was white and pink; / It seems to him that she is her mother, / Except that she was younger." All translations of *La Manekine* from Sargent-Baur unless otherwise noted.

believes he has leave of the clergy to marry her, though he heard this through his barons, not directly from any churchman. Since she refuses, love strikes him all the harder and he commands her to submit to his will.

At Candlemas the king informs his barons that he will marry his daughter without delay. A spy informs Joïe of her impending marriage. She slips away from her maids-in-waiting to a kitchen located near a river that flows swiftly into the nearby sea. She takes up a large, sharp butcher knife and, after some internal debate, lops off her left hand. This hand falls into the river Yse where a sturgeon swallows it. When brought before the king, Joïe presents her injury, which should prevent her from becoming queen. Her angry father sentences her to be burned alive. However, the seneschal conspires with the jailor to whisk Joïe from prison and set her in a boat without mast, oars or rudder. The seneschal then burns four carts in a field at daybreak and claims he has carried out the king's orders.

“Or dist li contes que la bele / Est toute seule en la nacele, / Ou elle maine vie amere (lines 1069-71).”<sup>3</sup> By citing “li contes” (perhaps an oral tale), Philippe reports her condition at sea. She is in a terrible state. The only good news is that her wound healed well. But God has not forgotten her. By and by, she comes to land in Scotland, at Berwick, while an exotic local celebration is underway. The provost, apparently disapproving of such revelry, is facing the sea, with his back to the festivities. He spots Joïe in her boat and orders some people to help him bring it to land. Joïe refuses to reveal her origin and is taken to the king, where she continues

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<sup>3</sup> “Now the story tells that the lovely girl / Is all alone in the little boat, / Where she has a hard time of it.”



her silence concerning her past. She is placed in the care of the queen mother. Despite her injury her obviously noble qualities please the Scottish king with whom she plays chess. He dubs her Manekine. They fall in love. The queen mother notices this and forbids Manekine to see her son. Shortly thereafter the king proposes to Manekine, and they marry with great celebration. Manekine's mother-in-law cannot be reconciled and opts to receive her dower and retire to her estate.

Manekine becomes pregnant. Although aware that he is about to become a father, her husband asks for a boon from Manekine. Before knowing what it is, Manekine grants his wish. The king then announces that he would like to tourney in France. His wife is not pleased but does not revoke her consent. Manekine is placed under the care of the seneschal and two knights. While Manekine gives birth to a son, the Scottish king earns glory in France.

The men who are protecting Manekine during the king's absence write to the king informing him of the birth of a son. On his way to port the messenger stops at the residence of the queen mother. She makes him drunk, reads the message, and replaces it with a description of a hairy son with four feet that seems to be more devil than human. The king is naturally disturbed by this message but orders that his wife and this creature be protected until his return. Returning by the same way, the messenger again spends a night at the residence of the queen mother and again passes out from too much drink. The evil woman replaces the letter again with an order to burn Manekine and her child.

The three protectors of Manekine initially agree to carry out the order for fear of the king, but take pity on Manekine when the day comes. A mock execution is again staged, this time with carved images, and Manekine is returned to her boat, this time with her son aboard. When her husband returns from France, he inquires as to the well-being of his wife and learns that she has been put to sea. The messenger is summoned. Under questioning he reveals the lodgings he had on his journey. The queen mother is implicated. As a punishment, the king has a tower built where she will be imprisoned. In the search for Manekine the king sets out on the sea with the seneschal and the two knights who had been duped.

Meanwhile, Manekine lands in Italy near Rome, where she bargains for lodging with fishermen. At this moment a senator from Rome is coming to buy fish. He sees the fisherman with this woman, who, though it is clear she has suffered much, nevertheless radiates nobility. He buys her from the fishermen. Up to this point the only object she has retained is her ring, given to her by her husband. For seven years she remains at the house of the senator, supervising the household and attending church daily.

The King of Scotland and his seneschal are searching the world for news of Manekine all this time. Eventually they come to Rome. The seneschal searches for the best lodging to be found in Rome. He finds the house of the senator, who is also the richest man in Rome, and asks if a king could be accommodated there. The senator rarely takes in guests, but he is willing to make an exception for a king. When Manekine hears that the King of Scotland will be staying at the house, she

faints, and upon wakening informs the senator that she fears this man and does not wish to see him.

At dinner the senator tells the king that he has also lost his wife and child. Jehanet, Manekine's son, finds his mother in tears and, improbably, decides to take the ring she wears from her finger. Manekine is in such a state that she does not notice. Jehanet returns to the dinner hall and tosses the ring here and there until his father takes notice of the ring. The senator perceives that his guest has lost his appetite, and the king tells his story. The senator reciprocally tells how he found Manekine and, convinced of the king's love for her, reunites the two. Since it is Holy Week the reunited couple agrees to abstain from conjugal relations. On Maundy Thursday they go to the Pope.

The King of Hungary has by this time regretted his actions. He consults with his seneschal, who convinced of the king's sincere regret, reveals that he did not execute Joïe, but put her to sea, where she probably died. The king decides to make a pilgrimage to Rome in order to confess to the Pope. He arrives in Rome during Holy Week on Tuesday. On Maundy Thursday he goes to the Pope for absolution.

According to tradition, many seek absolution on Maundy Thursday. The King of Hungary gives his public confession first. Joïe recognizes her father and runs to embrace him. When her father begs her forgiveness, she grants it to him. The King of Scotland tells his tale. Amid great rejoicing the Pope declares that a miracle has occurred. Two clerks, while attempting to fetch water to fill the fonts in the church, fill up their bucket and discover a hand. As often as they throw the water back the

hand returns. They go back to the Pope to report this occurrence; they are commanded to bring the water and the hand. After a sermon, the Pope pronounces the general absolution and reattaches Joïe's intact appendage. A voice then instructs the Pope to return to the fountain where the hand was found and retrieve the sturgeon that had carried Joïe's hand. In it they find a glove-shaped form where Joïe's hand had been preserved. A feast is convened at the Pope's palace where the sturgeon is consumed. After Holy Week, Joïe and her husband may once again share a bed.

Joïe's father abdicates in favor of his son-in-law, and all return to Hungary. In Hungary a messenger arrives from Armenia requesting that Joïe visit her people. Joïe travels with her father and husband to Armenia where they establish peace. Having arranged for the administration of Armenia, all return to Scotland where great rejoicing ensues. The only sad note is that Joïe's mother-in-law has died in captivity. Joïe and her husband have many more children, and live rightly and happily ever after. Philippe ends with an exhortation to faith and trust in God.

The skeleton of the "Constance" group in the form of *La Manekine* can be summarized as follows:

1. A king and queen have a daughter.
2. The queen dies after extracting a promise from her husband to marry again only if the woman is either identical in appearance or as beautiful as she.
3. After searching the father concludes he must marry his daughter.
4. The daughter flees after committing an act of self-mutilation.
5. She lands on foreign shores and marries the local king.
6. This king absents himself while his wife gives birth.
7. A persecutor forges a message to the king and alters the return message as well.
8. This causes the queen to flee with her child in the manner by which she arrived.

9. She lands on foreign shores and is taken under the protection of a powerful person.
10. Her husband, having found out the truth, searches for her.
11. Upon arriving at her place of residence the two are reunited.
12. The daughter's father is forgiven; he abdicates in favor of his son-in-law.
13. All visit Hungary and Armenia before settling to rule in Scotland.

### *King Offa I*

There are few works of medieval vernacular literature that can be called original in the sense we would use the term today. If a work of literature is not based directly on an older, prestigious model, it is likely based on oral story telling. Even if there were no modern recorded folktales reminiscent of *La Manekine*, we would still be moved to consider oral tales as a model for the plot, because only one possible literary source exists for the story, and there is no reason to assume that Philippe de Remi would have had access to the writings of Matthew Paris (if he had been writing by the time Philippe took up his pen), much less extracted the Offa episode and transformed this historical account into a very different romance. It is reasonable to assume that both the Offa episode and *La Manekine* are based on separate folktales. Let us now consider the life of Offa.

The episode in which Offa I obtains a wife has been reprinted in extracted form in *Sources and Analogues of some of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales* (1872, 73-84). The larger context is the *Chronica Majora* and *Liber Additamentorum* (Matthew Paris 1872, also published together as *Historia Major* 1684), historical texts of disputed authorship but associated with Mathew Paris and St. Albans. Henry Luard, in the introduction to his 1872 edition, attributed much of the work to an anonymous

compiler of St. Albans, on whom Matthew Paris drew heavily. Some of the writing does belong to Matthew Paris, but, according to Luard, the manuscript is the product of a scribe who “was a very illiterate and careless one” (Luard in *Chronica Majora* 1883, xxxix). The assumption is that a respectable historian, like Mathew Paris or some of the other historiographic sources listed by Luard for our compiler could not have had a direct hand in the creation of this confused mess of solid historical writing and legend that was badly copied, compiled, expanded and rubricated.

It is the very story we are concerned with, the “Life of Offa I” which Luard singled out as having been composed latest, by this semiliterate compiler ca. 1195, since it was thought to have been used by Matthew’s predecessor, Roger of Wendover. Vaughan, however, did not believe Matthew to be incapable of absurd errors and blunders, stylistic or historical. More importantly, Vaughan convincingly argued that the “Vitae Offarum” need not have been read by Roger, because the only anecdotes he used from this source are matters of local legend. He did not “mention Offa I, or any of the legends concerning Offa II” (Vaughan 1958, 45). Contrary to this, Vaughan (1958, 48) presented not only convincing stylistic evidence of Matthew’s responsibility for this text but also argued that the “Vitae Offarum” reflected the sorts of prejudices evident in other writings by that author. I accept a date for the “Vitae Offarum” that is more toward the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps as late as 1250. This means that the “Vitae Offarum” and the legend surrounding the spouse of Offa I were most likely composed concurrently with, if not slightly later than, *La Manekine*.

The manuscripts on which Luard based his edition are found in Corpus Christi College under the titles Matthew Paris 16 and 26. Luard made use primarily of 26. The time frame of composition given for the tale in earlier scholarship (Suchier and Gough) was roughly the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Suchier in *OPB* 1874, xxiv-xxv). The plot of the tale is as follows. As a young king, Offa is out hunting one day. He hears weeping and finds a young woman. He learns from her that her father, the King of York, had fallen in love with her. She refused his advances, for which reason he ordered her murdered in a remote location. On account of her beauty, the servants of the king spared her life but left her in the wilderness. Offa takes her home where she is looked after. A few years later, though he had previously laughed off marriage, Offa is pressed to marry by his nobles, and he chooses the unnamed girl found in the woods. They have two children.

After many happy years of marriage, Offa must assist the King of Northumberland in a defensive war against the Scots. The messenger, who brings back news of Offa's victories, lodges with the King of York, who has since become aware of his daughter's marriage. He forges a letter, which reports disastrous losses for Offa and which blames the defeat on his wife. Her hands and feet are to be cut off and she is to be abandoned in the wilderness. The queen is again spared by merciful executioners, though they hack the children to pieces. A hermit finds the queen and the dead children and miraculously revives them. The family remains with the hermit.

When Offa returns from the war, he is appalled to discover what has happened. The solution to his troubles is more hunting, and, while in the woods, Offa discovers the hermit's dwelling. He decides to tell the hermit of his woes. The hermit reveals that his family yet lives, and they are reunited. He then instructs King Offa to found a monastery (St. Albans) in thanks to God. Offa I fails in this duty; God punishes him with the loss of lands. On his deathbed the king instructs his son to fulfill the promise, but the duty is passed on from father to son until finally Offa II, several hundred years later, founds the monastery.

The similarities to *La Manekine* are evident. Both tales involve a lecherous father who has caused the exile of his daughter. This daughter is found and married by a different king. The king absents himself either after his wife has given birth or conceived. A jealous parent intercepts letter(s) and replaces them with orders to execute the heroine. The heroine is again exiled, instead of murdered, by sympathetic executioners. She is protected for some time by an authority figure other than a king and eventually reunited with her husband. But in the "Life of Offa" we hear the first part of the story only through the heroine, while the focal point of the story is King Offa. It is also noteworthy that the heroine in this account remains physically unharmed and unchanged, not to mention anonymous.

### *Mai und Beafloer*

The next 13<sup>th</sup>-century romance was most likely written not much later than *La Manekine* and the "Life of Offa I." *Mai und Beafloer* is an Austrian or Bavarian text of uncertain date. Ehrismann says only that the "Schaffenzeit fällt in die Mitte oder



zweite Hälfte des 13. Jahrhunderts”<sup>4</sup> (Ehrismann 1932, 63). De Boor narrows the period down to somewhere between 1260 and 1270 because, though he saw the tale as propounding a worldview more or less in line with that of Hartmann von Aue, “Gewisse stilistische Momente, so die gelegentlich eingestreute, geblümt-allegorische Rede in der sonst maßvollen Erzählweise, die Freude an realistischen Einzelheiten, die in schmerzlichen Augenblicken durchbrechende überströmende Sentimentalität verbieten eine zu frühe Datierung...”<sup>5</sup> (de Boor 1970, 103). Gough and Roussel dated the composition slightly earlier and more narrowly between 1257-59 (Gough 1900, 3 and Roussel 1998, 79). The oldest edition, published anonymously in 1848,<sup>6</sup> was based on the two manuscripts available: (A) Cod. Germ. nr. 57, composed ca. 1400 in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, and (B) a paper manuscript of the 15<sup>th</sup> century in Fulda. The author of the preface (probably Franz Pfeiffer) did not consider either manuscript to be of high quality, and the anonymous editor used both in the formation of his edition (Anonymous in *MuB* 1974, xvii-xviii). Until recently, no other edition had been published, though the edition of 1848 was reprinted in 1974. In 2006 a new edition was made available. Albrecht Classen based his version primarily on Cod. Germ. Nr. 57, only using C for the purpose of filling lacunae in A (Classen in *MuB* 2006, xxviii).

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<sup>4</sup> “The period of composition lies in the middle or second half of the 13<sup>th</sup>-century.”

<sup>5</sup> “Certain stylistic moments, like the occasionally inserted florid allegorical speeches in an otherwise modest narration, the joy in realistic details, the gushing and overflowing sentimentality in painful moments, exclude a too early date.”

<sup>6</sup> Gibbs and Johnson (1997, 389) thought Alois J. Vollmer to be the probable editor and cited the edition under his name, while Pfeiffer composed the preface.

While the other three versions of the “Constance” plot in the 13<sup>th</sup> century take place in the post-Roman world,<sup>7</sup> *Mai und Beaflo*r is a tale about Rome.<sup>8</sup> In fact, MS A contains, besides *Mai und Beaflo*r, Veldeke’s *Eneit* and Otte’s *Eraclius*. The center point of the manuscript seems to be Rome and empire. As Black points out (2003, 58), both of the other works in BSM 57, *Eneit* and *Eraclius*, were written on the basis of French originals, and it is often assumed that *Mai und Beaflo*r must also have a lost French prototype. Black (2003, 57) mentions that *Mai und Beaflo*r was once a separate manuscript that was only later attached to BSM 57. Whoever added *Mai und Beaflo*r to the manuscript did not necessarily share the intentions of the original creators. Classen rejects the assumption of a direct French source (Classen in *MuB* 2006, ix-x) due to lack of evidence but does not deny that the tale passed through the hands of French speakers. Also indicative of French influence, though not conclusive, is the assumption of the author that his characters are speaking French.<sup>9</sup>

The author of *Mai und Beaflo*r claimed that a “worthy knight” related the tale, which he had read “noch ze schriben stet / in der chroniken, daz er las, / dar an ez

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<sup>7</sup> In the case of *La Manekine* it would seem purposely so. Scotland, Hungary and Armenia were all on the far edges of the Empire. Jans Enikel’s narrative, though it begins in Rus, ends up in Greece. Matthew Paris’s version is the only version that is tied to events near the location of the author.

<sup>8</sup> More specifically it concerns an idealized Rome, where Pope, Emperor and Senate all reside simultaneously. In this respect it is similar to the tale of (H)Eraclius both as related in the *Kaiserchronik* (1892, lines 11156-351) and the 13<sup>th</sup>-century historical romance *Eraclius* (1983). Though the historical Herakleios was the Eastern Roman emperor who retrieved the true cross from Persia, the medieval legend places his reign in the city of Rome (*KC* 1892, line 11306 and *Eraclius* 1983, 9.59). According to *Kaiserchronik*, upon the death of Eraclius the Greeks took the empire by convincing Constantinus Leo to move to Constantinople (1892, lines 13683-824). Thereafter Greeks rule as emperors.

<sup>9</sup> Upon their first meeting, in lines 2236-42, Beaflo asks Mai if he speaks French, which he affirms. Up to that point they had been speaking Greek (*MuB* 2006, lines 2103-10)

vngereimet was”<sup>10</sup> (*MuB* 2006, lines 74-76). This could be a reference to an episode like “Crescentia” in the 12<sup>th</sup>-century *Kaiserchronik*, except that the *Kaiserchronik* is rhymed.<sup>11</sup> More likely, whatever historical narrative referred to is now lost. Classen attributes the lines about the knight and the prose chronicle as traditional *humilitas* topoi (Classen in *MuB* 2006, xxi) since in his opinion the claims of the author are insufficient evidence for the lost chronicle. Without even mentioning *La Manekine*, de Boor (1970, 103) linked *Mai und Beaflo*r primarily to “Crescentia.” Additionally, while the “Constance” cycle is closely related to “Crescentia,” the first attestation of “Crescentia” precedes *Mai und Beaflo*r by a century, which allows for the possibility of direct influence, it is evident that by the time *Mai und Beaflo*r was written the “Constance” type had existed for at least ten years, if not longer. Any line drawn to “Crescentia” can only be thematic in nature. The author worked with a distinct and well-known tale. It is correct to argue that the poet’s attribution of the material to an external source can be classified as *humilitas* topoi, but the author of *Mai und Beaflo*r did not invent the plot. A knight and a prose chronicle are plausible origins.

Nevertheless, there are some distinct “Crescentia” elements that differentiate *Mai und Beaflo*r from *La Manekine*, primarily the location of the action within the Roman Empire, while *La Manekine* decisively avoids old, civilized Roman territory until Joie’s second exile. Parts of Hungary and Scotland had geographically been a part of the Empire, but the medieval peoples of those countries had no history as

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<sup>10</sup> “...written within / a chronicle that he read, / which was not in verse.”

<sup>11</sup> It may be that *Mai und Beaflo*r was added to the MS containing *Eneide* and *Eraclius* on account of an association between *Mai und Beaflo*r and the “Crescentia” legend. In the *Kaiserchronik* the legend of “Heraclius” (KC 1892, lines 11138-1350) directly precedes “Crescentia” (KC 1892, lines 11352-2812), just as *Eraclius* comes before *Mai und Beaflo*r in the Cod. Germ. 57.

Romans, while Armenia bears a mixed history as an independent kingdom, a Roman-Byzantine tributary, and Persian conquest. The three kingdoms brought together by *La Manekine* are, at any rate, Christian, though not completely civilized in the text and perhaps of questionable catholicity.<sup>12</sup> *La Manekine* is concerned with civilizing new territory by bringing it under Roman influence, while *Mai und Beaflo*r explicates, in the vein of *König Rother*, the prehistory of an imperial dynasty. Other similar traits include a scene in which Beaflo'r's father (*MuB* 2006, lines 777-1066) or Crescentia's brother-in-law (*KC*, lines 11480-53) seeks instead of an inappropriate marriage merely to have his way with the heroine. In place of accusations of monstrous birth, the indictment is adultery. The wider plot is as follows.

A beautiful daughter is born to the king and queen of Rome. The Pope himself baptizes the child, naming her Beaflo'r. Ten years later the girl's mother dies. In order to comfort the girl Benigna, the childless wife of a senator named Roboal takes Beaflo'r as an adopted daughter (2006, lines 752-65). Beaflo'r is often alone with her prayers, but Teljon often accompanies her. At first the king went to her "...vnd troute vnd chuste sie / vnd wont ir gutlichen pi" (lines 773-74).<sup>13</sup> In short order the attempts of the king to comfort his daughter take a diabolic turn. Whereas before he had comforted her "mit triuwen" he begins to kiss his daughter "mit

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<sup>12</sup> Hungary was in its third century of Christian adherence by the time Philippe de Remi began to write. But perhaps adhering to the conventions of romance, Philippe set his tale in an exotic land that, since its barons were willing to suggest an incestuous union, could still be considered semi-barbarian. Scotland is given an exotic, pagan flavor by the celebrations taking place upon Joïe's arrival. A 13<sup>th</sup>-century Christian would be well aware of the east-west schism in Christendom. On this account, Armenia may be considered not quite civilized since it never followed the Latin rites. The implied barbarity is reinforced by the anarchic violence present in the country until Joïe and her husband bring order.

<sup>13</sup> "...and comforted her and kissed her / and was very tender to her."

vleizichlichem geluste”<sup>14</sup> (line 850). Teljon asks that his daughter fulfill his will, and she, not recognizing the situation, promises to do whatever he wishes (line 857). Beaflo’s naiveté is comically excessive and when her father states flatly that he wants to “lie with her” she answers, “Vater, des wirstu niht verzigen, / ligen, sitzen oder stân, / bin ich dir alles vndertan. / Swas du wilde, daz sol sin, / wan ich pin dev tohter din”<sup>15</sup> (lines 867-72). The father clarifies his wishes, and Beaflo makes the expected virtuous protestations. Though the king does say, “you must become my wife” (lines 892), this is not so much the pressure to marry found in *La Manekine*, as it is attempted rape. Ehrismann (1932, 63) labels the situation a typical incestuous marriage proposal, and it seems that the father wants their relationship to be public, or at least does not care if it is (“...swis holt dar nach ergat.”<sup>16</sup>). For the sake of escaping the immediate situation, Beaflo must think of a trick. She convinces her father to wait, so that she can arrange for secret meetings, in order to save his honor. Beaflo does not have a long-term plan however, and resorts to prayer and extreme asceticism. She even considers killing herself in what is the first of many suicidal meditations or attempts throughout the romance. These thoughts are atypical in the extreme for medieval literature. Suicide is strictly forbidden by the Church; in an explicitly Christian romance the longing for death must have been deeply significant to the author’s purpose for it to have been featured. Roboal and Benigna take note of their adopted daughter’s depression and intervene. Upon discovering the situation,

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<sup>14</sup> “with fleshly lust.”

<sup>15</sup> “Father, that you will not be denied. Whether lying, sitting or standing, I am subordinate to you in all things. Whatever you wish, that will be: for I am your daughter.”

<sup>16</sup> “...however things work out afterwards.”

the couple arranges for Beaflo's escape by boat on the Tiber. After Beaflo's departure, Roboal is so upset that he would have drowned himself had the shipman (who built Beaflo's boat) not dragged him out of the river (lines 1718-19). Teljon is immediately repentant when he hears that his daughter is missing.

By a miracle, Beaflo survives the journey to the happiest land on earth, Greece, which is referred to as "Maien lant" in the poem, after the young King Mai.<sup>17</sup> As in *La Manekine*, the exiled heroine is placed under the care of the queen mother, Eliacha. Additionally, Eliacha, though she is initially given a positive image, objects to the marriage for the same reasons of Manekine's mother-in-law: concern for lineage and reputation. Mai's lords are also suspicious of the wedding plans, but with one look at their future queen they submit, and the wedding takes place.

Soon thereafter Mai's uncle in Spain requests assistance in his war against invading heathens. Beaflo's display of grief at the news of Mai's impending departure nearly matches her previous wretchedness before leaving her father. One of the barons implores her not to grieve so immoderately (with "vnmezigen chlage," [2006, line 4232]). An account of Mai's preparations and battles follows. While her husband is away, Beaflo gives birth to a son. A messenger is sent to Mai, and as in *La Manekine*, he stays with the heroine's mother-in-law, where he is made drunk and given forged letters. Unlike in *La Manekine*, the heroine's husband receives the verbal message of a healthy son intact, but the forged letters he receives tell of an

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<sup>17</sup> More specifically, the land is identified as "Das lant ze Mureie (*MuB* 2006, line 2051). "Morea" is the name of the Peloponnese that was adopted in the Middle Ages (Knapp 1976, 86). This is significant in that Mai is not the emperor, rather a subordinate or independent lord.

unfaithful wife. Mai falls into hysterics, and there is yet another suicide attempt. After his men have brought him to his senses, he issues orders that Beaflo be looked after until he can return. But the messenger spends a night at Eliacha's house, where he is made drunker than before. Beaflo's mother-in-law forges a letter in which the order is given for Beaflo and her child to be drawn and quartered (2006, lines 5522-34).

Beaflo is told that she must dress in the same clothes in which she arrived and is taken to the boat that brought her to Mailand. When word is spread concerning what has happened, a rebellious mob goes out to meet Mai's returning army. Bound by his own men, because he is still suicidal, Mai is saved by the empathy aroused on account of his histrionics. When the truth of the matter is discovered, Mai impales his mother in a fit of rage (*MuB* 2006, lines 6921-24). After much bewailing of his sins, Mai once again tries to kill himself and is once again prevented from the ultimate sin by his vassals.

Meanwhile Beaflo has floated back into the Tiber and is spotted by Roboal. Her father still lives, and Roboal and Benigna vow to protect her from the king. Beaflo tells the story of her sojourn in Mailand, and inexplicably states what she could only guess, namely that her mother-in-law was to blame. Beaflo's son is adopted by the childless Roboal and Benigna.

Mai spends the following eight years repenting but receives no peace. The bishop advises him to visit the Pope, who alone can absolve him of his sins. When Mai arrives in Rome, Roboal recognizes that Mai must be Beaflo's husband. He

engineers their reunion. Beaflo's father, having repented, abdicates in favor of his son-in-law and enters a life of penance. Mai rules the Roman Empire wisely, and his son becomes king of Greece. When the emperor and empress die, they are given eternal joy in the kingdom of heaven.

Again, though the tone of the narration is different, the plot and flow of events are similar to *La Manekine*. Minor differences, such as the specific reason for the absence of the husband or the accusations leveled at the queen, may be attributed to literary adjustment and do not have a significant effect on the plot, though they may point towards authorial intentions. The major difference is that Beaflo returns to her homeland after fleeing her husband. The journeys between Greece and Rome and the ultimate unification of the empire under Mai indicate that *Mai und Beaflo* is concerned primarily with the political wholeness of the Roman Empire. The Greek Christians of *Mai und Beaflo* are good Roman Catholics, happy to defer to the Roman pontiff. It is noteworthy that Byzantium had at the time of the supposed composition of *Mai und Beaflo* been under Latin rule for many decades (though soon thereafter it was reconquered by the Kingdom of Nicea). It is not clear when, in the historical framework of medieval thought, *Mai und Beaflo* was intended to have taken place. The nobility in Greece appears entirely Frankish, implying a contemporary setting, though the background of the narration is set at some point in the past. The text may have served as a mythic justification for western dominance over Greek Christians, or a hope for future unity between East and West.



### *The Daughter of the Russian King*

The final version of the “Constance” group from the 13<sup>th</sup> century which we will be examining is an episode found in the *Weltchronik* of a Viennese patrician, known to modern scholars as Jans Enikel (or Jansen Enikel). The author of the *Weltchronik* identifies himself as Johans: “Der ditz getiht gemachet hât, / der sitzt ze Wienn in der stat / mit hûs und ist Johans genant” (Jans Enikel, lines 83-86).<sup>18</sup> *Enikel* is the Middle High German form of the modern German *Enkel*. Apparently, Johans was the grandson of a prominent Jans. This alternative name for Johans is found a few lines after the initial identification (line 87). It appears that Enikel’s father was known in Vienna as “Jansen Sun.” We have no information on Jans Enikel’s genealogy, but Strauch believed the name Jans to have most likely been of Bohemian origin (Strauch in Jans Enikel, LXX).

Given the size of the *Weltchronik*, it presumably was written over an extended period of time. But the work must have been completed before 1276, because the final Pope in Enikel’s list is Gregory X (1271-1276) with the words “Gregorius der zehent lebt ain jar”<sup>19</sup> (Jans Enikel, 434). The *Weltchronik* and the “Daughter of the King of Russia” were probably written in the years immediately preceding or during the papacy of Gregory X – between 1265 and 1276.

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<sup>18</sup> “He who composed this poem / lives and has his house in the city Vienna / and is called Johans.” All translations of Enikel my own.

<sup>19</sup> “Gregory X resides for a year.” This section of the *Weltchronik* is numbered separately; I cite by page number here.

Strauch divided the manuscripts into those that contain only Enikel's *Weltchronik* and *Mischhandschriften*, which contain portions of Enikel's work mixed with other histories. All of them are from the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the first group are ten manuscripts, five of which are reasonably complete. Most important for Strauch's edition are the first two, while number eight is useful only for lines 1 through 9,396. Manuscripts nine and ten have been heavily amended with prose in the second half of the work (Strauch in Jans Enikel, iii-iv). The language is Bavarian-Austrian with the exceptions of eight, which is in a middle German dialect, and 10, for it is written in a Thuringian dialect. Strauch notes, however, that the influence of the original southern dialect can be seen in the language of MS 8, which uses the diphthongs *ei* and *ai* (in Jans Enikel, xx). MS 1 is a parchment folio found in Munich (cgm. 11). Though the manuscript is complete, much information is missing due to damage. MS 2, a richly decorated manuscript from Regensburg (256 illuminations) on parchment folio is the most consequential source.

In certain ways, Enikel's *Weltchronik* follows the style of its sources closely, primarily the Bible and the German tradition of vernacular historiography extending back to *Annolied*. Enikel claimed to be holding to the scheme of four empires but makes little effort to uphold the theme. Following the prologue, Enikel begins with Old Testament history, which he follows through Job (lines 13173-456). Enikel then abruptly crosses into Greek history, concentrating on the Trojan War and the conquests of Alexander. Thereafter Enikel turns to Rome, and the history of the Empire brings the reader up to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. As Dunphy notes, Enikel is not

systematic in his treatment of history. “The style is anecdotal, with a large proportion of direct speech. To some extent this is modeled by the *Kaiserchronik*, which is also a source for part of the material on emperors, but whereas the tales and legends of the *Kaiserchronik* serve as moralizing *exempla*, Enikel’s are often more reminiscent of the *Schwank*, with its scurrilous, bawdy humor” (Dunphy 2003, 17).

The author, for instance, takes great pleasure in relating his version of the judgment of Paris and the abduction of Helen (lines 13787-4373). This is not surprising. The Trojan War was a popular topic of Enikel’s time. But, unlike, for example, Rudolf von Ems,<sup>20</sup> Enikel does not seem to qualitatively differentiate between biblical history and pagan myth. Between the tale of Job and the origins of the Trojan War Enikel gives no warning that he is switching from one source to another; nor does he give any indication that he sees one set of tales as more reliable than the other, or express an inclination to connect the themes of pagan myth to Christian history, the way Veldeke did by portraying the creation of the Roman Empire as a necessary component of Christ’s birth (Heinrich von Veldeke, lines 13399-428). In stark contrast to the piety of the *Kaiserchronik*, Rudolf von Ems, or Veldeke, he presents with no apology or rationale the situation of three goddesses at a Trojan wedding fighting over a golden apple, as though this were as true as the suffering of Job.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Though Rudolf von Ems was not opposed to secular history, “Heilsgeschichte war für den Dichter ‘der wahre Weg der wahren Geschichte’ (3103), während Profangeschichte nur den ‘Nebengang’ (lines 3117) bilden sollte” (Bumke 1990, 348). “Sacred history was for this poet ‘the true path of history’, while profane history was intended only as a diversion.”

<sup>21</sup> What Enikel lacks is a philosophy of history. He places various tales back to back in roughly chronological order, but makes little attempt at reconciling differing traditions. While Rudolf von Ems

For such an author, who is willing to embrace foreign and heathen tales on the same level as the Bible and consequently exercising little concern for a criterion of truth, it should not be surprising that between lauding Saladin and discussing the multilingual results of the Tower of Babel, Enikel found room to include a tale of a Russian princess who fled from her father's incestuous desires (Jans Enikel, lines 26677-7356).

The wife of a wealthy and powerful king of Rus died and his vassals pressure him to marry again, for he had only one daughter by his late wife. The king, perhaps revealing his feelings too soon, replies that he will only take a woman as beautiful as his daughter. His vassals search for such a woman without success. The king resolves to remain without a wife. His vassals, however, decide to obtain permission for the future wedding by direct bribes to the Pope. In contrast to *La Manekine*, there can be no confusion about what the Pope is aware of, "for he was delighted about the money" (Jans Enikel, lines 26742). Upon hearing the news, the King of Rus is pleased and tells his court that since the Pope has agreed, he may take his daughter as wife without sin. But his daughter remains in the dark, knowing only that since she is receiving such fine presents, she will soon be married to someone. Upon learning that her father is the groom and realizing that it is her beauty that is the cause of her

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takes the trouble of composing euhemeristic explanations for the existence of idolatry (Rudolf von Ems, lines 3422-3498) and the gods of the Greeks (lines 19690-751), Enikel presents pagan gods without Christian explanation. Note also the apology that Rudolf von Ems gives for having strayed into non-Biblical history by telling of the destruction of Troy: "nu suln wir hie dú mere lan / und sagin abir fúrbas hie / wie ez Israhelis kúnne irgie, / da ih ê von der rechten ban / mit disin meren kerte dan (lines 20376-81)." "Now we should leave this story at this point / and better tell here / how things stood with the people of Israel, / since I earlier from the true path / then with this tale would turn." Enikel demonstrates no such regrets.

misfortune, she cuts her hair, changes her beautiful dresses for “einen grâwen roc” (lines 26805)<sup>22</sup> and exclaims “wærlich nû, ich wil mich / machen als ein schem gevar”<sup>23</sup> (lines 26806-07). She scratches her face into a bloody mask. When the princes of the court see her, they all agree that she now looks like the devil. Her father sends the wedding guests home publicly vowing to punish his daughter for her offense.

She is again dressed in her beautiful clothes and handed over to the marshal who places her into a *vaz* (which is to say, not a standard boat, but a container that completely conceals her: a barrel, as opposed to the open boats in which Joë and Beaflo travel) and thrown out to sea. She arrives in Greece and her *vaz* is immediately spotted by the king who happens to be standing on the shore. He sends a fisherman out to bring this container to shore and orders it to be opened. The king inquires about the identity of this girl’s persecutor, but she will not name him. He then asks if she is a virgin, which she affirms, and declares that she wishes to remain so on account of her suffering. The king is sympathetic to her plight and recognizes her nobility. She dwells under his protection for half of a year before the king marries her. Shortly thereafter they conceive a child.

At this point Enikel introduces the figure of the king’s mother, who is immediately declared to be the sort of woman who should be drowned in the Rhine. The mother denounces the marriage and adds that she will never be reconciled to her

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<sup>22</sup> A gray colorless skirt or dress.

<sup>23</sup> “Truly now, I want to make myself appear as a frightful mask.” For the translation of *schem* as “mask,” “larva” or “Schreckbild” see Lexer 1970, 698.

daughter-in-law. The king has his marshal take his mother to a far-off castle, where, presumably, she will be unable to do any harm.

While his wife is pregnant, the king must repel an invasion. She gives birth while he is away and, as in *La Manekine* and *Mai und Beafloer*, the king's mother intercept the happy message, makes the messenger drunk and changes the message to read that "einen tiuvel hât mîn frou getragen, / daz wil ich iu für wâr sagen, / ez is gestalt als ein schem"<sup>24</sup> (Jans Enikel, lines 27047-49). However, in Enikel's version of the tale, upon receiving this news, the king himself orders his marshal that his wife be shut into her *vaz* once again and put out to sea with her terrible child. The marshal reluctantly obeys the order. This time the heroine and her child float into the Tiber to Rome, where again a fisherman pulls the container to shore on the orders of a man who, though only identified as a Roman, is, apparently, wealthy.

Meanwhile, in Greece the king has returned from war with the enemy king captive. The king expresses his sadness at having been forced to order his wife's exile. The baffled response of the marshal causes the king to have the messenger brought before him. He reports that he had spent the night at the castle of the queen mother. The king imprisons her for life. He then immediately decides to make a pilgrimage to Rome where he can do penance for his sin. At the same time, the King of Rus, assuming that his daughter perished at sea, also decides to travel to Rome, in order to obtain absolution not for attempting to marry his daughter, but for having killed her. The Pope, having since become aware of the unusual arrival of this

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<sup>24</sup> "My lady has given birth to a devil, / I wish to tell this to you truly, / it is shaped like a maggot" (an ugly, frightening larva-like object).

mother and child, reunites father, daughter and husband. Unlike in *La Manekine* or *Mai und Beafloer*, there are no consequences to this reunion other than that the heroine returns to her rightful place as queen in Greece.

It is not clear in what time period Enikel understood his version of the “Constance” tale to be taking place, but since an anecdote about Saladin precedes it, the King of Rus seems to have attempted to marry his daughter in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. One could put this tale, like *Mai und Beafloer*, in the context of crusading, not only in the Holy Land but also in Eastern Europe. In Enikel’s case, however, it is strange that even the King of Rus demurs to the Pope, because Enikel is aware of the schism between the eastern and western churches, as should be expected from a 13<sup>th</sup>-century author. If one assumes that this episode is taking place contemporary to Charlemagne and not during the Crusades, then it would be taking place in a pre-schism environment (and further, before the Christianization of Rus, though Enikel probably would not be aware of this) and Enikel could then be seen as constructing an idealized past in which Christendom is unified. But other passages in the *Weltchronik* do not support this chronology. Enikel seems to be open-minded concerning religious practice and belief. This can be seen in his discussion of the aftermath of the Tower of Babel, which is found directly after his version of “Constance.” In this section he undertakes to describe the linguistic and cultural diversity of Christendom. The fourth language produced by God’s curse is, according to Enikel, found “in the worthy land of Rus” (line 27560). He goes on to explain that:

*dâ habent die pfaffen sunder art:*

*sô si zuo der messvart  
 süllen gên und got dienen,  
 so begênt si ez anders dann ze Wienen.  
 si lesent anders dann die pfaffen.  
 daz selb in got hât beschaffen.  
 si begênt anders die wandelung,  
 die pfaffen alt und junc<sup>25</sup> (lines 27561-68).*

Though Enikel describes the Greeks as deceitful (an old prejudice, cf. Virgil 1972, 2.67ff., but the notion is probably derived from the more recent experience of western crusaders with the Byzantines), he is undisturbed by the schism and has an unabashedly positive attitude towards the East. At this point, it is uncertain why he began his tale in Rus; perhaps it was merely on account of his fascination with the place<sup>26</sup>; no other non-German land gets such high praise as Rus. Alternately, Enikel could be using the story to comment on dealings between Rus and the West. But the route his heroine travels is not irrelevant. Enikel's *Weltchronik* and *Mai und Beafloer* were both composed in Austria, most likely in the 1260s. It may not be fortuitous that both should deal with relations between Rome and Greece. Either the two versions stem from a single close ancestor or one influenced the other. Most likely *Mai und Beafloer* influenced Jans Enikel, if this is the case.

These four literary monuments from the 13<sup>th</sup> century will act as the core for our discussion of the "Constance" plot. I will be focusing on the composition of these tales in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Of the four only Matthew Paris's version is definitely

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<sup>25</sup> "The priests have a special way there: / when they to mass / should go and serve god, / then they do it differently than in Vienna. / They recite differently than the priests (i.e. Western priests). / God arranged it for them himself. / They perform transubstantiation differently, / the priests, old and young."

<sup>26</sup> The editor of *Mai und Beafloer* included a prose version of Enikel's tale in the introduction to his edition. He attributed the alternation between locations from Rome to Rus to the arbitrariness of story tellers (Anonymous in *MuB* 1974, IX-XV).



independent of the others; for the sake of convenience I will refer to the ‘synoptic tales’ when opposing *La Manekine*, “The Daughter of the King of Rus”, and *Mai und Beaflo* to the legend of Offa. Jans Enikel and *Mai und Beaflo* are likely to be closely related, if one is not derived from the other. Given the obscurity of *La Manekine* as a work (Philippe de Remi was not a professional author, and it does not seem that his work had much immediate literary influence), the two Austrian works appear to be independent of Philippe’s romance.

At least three independent versions of a single tale type appeared at roughly the same time with no direct influence on each other. Certainly we can refer to oral tradition, for we have no other choice. But working from versions of the “Constance” group that happened to be written down, what can we learn about this oral tradition? Why do we have no evidence of this tale type before the 13<sup>th</sup> century? Why should so many similar tales appear more or less simultaneously?

The simplest answer to the questions is that the tale did not exist before about 1200. This hypothesis gives a unique opportunity to analyze variations on the plot with the knowledge that we are not dealing with archaic survivals, for we cannot under any circumstances “interpret reconstructions of what may have existed in former times” (Holbek 1987, 202). Instead, we work with a tale that had maximum significance for the society relating the story, because, unlike medieval retellings of the Trojan War, that is the society that created the tale. As it stands, nearly all of the motifs of the “Constance” group can be found prior to 1200 in one context or another. Our task is to bring the history of these motifs together with the cultural situation of

13<sup>th</sup>-century Europe, in order to determine why these motifs were arranged in the way they were to create the “Constance” plot. This undertaking will entail analysis of the primary motifs clusters that make up the story: the proposed incestuous marriage, the exile and mutilation of the daughter, the eventual marriage, the second exile, and final reunion. Once the motifs have been put in the context of their individual histories and their use in the “Constance” group it will hopefully be possible to work out “what the tale says,” as Stith Thompson put it, while speaking against rigid theoretical treatment of folklore (Thompson 1955, 177). But first let us turn to the history of scholarship on this type. This will acquaint us with which theoretical tools have been used for understanding the “Constance” group.

## Chapter Two History of the Scholarship

Steven Swann Jones has marked out the parameters of the contemporary debate concerning the analysis of fairy tales as three fundamental oppositions: psychological versus sociological interpretation, “cross-cultural” perspectives as opposed to ethnographic (i.e. localized) perspectives, and textually based analysis of symbols versus “contextually based assessments of audience response” (Jones 1993, 21). The discussion on the “Constance” group began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, before the science of folklore had formed such factions, but from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century on, Jones’s pattern can be discerned. Apart from the question of geographic origins, which as a topic of discussion was eventually dropped because often no answer can be definitely proved (only Schick and Krappe described anything approaching a convincing geographic genesis of the “Constance” story), Jones summed up the general debate well. Regarding specifically the “Constance” group, psychological and cultural-historical interpretations have dominated the scholarship. The purpose of this chapter is to summarize this research and the place to which it has brought us in understanding the cycle of tales in question.

Scholarly interest in the “Constance” group goes back at least to the Grimms. The tale they published that corresponds most closely to our tales is #31, “Das Mädchen ohne Hände.” This is one of their composite tales. The Grimms’ version in editions three to seven was derived from “zwei im Ganzen übereinkommenden und

sich ergänzenden Erzählungen aus Hessen.”<sup>27</sup> The Grimms report several beginnings that deviate from the standard theme of the incestuous father, which is found in the version of the first edition. By the third edition they had replaced this version with the beginning in which a man inadvertently sells his daughter to the devil. A different version presents a father who forbids his daughter to pray. Though, as they typically did, the Grimms chose the introduction that sets the father in the best light possible, the hostility between father and daughter is barely covered over, especially in the first edition, in which the farmer promises to support her after depriving her of hands; the daughter departs, proclaiming that she cannot stay.

Only a decade after the Grimms’ published the third edition of *KHM*, an anonymous editor published *Mai und Beafloor*. This editor (or perhaps Pfeiffer, who may have written the introduction [Gibbs and Johnson 1997, 389])<sup>28</sup> supposed the tale to have been brought from the East during the Crusades on account of the location of Mai’s kingdom in Morea. This he believed could best explain “das wunderliche Gemisch von griechischen, lateinischen und französischen Namen, die in bunter

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<sup>27</sup> ...from “two tales from Hessen that on the whole overlap and complement each other” (*KHM* 1985, 918). Bolte and Polivka clarify that a tale from Marie im Wildchen Hause (Marie Hassenpflug in Uther 2008, 81) told in 1811 was revised in 1819 according a tale told on August 27 by Dorothea Viehmann (BP 191, 295-96). Between the versions of Grimm #31 in the first and third editions there are the usual stylistic differences that characterize the evolution which the Grimms’ tales underwent. For example in the first edition, after the miller signs over what stands behind his mill, the devil does nothing. But in the third edition the “old man” is described as laughing with a sneer after the contract is signed. More significantly, in the first edition there is an intervening period before the king (in the first edition a king’s son) marries, in which the girl without hands serves by watching over the chickens. In the third edition no mention is made of this period of service. The girl without hands is taken under his protection and soon after they wed. Also important in the third edition is that the queen-mother shows mercy to her daughter-in-law when she is ordered in the false letter to kill her. In the first edition it is implied that the orders to drive out the queen and her child are undertaken by the court.

<sup>28</sup> Letizman (1930: 284) supposed that Alois Vollmer was the editor on account of mistakes in the edition that Pfeiffer would not have made.

Reihenfolge miteinander wechseln”<sup>29</sup> (Anonymous in *MuB* 1974, VIII). Though he thought the location of Mai’s kingdom to be indicative of the tale’s origin, the editor did not take into account the analogue tales, which occur in Hungary, Britain, Russia, or some other place. The editor seems to have believed that *Mai und Beafloer*, along with *La belle Hélène de Constantinople*, on account of the setting in Greece, represents the most primitive literary version available. This guess was not argued convincingly and was therefore not taken seriously until almost eighty years later, because it seemed to later researchers that the “Life of Offa” pointed to Germanic origins.

The Grimms saw “Das Mädchen ohne Hände” as related primarily to “Allerlei-Rauh,” Grimms’ Tale #65 and “Aschenputtel,” Grimms’ Tale #21 (*KHM* 1985, 976). The correlation between the exiled/run-away daughter and the daughter persecuted at home has consistently been problematic in questions of classification. The historical-geographic school, as represented by the ATU Type Index, had kept the tales separate<sup>30</sup> (Uther 2004, 379-80). Structuralists, like Jones, have, however, seen a broader “persecuted heroine genre” (Jones 1993, 18-21).<sup>31</sup>

Later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Hermann Suchier and Marian Cox expanded the research on the “Constance” plot by discussing its origins in medieval literature and as a Cinderella-like folktale. Suchier first explored the legend of King Offa I and his bride, exiled, and after her marriage, framed. He listed several literary works that

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<sup>29</sup> “...the wonderful mix of Greek, Latin and French names that alternate in an arbitrary sequence.”

<sup>30</sup> Cinderella (510A) and Peau d’Ane (510B) are classified together, while the Maiden Without Hands is in its own category (706), though it is similar to 510B.

<sup>31</sup> Jones includes in this genre AT types 310, 403, 410, 437, 450, 480, 500, 510A/510B/511, 533, 705, 706, 707, 709, 710, 712 (Crescentia), 870, 870A, 883A, and 923.

belong to the same cycle but discussed only three of what to his mind were the most ancient tales after the legend of Offa I. Those were *La Manekine* by Philippe de Remi, Nicholas Trevet's tale of Constance in the Anglo-Norman Chronicle, and a Middle English poem *Emare* (1901).<sup>32</sup> The latter two have turned out not be among the oldest versions; *La Manekine* is likely older than Suchier believed and the "Life of Offa" is probably younger (see above, 4-5, 13). Unlike Simrock (1878, 62-63), Suchier did not believe that the character of Pryðo (Mōðþrýðo) in *Beowulf* (whose story is found in lines 1931-62) and other sources could be considered the direct ancestor of the "Constance" heroine. He was hesitant to accept Simrock's genealogy because none of the heroines of the "Constance" group share the name Pryðo. More powerfully he argued that "Die Pryðo-sage war durchaus heidnischen characters; das Constantia-lied gehörte bereits der christlichen zeit an, doch war sich der dichter gleich dem des Beówulf des heidnischen characters der auftretenden personen noch wol bewusst" (Suchier 1877, 520).<sup>33</sup> Suchier also recognized an oral character of the tales and offered suggestions as to whence certain motifs might have their origins: the punishments of exile on a ship lacking sail or rudder appears in the story of Ragnar Lodbrog, loss of a hand was inflicted on thieves under Anglo-Saxon law, and the alteration of letters was a common motif, for instance in the story of Amleth.

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<sup>32</sup> "Die vier genannten halte ich für die ältesten versionen dieser Sage. Die ersten drei verlegen die handlung nach Northumberland oder, was fast dasselbe besagt, nach Schottland, die vierte nach Galizien" (Suchier 1877, 517). "I judge those four named to be the oldest versions of this saga. The first three transfer the plot to Northumberland or, what entails nearly the same, to Scotland, the fourth to Galicia."

<sup>33</sup> "The Pryðo Saga was of a completely pagan character; the Lay of Constance already belongs to the Christian era, but the author [of "Constance"], just as the author of Beowulf, was well aware of the pagan character of the personages."

While Suchier treated the “Constance” group as an independent folk narrative, Marian Cox, in the introduction to her abstracts of “Cinderella,” was the first to bring Constance into the vicinity of “Cinderella” (Cox 1967, xlv-lxvi). She offered plot summaries of several medieval versions of “Constance,” though she did not speculate on an origin of the tales or offer an interpretation. Her aim was to classify and to gather as many examples as could be reasonably published. Since Cox’s addition of “Constance” stories in the Cinderella cycle, Constance has enjoyed a tentative affiliation with Cinderella. Rooth also included folktale versions of the “Constance” group in the Cinderella cycle,<sup>34</sup> but she did not consider it to be an original variant: “The scope of this investigation of Type B1 [ATU 706, the ‘Constance’ group] is only to show 1. that Type B1 with the motifs unnatural father etc., together with the visit to the feast, is limited to the European tradition, and 2. that Type B1 has no original affinity with Types AB or B [ATU 510A] either through style or through content” (Rooth 1980, 119). Rooth considered some of the variant motifs of the “Constance” group to be ancient, but the tale to be of medieval origin.

The initial, definitive list of tales that make up the “Constance” group was laid out by Suchier in the introduction to his edition of Philippe de Remi’s works and expanded on by A.B. Gough, Däumling, and Bolte-Polivka. Suchier (in *OPB* 1884, xxiv) grouped the medieval analogues of *La Manekine* into two alternatives: “Les versions de ce conte se divisent en deux types qui j’appelle celui de l’ermite et celui

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<sup>34</sup> Rooth classified the Cap O’ Rushes/Donkey-Skin tale as Cinderella Type B. The “Constance” story is included as B1.

du sénateur.”<sup>35</sup> In the “hermit type,” the heroine has two sons from whom she is separated during her second exile. These sons grow up under the protection of a hermit. *La Manekine* belongs to the “senator type” in that Joïe and the corresponding heroines of other tales spend their second exile in the house of a Roman senator. As opposed to the editor of *Mai und Beafloer*, Suchier believed that “Ces deux traditions, qui primitivement n’en font qu’une, ont existé a côte l’une de l’autre dans l’Angleterre septentrionale avant la fin du douzième siècle” (in *OPB* 1884, xxiv).<sup>36</sup> Locating the “Constance” plot in England depends on an inconsistent association of the tale with English historical traditions, most importantly the life of the two Offas and the debatable reference to the Prypo interpolation in *Beowulf*. Gough agreed with Suchier and took the argument further by tentatively claiming that the original “Constance” tale arose as an Anglian nature myth (Suchier 1877, 521 and Gough 1902, 51 and 83).

In accordance with his contention that the medieval accounts were borrowed by authors from the tales of the illiterate folk, Suchier further classified the various folktale motifs that correspond to the “Constance” group into three groups, the latter two groups being variations of the most ancient attested form. Gough compared the literary and folktale versions listed by Suchier and reconstructed what he considered to be the primitive form of the “Constance Saga” (Gough 1902, 12). From this

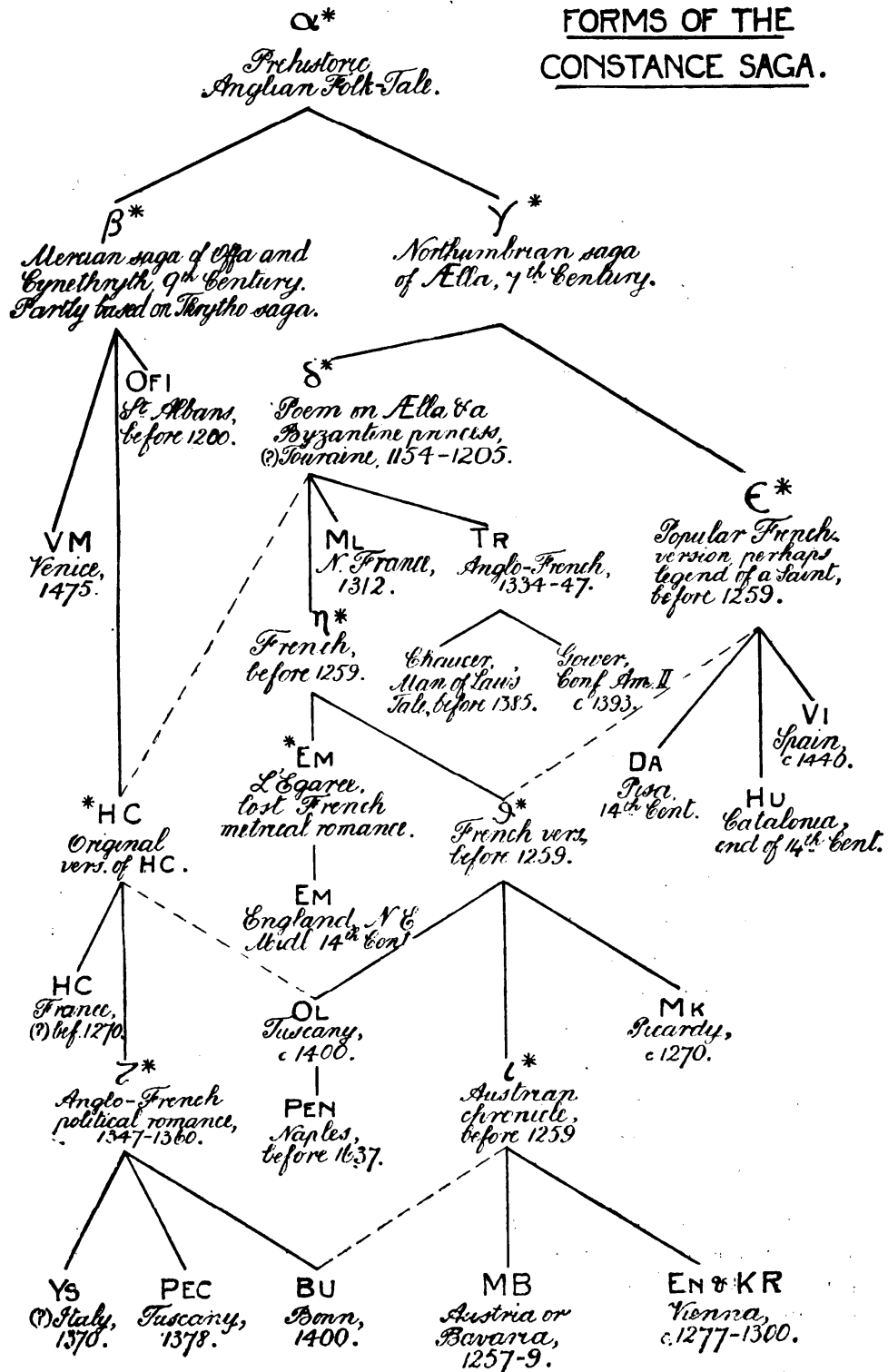
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<sup>35</sup> “The versions of this tale divide themselves into two types, that I label those of the hermit and those of the senator.”

<sup>36</sup> “These two traditions, that originally derive from one, have existed next to each other in the north of England since the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century.”



original form he created a genealogy of the cycle, with which he traced developments and alterations of the story (copied from the Google Books facsimile).



Contrary to Gough's dating, the composition of *La Manekine* is now thought to have occurred approximately fifty years prior to the date given here. This in itself does not discount that *La Manekine* (MK in Gough's abbreviation) is tied to *Mai und Beafloer* and Jans Enikel by some lost French version ( $\eta^*$  and  $\theta^*$ ), but concrete evidence is lacking for these proposals, and there is no reason to assume that the association the tale gained with English history pre-dated Matthew Paris.

Although Gough continued the discussion of the "Constance" group in connection with that of Offa and Prypo, he did so with genealogical objectives. He excluded from his work what he thought of as mythological interpretations, but came to no conclusions concerning the connection to Offa-Prypo. After his publication the topic was no longer discussed, except to be rejected by Schick. The sort of mythological interpretation Gough was referring to began in connection with the related folktale known as "Catskin" or "Peau d'Asne." Coote argued that this tale – and related tales as well – descended from an Indian myth recorded in the *Rigveda*, which he summarizes in the following manner:

A young nymph, named Apâlâ, comes down from the mountain to draw water, and in so doing draws *somu* (or ambrosia), which she presents to the Sun God, Indra, the drinker of that immortal beverage. Indra, pleased with this attention of the nymph, who, though young, is ugly and deformed, consents to pass over her head, her chest, and her stomach. She becomes purified also by the wheel of his car, the car itself and the helm of the car being passed over her, and when he has done this Indra gives her, to complete his favour, a shining robe made of the skin of the sun (Coote 1880, 16).

The elements of the European folktale are interpreted as being descended from the myth and adapted to a human setting. Thus "the water which Apâlâ draws

from the God, and which, because of its holy destination, becomes the *soma* on which he lives, is expressed in the soup which Zuccaccia, the Mantuan heroine, and Allerleihrauh, make for their princes. In the Irish tale it has come down to shaving water” (Coote 1880, 16). The blows which the European heroine receives and her dresses are treated in a like manner, in that the car driving over her transforms into a beating, while the skin of the sun turns into the shining dresses that Allerleihrauh takes with her. Having proposed this equivalency to the Vedic myth, Coote proceeds to interpret the “Catskin” story in light of the nature mythology that was commonly accepted in his time. Solar interpretations of folktales and myths were later ridiculed into obscurity by Andrew Lang’s anthropological school of folklore. For this reason Coote’s analysis made no lasting impression on later studies of the persecuted heroine genre.

Subsequent scholars took a more Euro-centric approach. Continental versions of the “Constance” group from the 13<sup>th</sup> century associate the tale with Eastern Europe, be it Hungary, Byzantium, or Russia. This is likely due to the generic demands of ancient and medieval romance, which typically held a fascination for exotic eastern locales. A focus on the Eastern Roman Empire is typical. Following Schick, Alexander Krappe proposed that the tale type migrated to Britain from Byzantium on the basis of the tale’s distribution from this area, as well as the fact that the history of Trevet (whence Chaucer received the name “Custance”) gave the characters oriental names:

It is however an axiom that the heroes and heroines of folk-tales, if not altogether anonymous, bear the most common names known in the country in which these tales are told, witness *Jack with Bean-stalk* and *Hans im Glück*. No English or French story-teller would have called his hero *Constantine*, his heroine *Helen* or *Constance*; a Greek story-teller would do so quite naturally (Krappe 1937, 367).

One cannot equate the tellers of *Jack with Bean-stalk* or *Hans im Glück* to the upper-class authors of medieval romances. A German peasant would not name his hero Iwein or Parzival either. But the names do perhaps indicate something about the tales. Krappe further argued that the incestuous advances made by the heroine's father were so contrary to occidental mentality as to make a connection to western folktales impossible. Fifty years later Dundes presented this argument from Krappe as an example of what he called historical-literalism, in that it assumes that the proposed incest in the tale reflects actual incidences of incest. "If Krappe and other folklorists had been the slightest bit willing to consider psychoanalytic theory seriously, they might possibly have realized that it is precisely because the attempted incest is so monstrous to Occidental feeling that it occurs in fairy tale form" (Dundes 1987, 60).

As an advocate of psychoanalytic theory in folklore research, Dundes used the case of the "Maiden without Hands" (ATU 706) to argue that attempts to interpret fairy tales had fallen short up to that point (1987). In doing so, he brought together two scholars who analyzed the "Maiden without Hands" in 1912: Däumling and Rank. Heinrich Däumling published his dissertation in which, breaking with past mythological and genealogical approaches, he sought the origins of the lost-hands motif in popular legends and ecclesiastical literature. He concluded that ATU 706

played on the New Testament admonition that if “your hand offends you, cut it off” (Däumling 1912, 98).

In the same year Otto Rank published his *Inzest-motif in Dichtung und Sage*, in which he presents the tales as working out suppressed erotic desires between fathers and daughters. Incest cannot openly take place. Accordingly, the first attempt of the father is rebuked; however, the daughter loses her hands as punishment for replacing and fulfilling the sexual desire for her father by masturbation. Rank sees the foreign king the heroine eventually marries as a recurrence of her father. Thus the incest is, in fact, fulfilled (Rank 1912, 392-8). Dundes (1987, 56 and 61), while criticizing other psychoanalytic approaches as lacking evidence (primarily Róheim [1922] and Fenster [1982]), gave an interpretation similar to Rank’s:

Fairy tales represent the child’s point of view. The maiden without hands is a girl who wants to marry her father, but this taboo cannot be expressed directly. So through projective inversion, it is the father who wants marry his daughter. This is not to say that there may not be fathers who are sexually attracted to their own daughters, but only that in fairy tales, it is the daughter’s point of view which is articulated. In carrying out the dead mother’s commands, the father is obliged to marry his own daughter. Since, according to this interpretation, it is the girl who is guilty of the original incestuous thought, it is appropriate that it is the girl who is punished for this thought. This is why it is the girl who is punished by having her hands cut off (Dundes 1987, 61).

He used the textual evidence of Däumling to back up this claim:

...a legend attached to Pope Leo among others reports that as he was celebrating Easter mass, a woman kissed his hand. This aroused him sexually and shortly thereafter he withdrew to cut off the hand which had scandalized him. Later, the people complained because he did not celebrate mass as usual. He prayed to the Virgin who appeared to him and restored the missing hand (1987, 62).

Däumling considered the loss of hands and the eventual miraculous healing to be the most significant motifs of the “Maiden Without Hands” cycle. Because Enikel’s treatment of the “Constance” material lacks that motif, he placed the “Daughter of the King of Russia” into the category of “Allerleirauh” and “Peau d’ane” (Däumling 1912, 24). But in this case Däumling allows the lines drawn between categories to get in the way of interpretation. If one has a category of tales labeled “Maiden Without Hands” one believes that the loss of hands is the most important feature in that category. But the substantial difference between the “Maiden Without Hands” and Jans Enikel’s version of the same plot is limited to the respective choices the authors made concerning what torture they would inflict upon their heroine before putting her out to sea. Most importantly and most consistently, the heroine is exiled, mutilated or not. Though the connection Däumling and Dundes draw between sexual desire and the mutilation of hands may be valid, it does not shed light on the most important event: the exile of the heroine.

Dundes is not the only scholar to have made use of psychoanalysis in relation to the “Constance” group. Prior to Dundes, Fenster, whom Dundes criticized, interpreted *La Manekine* as a game of ‘who has the phallus.’ Her analysis was carried out “at the level of castration anxiety” (Fenster 1982, 57). The conclusion is that the heroine, represented metonymically by her hand, is herself a transferable phallus. Danielle Buschinger took the idea of castration anxiety further and argued that, while the castration in *La Manekine* is represented by physical mutilation, in *Mai und Beafloer*, since Beafloer remains physically unharmed, the mere removal of the heroine

from her homeland is a sort of castration (Buschinger 1988, 33). This is a prime example of reading a favored interpretation into a text against all evidence. Though Buschinger's article appeared some years after Dundes took the matter up, it was primarily from such explanations, unsupported by evidence, that he wished to rehabilitate psychoanalytical exegesis (Dundes 1989, 126, and in particular against Fenster [1982, 141]). But Dundes' understanding of ATU 706 is predicated on the guilt of the daughter. This proposed guilt is no more apparent in ATU 706 than is castration. Indeed, the heroine is the epitome of ideal womanhood and piety. Dundes was correct when he argued against Krappe's insistence that a tale of incest could not arise in the West. Occidental feeling against incest tells us nothing of the tale's origin, for the incest taboo is universal.<sup>37</sup> Krappe's insistence that the incest theme is based on actual occurrences of incest is atypical. Be that as it may, Dundes' theory shares a good deal with the "literalist" theories in that both assume a generic uniformity in the tales that is not necessarily present. Dundes did not address the many tales in which a loss of hands plays no role at all.

After Däumling, studies of the "Constance saga" began to show influence from disciplines other than philology. Margaret Schlauch, a literary scholar heavily influenced by the anthropological school of Frazer, argued that the "Constance Saga" was a combination of two ancient tales: the story of the incestuous father and a "general cycle of persecuted women" (Schlauch 1927, 65). She viewed the initial

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<sup>37</sup> Though great variety is apparent in practice, the "vertical" incest taboo against a parent having sexual relations with a child is everywhere present, while the "horizontal" taboo against sibling or cousin sex varies from place to place. In certain times and places there has been no prohibition on sibling marriage (e.g. ancient and even Hellenistic Egypt). At other times the horizontal prohibition has been extended to the seventh degree of kinship (e.g. medieval canon law; see Brundage 1993, 140).



motif of the incestuous father as one method among many of forcing the heroine into exile. Her explanation for the existence of such tales is an ingenious use of Frazer's ideas as explicated in *The Golden Bough*. Schlauch believed that the origin of the incestuous father tale could be projected onto a time when "matriarchy," that is a system in which the king is dependent on his wife for his throne,<sup>38</sup> was being overtaken by patriarchy. When the king's wife dies, he must marry his daughter in order to maintain his position. "The daughter's repugnance would be an index of the new and growing point of view" (Schlauch 1927, 44-45). The false accusations of animal birth Schlauch reckons to a feminine version of the basic folktale theme of a persecuted child, who suffers because a person of authority fears his or her existence (1927, 114). The idea that the theme of incest reaches back to a shift in genealogical calculation is an interesting concept. It is true that some of the kings of Rome, and apparently the kings of other Latin tribes, had married the daughters of their predecessors. Most famously, in *The Aeneid*, the feud between Aeneas and Turnus is not so much for the hand of Lavinia (though it is that), as it is a contest for the kingship of Latium. Not one of the seven kings of Rome was succeeded by a son, but some were succeeded by their sons-in-law. Frazer presents these facts to convince the reader that the right to rule was passed on through daughters. But Frazer also notes the violent deaths by which many royal tenures were concluded. In Frazer's theory of religion, this is evidence of yet another rite by which kings, impersonating gods, are sacrificed (Frazer 1994, 131). His chief evidence is the myths that explain

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<sup>38</sup> What Schlauch calls "matriarchy," could probably be more accurately labeled "matrilineal succession."

Romulus' death as either an assumption into heaven or a brutal murder at the hands of angry patricians. This murder is said to have taken place at a summer festival equivalent to the Saturnalia.

Frazer tended to subordinate all things to religion. However, the facts of marriage and murder in early Rome can be more convincingly explained as the sort of alliance building and backstabbing that has characterized most ancient and modern political history. It is doubtful that early Latin culture had the durable political institutions required to uphold such traditions. On this topic, Crawford wrote, "Just as in archaic Greece, tyrants and aristocrats of one *polis* inter-married with those of another, so in archaic Italy there was no rigid conception of citizenship to tie a man to the community of his birth. What is more, openness to horizontal penetration seems to have been true of all social levels..." (Crawford 1986, 393). Or, as Peter Meineck argued in his lectures on Roman Mythology (2005, Lecture 7), the kings of Rome were not so much kings as tyrants in the Greek sense: strong-men who ruled city-states as long as they could hold power. As a young city, Rome had no institutionalized kingship, only tyranny.<sup>39</sup> Matrilineal succession does not appear to have ever been a Roman tradition.

Schlauch's use of Frazer is vague and taken out of context. While she must have derived her theory from Frazer's discussion of matrilineal succession in early Roman kingship, Schlauch does not present the "incestuous father" tales as having originated in Italy during Rome's early years, or at any particular time. According to

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<sup>39</sup> For a complete review and critique of Frazer and the ritualist school of folklore see Fontenrose (1966).

Schlauch, matriarchy is older than patriarchy; the incestuous father tales were born at a crossroads between these two systems, whenever that was. When returned to the context of Roman myths, this theory cannot hold, for it is well known that prior to the foundation of Rome and the supposed matriarchal system practiced there, the Alban kings who succeeded Aeneas were his own male descendents right up to Romulus and Remus (though the twins were supposedly descended from Aeneas through the daughter of Numitor, Rhea Silvia, and fathered by Mars [Livy, 1.3]).

Schlauch's account of the incestuous father tales is based on speculations that certain motifs of the tale represent survivals from prehistory – an axiom of the anthropological school of folklore. This is the primary weakness of her approach; she makes no attempt to account for the popularity of the incestuous father tale in the contexts in which it is found. Instead, she seeks to find thematic connections in the fog of past and quasi- or ahistorical myths that even our primary source for the tales did not necessarily find credible.<sup>40</sup>

Up to that point scholars had been intent on demonstrating the Germanic or folkloric roots of the “Constance” group. Schick continued this tradition, but split the Offa legend in two. He attributed the tales of Offa's youth as disabled and ineligible for the throne to Germanic folklore. However, he did not accept the usual date of composition for the “Life of Offa I” offered by Luard. Rather he associated the composition of the tale with the jubilee of St. Albans in June of 1256 (Schick 1929,

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<sup>40</sup> In the introduction to her translation of Livy, Warrior places special emphasis on expressions used by Livy to connote detached skepticism, although his professed intent was to neither affirm nor deny received tradition (Warrior in Livy, xix).

41-42). He speculated that *Mai und Beaflo*r represented the oldest record of the tale because if it was translated into German ca. 1260, then one can assume that its French original was composed as early as the 1230s, while *La Manekine* was thought to have been composed later in the century.

If *Mai und Beaflo*r is the oldest version (while *La Manekine* was dated to ca. 1270), then the Germanic roots of the “Constance Saga” seem less likely. Given the moralistic tone many versions demonstrate, Schick treated the “Constance” group in a Christian context. In particular, he saw “Constance” as strongly associated with the “Crescentia” legend attested originally in the *Kaiserchronik*. He believed both of those tales to be genetically related to the “Clementine Recognitions,” while also giving brief mention to the legend of Placidus-Eustathius (DSE in *Acta Sanctorum*) and *Apollonius of Tyre* (in Archibald 1991).<sup>41</sup> Since the editor of *Mai und Beaflo*r proposed the idea, Schick was the first to argue convincingly for the non-Germanic origins of the “Constance” group, stating that “...wir wissen ja, wie von Byzanz aus zahlreiche Wandermärchen ihre Wege in slawisches, lateinisches und germanisches Gebiet gehen”<sup>42</sup> (Schick 1929, 54). He projected that *Mai und Beaflo*r stemmed from an “Ur-Ur-Kreszentia” that had either grown from a different class of *Märchen* of Byzantine origin or that the ancient “Crescentia” had simply been transplanted from Byzantium (1929, 47).

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<sup>41</sup> Schick did not consider the “Clementine Recognitions” to be the exclusive source for the “Constance” group; rather he believed the shared motifs to have multiple origins, namely the many other Christian legends, Arabic and Indian tales (Schick 1929, 46 n. 19).

<sup>42</sup> “...we know how numerous migrating tales from Byzantium find their way into Slavic, Latin, and Germanic territories.”

A decade later, Philip Goepp objected that attributing the origin of the “Constance” plot to the “Clementine Recognitions” ignored the folkloric elements of the saga (Goepp 1938, 166). Goepp seems to have thought that Christian legends do not traffic in folklore, though this is untenable as an assumption. Be that as it may, he took the philological study of the “Constance” group in a new direction by comparing it to *Apollonius of Tyre*, the late antique tale, popular in the Middle Ages, which, though certainly not Germanic, is of disputed origin.<sup>43</sup> Goepp identified six points of resemblance between *Apollonius* and the “Constance Saga.” 1. The general pattern of a man, wife and child separated and reunited after many adventures; 2. The initial theme of incest, consummated in *Apollonius*, threatened in the “Constance Saga” (Goepp, like Schlauch, considered the incest to be mere catalyst for the later adventures); 3. Absence of husband after marriage; 4. A floating chest plays a role in the separation of husband and wife; 5. A doubtful parallel between the banishment of the “Constance” heroine and the abduction of Apollonius’ daughter; 6. Both the wife of Apollonius and the “Constance” heroine appear dazzlingly, sometimes supernaturally beautiful at the end (Goepp 1938, 164-65). Goepp did not consider the correspondences to be exact, which he attributed mainly to the distorted character of the *Apollonius* narrative. He concluded that parts of *Apollonius*, namely the themes surrounding the incestuous king, Antiochus, and the fate of Apollonius’ wife, stemmed from an ancient source distantly shared by the “Constance” group.

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<sup>43</sup> Although the romance is only extant in Latin and medieval translations from the various Latin versions, there is a long lasting and ongoing dispute as to whether *Apollonius* stems from a Greek original. Goepp argued for the presumption of Latin authorship (1938, 150, n. 4) since no physical trace of a Greek text survives. See Kortekaas (2004, 21-35) and Archibald (1991, 6-9) for the most recent and comprehensive overview of the literature concerning this question.

Goepp's argument is convincing and has been influential. Both Ehrismann and de Boor mention the connection of *Apollonius* to *Mai und Beaflo*, even though they do not discuss the more closely related French correlates (Ehrismann 1934, 63 and de Boor 1970, 103). Elizabeth Archibald (1986, 1991 and 2001), however, has given more in-depth consideration of the relationships between *Apollonius* and the "Constance" group. Noting that Goepp considered the fifth and sixth parallels dubious, Archibald expressed doubt concerning the first and third parallels, because the protagonist of the "Constance" group, contrary to the daughter of Antiochus, is horrified and escapes her father. Unlike Schlauch and Goepp, Archibald saw the theme of incest pervading both narratives, in that the incest "represents a disruption of domestic and social order," while the final reunion with the heroine's son signifies a return to patriarchal norms, as opposed to the incest motivated by matrilineal (Archibald accepts Schlauch's theory [Archibald 1986, 267 and 1991, 59]).

If incest is not only a method of initiating the daughter's adventures, then the mutilation the daughter undergoes before her exile must reflect the threatened incest. To demonstrate this, Archibald uses an episode from Herodotus, in which King Mykerinus of Egypt seduces his daughter, causing her to commit suicide out of grief (Herodotus, 2.131-132). Her mother has the hands of all accomplice maidens cut off. Incidentally, Herodotus did not believe the tale. He conjectured that the story had been invented to account for the broken arms of female statues found in the tomb of Mykerinus's daughter. Archibald wrote in response: "It seems unlikely that broken statuary could have been the source of such a pervasive theme, but this early tale of

incest does suggest that the mutilation of hands may have been originally a punishment or threat..." (Archibald 1991, 267). Further, according to Archibald, the case of paralyzed hands in the "Clementine Recognitions" represents a Christian development in which the hands are mutilated by the heroine herself out of grief. In the Middle Ages this evolves in some cases into an act of defiance (most notably in *La Manekine*).

Apart from the philological study of the origin's plot in late antiquity, Archibald was concerned with the apparent popularity of tales involving incest beginning in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. As she recognized, it is unlikely that incest was any more or less common in this time period than in earlier times, when incest was not such an evident concern (Archibald 1989, 5).<sup>44</sup> Thus the rise of popular tales involving incest, namely the legend of Judas, Gregorius, St. Alban, and the incestuous father tales, must be due to a cultural and intellectual shift. Archibald identified 1. the intervention of the Church in aristocratic matrimonial practices, which resulted in the medieval regulations stipulating that one may not marry within seven degrees of kinship and 2. the theological discussion of repentance, which gave rise to contritionism. Archibald invoked Payen's discussion of a new kind of hagiography in which sanctity is attained by repentance for a monstrous sin. Incest was often the sin described on account of the increased awareness of the matter brought about by the

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<sup>44</sup> Archibald points to medieval penitentials as evidence for this increase of concern. Before the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries, incest was only mentioned in passing, while afterwards entire sections were devoted to the topic (Payen 1967, 519).

church's unrealistic attempts to enforce the laws of consanguinity (Archibald 1989, 8).

The attempt to explain the elements of the “Constance” group in terms of prehistoric cultural heritage was taken to the limit by Marijane Osborn. To be fair, Osborn separated the scholarly portions of her book from the chapter in which she contextualizes her investigation in the modern search for “the goddess.” Her approach is speculative but innovative in that she focuses not so much on the plot as on the image of a woman-goddess afloat on the sea. This gives her a wider latitude of historic and prehistoric comparisons to explore, but the threads she draws from medieval romances to late classical romances and further to pagan myth are thinly woven.

Osborn concentrated on three English romance versions of the “Constance” plot: *Emare* (1901), *Le Bone Florence of Rome* (1976) and Chaucer's *Man of Law's Tale*. She treats these romances not only as the survivals of pagan myth but also as myth being redeployed for contemporary political etiologies. In general, the myth is designed to explain how a great man was born from a mother who survived difficult trials. “In other words, this genealogical concern turns the woman's quest into her son's birth” (Osborn 1998, 177). Ultimately, Osborn connects the image of a woman on a boat through the Virgin Mary as sea-goddess to Isis, and before her a great mother goddess. The myth of Isis and Osiris is of particular importance in that it tells of an incestuous relationship between brother and sister (though licit), which results in the dismemberment of one party in the relationship (in this case the male party)



and the extensive travels of the goddess in the aftermath of this disaster (Osborne 1998, 201). Regarding the mutilation of hands associated with incest, Osborn points to a ritual in which Isis is said to detach her hand and send it to her devotee so that the human suppliant is possessed. She also speculates that the prominent hands evident in Swedish rock drawings indicate a shamanic power located in the hands. The mutilation of hands in the later folktales may indicate an attempt to extinguish that power (1998, 214-15).

To return to Jones' summary of the current debate on folklore, I see in the history of the scholarship on "Constance" a parallel between the psychological and cross-cultural perspectives versus the sociological and ethnographic perspectives. Around the turn of the last century, the discussion centered on ethnography: scholars pursued a philological inquiry into the folkloric origins of the plot. Which nation told this story first? Under the influence of the anthropological school, this question was refined to: What prehistoric cultural circumstances generated the plot? About this time, scholars engaged in psychoanalysis were more concerned with the meaning of human (cross-cultural) symbols. Only the more recent commentators, Archibald and Osborn, have attempted to assess "Constance" in terms of audience response: Archibald by describing the increased consciousness of incest in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, Osborn by connecting the tales to a living "sea-goddess" tradition, that, she speculated, reached far into prehistory, and indicated a tradition of tales about independent women.

In her later work on the topic, Archibald denied that the woman set adrift maintains any control of her destiny (Archibald 2001, 157). Instead, “[t]he Flight from the Incestuous Father plot can be read as an important social and personal rite of passage gone horribly wrong” (2001, 157). But as Hares-Stryker pointed out, when men, be they infants or adults, are set adrift, the situation represents “an adventure that proves his defiance of the natural elements, his defiance of fate itself,” whereas women face their doom passively (Hares-Stryker 1993, 91-92). Nevertheless, Osborn was not totally off the mark when she observed independence in the “Constance” heroines. Some of them, particularly Joie of *La Manekine*, are indeed strong-willed. But this is an attribute bestowed by the author, not by folk tradition.

Some suspicion may be cast on the folkloric bona fides of the “Constance” group. Osborn noted that, though the medieval romances she analyzed shared much with *Apollonius* and the “Clementine Recognitions,” the focus of the two tales was not the women but male protagonists (Osborn 1998, 176). The same could be said of the “Life of Offa I.” The plot structure, as opposed to the clusters of motifs that make up the plot, must be relatively new and perhaps literary. Osborn’s comparisons, though in many ways dubious, are intriguing in that they flesh out Archibald’s conviction that “[t]here seems to be a link between incest and mutilations, however enigmatic” (Archibald 1986, 262). This link is still difficult to identify.

The motifs of myth and folklore must make sense to the carriers if the stories are to continue to be told. There is little indication that the “Constance” heroine carries any sort of magical power in her hands. Such survivals of the Isis cult would

mean nothing outside of their original cult significance. The oldest reliable antecedents of “Constance” so far are the “Clementine Recognitions” and *Apollonius*. On the whole, however, Osborn’s evidence for a living “sea-goddess” tradition, of which the medieval “Constance Saga” is allegedly a reflection, is strong.

Whether “Constance” stems from these traditions of women at sea, such as Isis or the Virgin Mary, must remain debatable. I find Archibald’s explanation for the incest element convincing. But the relationship of “Constance” to the “Clementine Recognitions” and *Apollonius of Tyre* should be reevaluated. The shared themes are clear. However, what remains unexplained is why the relatively minor character of the persecuted woman merited her own tale later in history. Osborn was on the right track by searching for living mythic traditions. But the “Constance” heroine is a human, not Isis, and she is of her own time, the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The task henceforth is to investigate the 13<sup>th</sup> century background that made “Constance” an appealing story to the men who put it to paper.

### Chapter Three

#### Romance, Historiography, and Wondertales

The origins, sources, and analogues of modern folktales have been common topics of discussion since scholars began collecting popular antiquities. Though there has typically been an assumption that folktales represent what is left over from older cultures, our perspective on what the ancient ancestor of a modern wondertale should look like, and thus what we search for, has often been marred by generic definitions. Above all, the essence of folktale was defined as necessarily a product of peasant oral culture. To use the subject of this investigation as an example, in the third edition of *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* the Grimms present the medieval romances *Mai und Beafloer* and *La Belle Hélène* as “*entsprechungen*” (“correspondences”) to “Das Mädchen ohne Hände” (KHM 1985, 920). “*Entsprechung*” would seem to be a carefully chosen word, because, while it implies kinship or derivation, it excludes any subsequent interaction between the oral and the literary. For the Grimms *Mai und Beafloer* is evidence for the existence of the medieval oral tradition. They took it for granted that such literary creations could not influence peasant storytellers.

Many theories account for the distribution of folklore. The question of literature as source or correlate of folklore has been heavily researched since the Grimms.<sup>45</sup> Ideas of how long versions of these tales have been in circulation, what form they took, where they came from and who composed and told them have been broadened in recent years by Graham Anderson (2000) and Jan Ziolkowski (2006),

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<sup>45</sup> Notably by Wesselski (1974) or more recently by Holbek (1987), Roth (1986), and Bottigheimer (1989).

among others. The tasks those two scholars have undertaken have sometimes required a reevaluation of what may constitute a legitimate antecedent to or ancestor of a modern folktale. It is still true, of course, that the earliest complete documented “Cinderella” tale is to be found in Basile. But as Anderson has shown, an ancient version of “Cinderella,” the “Rhodopis” episode related by Strabo, “has no problem in supplying three of the five essential steps as it stands: Rhodopis has the help of an animal, which might be classed as ‘supernatural intervention’; the operation of the slipper test motif could not be clearer, nor could ‘marriage to the prince’” (Anderson 2000, 27). Three out of five is not bad, and without doubt we are dealing with an early version of “Cinderella” in this account. However, not all cases are as clear-cut. When investigating the history of folktales, one must be prepared to consider sources that in form and artistic intention are different from modern tales.

For instance, “Little Red Riding Hood” has typically been traced back no further than to Perrault’s “La Petit Chaperon Rouge”<sup>46</sup> (in Saintyves 1923, 211-13). Arguably, Perrault’s tale did influence all subsequent versions to such a degree that one must think of it as the origin of the modern cycle of “Red Riding Hood” tales. But it is unlikely that Perrault invented the tale out of nothing. Ziolkowski compared the “Little Red Riding Hood” model to a section of the *Fecunda Ratis* by Egbert of Liège. In this brief account we find a young girl, recently baptized on Pentecost and given a red tunic by her Godfather. When the girl is taken by a wolf as food for cubs,

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<sup>46</sup> Though Zipes’ central concern was not with a philological study of the tale’s origins, he presented “Red Riding Hood” as having grown from local French oral accounts of werewolves leading up to Perrault’s day (Zipes 1992, 18-20).

the girl remains unharmed on account of her recent baptism, symbolized by the red tunic (Egbert of Liege, 2.472-85). This is far from the *conte de fées* of Perrault, but the two share definite similarities. Anderson (2000, 96) argued that certain ancient tales of “flame-girls” who survive the attacks of wolfish creatures should also be included in the “Red Riding Hood” cycle. As Ziolkowski stresses, what is at issue when using ancient or medieval literary sources is not oral authenticity, “not *whether or not* Egbert took from the peasants but *what* he took from them and did with it” (1992, 159-60).

Egbert explicitly stated that his tale originated from the peasantry, and there is no reason not to take him at his word. The subjects of the present work do not make any such admission. Nevertheless, it has generally been assumed that the basic “Constance” plot originated from oral tradition. The four medieval tales fall under ATU 706.<sup>47</sup> Grimms’ tale #31, “Das Mädchen ohne Hände,” is the premiere example among the modern versions of this tale. However, throughout their lives the Grimms, especially Wilhelm, edited and refined the tales of *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*. In the case of #31, by the third edition they had combined the tale of the first edition, related by Marie Hassenpflug, with a tale told by Dorothea Viehmann, thereby creating a composite tale (Bolte-Polivka 1913, 295). Though the version that Viehmann related to the Grimms included the standard, we might even say original, introduction of ATU 706, the flight from an incestuous father, the Grimms favored the introduction

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<sup>47</sup> For Uther’s classification of the tale under “Tales of Magic” see Uther (2004, 378-81), where the tales we are discussing are divided between 706 “The Maiden Without Hands” and 706C “The Father Who Wanted to Marry His Daughter.”

from the first tale. They have been strongly criticized for refining their tales. But the sort of tinkering that brought about composite tales is allegedly their most egregious offense. For current purposes, there is little reason to make use of the composite version, since the first edition of the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* is readily available.

In the version from the first edition, a miller, thinking only of his apple tree, unwittingly trades his daughter to the devil for great riches, when he is asked for what stands behind his mill. Upon returning home, his wife inquires about the riches that have suddenly appeared in the house. The miller explains and the wife reports that their daughter had recently been behind the mill. Three years later the devil comes to fetch the girl, but she has drawn a circle around herself with chalk and washed herself clean. In this manner she wards off the devil. The devil orders the miller to take all water away from her, but when he comes the next day to take her, he finds that she has kept her hands clean with her tears. The devil then orders the fearful miller to chop off her hands, which he does. The devil returns on the third day, but her stumps are clean from tears and he loses power over her. Despite the request of the miller that she stay, the daughter, sensibly, decides to leave home. She ties her hands to her back and finds her way to the king's apple orchard, living off the fruit of the trees until she is caught and taken before the king. He allows her to stay and care for the chickens.

The king's son falls in love with the miller's daughter and when it comes time for him to marry, he chooses her. The king dies, and his newly wed son inherits the throne. Soon thereafter war calls the king away. During his absence his wife gives

birth to a beautiful child. A messenger is sent to the battlefield, but while the messenger is resting, the devil comes and replaces the letter with one reading that she has given birth to a *Wechselbalg*.<sup>48</sup> Upon receiving the letter, the king is sad, but writes back that the queen should be protected until his return. The devil again replaces the letter with one reading that she and her child should be driven from the country.

She has her child and her hands tied to her back and departs. She comes to a forest where she requests of an old man that he hold the child to her breast until it is satiated. He directs her to a tree: "...zu dem geh hin und schlinge deine abgestumpften Arme dreimal um ihn!"<sup>49</sup> This she does and is healed. Meanwhile, the king returns from war and discovers the deception. Accompanied by a single servant, he sets out to find his wife. After some time, the king arrives in the same forest where his wife lives. The servant spies a light shining in the dark forest where they might rest. But the king does not wish to interrupt the search. The servant insists, and the king relents. By the light of the moon they see a woman in the window. The servant comments that she looks like the queen, except that she has hands. Although the servant asks her for shelter, she denies it because "he did not ask for the sake of God." The king steps forward and cries "Let me in for God's sake!" But his as of yet unrecognized wife insists that they must ask three times. The king

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<sup>48</sup> A common word in the Grimms' tales. Zipes translates this as "changeling" (for instance 2002, 111). Normally one could not give birth to a *Wechselbalg*, as they are enchanted objects put in the place of kidnapped babies. But a *Wechselbalg* may also denote a malformed child, without any idea of demonic origin (*Deutsches Wörterbuch* 1922, s.v., def. 2). The implication of illegitimate birth is also present (1922, s.v., def. 3).

<sup>49</sup> "...to that one go and loop your maimed arms three times around it!"



does this, his little son comes out to him, the king recognizes his wife, and they all return to their kingdom (*KHM* 1953, 137-40).

At this point in the history of ATU 706, the tale may without difficulty be considered a wondertale. Given the prominent place magic ritual takes in the story, the term “magic tale,” which Christine Goldberg used for “Three Oranges” (Goldberg 1997, 10) would perhaps be most appropriate. Without putting the tale through a structural analysis, we can also consider it to be a wondertale in the Proppian sense, for as Dundes pointed out, the basic function of a wondertale in Propp’s system is to demonstrate the dissolution of a family at the beginning of a tale, and the formation of a new one at the end (Dundes 1987, 54).

Propp (1983, 16) believed that the fundamental groundwork upon which all wondertale plots were structured was that of the “Dragon Slayer” tale (ATU 300). The account of a hero who fights and kills a dragon is, for the most part, the story of a man, while ATU 706 clearly has a female in the role of protagonist. Indeed, Propp’s ideas have come under fire in general for being “procrustean” (Jones 1993, 16) and more narrowly for excluding feminine tales (Cardigos, 1996, 20). A fusion of Proppian structuralism, psychoanalysis, and semiotics has been proposed as a means of broadening Propp’s seemingly narrow view of the wondertale by Dundes (1989, 124) and vaz da Silva (2002, 227-28). In vaz da Silva’s expansive structuralist view the “Dragon Slayer” and “Cinderella” are complementary – two parts of a symmetrical relationship of meaning. Whether the “Constance” tales can be fitted into such a system remains to be seen. Conversely, prudence is necessary in the

fitting of tale to theory. To use Ziolkowski's language, "theories have proven to be so ephemeral in comparison with the tales themselves" (Ziolkowski 1992, 549). In a similar vein, Stith Thompson (1955, 177), while commenting on interpretations of "Cupid and Psyche," maintained that he was inclined to believe that the tale "means what it says." Thompson directed this statement against rigid theoretical (especially psychological and ritualist) interpretations of myths and folktales. However, to what degree an interpreter is positioned to understand what any ancient text says is not clear, especially if, like Thompson, one takes a skeptical position concerning the reconstruction of the prehistory of a tale" (1955, 176; on the difficulties of placing literary folktales in the context of oral tradition Thompson 1977, 178).

Structuralism requires a separation of the synchronic description of its object from diachronic analysis (Lieberman in Propp 1984, xx). But even Propp, as was made clear throughout his work, was interested in the diachronic study of wondertales.<sup>50</sup> Folklore has a history, and much of 20<sup>th</sup>-century folkloristics took as its task the discovery of this history. However, it is unclear how one can do this to any significant extent. Warren Roberts' historic-geographic study of ATU 480 collected almost 1,000 variants of the tale type from all over the world, but, as Dundes pointed out, was nevertheless short on conclusions (Dundes 1989, 125). Roberts (1958, 161) could only offer a *terminus ante quem* for the earliest distribution of the tale type, one which, in all probability, is much too late. Though his attempt to coax folklorists toward paying attention to psychoanalysis was worthwhile, Dundes

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<sup>50</sup> "Folklore is a historical phenomenon and the science of folklore, a historical discipline" (Propp 1984, 11). Propp saw synchronic description as a prerequisite to historical inquiry (see above, 3).

promoted in this instance an ahistorical approach to the tale “The Maiden Without Hands” (ATU 706). While advocating the collection and analysis of as many versions of a tale as possible, he proceeded to impose a single interpretation on all variants. The idea that we can interpret a tale using universal symbols assumes much about what we share with past storytellers. Undoubtedly, they had the same human brains we do. But what good does it do to take multiple versions of a tale into consideration if we impose a single interpretation on all of them? And if tales within a group share a general structure, do they necessarily share identical meanings? For the purposes of the interpretation of the “Constance” group, I assume that the meaning of a tale can only be discussed as the historic and cultural development of a particular time and place. Questions of universal significance can be postponed. To the extent that it is possible, synchronic description must be carried out without reference to diachrony, because tales are told and altered to fit their environment. If we know something about the cultural environment that produced a tale, we can more fruitfully compare it to similar tales from other times and places.

The structural analysis of the “Constance” group will be undertaken in subsequent chapters. For the moment it is more urgent to define what sort of literary manifestation of folklore we are dealing with, beyond Grimm #31, and what we hope to learn from the study of this tale type. Just as when Propp refers to the “Dragon Slayer,” it is not a single tale placed before us, but rather a series of plots from various times and places that match up on a number of points; likewise, here it is important to consider multiple sources. Yet the tools of folklore analysis are

insufficient for this task because the structural methods of folklore analysis, particularly the method advocated by Propp, were developed specifically for “volšebnaja skazka” or the “wondertale.” The “Constance” tales have roots in an era before secular wondertales were recorded, and perhaps before the wondertale genre existed.<sup>51</sup> Ziolkowski has referred to such tales as “fairy tales from before fairy tales,” thus indicating a close, but vertical kinship.

The first literary monuments of the “Constance” group were written as romance and history. As such, there are no fairies in these first versions of the tale, nor is there magic; instead, the will of God penetrates events. Though “wondertale” is a more appropriate overarching term ranging from medieval to modern versions, we must be careful to note that a medieval “wondertale” is a different phenomenon than a fairy tale (or wondertale) of a later era. As Zipes has described it, the fairy tales that were first recorded as literature in Italy by such writers as Straparola and Basile and later French and German writers such as d’Aulnoy, Perrault and the Grimms are meant to induce a sense of wonder that depends on marvelous transformation: in the wondertale “the center of attraction is the survival of the protagonist under difficult conditions, and the tales evoke wonder and admiration for oppressed characters, no matter who they may be” (Zipes 2006, 50). This much medieval wonder tales share with their future counterparts. But as Zipes stresses, the modern wondertale exhibits a *secular* sense of wonder. To take an example from Perrault, the tale “Les Fées” (in Saintyves 1923, 5-7) demonstrates miraculous

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<sup>51</sup> Zipes deals with the development and parameters of the wondertale (or fairy tale in his usage) in the second chapter of *Why Fairy Tales Stick* (2006).

transformation worked by a fairy (hence *conte de fées*), not by God or one of his intermediaries. The wonder of medieval wondertales, is to one degree or another, grounded in Christian theology, as the alleged “Little Red Riding Hood” of Egbert of Liège demonstrates. The girl is miraculously protected because she has been baptized.

Unlike the “Dragon Slayer”, the “Constance saga” is the story of a woman. If vaz da Silva is right, then this is not necessarily important in terms of the structure of the tale. On a deeper level more fundamental issues are at stake. It is important to define the material for the purposes of restricting the field of discussion to something more specific than feminine wonder tales. Even if, as Jones contends, the protagonist of the “Constance” tales (or in this case ATU 706) follows a pattern similar to other persecuted heroines such as Snow White, Cinderella, Crescentia or others (Jones 1993, 17), allomotifs make a difference. The fundamental assumption of my analysis is that the behavior of our heroine, be she Joïe of *La Manekine*, Beafloir of *Mai und Beafloir*, the Constance of Trevet, for whom the plot type is named, or one of the many anonymous protagonists, can give clues to how this tale may be understood as the product of historical developments, not necessarily manifestations of a static unit of meaning that came into existence in prehistory and has since only suffered decay. The persecuted heroine genre, even on the structural level, is not inert.

The label “Constance Saga”<sup>52</sup> was invented by Hermann Suchier (1877, 520) as a rubric for the many versions of our tale documented from the 13<sup>th</sup> century on.<sup>53</sup> The list of tales presented by Suchier and later by A.B. Gough was comprehensive, though any list that includes folktales will always be prone to expansion. Däumling and Bolte-Polivka added many folk versions to the list of tales. At the time of Suchier and Gough the “Constance” tales were identified and divided up by the presence of and variation of the motivating plot elements. But the reconstructions of Suchier and Gough (see above, 36-39) rely heavily on the assumption that the various tales of the “Constance Saga” can ultimately be traced back to a single prototype. This *Urform* of the tale is, circularly, the measure by which tales are accepted into the cycle. While it is almost certain that undiscoverable folktales lie behind the material of the oldest versions of the “Constance” story, it is, as Ziolkowski argues (2006, 7), difficult to accept that oral folktales recorded in the 19<sup>th</sup> century represent ancient oral tales just as well or better than literary versions that are chronologically closer to those undocumented tales.

For this reason, the starting point I chose for the study of the “Constance” group is not a reconstruction of the “original” plot or even an abstracted *Normalform*. Rather I have chosen to compare the four versions of the “Constance” group that first appeared almost simultaneously in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. *La Manekine* is likely the oldest, and certainly the longest, complete form of the “Constance” plot. But given the

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<sup>52</sup> The term “Constance group” is preferred here, for “saga” bears connotations that have nothing to do with the earliest tales of ATU 706.

<sup>53</sup> Suchier believed the Offa story to stem from the late 12<sup>th</sup> century; many critics following him date the “Constance” group to this period. Since the 1950s the “Life of Offa” has typically, though not always, been dated as late as ca. 1250 placing the “Constance” story well into the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

uncertainties surrounding the dates of the other three texts, it is impossible to say which one is the earliest, let alone which might be the “original.” With one exception, probably all 13<sup>th</sup>-century versions of “Constance” are independent from the others. This does not imply an improbable situation in which these versions are works of original fiction that trickled down to the lower classes by taking on the form of a folktale (though aspects of *La Manekine* probably did enter the oral tradition via popular theater).<sup>54</sup> Few works of medieval fiction – a term to be used carefully when applied to the Middle Ages – were original creations, and there is no reason to consider tales of the “Constance” group to be an exception.

The most irregular tale in our group, the “Life of Offa I,” was included as a full member of the “Constance” group by Suchier and Gough. But while aspects of the plot are similar to the other three, the lead character of this episode is Offa, not the exiled woman he finds in the forest. The “Life of Offa I” treats the same theme as Philippe de Remi, Jans Enikel, and the author of *Mai und Beafloer*; the similarities to the synoptic tales apparent in Matthew’s tale of Offa point to a close association with the other three “Constance” tales from the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Folktales gain in stability when centered around popular texts (Bottigheimer 2003, 59). Because they are so different, both the synoptic group and the episode concerning Offa can be related only through oral tradition. The object of the following chapters will be to compare and analyze those plots for the sake of determining how the history and cultural milieu of the 13<sup>th</sup> century shaped the “Constance” tales.

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<sup>54</sup> *MP* (1880) #29, 3-88.

The advantage of using *La Manekine*, *Mai und Beafloer*, and Jans Enikel's story as substitutes for a reconstructed oral form is that the originals exist and we can become familiar with their contents. In that way a factual basis for speaking of this academic construction the "Constance" group is maintained. The danger inherent in such an approach is that it can ignore the oral tradition that must have existed prior to the written versions. But if we are to know whether the versions subsequent to, for instance, *La Manekine* were based either directly on Philippe's version or on folktales, we must have an idea of what sort of differences we could expect to find between a raw folktale and one that had been influenced by Philippe de Remi. In this situation comparison with the "Life of Offa" will be helpful because, though Matthew Paris cannot be assumed to be any closer to the oral tradition than Philippe, he was at least not under the influence of the synoptic tales.

Nevertheless, the "Life of Offa" cannot be too far from the synoptic tales, because, without documented precedent, Matthew also wrote a story of a twice-exiled princess. But the focus on Offa, and the colorless character of his wife points to a different purpose for the tale. These issues will be explored in the third section.



## **Section II**

The Motifs and Structure of the “Constance” Group

As demonstrated in the preceding section, the “Constance” group appeared within a relatively short period of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. With the possible exception of a close relationship between the Austrian versions, a direct, literary genealogy tying the texts to one another is out of the question. It could be thought that a lost work accessible to all of the authors played a role in the dissemination of the “Constance” plot. But similarities between plots make an assumption of origin in oral culture reasonable. Each ingredient of the stories can be found elsewhere in oral and literary culture. It will be useful therefore to extract the motifs shared across the “Constance” tales in order to discuss them separately.

Any list of generic motifs will not do justice to the individual authors who composed the 13th-century “Constance” tales, because though each author drew from the same well of material, this material was used in different ways. Perry wrote on the classification of ancient Greek novels: “The purpose of an author, not his means nor the specific content or mechanical features of his book, is the only feasible criterion by which to classify it among genres” (Perry 1967, 30). Like the “Constance” group, Greek romance made use of folkloric and mythological themes; in both cases, however, authors formed the material towards a purpose. De Vries (1958, 8) is correct to write that for fairy tales “[i]t is not the themes that are significant but the scheme of action – the ‘pattern,’ as it is now likely to be called.” However, the “Constance” material is not quite folkloric in nature; the sources are at least one step removed from the oral tradition that hides behind all of them. What the authors do with that material matters; for our purpose the themes each author employs

are significant. Still a discussion of the motifs and their place in each text must act as prolegomena to a teleological discussion of our subject texts. The 13th-century “Constance” plots share an outline. The specifics of each motif’s usage in each text vary; by examining the clusters of motifs the author’s purpose in employing the “Constance” plot may become apparent. In particular, the “Life of Offa I” diverges in how the events are ordered and presented. The reordering of motifs distinguishes Matthew Paris’s story from the synoptic tales primarily in that the emphasis is not on the heroine but Offa. Though the narrative string may vary, the internal chronology of each tale is similar, as can be seen in the comparison of events in each text below:

Table 1: Plot Comparison of the Four 13<sup>th</sup>-Century “Constance” Tales

<i>La Manekine</i>	“Life of Offa I”	“The Russian Princess”	<i>Mai und Beafloer</i>
	Offa, a virtuous king, goes hunting.		
	Separated from his hunting companions, he finds an abandoned young woman who tells him that:		
The Hungarian King and Queen have daughter (Joïe).	she is the daughter of the King of York and	The King and Queen of Russia have daughter.	The King and Queen of Rome have daughter (Beafloer).
The queen dies.		The queen dies.	The queen dies.
Before she died, the queen extracted a promise from her husband to marry only a woman identical to her. The King is persuaded to marry his daughter.	her father attempted to seduce / rape her.	The King wishes only to marry a woman as beautiful as his daughter. He is persuaded to marry his daughter.	Father attempts to seduce / rape his daughter.
Joïe chops off her left hand and flees in a small rudderless boat.	Father orders men to murder her, she is taken to a remote area and spared out of pity, but abandoned.	The daughter scratches face, etc. As punishment she is placed in barrel and thrown to the waters.	Beafloer flees in small boat with help of the Seneschal, Roboal.
Joïe arrives in Scotland and marries the local king.	Offa returns to his own realm with the lady. Later he marries her.	The daughter arrives in Greece and marries the local king.	Beafloer arrives in Morea (Greece) and marries the local king (Mai).
The king tours in France while his wife gives birth.	Offa goes to war against Scots while his wife gives birth.	The king goes to war while his wife gives birth.	Mai goes to war in Spain while Beafloer gives birth.
Interception of letters by mother-in-law.	Interception of letters by the King of York.	Interception of letters by mother-in-law.	Interception of letters by mother-in-law.
Joïe is exiled on the water with her child.	The queen is exiled again. Her children are cut to pieces.	The queen is exiled on the water with her child.	Beafloer is exiled on the water with her child.

Joïe arrives in Rome and is taken under the protection of a Senator.	A hermit discovers the heroine and resurrects the children. Offa does not witness the miracle.	Queen arrives in Rome and is taken under the protection of a Roman.	Beaflor returns to Rome and is taken under the protection of Roboal.
The king returns from France and discovers what has happened. He imprisons his mother.	Offa returns and discovers what has happened.	The king returns from war and discovers what has happened. He imprisons his mother.	Mai returns from war and discovers what has happened. He impales his mother.
The king searches for wife, arrives in Rome and takes lodging with a senator.	Offa goes hunting to console himself. He finds the hermit.	The king travels to Rome.	Mai travels to Rome to repent (for having executed his mother).
The king tells the senator of his woes, senator reunites family.	Offa tells the hermit of his woes. The hermit reunites the family.	The Pope, having heard of the arrival of all involved, reunites the family.	Roboal reunites the family.
The Pope heals Joïe.			
Joïe's father abdicates the throne and her husband inherits Hungary and Armenia (through Joïe's mother).	Offa promises to found a monastery. He fails to do so and is therefore unsuccessful in his wars of conquest.	The king and queen return to Greece.	Beaflor's father abdicates the throne and Mai and Beaflor ascend as the King and Queen of Rome. Their son becomes king of Greece.

To boil the texts down to a single outline is not necessarily desirable. The above list of motifs underscores the differences between the texts (particularly the “Life of Offa”) as much as the common features. Nevertheless, if we want to know why the motifs were used in each text, we must understand the core of the story. To strip the tales even further, the fundamental tensions in the plot can be summarized as

1) a daughter exiled by paternal persecution, 2) marriage to a foreign king, 3) persecution in the adopted home and second exile, 4) reunification and its extraordinary consequences. These four motif clusters will be examined in this section. Since it will be argued in the following chapters that one facet of the “Constance” group can be characterized as a foundation myth, it will also be necessary to compare the “Constance” group to other texts from classical and medieval historiography, mythography, and romance, for the problem to be grappled with is the function, and as far as possible the origin of the plot within the wider culture and literary tradition.

The texts to which the “Constance” group will primarily be compared in this section are of two types: persecuted queen narratives and incest tales. The 12<sup>th</sup>-century *Kaiserchronik* contains three persecuted queen tales that in oral or literary form may have been influential on the development of the “Constance” group, namely the story of Clement and his family (*KC*, lines 1219-4083, known from early Christianity as one of the plot threads of the “Clementine Recognitions” [*DP* 1953]), the Rape of Lucretia (*KC*, lines 4301-384) as borrowed from Ovid’s *Fasti* (Ovidius Nasonis 1978, lines 685-864), and the “Crescentia” legend (*KC*, lines 11352-2812). The plot of “Crescentia” is most similar to “Constance” in that here too the events are narrated with Crescentia as an exiled heroine, whereas Lucretia is not exiled, and Clement’s mother is not the center of the plot’s attention.

Tales featuring persecuted queens need not be initiated by incestuous advances. But as pointed out, the subject of incest was popular in the later Middle

Ages and has attracted much attention in modern scholarship. The most famous medieval incest stories are the Christianized “Oedipus” tales: the Life of Judas, the Life of Albanus, and the legend of Gregorius. Introduced somewhat earlier in the 11<sup>th</sup> century through Arabic sources (Wack 1990, 5) are the incest *exempla* of the *Viaticum*. Of these #22 deals with mother-son incest coupled with infanticide, final repentance and salvation. The opposite result is found in *Viaticum* #18 (VHB 1972, 19) in which a woman fails to confess her incestuous relationship, dies in sin, and is later seen in a vision riding a dragon. *Viaticum* #31 (VHB 1972, 39-41) deals with brother-sister incest. With the exception of the *Viaticum* most of the incest tales listed by Tubach (1969, #2728-39, 4667) are from the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. Many of these examples are on the same model as *Viaticum* #22 (VHB 1972, 20-22): a woman commits incest either with her father or son, bears children and subsequently murders the children and possibly her parents (Klapper 1914, #106: 115-16, 318-19 which also features a suicide attempt; *Islendzk æventyri* 1882, #39: 129-33; *Gesta Romanorum* 1890, #13: 291-94, #244: 641-46 without murder or suicide; Heuser 1907, 180-208). The women are the focus of the narrative in the *exempla*; their repentance, not that of their partners, is documented even if the partner was not murdered. This tendency to blame the female partaker of the crime is taken to an extreme in an Icelandic tale that combines the mother-son incest motif with that of Potiphar’s Wife. After the accusation is made, however, she is struck by a thunderbolt (*Islendzk æventyri* 1882, #24: 95-100).

Finally, the ancient romance *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri* (*Apollonius of Tyre*) was one of the most widespread and well-known incest tales in Western Europe and influenced the creation of the “Constance” plot. This folksy novel appears in numerous texts from its inception in late antiquity to the Renaissance. In the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries the story reached an apex of popularity. Authors of “Constance” tales could have come into contact with *Apollonius of Tyre* from any number of Latin histories or perhaps a lost French translation (Archibald 1991, 47).

The original language of *Apollonius of Tyre* is a matter of dispute. A common assumption has been that the extant Latin versions must descend from a Greek original. Perry did not believe the supposition of Greek authorship to be warranted, for in the milieu of late antique culture a Latin writer could just as well have composed *Apollonius of Tyre* on Greek models as a Hellenic writer (Perry 1967, 304). Most recently Kortekaas (2004, 37-39) has presented words, phrases, probable mistranslations, and formulations in the Latin text as demonstrating a Greek flavor, hence, in his view, the product of a translation. Whatever the nature of the original *Apollonius of Tyre*, it stems from a tradition of Greek romance, which it does not perfectly imitate. The standard plot of the ancient novel was summarized by Dunand as follows: “...deux jeunes gens se rencontrent, deviennent amoureux l’un de l’autre, sont séparés pour des raisons diverses, puis, au terme de multiples aventures et péripéties, se retrouvent et s’épousent”<sup>55</sup> (Dunand 1989, 173).

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<sup>55</sup> “...two young people meet, fall in love with, are separated for various reason, and after multiple adventures and events, they find each other and marry”



Deviating from this standard plot, *Apollonius of Tyre* focuses on the hero, while dividing the role of the heroine between the daughter of Antiochus, the wife of Apollonius, and their daughter. The narratives concerning the heroines are persecuted queen novellas. Such adventures of lost daughters and wives were common to nearly all of the Greek novels. On the other hand, the protagonists of the “Constance” group contrast with those of the Celtic-Arthurian tradition of romance. Arthurian knights and ladies often perform proactively because there is a particular goal that needs to be fulfilled. For example, in *Erec* (2004a), the hero’s actions are meant to correct his undue devotion to his wife, which leads him to the opposite extreme of spousal neglect until by the pair’s actions their relationship is restored to a semblance of normality. Erec departs from his kingdom because he needs to rectify an imbalance. The “Constance” heroine, in contrast, does very little but let herself be buffeted about by fate. Other characters cause her distress, and the will of God reunites the family. The “Constance” plot conforms to the basic pattern of a Greek novel. It is worthwhile then to compare the “Constance” group not only to *Apollonius of Tyre* but also to the entire corpus of ancient novels, for the emphasis in all of these narratives is on the division and reunification of families, while the Arthurian tradition of romance has less in common with the “Constance” group.

Since the incident of threatened incest is the focal point of the initial motif cluster in the “Constance” group, this motif will be discussed in the following chapter. Chapter five will then consider the plot’s flow and structure in relation to

thematically similar tales. Section three will discuss the purpose for which the stories were written.

## Chapter Four The Persecuted Queen under the Threat of Incest

### *Incest in Classical and Medieval Literature*

Archibald's explanation of why incest came to be a popular topic in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries (see above, 49-51) is adequate for explaining the cultural milieu that differentiated treatments of incest in antiquity and the early Middle Ages from later medieval handling of the topic, though it might also be added that developing medical theories of lovesickness exerted an influence on the learned imagination (Wack 1990, 126-27). For though Matthew Paris couches the father's will in the language of sin without invoking the devil (1684, 965), Philippe de Remi speaks of the King of Hungary as being struck by love as a sickness (lines 467-503), and *Mai und Beaflo*r invokes Satan as the instigator of the father's sin (*MuB* 2006, lines 786-830). Jans Enikel dispenses with justifications; the king finds his daughter beautiful (lines 26712-13), and when it is found that she has no *Doppelgänger*, he decides that he must settle for marrying his own offspring.

The literary treatment of incest prior to the twelfth century was not always equanimous, but few authors of the early Middle Ages and antiquity use the motif for purposes of moral condemnation. This is so because as Payen (1967, 20) wrote in his introduction, "...les philosophes anciens ne semblent pas avoir été très sensibles à la notion de péché d'intention."<sup>56</sup> Indifference toward intentionality explains why the semi-Christian story of Apollonius is the only notable incest tale before 1200. Indeed, the taboo against incest is universal, but myth and epic are not typically

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<sup>56</sup> "Ancient philosophers do not seem to have been very sensitive to the concept of intentional sin."

hostile toward sexual unions between close kin. In some instances a detached attitude is merited by the culture of the author, for the taboo is not, as presented for example by Godelier (1989, 67), a prohibition of sexual relations between any and all family members, but the extent and sway of the taboo varies across cultures and history. Many stories including reports of incest (or what we would call incest) contain only weak condemnations of the deed, if any at all, because the core of the incest taboo is the ban on sexual relations between parents and children. Even when the source dates from a later period, when the incest taboo had become more comprehensive, the author will not gloss over brother-sister incest. Only intergenerational unions are consistently condemned. This may be witnessed throughout the two mythic traditions most pertinent to the origins of the “Constance” group: the classical and biblical.

Hesiod, explicating the descent of the gods, reports their incestuous relations (though perhaps out of respect he does not overtly state that the relations are incestuous) with detachment. Nor does the marriage of Jove and his sister Juno seem to have disturbed Vergil, who without any condemnation described Juno as “et soror et conjunx”<sup>57</sup> to Jove (Vergil 1.47). The point is not that the couple commits incest but rather that Juno is doubly honored to be both sister and wife to the most powerful of the Olympians. Ovid, conversely, often casts the spotlight on this double standard as an unstated joke, for example when Juno demands that Jove make a gift of Io in the form of a cow: “quid faciat? Crudele suos addicere amores, / non dare suspectum est: pudor est, qui suadet illinc, / hinc dissuadet amor. victus pudor esset amore, / sed,

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<sup>57</sup> “...both sister and wife.”

leve si munus sociae generisque torique / vacca negaretur, poterat non vacca videri”<sup>58</sup> (Ovidius Nasonis 1997, lines 617 – 610). The irony is stronger when Ovid has Juno exclaim: “ipsa petenda mihi est; ipsam, si maxima Iuno / rite vocor, perdam, si me gemmantia dextra / sceptrum tenere decet, si sum regina Iovisque / et soror et coniunx, certe soror”<sup>59</sup> (Ovidius Nasonis 1997, lines 263 – 266). However, the joke need not be concerned with incest, as much as the situations in which Jove treats Juno more as a sister than a wife.

The indifferent attitude apparent in Greek and Latin mythological literature may be supported by the dictum of the classical world that gods may do what humans may not. Humans in the classical tradition of myth, however, likewise remain guiltless for incestuous relations between siblings. Recorded in the same era as Hesiod, the *Odyssey* mentioned that Aeolus had six sons and six daughters, each of whom was paired with a sibling. Again, no criticism from the narrator is evident (Homer, 10.6-8), though as Archibald comments in a footnote, by the fifth century B.C., marriage between full siblings was unacceptable in Greece because the vertical ban had by analogy begun to spread to horizontal sibling relationships (Archibald 2001, 59 n. 10).

However, this view is limited to traditional mythological literature. Incest in historical accounts is never excused; accusations of incest are one of the common

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<sup>58</sup> “What should he [Jove] do? To enslave his beloved would be cruel, not to give her is suspicious: shame is what prevails there, though love advises against this, but, if such a lowly gift as a cow is denied to his spouse and sibling both, then the gift would not pass as a cow” (my translation).

<sup>59</sup> “I must attack her, destroy her, if I am duly called almighty Juno, if it is right for my extending right hand to carry the scepter, if I am Jove’s queen, both sister and wife – well, certainly his sister” (my translation).

weapons found in the arsenal of charges typically leveled at unpopular rulers because it is a symbol of the autocrat's aspirations towards a position above the law. Endogamy is, in reality, a more attractive practice at higher social levels where greater wealth is at stake in marriage contracts (Boehrer 1992, 17), so the accusation will always maintain a minimal level of plausibility. While it is unlikely that the folklore motif cluster of a daughter exiled by the incestuous advances of her father predates its literary debut in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century, the image of the lecherous king is borrowed from historians' habits of using incest as a symbol for hubristic reign. Suetonius is famous for this, and though the historicity of his accusations against Gaius Caligula (Suetonius, 4.24) have not always been taken seriously by historians (Balsdon 1934, 19 and 41-42), his reports of Caligula's incestuous relations remain well known in popular culture today, most notably through the novel *I, Claudius* (Graves 1989, 389) and the BBC mini-series (1976) of identical title.

The Hebrew legal tradition lays out a more explicit legal ban on incest; yet a similar double-sidedness is displayed in biblical myth. Isaac was born of Abraham and his half-sister and wife, Sara (Gen. 20), though the text does say that the punishment for this relationship was barrenness (Gen. 20:18), which is only overcome by divine intervention. But the Moabites, whom Genesis accuses of having incestuous origins (Gen. 19:30-38), are not granted the same forgiveness and rehabilitation, despite the fact that Lot is excused due to his ignorance of the acts. Besides the presence or absence of God's blessing, the primary difference between

these two situations is that Abraham and Sara were related horizontally, while Lot and his daughters were related vertically.

The scene of Lot prevailed upon by his daughters stems from the same broad Jewish (and eventually Christian) tradition of religious law as the much later “Constance” tales. One motif is notably similar here: the absence of the mother who had been turned into a pillar of salt, or in the “Constance” tales had died in a more conventional fashion. Bennewitz (1996, 157) sees a parallel in the innocence of the father and the seductive deeds of the daughters, but I am at a loss to explain how the father of the “Constance” heroine is without guilt (even if his guilt is not a central concern of the tales) or what the heroine did to seduce her father. Such readings of the “Constance” plot, in which critics assume that the father is thought to be innocent or his actions excusable are the products of a will to find uniformity where none exists. It may be that the “Constance” heroine is excessively beautiful, thereby causing her father’s fall into sin. But exceptional beauty is paired with exceptional piety; her existence, not her actions, causes evil. None of the authors places any explicit blame on the “Constance” heroine. While 13th-century Christians and the author of Genesis share an identical fascination with father-daughter incest, the results of the stories are different, because the protagonists are different. The Bible takes the side of Lot. The “Constance” group is unequivocally on the side of the daughter.

More of a point may be made about the father’s innocence through ignorance in what must be a Christian legend transplanted into saga. The stories of Helgi and

his daughter Yrsa in the *Gesta Danorum*, *Hrólfs Saga Kraka* and *Ynglingasaga* allow the marriage of father and daughter in ignorance. Helgi's guilt, however, is manifest in the cycle of rape (in Saxo Grammaticus 2006, 52), kidnapping (in *Heimskringla* 1991, 33) or humiliation (in *Hrólfs Saga* 1960, 18-22) and revenge that precedes the conception of Hrólfr. *Völsungasaga*, on the other hand, demonstrates a clearly pagan attitude toward brother-sister incest: the union of a deceived Sigmund with his sister Signy produces Sinfjǫti, the only companion capable of aiding Sigmund in his quest for vengeance for the death of King Völsung (*Völsunga saga*, 6.41-7.46), because he is pure Völsung.

Since children conceived by siblings may become great heroes in Germanic tradition, it is doubtful that the "Constance" plot could have been derived from native Germanic traditions alone. "Constance" makes use of a different type of incest motif, but it is not clear that the northern European pagan attitude towards vertical incest is similar to that of the south. Medieval incest tales are the product of Christian tradition and law, except perhaps in that aspect of the medieval Oedipus tales by which Gregorius, like Sinfjǫti, became a hero, though by a different path. Despite the development of incest in *exemplum*, a fundamental dynamic between father figures and daughters in folklore, romance, and in some cases even myth remains unchanged in the "Constance" group. This dynamic entails alternately a neglect and casting out of the daughter on the father's part, or her confinement.

Unlike the literary relationship between fathers and sons, which can be characterized as a fear of usurpation and replacement (which generally conforms to



the masculine hero pattern, Raglan 1936, 179-80), the tension between fathers and daughters is one of separation and retention (Boose 1989, 32). Examples in wondertales are plentiful. The Rapunzel theme (ATU 310), “The Sister’s Flight” (ATU 313E), “The Banished Wife” (705A), “Our Lady’s Child” (ATU 710) “Crescentia” (ATU 712), and of course “The Maiden without Hands” and “The Father Who Wanted to Marry His Daughter” (ATU 706 and 706C) are a few examples of tales that concern themselves with authority figures (usually fathers or husbands) who wish to detain women (daughters or wives), the separation of those women from their protectors, and union with a new authority. That the father who seeks to confine his daughter is not always presented as opprobrious, one may witness from the first tale of the *Gesta Romanum* (1890, 1-2), in which a young girl is locked up by her father (not a witch) in the style of Rapunzel, only to be seduced by a young man. Unlike Rapunzel, the daughter does not remain with her lover at the tale’s conclusion, but is retrieved by her father. According to the narrator, her father was right to do so. It is possible for a tale to take the opposite approach by siding with the daughter (as occurs in most Cinderella and Rapunzel tales), but often the father, who must in such cases be a villain, is replaced by some other character, such as the witch of Rapunzel.

The emergence of the “Constance” group marks a significant change in European attitudes towards the authority of fathers. Conflict between father and son is one of the oldest folkloric and literary motifs known, whether it is used for tragedy (*Oedipus Tyrannus*, *Hildebrandslied* et al.) or comedy (Plautus and Terence).

Daughters, on the other hand, even when given a voice (New Comedy kept unmarried daughters silent [Saller 1993, 87]) rarely defy a father. When they do rebel, significant justification must be given and often due penance is done (this is evident in the incest motif of the “Constance” plot, as well as in the abuse heaped on the youngest daughter in the “Love like Salt” theme, ATU 923). For instance in the complex plot of Heliodorus’s *Aithiopika* (Reardon 1989) the heroine had been abducted as willing victim from her adopted father’s home. Since the narration had made clear that the man under whose protection she resided was not her biological father, the crime is ameliorated in advance. Nevertheless the adopted father returns at the close of the story, so that he may offer forgiveness and approve of his daughter’s marriage.

*Digenis Akritis* also presents a situation in which a girl of good family is abducted. Her father the general attacks Digenis for the crime, but when all of his soldiers are defeated, he agrees to bless the marriage (*Digenis Akritis*, 107 lines 684-92). The “Constance” tales fit into this pattern: the father is initially defied, the daughter escapes the reach of his power, and in most tales the father consents *ex post facto* to the union. The difference lies in the religious, as opposed to military opposition to the father. The daughter overcomes her father by righteousness, whereas Digenis overcomes his bride’s father by strength. Notably, the general’s action against Digenis on behalf of his daughter are the legal and proper course (Laiou 1990, 203), much as the opposition of the “Constance” heroine’s mother-in-law to her son’s marriage is based upon the norms of medieval society. The

“Constance” group is in this aspect a pious variation on the theme of abduction. This is another piece of evidence for more recent medieval, perhaps Byzantine, origins of the “Constance” plot, for as Beaton (1996, 60-61) has noted on the 12<sup>th</sup>-century Greek romances, abduction is the one decisive action the heroes undertake. He opposes this pattern to the ancient romances, though, as noted above, a sort of abduction occurs in the late classical romance *Aithiopika*.

At stake in the tales is the control of daughters for the purposes of political alliance and ultimately reproduction. This is seen in those “Constance” tales most clearly in which the king is pressured by his vassals to take a wife (*Mai und Beafloer* excludes this theme, the other tales shift the initiative to the kings’ magnates), so that he may produce a male heir. According to Lévi-Strauss, the incest taboo propels a system of exchange, and by seeking to keep wealth and kingdom within the family the “Constance” father is denying right order. “The prohibition of incest is not merely a prohibition... because in prohibiting it also orders. Like exogamy, which is its widened social application, the prohibition of incest is a rule of reciprocity. The woman whom one does not take, and whom one may not take, is for that reason, offered up” (Lévi-Strauss 1969, 51). Further he concludes that the outrage that results when the incest taboo is broken is caused by a gift not being given (1969, 52). Endogamy results from the inclination to keep wealth within a family. Thus in *La Manekine* the mother of Joïe is as guilty as her husband because she wishes for her daughter to inherit the kingdom. The instinct to keep wealth and power within a tight circle of relatives motivates the extraction of promises from her deathbed. The

mother's obsession with wealth is translated into the action of incest when the implications of her demands are carried out.

### *Incest as Allomotif*

The immediate cultural background of the incest motif in the "Constance" group is found in the literary renaissance of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The "Gregorius" and Apollonius legends, and other stories of persecuted queens from the medieval world, are of decisive importance to the development of the "Constance" material.

While the similarities between *Apollonius of Tyre* and the "Constance" material are not limited to father-daughter incest, the opening of *Apollonius of Tyre* is the point at which the two tale types coincide and diverge most poignantly. I do not find it useful to think, as Archibald (1991, 59) has argued, that the theme of incest pervades the entirety of the *Apollonius of Tyre* and "Constance" plots. Incest is not so much the focus as a broad concern with the bearing of men towards kindred women, be those daughters, wives, or mothers. Both the fulfilled and unfulfilled incest motifs are single instances among many that demonstrate the shortcomings of male relatives in relation to the heroine. Other plot devices could send the daughter into exile. Generally, the progression of the plot centers on the success or failure of monarchy as a family institution, not the relationship between the heroine and her father.

The incest motif is folkloric in nature, but the authors imbued the story with their own significance. The traditional significance of the folklore motif is not yet here in question. One aspect of the significance given by the authors is political

because the story concerns kings and the problem of succession. The persecution by her father serves to send the “Constance” heroine into exile, but it also acts as a contrast to the proper marriage, and more importantly, the proper kingship, created at the end of the narrative.

It seems unlikely that the “Constance” plot shares a common source with *Apollonius of Tyre*, as Goepp suspected it did (1938, 166), because as I have argued, the tale was created not long before the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, the “Constance” group can be seen in part as derived from or closely related to the themes of *Apollonius of Tyre*, and the storytellers and authors behind “Constance” were likely familiar with the romance and drew ideas from it. Archibald (1991, 60) wrote that the “Constance” narrative may be best imagined as a fantasy about what would happen if Antiochus’s daughter had resisted her father. This is a useful suggestion, but why the authors of the “Constance” group thought it worthwhile or necessary to investigate an alternative outcome has not been considered.

In any case, the influence the *Apollonius of Tyre* material wielded over “Constance” is indirect, a matter of inspiration, not similarity in plot, because the 13<sup>th</sup>-century authors, by changing the outcome of the initial motif, altered the possible course of the entire narrative. That this sort of literary experimentation might occur is not surprising, though the consequences are striking. A counterexample would be a comparison of Chariton’s *Cheareas and Callirhoe* to Xenophon’s *Ephesian Tale*. This too is a case of an author borrowing from the work of another, yet altering it to suit his own purposes.

Xenophon took much of the material for his tale from Chariton (Reardon 1989, 126). Both narratives feature a couple separated by fate; in each story the wife wishes to defend her chastity by refusing a second marriage. Chariton's heroine Callirhoe fails, however, in that she is compelled to enter into a consummated marriage with a wealthy Ionian named Dionysius. Xenophon included a similar episode in which his heroine, Anthia, is likewise compelled to wed a wealthy man, but falls as if dead after a suicide attempt, thereby avoiding conjugal relations with her new husband. Just as what in *Apollonius of Tyre* is consummated becomes a narrow escape in the "Constance" group, in the *Ephesian Tale* the heroine is also preserved from violating her commitment to her original husband, even though the situation is borrowed from the earlier work in which the opposite result comes about. This discrepancy between the ancient Greek texts produces no consequences for the direction and outcome of the narrative: the lovers will be reunited regardless of the obstacles placed in their way. The link between *Apollonius of Tyre* and "Constance" is more complex in that the choice to preserve the heroine's chastity takes the plot in a new direction.

It would be simplistic to credit the dissimilarity between the Greek novels and the "Constance" group to differing estimations of virginity. Pagan Mediterranean cultures were every bit as concerned with female chastity as medieval Christians were. The fanatical sequestration of women in Athens (Shelton et al. 1988, 55) was severer than the restrictions placed on women in 13<sup>th</sup>-century Europe. The difference lies in that ancient Greeks subordinated chastity to family honor (Saller 1993, 86),

whereas medieval Christians glorified virginity for theological reasons. Boswell wrote on the limits put on female sexuality: “The rationale behind such strictures is clearly not related either to sexual purity in any abstract sense or to safeguarding any affective aspects of family life... On the contrary, the interest behind these seemingly capricious and unrelated taboos and strictures is apparently the limitation of access to position and privilege within the family” (Boswell 1980, 32). Medieval Christians were similarly preoccupied with the link between female chastity and the honor of the family, but the ideals of virginity were coupled with a theological order separate from mortal men, the family, and worldly honor.

Theoretically, women could be the spiritual peers of men, though by no means physical or intellectual equals. Ancient Greeks, however, gave little thought to inner spiritual purity (“sexual purity in an abstract sense”). The larger concerns were appearance and hierarchical position within family and society. Chariton constructed a narrative around the difficulty that Callirhoe faced when she found herself enslaved, pregnant, and pursued by a powerful lover in a foreign land. The reader knows that she conceived her child with her first husband and that the ends of chastity have been maintained, though Chaereas is temporarily dishonored by his wife’s second marriage. This dishonor is reinforced by his subsequent enslavement in Persia. That Callirhoe entered into a second, childless marriage is a misfortune, but not an overwhelming catastrophe because the son born to Callirhoe in Ionia was fathered by Chaereas, and the affair is unknown to Syracuse. The love of Dionysus is one more obstacle to overcome before Callirhoe can be reunited to Chaereas. The

Christianization of *Apollonius of Tyre*<sup>60</sup> presents a different situation. By resisting her father's will and escaping, the daughter of the king is thrown into the center of the story. This entails a rearrangement of motifs and characters. The focus is switched from a hero like Apollonius to the heroine.

It is probable that the alternative path that "Constance" represented was only made possible by developments in social thought that accompanied the increased control the Roman church began to exert over Northern Europe from the 11<sup>th</sup> century on. Germanic law codes did not require the consent of brides for legitimate marriages (Wemple 1993, 229).<sup>61</sup> While generally fathers retained de facto control over the marriages of their children (Duby 1994, 25), legal consent of the bride was required by canon law, which only held consistent sway over Europe after the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Before the assertion of Church authority beginning at this time, marriage was a matter of secular law (Boswell 1996, 165); the Church did little to regulate marriage. While consent of all parties was a theoretical legal principle in secular Roman and Byzantine law (Saller 1993, 86-87 and Laiou 1993, 111), this was not so in the Germanic law codes. Only when canon law came into effect in Northern Europe was it conceivable that a girl might defy the will of her father.

Even so, rebellious daughters were rarely looked upon favorably in the centuries of the "Constance" group. As Duby notes (1994, 25), a girl's defiance of her father's will regarding marriage could only be praised if it originated in a desire

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<sup>60</sup> Kortekaas (2004, 30) is probably correct that *Apollonius of Tyre* was composed by a Christian, but the tale nevertheless takes place in a quasi-pagan environment.

<sup>61</sup> See also King (1972, 229-233) on Visigothic law; of particular interest is King's point that though a daughter did not have the right to a voice in her marriage, she did have the capacity to elope – an act for which she could be punished, even if the marriage could not be reversed.



for the monastic life. Yet few of the “Constance” heroines express any desire to remain a virgin.<sup>62</sup> All are devoted to God, yet gain sanctity as married women and mothers despite resistance to their fathers. The “Constance” group represents a collective thought experiment that seeks to test the limits of a woman’s freedom, and the circumstances under which she can defy conventional authority. One aspect of the persecuted queen might originate in the cognitive dissonance created by the discrepancy between legal theory of consent and the reality that despite legal and religious ideology a woman had little choice but to fulfill the will of her family. An example of this constraint in literature may be found in *Digenis Akritis*. It has been noted (Laiou 1993, 210) that when the Cappadocian brothers negotiate with the Sultan over their sister (*Digenis Akritis*, lines 262-337), no indication is given that either party believed that the will of the girl in question need be taken into account.

In the century preceding the appearance of incestuous father tales, a different kind of incest tale came into wide circulation. The first of these, the Judas legend, was recorded in the *Aurea Legenda* of Jacobus de Voragine (1890, 184-86) between 1270 and 1298 (Rank 1912, 344), but the manuscript tradition probably goes back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Baum 1912, 496). The Judas legend is a strange tale because even though, as Baum (1912, 483) wrote, the point of the story is to blacken the name of Judas Iscariot yet further, Judas is nonetheless in the position of hero. Erming (2003,

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<sup>62</sup> Hélène of *La belle Hélène de Constantinople* would have preferred to live as a beguine (1995, line 1104), but this poem was probably composed in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and thus is excluded from the present discussion. The prose version of Enikel’s Russian Princess Tale (in *MuB* 1974, IX) states that the daughter did not want to take any man but one that pleased her (a radical disposition for the time). Beafloer is said to have been beautiful and virtuous beyond measure, but her virtue never takes the form of monastic leanings. The same is true of Joïe in *La Manekine*. She is devoted to the Virgin Mary (Philippe de Remi, line 191), but never says that she would prefer to remain a virgin herself.

411-12) argued that Judas is heroic because no minor sinner could play a role in the execution of Christ. God's betrayer must be larger than life. Hence Judas's villainy is enhanced, as Baum pointed out, but his character is elevated into a sinner of extraordinary measure. Shortly after the Judas legend began to spread, the *vita* of St. Alban was composed on a similar model, some time between 1178-1190 (Morvay 1977, 154). While versions of the Judas legend did not appear in vernacular languages until about 1300, all of them based most likely on the *Legenda Aurea* (Baum 1916, 526), fragments of a Low German verse translation of St. Alban's *vita* survive from as early as the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Morvay 1977, 72). Finally, only the legend of Gregorius initially appeared in the vernacular to be subsequently translated into Latin. The story first appeared as a French verse legend by an anonymous author (LG 1991), to be taken up later by Hartmann von Aue, perhaps in 1186 (Mertens in Hartmann von Aue 2004b, 775). Then in the first decade of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Arnold von Lübeck composed a Latin version (Arnold von Lübeck 1986).

The above-mentioned tales focus on situations widely divergent from the themes of the "Constance" group. That they are all based upon the Oedipus legend need hardly be mentioned except that this fact points to a Byzantine origin of the tale type. Puchner (1994, 309) argued as much for the "Judas" legend. Since this is likely the earliest version of the tale type in Western Europe, a development may be postulated in which the antiheroic Judas, imported from the East, is deemed unsatisfactory and is hence replaced by a holy sinner like Albanus or Gregorius. In all versions, as in the Oedipus legend, the hero transgresses in ignorance, though the

Albanus legend begins with a case of consummated father-daughter incest, while the “Gregorius” type begins with a case of brother-sister incest which results in the birth of the hero, who will grow up to wed his mother. Gregorius’s personal guilt and the effect the double incest has on the message of the tale have fueled much of the discussion around the “Gregorius” legend (Duckworth 1985, 350-79; King 1975, 162-93; Schieb 1950, 51-64; Tobin 1975, 85-98). The protagonists of these incest tales have little in common with the “Constance” heroine. The medieval Oedipus is destined for great things in his own right (be they for good or evil).

However, the figure of “Constance” bears striking similarity to the mother of Gregorius. On his deathbed Gregorius’ grandfather laments to his son that he neglected his daughter:

jâ vürhte ich harte sere  
 diner schœnen swester.  
 Des ist mîn jâmer vester  
 und beginnez nû ze spate klagen  
 daz ich bî allen mînen tagen  
 ir dinc niht baz geschaffet hân:  
 daz ist unväterlich getân.<sup>63</sup> (Hartmann von Aue 2004b, lines 236-42)

“Ir dinc,” “her (legal) affairs” can only refer to matrimonial arrangements that were never made, because the marital status of a woman in the Middle Ages was the only significant matter to be cared for. This is more explicit in the French legend *Gregoire* in which the king claims that if he had arranged for his daughter to be married, then he could leave the world in peace (*LG*, lines 85-93). That Hartmann has the king

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<sup>63</sup> “Indeed, I fear very much / For your beautiful sister. / My sorrow is deeper on this account / and I begin to lament this now too late / that I in all my days / did not better arrange her affairs: / that did not fulfill fatherly duties” (my translation).

express less defined regrets regarding his daughter implies that the king's delay over his daughter's engagement signifies a deeper imbalance in their relationship, which can be characterized as possessiveness. Wailes writes:

Why has the father not made the normal overtures about a spouse for the girl? Why does he imply but not articulate the need for her to find a marital partner? This suggests the possessiveness that characterizes that branch of incest literature treating latent but repressed desire. What the father does do is to bid his son to act in his place... The boy accepts the charge to act in *loco patris* and becomes the lover of his sister (Wailes 1992, 72-73).

The father's disposition toward his daughter is essentially the same as in the "Constance" group. That it is her brother who seduces her makes little difference, for he is her legal guardian, just as her father was. The critical distinction is the compliance of Gregorius's mother opposed to the defiance of the "Constance" heroine. When the intentions of her brother first become apparent, Gregorius's mother elects not to scream for the sake of appearances, *êre* (Hartmann von Aue 2004b, lines 385-90). That she concerns herself with *êre* 'reputation' is the fundamental difference between Gregorius's mother and the "Constance" heroine.

Though the situation is constructed such in *La Manekine* that there would be no loss of honor for the daughter to marry her father, because both the barons and the clergy approve, Joïe is not concerned with appearances: "Ne sui mie tenue a [fa]ire / Ce qu'a m'ame seroit [c]ontrarie" (Philippe de Remi, lines 559-60). "I am not obliged to do / What would be perilous to my soul." These two situations are not entirely analogous. Gregorius's father went to his sister in order to seduce or rape her on the spot. Joïe's father only approached her in order to inform her of his intentions

to make her his queen. The corresponding scene in *Mai und Beaflo*r more closely follows Hartmann's narrative. Indeed the 13<sup>th</sup>-century author probably modeled his scene on the equivalent passages in *Gregorius* and the "Crescentia" legend of the *Kaiserchronik*. Just as Dietrich wishes immediately to sleep with Crescentia, and Gregorius's father accomplishes the deed without any talk of marriage, Teljon, after being rejected by Beaflo, attempts to rape her. Like Crescentia, Beaflo manages to forestall the crime by feigning submission, but convincing her attacker to wait until the two can be sure of secrecy. While Beaflo must play to her father's wishes by pretending to be concerned with appearances (again, *êre*), unlike Gregorius's mother, she uses this only as a ploy. Her true concerns are with the soul.

Despite a similarity between the figures of Gregorius's mother and the "Constance" heroine, the "Constance" plot is generically more similar to the persecuted queen plot. The motif of threatened incest, while inspired by *Apollonius of Tyre*, is only an allomotif for the function that sends a daughter to far-off lands. The persecuted queen tales also use sexual persecution, though it does not come in the form of father-daughter incest. These texts feature the exile of a queen on account of an accusation of sexual impropriety, or in the oldest story "Lucretia" the rape is completed. In our three 12<sup>th</sup>-century examples from the *Kaiserchronik*, the persecutor of the heroine is her brother-in-law.

The medieval stories of Lucretia and Clement's family both have literary precursors. Only "Crescentia" was first recorded in the *Kaiserchronik*, though on account of the rhyme pattern and literary quality of that section it is thought to be a

separate composition inserted into the lengthier history (Ohly 1968, 190); some discussion has taken place as to whether the tale of Clement and his family was authored by the same poet who wrote “Crescentia,” but Bornholdt (2000, 398-99) debunked the idea. Despite this, the similarities between the tales indicate that all stem from the same tradition of persecuted queens. The link between “Crescentia” and the “Clementine Recognitions” has been known since Schick (1929, 44-45). Ohly (1968, 195-56) argued that the all three persecuted queen tales evidenced an act of medieval typological thought on behalf of the author of the *Kaiserchronik*, though the Christian patience of Crescentia should be seen as a counterpoint to the suicidal Lucretia and despairing mother of Clement.

By comparison to Lucretia, the symbolism in the “Constance” tales of the exiled queen upon the water is highlighted. “The image of the boat adrift at once symbolizes the uniqueness and frailty of the hero/heroine. Separated from those around him/her, s/he is beset and battered by the dark impulses of the community. As for the water, it, too, is a doubly-resonant symbol, suggesting cleanliness and rebirth but also death and surrender to the unknown” (Hares-Stryker 1993, 83). Christianity condemns suicide under any circumstances. Hence the suicidal tendencies of Lucretia, Crescentia, and the “Constance” heroine that are fulfilled by Lucretia and indicated in *Mai und Beafloer*, are veiled in the symbolism of “Constance’s” floating coffin that brings her to new life. This transformation from actual to symbolic death marks the bridge between the pious legend of republican Rome and the Christian wondertale. The larger development of the persecuted heroine as the object of local

legend and myth to romance may be discerned through Propp's system of folktale analysis in that the motifs of the legends are appropriated for new purposes in romance and folktale. The history of romance is key to understanding the "Constance" group.

Winkler's concise statement on Greek romance applies to the medieval "Constance" group too, "The entire form of the Greek romance can be considered an elaboration of the period between initial desire and final consummation" (Winkler 1994, 28). While each "Constance" tale adheres to a Proppian structure, under which one family is broken up so that a second at the final point may be formed, of the four the "Life of Offa I" adheres closest to the pattern of Greek romance in that the initial encounter between husband and wife takes the opening position in the narrative chain, while what led to the heroine's abandonment in the wilderness is recounted as a flashback. Nevertheless, Greek romance delighted in the clichés of love at first sight, Matthew Paris (ever the monk) does not have his characters expressing anything like erotic desire. Recall that Offa is uninterested in sex. Only under pressure from his magnates does Offa remember that he had brought a girl back from a hunting trip, and decided that she would make a suitable wife. Opposite this dispassionate character, the heroine's villainous father is said to be in love and in lust. Contrary to this, the two romances *La Manekine* and *Mai und Beafloer* engage the literary tropes of courtly love, in the incestuous proposal of the father, as well as in the marriage of the exiled daughter to a foreign king.

The underlying structures of Greek romance and our medieval tales do not conform strictly to the chain plot of wondertales. But viewed from the perspective of Propp, insights into their similarities can be gained. The “Constance” tale makes most sense when the father and husband of the heroine are considered in combination to be the hero of the tale. In the same way that *Apollonius of Tyre* employs one hero paired with multiple heroines “Constance” makes use of one heroine and multiple heroes. This is a counterintuitive method, for the center of the narrative is the “Constance” figure: the exiled daughter and wife. However, as has been observed, in myth and folktale the setting adrift of a boy or man portends great adventures in store for him (Hares-Stryker 1993, 91), whereas the girl at sea is passive. Instead of adventure, her wanderings signify a crisis in family life, which is rectified only when the marriage of the “Constance” heroine is placed in the proper Christian context by the men of the story. This is so because the “Constance” heroine is already perfect, an ideal of the feminine that is both divine and secular. Bloch attributed the creation of the abstract woman in religious devotion to the Virgin and the veneration of courtly women to a change in the relationship of women to property (Bloch 1991, 183), that is, as a means of preserving the limitations of privilege within the family (see Boswell quote above). It is noteworthy then that Joïe’s dying mother extracts the promise from her husband not to remarry because she wishes for her daughter to rule in her own right. “The invention of Western romantic love represented, above all, a usurping reappropriation of woman at the moment she became capable of appropriating what had traditionally constituted masculine modes of wealth” (Bloch



1991, 196). Marrying one's own daughter is preferable to allowing her to reign alone; her exile is the logical conclusion to the intolerable paradox created by her competence to fill masculine roles in society.

Though the "Constance" group presents the matter in an extreme form, broadly articulated, the fundamental problem of royal succession and marriage policy is framed by the authors so as to offer a critique of how power is accumulated, exercised, and retained. The attempt at incestuous marriage that initiates the tales is used for an effect opposite to that which Suetonius and other historians obtained with their accusations of incest against rulers. The historiographic function of incest, as found in Suetonius and others, denotes a prince so secure in his power that he feels he can flout conventional morality for no purpose other than to demonstrate his superiority. That the Kings of Hungary, Rus, Rome, and York cannot fulfill their own will regarding their family, that two of the four kings ask permission of an outside authority to marry their daughters signals weakness, which seems to be caused by the death of the queen.

Here is revealed a fundamental divide between ancient reports of incest and medieval incest tales. *Apollonius of Tyre* tells of one king supplanting another. In the ancient tales, the king's rule is replaced by, what from the point of view of the legend's teller (be it Livy or Ovid), is a better order, in which no man can presume to transgress limits with impunity. The crime fits the stereotyped ancient idea of hubris. The effects are political.

The medieval incest tales also narrate acts of usurpation, but the initial sin is not motivated by hubris, nor are the consequences merely political. The primary concern is with salvation either only of the individual or of a political entity. Gregorius obtains this salvation despite his mother, and no communal deliverance is implied by his ascendance to the Papal throne. Contrary to this, with the exception of Offa, the heroes of the “Constance” group obtain salvation on account of the “Constance” heroine. Like the stories of *Apollonius of Tyre*, “The Rape of Lucretia,” and “The Clementine Recognitions,” political legitimacy passes through women. In the following chapter the “Constance” tales are examined as a progression of functions. This study should illuminate the key differences between the four tales in question here, and help answer how the heroine is invested as a symbol of authority.

## Chapter Five

### Themes and Functions

Propp developed his system of wondertale analysis based on 100 entries in Afanasiev's (51-150) collection of Russian folk stories (Propp 1973, 18). These narratives feature in large part male heroes, though not exclusively. To what extent Propp's system can be rigorously applied to non-Russian wondertales or narrative material other than wondertales is not a question to which this chapter offers an answer. Rather the operative assumption is that Propp can offer a point of entry to the plot, an interpretive guide to the flow of the tales, even if the circumstances of their composition and recording are different from the material Propp worked with. This assumption is possible because, as a whole, the "Constance" stories are referred to in the ATU system, the early version of which (Aarne 1928) Propp used to form his definition of the wondertale (Propp 1973, 19). Additionally, the "Constance" group constitutes a group precisely because, as Propp observed of wondertales, the functions of the *dramatis personæ* in this group do not change from version to version (with the exception of "Offa"). Neither medieval romances nor chronicles are created in the same manner as folk narrative in the strictest sense; nevertheless, as argued (see above, 12, 57), in the instance of the "Constance" group (and in many other monuments of medieval literature) a useful approach to those texts deals with them as literary embellishments and appropriations of oral tales. It is my contention that this approach will prepare the way for a synchronic analysis of the 13<sup>th</sup>-century "Constance" group. However, for the sake of the future study of the "Constance"

group's prehistory, reference will be made to thematically related legends such as "The Rape of Lucretia," "The Clementine Recognitions," and the "Crescentia" legend.

The character of the "Constance" heroine varies according to the author casting her, though all of the persecuted heroines fit a medieval typology of godliness and longsuffering. Matthew Paris's nameless victim displays the least personality. As a perfect Christian daughter and wife, she blames herself for her father's aggression,<sup>64</sup> and never takes action. Joïe of *La Manekine* is likewise a devout icon of feminine virtue. She, however, is less inclined to passive resistance. Joïe is capable of implying that her father is a fool and of mutilating herself as a means of escape. Nevertheless, once this display of spirit is complete, she reverts to passivity. Like all the characters of *Mai und Beaflor*, Beaflor tends to act out her emotions. She is prone to deep depression as a means of coping with her situation, but is also devout. Only Jans Enikel gives a hint that his heroine does not live up to medieval standards of piety. He states that she wanted only a husband who would please her (lines 26690-91). This assertion of self-will is at odds with the ideal of a medieval Christian daughter, who, unless she wishes to remain celibate, ought not to display her own wishes actively, especially regarding marriage. The limited variation present between the four heroines stems from the personalities and goals of the authors, but after the first scenes of the attempted incestuous marriage or assault and the heroine's

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<sup>64</sup> "Peccatis meis' inquit 'exigentibus infortunii hujus calamitas mihi accidit'" (Paris 1684, 965). "On account of my sins' she said 'this calamity of being driven out befell me.'"

escape, she has little opportunity to display individual qualities because the story is not about her.

The “Constance” figure is not so much protagonist as victim. Propp notes that a person can also take the place of a lost object, for which the hero seeks;<sup>65</sup> for such characters he uses the term “hero-” or “heroine-victim” (Propp 1973, 36). The heroines of *La Manekine*, *Mai und Beafloer*, and “The Daughter of the King Russia” fit this description. Although the narrative concentrates on her movements, ATU 706 is best understood in terms of Nikiforov’s outline of an epic tale concerned with winning a bride (Nikiforov 32, 1973). The definitive question must concern not who is at the center of the narration, but rather who the pivotal actor is. Nikiforov did not distinguish between these two positions. For that reason, his tripartite division of fairy tales into “epics,” “female fairy tales,” and “neuter fairy tales” is too general, because it does not recognize interchangeable roles between the sexes. Propp’s more detailed system of analysis coupled with Vaz da Silva’s recent work on the semiotics of fairy tales (see above, 60) permit a view in which those plots normally classified as feminine tales may be treated as stories about winning brides.

### *The Initial Threat and Exile*

Since the folkloric “Constance” heroine is a passive figure, whatever personality the heroines display was grafted on by authorial intention. The actions of

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<sup>65</sup> One example among many of a lost object may be found in Afanasiev’s “Firebird and Princess Vasilisa” (Afanasiev 1975, 495-97). The hero violates the interdiction to avoid acquiring the golden feather of the firebird. Once he has done so, he must find the bird to which it belongs.

the men with whom the victim comes in contact make up the plot, even though the effects of those actions on “Constance” are the focus of the narrative. This is seen in that the first two events do not concern Joie or her 13<sup>th</sup>-century cousins at all. The first of these functions for Propp is: “One of the members of a family absents himself from the home”; with the exception of the “Life of Offa,” in the “Constance” group this is the dying mother. The synoptic “Constance” tales comprise a double structure in that the heroine leaves first from her father’s home, second from her husband’s kingdom. Most persecuted queen narratives content themselves with a single departure from home. Thus in legends of victimized women a male family member departs on a temporary basis. Just as the death of the queen opens the possibility that the father might sexually persecute his daughter in the “Constance” group, the temporary absence of Tarquinius Collatinus (“The Rape of Lucretia”) or the ugly Dietrich (“Crescentia”) allows for a crime to either be threatened or carried out against the heroine-victim. The absence of a family member signifies vulnerability and leads to the next step in the chain of events.

This is not because these tales conform to Propp’s system; as historical myth “Lucretia” lies outside his purveyance. Nevertheless, the thematic material is similar to the “Constance” group. The motif of sexual violation in “Crescentia” and “Constance” is different from “Lucretia” only in that the medieval tales feature heroines who devise tricks to escape their persecutors. The dissimilarity between the two outcomes is not so great: Lucretia commits suicide, while Crescentia and the “Constance” heroines undergo symbolic deaths by exile on the waters.

Such functional reversals may or may not have consequences for the further plot. “The Rape of Lucretia” and “Crescentia” disagree in terms of plot, but the thematic tie of sexual chastity to questions of political succession remains. Both Lucretia and Crescentia keep their virtue, but since in Christian society suicide was forbidden as a means of retaining honor the rape or seduction of Crescentia cannot take place, unless, as in *Gregorius*, the story is to become one of repentance. Hartmann’s *Gregorius*, however, is already dealing with sexual transgression as sin in a theological sense. Despite the Christian façade placed on “Crescentia,” it is more similar to the “Rape of Lucretia” in outlook. Extra-marital sex is here a matter of honor, which can only be remedied by revenge and death, not a matter of sin, which may be corrected by repentance. Needless to say, “The Rape of Lucretia” would not have been a compelling narrative if Lucretia were to accept the arguments of her relatives that not having acquiesced in mind, she remained guiltless. In Lucretia’s view, adultery is not so much a moral crime as simple pollution. That pollution is no less severe when brought about without the concession of one party.

Crescentia wishes to avoid rape or adultery at all costs, but the assumption that sexual violation by her brother-in-law is something that could not be washed away with legal arguments or even repentance pervades the tale. Hartmann von Aue makes it plain that Gregorius’s mother, even if unhappy with the situation, acquiesced to her brother. Her repentance is necessary; subsequently, Hartmann’s story is one of atonement. Penance would not be required of Crescentia or the “Constance” heroine if she were raped. Sexual transgression is avoided, as though it were a matter of

pollution, first, because the legend did not undergo the sort of theological processing to which Hartmann subjected the *Gregorius* legend, second, because without this outlook the stories would have to end as Lucretia's did. The paramount importance of family honor is an assumption shared by all of these stories.

The implication of the "Rape of Lucretia" and "Crescentia" is clear: when a male protector is absent, his wife is vulnerable. The "Clementine Recognitions" dispense with the necessity of the husband's departure. Nevertheless, absence and reunion are at the core of the plot, as only Clement remains in Rome after his father went out in search of the wife and twin sons, who had departed under threats of a sexual nature from her brother-in-law. Again, as Christian pseudobiography the relationship of the "Clementine Recognitions" to the "Constance" tales is thematic, not genetic, but the exodus of Clement's family from Rome corresponds to Propp's first function in that it leaves the protagonist with the work of searching for lost family members.

The synoptic "Constance" tales all feature the death of a queen in the place of the first function. This leaves the daughter still under the protection of a proper authority. But the synoptic tales imply that the loss of the queen had a corrupting effect on the authority of the "Constance" heroine's father. Matthew Paris excludes the death of the queen instead following Offa's journey into the wilderness. For this reason, the heroine's father is presented as a natural villain, and as such remains the villain throughout the tale, while the fathers of the synoptic tales had only temporary lapses.



Function II in Propp's system reads: "An interdiction is addressed to the *hero*" (my emphasis). This function does not engage the heroine any more than the first function. Only Philippe de Remi has the dying mother extract a promise from her husband to remain celibate unless strict conditions are met. Jans Enikel features a self-imposed interdiction in that the king states that he wants a wife only as beautiful as his daughter. The father of Beafloer and Offa's wife are dissimilar from the other lecherous kings in that they are motivated only by lust. No prohibition is set against them by an external power. Since Matthew Paris's narrative mostly follows Offa, while the tragedy involving his wife and her father occurs in the background, this feature is unsurprising. The author of *Mai und Beafloer* dispensed with an explicit interdiction, perhaps to avoid a problem that arises in *La Manekine* with the third function.

The third function depends on the second in a simple manner: "The interdiction is violated." Strictly speaking, by attempting to marry a girl identical to the mother, the King of Hungary has not violated the restrictions placed upon him by his late wife; the same holds true in Enikel's tale, because the King of Russia wishes to marry a woman as beautiful as his own daughter, namely, his own daughter. Nevertheless, the intention of the prohibition was to prevent the kings from marrying. This is an instance in which the more sophisticated style of romance over folktale has transferred the crime from violation of an arbitrary interdiction (Propp [1973, 26] gives several examples, for instance: "You dare not look into this closet" or "If Bába Jagá comes, don't you say anything, be silent") to a societal taboo. But if the

transgression committed by the hero violates a taboo wider than a fairy tale prohibition, then the second function is unnecessary; hence *Mai und Beafloer* is able to do without function II.

In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the above-described incestuous marriage proposal forms the conflict between father and daughter essential to the “Constance” plot. The result is the exile motif, and in some cases a submotif of mutilation. One form of this secondary action has received particular attention in the scholarly literature. The initial motif cluster in both the “Constance” group and the persecuted queen narratives does not vary significantly across the tales we have been discussing here: the heroine is exiled on account of an unworthy proposition by her brother-in-law or father. In some cases (*Mai und Beafloer*, “Crescentia”) the heroine is able to delay by tricking her pursuer. In other cases “the trick” consists in the heroine’s mutilating either her face (Jans Enikel) or her hands (Philippe de Remi), so that she is no longer attractive to her pursuer, or she is bodily unworthy to be the royal consort.

The loss of a hand is a frequent event in medieval literature; it is difficult to know if Philippe de Remi added the incident to his tale or whether it was part of the oral tradition connected to the “Constance” heroine. The former possibility is equally probable despite the widespread assumption that ATU 706 necessarily includes the motif of a lost hand. The common fairy tale version of the “Maiden without Hands” was likely popularized by a theater production of *La Manekine* in 1371 (MP 1880, #29: 1-88; Black 2003, 90). In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, *La Manekine* is the lone “Maiden Without Hands” version of the “Constance” group. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, *La Belle*

*Hélène* (1995), *Novella di Dionigia* and *Historia del Rey de Hungria* incorporate the severed hand motif. The first of these may be of a tradition literarily independent of *La Manekine*, since the loss of hands occurs at the exile of the heroine from her husband's court (*La Belle Hélène* LXXXV) after she had given birth to twins. The severed hand remains with one of her sons so that when she is reunited with her family she is bodily healed as well. However, these differences from *La Manekine* are insufficient to determine that *La Belle Hélène* was composed without the influence of Philippe's work, for the timing of the loss of hands could be a reaction to a problem in *La Manekine*: if the loss of a hand disqualifies Joïe from marrying her father, how is it she can marry the King of Scotland despite her mutilation? *La Belle Hélène* resolves this difficulty by pairing her mutilation with the second exile (cf. Harvey 200, 265-66, who believed *La Belle Hélène* to be under the direct influence of Philippe de Remi).

The latter two romances are under heavy influence from Philippe de Remi either directly through *Le Roman de la Manekine* or through the theatrical production of 1371. Both incorporate themes and details of Philippe's romance (Däumling 1912, 37-39), and perhaps date from after 1371. Therefore, it is possible that this motif is not of folkloric origin and that Philippe de Remi first appended the loss of a hand to the oral material.

Even if the lost hand motif had never before been used in persecuted queen tales, the mutilation of limbs seems to be a genuine folk motif loosely connected to victims of sexual abuse and exile in popular storytelling. Persecuted queens,

daughters, and wives prior to Joïe sometimes undergo mutilation of the hands. Out of grief, Clement's mother in the "Recognitions" had gnawed her hands to uselessness, thereby reducing her to the life of a beggar (*DP* 1953, 205). In the *Kaiserchronik* she is also a lame beggar (*KC*, lines 2647-48), but the text is unspecific concerning the nature and cause of her ailment; she states only that "nû ist iz chomen an daz, / daz mih daz giht zebrochen hât" <sup>66</sup> (*KC*, lines 2754-55). No mutilation is carried out against Matthew Paris's heroine, yet her father had ordered men to chop off her hands and feet and then expose her. The men charged with this duty failed to complete the order on account of her beauty; instead they abandon her in the woods. In *Digenis Akritis* (107 line 786), a connection between wounded hands and illicit sex is also found. Maximou is wounded in her right hand before losing her virginity to Digenis (and in some versions being murdered by him), who is being unfaithful to his wife.

The symbolism in this case is obvious. As a warrior, Maximou would carry a sword with her right hand. Before she can be subdued sexually, the site of her virility and her ability to engage in battle must be incapacitated. Since neither Clement's mother nor Joïe has any claim to warrior status, it is questionable whether this interpretation can be transferred to them without caveats. Osborn (1998, 212) is correct to note that the effect of mutilation is to reduce Joïe to a helpless damsel in distress (while simultaneously demonstrating her resolve), and this is equally true of Maximou and Clement's mother. But Joïe was never a warrior-maiden, nor does thinking of her hand as a castrated phallus (cf. Fenster 1982, 57) solve any problems

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<sup>66</sup> "Now it is come to this, that poison has ruined me."

because it makes the motif needlessly abstract. An economic interpretation is more pertinent. At the point in the story when Joïe stands ready with the cleaver, she is only of significance because she is an heiress. By mutilating herself she has made herself legally incompetent to rule and therefore no longer of any political importance. She cannot inherit property or power. The motif reflects the practice of blinding political opponents, for which the upper echelons of Byzantine society became famous, even if the practice was not limited to the Roman Empire. Like Clement's mother, Joïe is unable to engage in economic activity. Depriving women of their ability to support themselves independent of male control is at the heart of the motif. When the heroine-victim has been stripped of her ability to compete with her father and husband, she can be received back into the family unit. To reiterate Boswell's thesis (1980, 32), the point is to limit the privilege of women within family hierarchy (see above, 86-87).

The loss of hands that accompanies exile in *La Manekine* became in later centuries a popular variation on the themes of the "Constance" group, so much so that the type "The Father Who Wanted to Marry His Daughter," which includes *Mai und Beafloer*, is classified as a variant (ATU 706C) of "The Maiden Without Hands" (ATU 706). Be that as it may, the loss of hands does not add anything substantial to the fundamentals of the tale. It reinforces the symbolism of impotence and allows for the symmetry of the plot to be traced more fully in that the detached hand tracks the movement of Joïe throughout the tale. Mutilation, however, is secondary to exile, which is the culmination of the opening sequence of interlocking motifs: the death of

a beautiful queen, the attempted seduction of the equally beautiful or identical daughter, and her subsequent banishment. This banishment corresponds to Propp's eighth function (1973, 30): "The villain causes harm or injury to a member of a family." Propp comments: "This function is exceptionally important, since by means of it the actual movement of the tale is created. Absentation, the violation of an interdiction, delivery, the success of a deceit, all prepare the way for this function, create its possibility of occurrence, or simply facilitate its happening." It is the movement produced that is crucial, not the physical harm brought upon the heroine.

That exile over mutilation is essential to the "Constance" group is demonstrated by later versions of the tale type. The "Man of Law's Tale" uses neither of the first two motifs. It is only required that a young princess be removed from her native surroundings and be wed to a heathen king. Nevertheless, the first two moves in the plot maintain value in the symbolism of the story and in the wider range of folktales. The death of the mother and the promise she extracts from her husband that he marry only a woman identical to herself echo the mother of Cinderella, who after death assists her daughter (Thompson 1932-36, D815.1) in that the will of the mother is in both types decisive. Philippe de Remi casts the extracted promise as a means of reserving the kingdom for her daughter (Philippe de Remi, lines 128-42). Yet the motif is the inverse of Cinderella, for an unintended consequence results from the extraction of the promise, and when Joie learns of the promise from her father, she mocks it as a "fol convent," "a foolish promise" (Philippe de Remi, lines 564).

Vaz da Silva presented the “Cinderella” plot as complementary to the “Dragon Slayer” cycle. Not only does the dragon slayer act as a male Cinderella (vaz da Silva 2002, 163), but in the symbolic complex of the fairy tale the deceased mother and the dragon, a father figure, both represent older generations that must be killed and replaced by their children (vaz da Silva 2002, 167-68). Whether this is universally true of “Cinderella” and “Dragon Slayer” plots need not be discussed here. But it is useful for situating the “Constance” tale, for it is a story in which both fathers and mothers must be overcome. The result is that while the chain of the plot conforms to Propp’s outline, it does so with more than one man in the role of the hero.

This must be so, since unlike most Greek romances, where the dynamic of unfulfilled desire and reunion is played out between a couple already lawfully married, the initial desire in the “Constance” group is exerted unlawfully by the heroine’s father. Just as in Homer, jealous suitors spread doubt on Callirhoe’s chastity in the Greek romance. The “Constance” heroine’s conduct in her father’s home is not in doubt. Following this prelude, “Constance” takes up the same pattern when outside forces, like the jealous suitors in Greek romance, cast aspersions on the medieval heroine causing a temporary separation to extend for years as the king’s wife is exiled, again due to her mother-in-law’s acting against her, except in the case of Offa, where it is the heroine’s father who returns to persecute her.

### *Husband and Wife*

This brings us to the marriage of the heroine to a foreign king, which transfers the status of hero from father to husband, for just as kingship is determined by the royal daughter, so too is the position of hero within the plot. Propp's tenth function (1973, 38), "The seeker agrees to or decides upon counteraction" involves a search for something lost. But it is the "Constance" heroine who is lost, and the narrative follows her wanderings. She is not so much sought, as she is simply found.

A transfer of status between father and son-in-law occurs. That the interdiction is addressed to the father and that he violates the interdiction demonstrate that he is a protagonist, not a villain. But he trades his status like one of the two brothers of ATU 303 ("The Twins" or "Blood-Brothers"). This tale type is a version of the "Dragon Slayer" tale in which two brothers take turns in the action while the other is under an incapacitating spell (he is asleep, turned to stone or something similar). If the father begins the story as the protagonist who violates an interdiction, someone else must pick up that status, because the father drops out of the tale when his daughter moves on, only to return at the end. That the husband is a recurrence of the father (just as the twins of ATU 303 are identical and interchangeable) has been commented on at least since Rank (1912, 392-98), who considered this evidence for the heroine's sinful attraction to her father. But the question of where guilt lies misses the fundamental workings of the tale. Unlike many wondertales – mainly those from later periods – the narration of the "Constance" tales rarely focuses on retribution against the father. In *La Manekine* and *Mai und Beqflor*, he is brought



back to be forgiven and absolution is readily granted. His guilt can hardly have been forefront in the minds of the narrators, because in the synoptic tales the heroine's father does not occupy the villain's position despite his dishonorable intentions; the heroine's mother-in-law is the structural villain, and more often she is punished by life imprisonment (*La Manekine*), or summary execution (*Mai und Beafloer*). This is not so in the "Life of Offa" in which the father continues to hound his daughter in place of the mother-in-law. That narrative tradition is continued in later variations of the "Constance" tales such as Straparola's "Tebaldo." In these tales the mother-in-law either remains unmentioned or is inconsequential to the plot. Though Matthew Paris drops the King of York from his storyline after the exchanged letters incident, the father is often punished when he is the structural villain, just as may happen with the mother-in-law when she fills this role. Straparola's villain Tebaldo is tortured, quartered, and fed to dogs (Zipes 2001, 33).

Whether the father is brought back to be forgiven is not an arbitrary feature. His daughter will be reunited with her husband in any case, but when the father returns in *La Manekine* and *Mai und Beafloer*, it is for the sake of passing his kingdom on to his son-in-law. The final theme of these two romances leads to an intergenerational transmission of authority. Jans Enikel, for all his disregard of fact, cannot write a fantastic history in which a medieval Byzantine Emperor inherits the kingdoms of Rus through his wife. The Russian King is forgiven, but nothing results from his forgiveness. Matthew Paris wishes to explain why Offa could not continue the territorial expansion of his kingdom. The passing on of authority is not a theme in

his tale. The transmission of guilt throughout the generations shapes the moral of the tale.

At least in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the themes of the “Constance” group lead to intergenerational transmission of power – a matter wholly lacking in “Crescentia” and the story of “Clement” (though *The Clementine Recognitions* may be read as documenting the passing of authority from secular to spiritual institutions). The translation of political rights allies “Constance” most closely to the story of Lucretia, whose suicide spurred the men in her life to rebel against Tarquinius Superbus and found the Republic (or in the *Kaiserchronik* to replace one emperor with another).

In the folktale “Peau d’Asne” or “Catskin” (ATU 510B), when the heroine marries her prince, the tale is over. The story is interested only that the daughter who had been pursued by her father (or promised to an undesirable suitor) is properly given to a worthy husband. The “Constance” tales, however, have larger concerns; they are political stories. But the translation of authority remains incomplete until the final reunion of the royal couple. The pair is typically separated by the call to war (*MuB* 2006, lines 3879-918; Enikel, 26967-79; Matthew Paris 1641, 966), an unavoidable circumstance. Philippe de Remi (lines 2475-540) puts the blame for the heroine’s second exile at the feet of her husband, who in absence of necessity travels to France to take part in tournaments and gain worldly honor (something for which his wife has little interest, as has been seen). Despite Philippe’s inversion, it is apparent that this deed on the part of the husband constitutes the action of a hero, for function XI in Propp’s system requires the departure of the protagonist from home.

In another sense, this moment in the plot is a return to the first two functions, though only thematically. Just before the husband departs for war or tournaments, his mother leaves or is removed to an isolated district of the kingdom. Philippe de Remi has her depart voluntarily out of hatred for her daughter-in-law. In *Mai und Beaflor*, she is intentionally placed where her son believes she will be incapable of harming his wife. Jans Enikel uses a similar device for removing the mother-in-law. This action, whether voluntary or involuntary, is a functional repetition of the death of the heroine's mother. In both cases the removal of the older woman portends the exile of the younger. It may be argued of Joë's husband that he is acting against the will of his wife, and he is breaking an interdiction when he travels throughout France to tourney. However, even in *La Manekine* the prohibition is circumvented by the motif of the foolish boon. In the other tales the departure of the husband to war is necessary. The king is excused for leaving his wife and for this reason the moral failure of the husband is less explicit than that of the father. While it is possible for a story to initiate the wondertale plot at the point when the king must go to war (as in the "Life of Offa"), structurally the synoptic tales make use of this motif in the position of function XI.

Intimately linked to the absence of her protector is the resentment and persecution carried out by the heroine's mother-in-law, or in Matthew Paris her erstwhile incestuous father. Jans Enikel's condemnation of the older woman is exuberant, while Philippe de Remi allows some space for the mother-in-law to develop her wickedness. Contrary to this, *Mai und Beaflor* initially presents Mai's

mother as affable and well-disposed toward the stranger (*MuB* 2006, lines 2359-70). It is only when marriage is on the table that she turns against the heroine (lines 2641-64). By medieval standards Eliacha (the only mother-in-law of the group with a name) has good reasons for opposing the marriage. She suspects that Beafloer has been cast out to sea as punishment for a crime, a suspicion that modern psychoanalytical critics share. But the most important aspect of her argument is that Beafloer is of unknown lineage. Mai is risking the legitimacy of his children. By implication, their succession to power in Morea is at risk. While appeals to an incestuous mother-son attachment parallel to the father-daughter episode may carry some weight (cf. Harvey 1995, 399), in the context of medieval family politics the mother-in-law's concerns are normal. It is her son who, like his wife, defies conventional morality by ignoring the will of the elder generation.

The mother's expectations are in line with what is normal for family politics; the expectations of Beafloer's father are less so. Since wicked mothers-in-law and stepmothers are standard villains in folklore and literature, there is no need for her to have extraordinary motives. Her existence as mother-in-law is enough for listeners and readers to know that she is evil. This prejudice against mothers-in-law is most poignant in *Mai und Beafloer*; when Beafloer reports that Eliacha caused her suffering even though she could not know it (*MuB* 2006, line 7487; see above, 21). Ample evidence is required to demonstrate the guilt of the "Constance" heroine's father, and the texts provide this evidence in the form of his improper advances against his daughter. No substantiation is required against the mother-in-law.

As Propp noted about function XI, the introduction of the donor is a significant motivation for the hero's departure from home. In fairy tales the donor often interacts only with the hero, because it is the hero who receives the agent (often magical) that brings resolution to the story. An example of this is ATU 303A ("Brothers seek Sisters as Wives"), in which only the youngest brother meets the youngest sister who knows how to defeat the villain. Alternately, a group of potential heroes are given a task, while undertaking the task all of the potential heroes encounter the donor, but only one acts according to the donor's wishes and therefore receives his aid. In ATU 513B ("The Land and Water Ship"), all three brothers come into contact with the old man, but only the youngest is given help, because he is kind to the donor. Sometimes the donor and the villain are the same, as in ATU 310 ("Rapunzel"). Likewise, in ATU 480 ("The Kind and Unkind Girls"), a tale that, unlike the "Constance" group, features a true female protagonist, the heroine encounters a number of donors underway to a supernatural being in one subtype. But it can be seen that these donors have a different role than those in male wondertales. Their behavior is the same: they offer assistance in exchange for payment from the protagonist.

In the "Constance" stories the donor does not come into contact with the hero (the heroine's husband) while he is searching, because the focus of the narration is on the heroine. We are only told that the husband is either off searching or waiting at home until he decides to depart for Rome. At this juncture in the plot he is not at the forefront and therefore does not interact with the donor. Instead, the donor finds the

heroine washed up on a beach near Rome or out in the woods and takes her under his protection. In the rationalized world of Christian romance the donor offers no magical items; miracles are reserved for the Pope. Only Matthew Paris allows the hermit to perform a miracle by resurrecting the children of King Offa. The function of the donor is to allow the hero to find the object of his search and resolve the initial lack brought about by the first functions in the narrative chain. In the synoptic tales, this is the purpose of the Roman protectors, or in Matthew Paris, the purpose of the hermit.

### *Reunion*

When the husband arrives at the residence of his wife (either in Rome or with the hermit), he is tested by the donor as per function XIII (Propp 1973, 42). Joïe in *La Manekine* had told her protector that she had reason to fear the man he had taken as guest (Philippe de Remi, lines 6179-88). But after the King of Scotland tells of his suffering, the host is convinced that he poses no danger to Manekine; he reunites the couple. Similar tests occur in most of the texts. King Offa (Matthew Paris 1684, 967) tells the hermit how long ago he had found his wife in the woods and all that had happened afterwards. The hermit then joins the couple again. *Mai und Beafloer* features the most active donor, in that Roboal and his wife Benigna had been aiding Beafloer since the beginning. When Mai comes to Rome, he resides in the house of Roboal where Beafloer lives. Roboal allows Beafloer to see Mai on the condition that she does not reveal herself (*MuB* 2006, lines 8584-610). Roboal engineers the

reunion of Mai, Beaflo, and her father the emperor before the Pope. Jans Enikel's donor is the least active. He protects the heroine until her husband and father arrive in Rome (Jans Enikel, lines 27131-60). Somehow the Pope becomes aware of the queen's arrival in Rome (lines 27235-36). When the Pope hears the confession of the Greek king (lines 27279-80), he brings the family together on his own initiative.

Since the husband passes the test, functions XIV – XVIII are omitted, though it is possible that function XVIII "The Villain is Defeated" is manifested in the final death of the mother-in-law, who is either murdered by her enraged son (*MuB* 2006, lines 6921-23), dies in captivity (Philippe de Remi, lines 8493-96), or is forgotten (Jans Enikel has her imprisoned, after which the reader hears nothing of her; Offa's father-in-law, who plays the villain throughout the tale, is never punished). Nevertheless, after the husband withstands the trial by demonstrating that he is the "Constance" heroine's husband and that he poses no threat to her safety, "the initial misfortune or lack is liquidated" (function XIX). The reunion of the heroine with her husband occurs in all cases under the auspice of religious authority (the Pope in the synoptic tales, a hermit in the *Life of Offa*). The blessing the couple receives from God contrasts to the secular, courtly love they had initially pursued after first being married. Again it may be seen that the husband of the "Constance" heroine is not unlike her father. Philippe de Remi (lines 1521-676) and the author of *Mai und Beaflo* (2006, lines 2486-513) both stress that the marriage was initially undertaken because the characters were in love. In these scenes the purity of the hero and heroine are emphasized, but the men are described as lovesick, which implies

improper motivation towards matrimony. While the mother-in-law is concerned only with family prestige, the young people are infatuated with one another. Both perspectives, in comparison to the ideal church marriage produced at the end, cause the separation of the couple.

Whether or not the father is brought back as part of the reunion is of relevance only in that when he returns to the narrative, his purpose is to bequeath his kingdom to his son-in-law. Both *La Manekine* and *Mai und Beafloer* let the husbands of the “Constance” heroine inherit larger kingdoms through marriage and the retirement of the father-in-law (The King of Hungary and the King of Rome). In Jans Enikel’s truncated version, the husband enjoys no enlargement of his kingdom for the reasons stated above. Unlike the other authors, Enikel is uninterested in connecting his story to any larger events. It is one more interesting occurrence in his string of pseudo- and quasi-historical anecdotes. Offa’s kingdom likewise does not become larger on account of his marriage. In fact, he suffers setbacks because he does not fulfill his promise to found a monastery.

This close to Matthew’s tale belies the fundamental structural difference between the synoptic tales and the version of Matthew Paris. In the “Life of Offa”, the heroine’s father is never in the position of the hero. His actions against his daughter are recounted as a flashback, thus preventing the incest episode from taking the initial narrative position. The heroine’s father is consistently the villain, while Offa is consistently the hero; the tale begins and ends with him, just as the synoptic tales begin and end with deeds of the heroines’ fathers and husbands. This situation



explains why Offa's wife is so colorless. She contributes nothing to Offa's successes. She provides only the context in which Offa's failings are manifested. Paris emphasizes that Offa had brought peace to a troubled country and that had he only given proper thanks to God, he could have continued to unite the island, taking his wife's native kingdom and continuing the war against the Picts. But because her father and her husband cannot be reconciled as in the other tales, there is no continuity between her father's kingdom, and that of her husband. Joë and Beaflo not only contribute to the size of the kingdom, they bring about a political healing. This healing is especially poignant in *Mai und Beaflo* in which a Greek ruler (probably a Frankish crusader, though he is never referred to as anything other than a Greek) becomes the Roman emperor, and his son becomes the king of Greece (one might say, the Eastern Emperor). Contrary to Mai's implied secular reunification of the empire, Philippe de Remi demonstrated a Roman-Christian expansion at the end of his tale. Three kingdoms in the periphery of Roman influence (be it the first or second Rome), and often hostile to the Empire, were brought under one Christian king under the tutelage of the Pope.

In the next chapter the origins of the tale will be looked at more closely, and I will attempt to offer some answers to Perry's fundamental question: to what purpose were these versions of the "Constance" group created?

### **Section III**

#### The Historical Context

In a philosophical missive, Novalis wrote that many superstitions of daily life rest on a game of interpretation dependent on an observation of an inverse connection: "...so for instance, *bad dreams* mean good fortune – rumours of one's death mean long life – a hare running across the path means ill fortune. Almost all the superstition of the common people rests on interpretations of this game" (Novalis 1997, 24). Novalis speaks here of accepted interpretations of natural events, but the habits of interpretation play out in certain patterns of folk narrative. Through a mythological, or functional, analysis of the "Persecuted Heroine" within history, a similar game can be understood to be found in the 13<sup>th</sup>-century "Constance" tales, because fairy tales are often manifestations of the same ways of thinking described by Novalis: catastrophe in one situation leads to victory under altered circumstances; the mistreated protagonist becomes greater than his or her victimizers.

Every fairy tale has set roles that need to be filled, but what sort of character occupies each role can change. The cast of characters and their organization can be of vital significance. The principal difference between the "Life of Offa" and the synoptic tales is the part played by the father of the heroine. Because Offa's father-in-law plays the role of villain throughout the tale, no connection exists between the two; the synoptic tales cast the hero's mother as villain, permitting the heroine to forge an association between the father and son-in-law.

In this section, I attempt to close with a conjecture on the historical motivation behind the appearance of the "Constance" group. This requires that we understand the reasons behind each author's composition of his own version because these four

are playing a game with well-known types and narrative structures. However, interpreting fairy tales, or any work of art, presents difficulties:

“The artist has left us a legacy – a piece of music, a sculpture, a tale, a drama or whatever it may be – but has not explained in so many words what it means. We have to decide that for ourselves, and we have no means of proving our answers conclusively right or wrong. In theory, the storytellers themselves might provide us with some sort of answers, but it is difficult to elicit such “metafolkloristic” statements and they may be unreliable...” (Holbek 1986, 24).

The attempt to divine a deceased author’s intentions is by nature a speculative enterprise. But purpose, be it aesthetic or ideological, is evident in any piece of writing and all our authors write with intention. However, the meaning of a work of art is the same as its expression, except in so far as the artist falls short of his plans. Tolstoy (1953, 268-69) wrote of *Anna Karenina*: “If I wished to say in words all that I intended to express in the novel, I would have to write from the very beginning the same novel that I had already written” (translation in Propp 1984, 78). Modern authors, in contrast to ancient and medieval writers, have abundant opportunity to comment in word and writing on their own work. With some notable exceptions this is not typically the case for pre-modern authors. If we believe Tolstoy, no explication is necessary, because what is written is written, and we can accept that an artist of his caliber is competent to accurately convey his message; whether the reader is reciprocally competent is another question. This is the dilemma of modern interpreters of medieval tales. It is between the author and the contemporary consumer of his work that the tale-telling game is played. Before an assessment of

the author's message can be made, it must be assumed that we can project ourselves into the place of a 13<sup>th</sup>-century reader or listener, while simultaneously keeping a wider critical view of the plot's history.

The stories examined above are of relatively simple organization and seem to be not too far removed from the oral tradition. Nevertheless, contemporary interpreters have need of tools and assumptions to make up for their shortcomings. The most significant assumption evident here is that analyzing the stories as folklore reveals how the author adjusted his source material, because as Propp (1984, 26) wrote of folkloric narrative,

The artistic logic of the narrative does not coincide with the logic of causal thought. It is the action that is primary, not the reason for it. In comparing variants of the same plot, we discover that the motives for identical actions can be very different... Logical motivations are introduced later in history, and there can be no doubt that a well-motivated narrative arose or was developed after a poorly motivated or unmotivated one.

Propp believed that the content of a wondertale "is a relic" (1984, 120). In his estimation, the rationalizations introduced in the later history of folktales do not alter the conservative nature of the plot, which has no connection to contemporary reality. But if wondertale plots were unchangeably traditional no such tales would ever appear as literature because writers would never be able to make sense of them. The use of folk plots in histories and romances imbues those motifs with new meanings. Under Propp's system the only manner in which one can explain meaningful wondertales is to classify them as myths. But even if the direct oral sources of the authors were not entirely without motivation, stories of persecuted daughters had a

different purpose in folk culture. A second major assumption is more a hope: that an understanding of 13<sup>th</sup>-century historical context can replace detailed knowledge of the inner life of the authors or even a superficial awareness of their identities.

It is possible, I believe, to find a direction in which to point our analysis, such that we too can participate in the literary game of the author. Modern readers of the “Constance” group and the “Maiden Without Hands” wondertales tend to be most fascinated by the introduction: the attempted incestuous marriage, self-mutilation, and the resolve displayed on behalf of the heroine. As demonstrated in the writings of Rank and Dundes, these concerns often devolve into a question of where guilt lies. Yet this first motif cluster makes up only a portion of story. Engaging the “Constance” group in a more holistic fashion requires overcoming this imbalanced approach. Medieval literature, and romance especially, tends to be utopian in bearing. The results of the game, the resolution of the initial conflict, and the implied future of the *dramatis personae* are where the full significance of the story is revealed.

## Chapter 6

### The Historical Purpose of the Individual Versions

In the introduction to his study of the mythic status of fairy tales in modern culture, Zipes wrote: “Obviously, we cannot trace the ‘real’ origins of fairy tales to their roots. But we can gain a sense of their historical transformation as genre and how they become mythified or are associated with myths in different historical periods” (Zipes 1994, 7). The four examples from the “Constance” cycle studied in the preceding chapters are not fairy tales in the modern, literary sense, for the European *Kunstmärchen* had yet to be invented (see above, 62-63). But like much medieval literature, they have roots in oral culture; the “Constance” tales are literary manifestations of a plot, or one might more generally say a cluster of motifs put to different uses in different contexts. The outline of the story must have been in wide circulation in 13<sup>th</sup>-century Europe for it to have been recorded independently in four instances, though this version of the “persecuted heroine” plot is unlikely to predate 1200.

The contents of the unrecorded tales are inaccessible, but an argument about the nature and purpose of the sources may be plausible. Without doubt, a wide range of variation was present, though certain points are consistently included across the literary expressions of the “Constance” material. Most prominently this includes the initial motif of the incestuous father. The question then arises that if that motif, or any other, is found in all or most adaptations, did the author include it because it was part of the well-known story, or because it served his purpose in composing his

version of the plot? A conclusive answer to this question is impossible. However, since part of my task is to analyze the uses of the written manifestations of the “Constance” group, it is important to consider criteria for determining which aspects of each narration stem from the folk tradition and which were devised by the authors to support their purpose or artistic vision. Some motifs fall into both categories. A prominent example would be the advances of the father against his daughter.

The account of attempted incestuous marriage (or rape) seen in the first four versions of the “Constance” story is a distinctive variation on the themes of that plot. Though the incest motif is not peculiar to the 13<sup>th</sup>-century, it is unnecessary for the development of the tale-type in later centuries. Trevet, Chaucer, and Gower have no need to chase their heroine from home by paternal abuse. Chaucer’s Custance is given peaceably to a Syrian prince who has promised to become a Christian for her sake (Chaucer, *Man of Law’s Tale*, 90.204-32; the tales by Trevet and Gower may be found in *Sources and Analogues of the Canterbury Tales* [2005]). Throughout her travels the 14<sup>th</sup>-century “Constance” heroine brings Christian salvation with her. Since the 13<sup>th</sup>-century “Constance” heroine remains within Latin Christian territory (even when she originates in Rus), the conversion of heathens is not at stake. It is unnecessary for the 14<sup>th</sup>-century “Constance” (Custance in Chaucer’s language) to be persecuted at home, because she acts as a means of mitigating the facts of Islamic military (and perhaps cultural) superiority. As Heng (2003, 188) noted of the 14<sup>th</sup>-century “Constance” stories, they serve to alleviate the failure of the Crusades. After the Latin kingdoms of Outremer fell (and one might add the demise of the Latin



Empire of Constantinople to this statement), it became crucial for western Christians to imagine that the Muslims, who defeated the Latins on the battlefield, could be conquered and converted by other means. In the later “Constance” tales, the conquest was undertaken by love.

Though the motif of unfulfilled incest appears in all 13<sup>th</sup>-century versions of the “Constance” group, most likely it was only one possible motif among many available to the authors. Next to questions surrounding individual motifs, the primary difficulty concerns the purpose of the tales. If the earliest “Constance” tales do not serve to affirm the pre-eminence of Christianity over Islam and paganism, what do they do? No single answer will suffice; each version requires individual attention.

I begin at the end with Jans Enikel, for his adaptation of the folktale is in certain respects the most unusual, even though it belongs to the synoptic versions. The plot does not deviate significantly from that of *La Manekine* and *Mai und Beafloer*, but the geographic stage on which the tale is played out, the context, and conclusion of the anecdote reveal much about Enikel’s purpose when he included the “Daughter of the King of Russia” in his *Weltchronik*.

Jans Enikel’s tale is the one 13<sup>th</sup>-century version of “Constance” which features a heroine not from Latin Christianity but from the Russian East. However, as pointed out, within the confines of the story, no indication is given that the writer is aware of the schism; throughout the tale Enikel assumes that Russia and Greece accept papal authority. However, the section following the “Constance” tale makes it clear that Enikel knows of the schism between the Roman and Eastern Churches (see

above, 28-29). If a plausible, if not conclusive, answer can be given to why Enikel chose to initiate his tale in Russia, that will prove to be key to understanding Enikel's intentions behind including this story in his larger work.

Using a prose version of Enikel's composition as an example, the anonymous editor of *Mai und Beaflo* argued that the origins of the "Constance" heroine are a matter of sheer randomness (*MuB* 1974, IX). Berkov (1964, 308) discussed the account as a folktale specially associated with Russia and proposed that Enikel's version shares a source with Pushkin's *Tale of the Tsar Saltan* (Pushkin 1947). Neither of these scholars addressed Enikel's views of Russia as expressed in his discourse on Christian nations; nor did they consider the diplomatic conditions between Latin and Eastern Christians during Enikel's life. The period in which Enikel wrote was one of increasing hostility between the Orthodox and Western Churches. Events of 1054 formalized the alienation of East and West, but the Churches considered themselves to be one long after that date. By the 13<sup>th</sup> century the split had been hardened by, for instance, the sack of Constantinople by crusaders, and the intermittent warfare between the Teutonic Knights and Russian forces in the Baltic regions (cf. Urban 2003, 93-98). Throughout the 12<sup>th</sup> century marriages had been contracted between the nobility of the West and Russia, but by Enikel's day such weddings had ceased (Selart 2001, 152). The reason is simple. By the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Westerners sources commonly depict Byzantines to be insufficiently Christian, if not in some specific way heretical (Runciman 2002, 219). Enikel is a clear exception to this general statement, but he could not have been

unique. As a patrician of Vienna his view, and the views of others of his class, are likely to be underrepresented in the historical record. The concerns of a merchant are not those of an aristocrat-warrior or churchman.

Despite all this, the split was relevant to Enikel; in his day the separation of the churches was a current, ongoing event – only barely a set state of affairs. His story of the exiled Russian princess had contemporary meaning for him as a representation of recent East-West alienation. Understanding the story of the Russian Princess in this manner may explain further why Enikel's tale lacks the broader, optimistic significance of the other "Constance" tales. Enikel's characters are antiheroic. The nameless princess is persecuted by her father. She arrives in Greece (recall what Enikel thinks of the Greeks [see above, 29]) where a diabolical mother-in-law circumvents her feckless son's attempt to protect his wife. The husband, unlike the duped husbands of other "Constance" heroines, personally orders that his wife be exiled. Philippe de Remi, the author of *Mai und Beaflor*, and Matthew Paris all include a second intercepted letter in order to exonerate the king. Eventually, the heroine finds her way to a Pope who conspicuously performs no miracles (as his counterparts in other "Constance" tales do) and who earlier had been willing to allow the unlawful wedding to proceed in exchange for lucre. There she and her husband reunite and return to Greece. The gains of her adventures are personal, not societal.

Compare this anticlimax to the blithe conclusions of *La Manekine* and *Mai und Beaflor*, in which political advancements are made for the heroines' husbands, and one sees that Jans Enikel must have thought more deeply about this story than

first appearance would suggest. Berkov (1964, 305) believed that Enikel's reference to the Rhine implies that he borrowed his material essentially unaltered from some locale along that river. That Enikel knew of the story from a western source is an unproblematic inference from the evidence. But Enikel's succinct manner and jaded view of spiritual and secular authority are at odds with the mainstream of "Constance" narratives, which also have their roots in oral narrative. That aspect of the Russian Princess's story is Enikel's design. Though strictly speaking, this anecdote of Enikel's literally wants for historicity, literarily the tale comments on history.

Enikel's version of the "Constance" plot differs from the remaining three 13<sup>th</sup>-century accounts in that his tale mythifies (to borrow Zipes's term) something Enikel views as negative: the schism between the Eastern and the Western Church. The ending of the "Daughter of the King of Russia" is likely an alteration Enikel made to the story. It cannot be coincidental that *La Manekine*, and *Mai und Beafloer* conclude with a glorious political event, while Matthew Paris inverts the ending to depict a profound disappointment. Each of the three heroines confers or takes away authority. Enikel's heroine does nothing of political significance. Jans Enikel follows the same pattern as Philippe de Remi and the Austrian Romance but concludes without any shift in the status of the heroine or her husband. Only Matthew Paris's account of King Offa stands out as significantly deviant from the pattern of events set by *La Manekine* in the 1230s. The remainder of this chapter endeavors to account for the role the "Constance" heroine plays in conferring power. In this respect *La Manekine*

and *Mai und Beaflo*r are in agreement, and, as such, are prototypical for the 13<sup>th</sup> century. As an arbiter of power between men, Joie and Beaflo are not alone, for in all stories discussed in the Chapters 4 and 5 (Lucretia et al.), it is a persecuted queen who plays a decisive role in a power transaction between two men.

The oldest tale discussed here that makes use of the heroine as intermediary of power is the “Rape of Lucretia.” Lucretia’s role is striking when compared to the typical heroine-mother figure. To pick an example set further back in Roman history, which is nevertheless similar to many hero stories, Rhea Silva served unwittingly to give birth to the founder of Rome, after which she was disposed of<sup>67</sup> (Livy, 9). Likewise, Lucretia did not outlive her usefulness to the foundation tale; but her primary role is not that of mother, but rather of virtuous wife. The difference between the two roles lies in that the mother of a hero can be passively virtuous. Like Joie (see above, 107), she is significant for who she is, not what she does. Rhea Silva did nothing proactively: she was raped and gave birth. Whether divine rape is an issue or not, other heroine-mothers are similarly inactive. The Mother of Christ did nothing but passively accept the will of God (Luke 1:39). The same may be said of Gregorius’s mother, who chose not to resist her brother for the sake of honor (Hartmann von Aue 2004b, lines 385-90). The case of the Holy Sinner’s mother is special in that on account of the legend’s preoccupation with sin and penance, the question of the mother’s intention must be taken into account. Rhea Silva, the Virgin Mary, or nearly any other mother of a hero, need only be of noble pedigree. The

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<sup>67</sup> Livy (1.3) reports only that she was imprisoned, but presumably thereafter she would have been buried alive according to the traditional custom of unchaste vestals.

legend of Rhea Silva holds that she was not at fault for what Mars did to her, but it is of little importance. What matters is that Romulus's lineage can be traced back to the kings of Alba Longa on one side, and to Mars on the other. As a person, Rhea Silva is peripheral; her punishment is an afterthought.

The loss and restoration of Lucretia's honor mirrors the rape and punishment of Rhea Silva. Unlike her predecessor, Lucretia's intention and will are vital for the transition from monarchic to republican government. Her words and actions provoke her male relatives to overthrow Tarquinius Superbus and found the Republic. Many, though not all, of the heroine stories discussed in the preceding chapters raise feminine honor as the arbiter of power, not exclusively in the function of heiresses as Schlauch argued (1927, 44-45), but as a wronged woman. The crimes committed against the heroine are not necessarily linked thematically to the outcome of the story. Why must Rhea Silva be raped? The story answers that because the usurping king of Alba Longa feared potential competitors he made Rhea Silva a Vestal Virgin, hence prohibiting her from bearing children. But the story does not explain why the founder of Rome could not be born as legitimate offspring. By placing the eponymous hero of the city with one foot in divinity and nobility and one foot in outlawry, Romulus is granted independence from his kin, just as Rome is distanced from the alleged parent city. The rape and execution of Rhea Silva is necessary to give Rome an ancient history.

With the exception of Jans Enikel, the authors of the 13<sup>th</sup>-century "Constance" stories make use of a similar process. Joïe, Beafloer, and Offa's wife serve both as

link to and means of dissociation from the heroine's father. The violence committed against the heroine is mitigated in the Middle Ages, because the theological pretension of female spiritual virtue and forgiveness offer an alternative to death. She is exiled and sometimes mutilated, but the heroine's life is preserved since Christian forgiveness allows father and daughter to be reconciled. In the ancient world, forgiveness was not a literary possibility. The heroine had to die for the sake of the new establishment. Romulus and Remus are allied with their uncle in that it is in the interests of all three to see Rhea Silva punished for the sake of family honor. In a similar fashion, Lucretia is of little use to the Republic alive.

The "Rape of Lucretia" differs from its Christian counterparts in that Lucretia makes use of suicide to regain honor, while actual death is unnecessary in Christian texts though extreme violence may still accompany the exile. The story of Clement's mother in the "Clementine Recognitions" can be analyzed as a Christian answer to the "Rape of Lucretia." A similar situation is at hand: a noble woman is threatened by her brother-in-law. However, instead of acquiescing under threats to her honor (recall that Lucretia's attacker threatened to shame her after death) she chooses to flee, is shipwrecked, and is reduced to the most ignominious depths imaginable in the ancient world, with the exception of slavery. She becomes a crippled beggar in a strange land, where she has no family connections. Hence, like Lucretia, she is gravely dishonored, though not sexually, and therefore not permanently. Clement's mother is a pagan until her encounter with St. Peter; any actualization of the initial sexual threat would end the story because as a pagan she would be compelled to

mimic Lucretia in response to an irreversible loss of dignity. In contrast to Lucretia, Clement's mother is redeemed by the miraculous intervention of God through St. Peter. The moral of the tale is clear: patience and faith lead to a restoration of family and honor, and hence are preferable to suicide.

The story of Clement's parents, like Matthew Paris's "Life of Offa", is subordinate to a larger narrative, which cannot easily accommodate an account of political succession. This is true also in the *Kaiserchronik*, which attempted with little success to fit the Clementine plot into the narration of the emperorship of Claudius. The *Kaiserchronik* casts Clement's father Faustinianus as the brother of the Emperor Claudius.<sup>68</sup> Nevertheless, the "Clementine Recognitions" are about a transfer of power not between family members as in the *Kaiserchronik* or in *La Manekine* and *Mai und Beafloer* but between the secular state and the Christian Church. Clement claims that his family is descended from Julius Caesar, though this contradicts the facts of Caesar's life and the subsequent history of the Julio-Claudians. The point, though ahistorical, is to establish Clement's family as credible representatives of the Roman ruling class. The passing of their allegiance to the Christian Church is the subject of the "Clementine Recognitions." The overarching goal is similar to that of the *Kaiserchronik*: to stand up the Christian Church as a plausible and logical successor to the secular power of Rome.

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<sup>68</sup> The historical Claudius obtained the throne because he was the one of the few descendants of Augustus remaining. Had he had any living brothers, one of them certainly would have become emperor before him.



Clement's mother Faustiniana does not play the central part in the tale; no conversion but her own depends on her. Unlike Lucretia, her suffering is not the vehicle through which revolution is obtained. Contrary to this, it can be inferred from the legend of Lucretia that had Sextus Tarquinius never transgressed the law, the Republic would never have been founded. No compelling reason exists to think that Clement's family could not have become Christians if the family had not broken up, other than the principle that the dispossessed make for vulnerable targets of conversion. The romance of Clement lacks the thematic interconnectedness of Lucretia's story, because while the dispersion of the family supplies the context for the successive acceptances of Christ and provides some clichéd surprises, the initial threat does not lead inexorably to the final outcome, the way that the crime of Sextus Tarquinius brings about revolution. But Lucretia is the exception.

"Crescentia" wins back some thematic unity in that the miraculous healings she performs are given by God as a result of her suffering. In the *Kaiserchronik*, however, there are no revolutions. "Crescentia" ends as all anecdotes in that chronicle end. The narrator moves on to the next emperor. The "Constance" tales, in contrast, mirror "The Rape of Lucretia." First, in both cases a family member is absent as Propp's scheme demands. No explicit interdictions need be proclaimed (though Philippe de Remi and Jans Enikel provide them out of fidelity to their sources) because in both plots the crime is without doubt wrong. When Lucretia and the "Constance" heroine are threatened, Lucretia reacts by submitting for fear of shame. "Constance" adheres to a Christian view of honor and sin and does not

submit. She cannot, therefore, so easily be taken out of the picture. But if “The Rape of Lucretia” explains the founding of the Roman Republic, if the story of Clement describes the conversion of the Roman upper class, and if those two along with “Crescentia” in the *Kaiserchronik* demonstrate a progression of female virtue within the context of the Germanification of the Empire, to what ends were the “Constance” tales composed?

The quest for an original should not distract us from dealing with the tales as they were recorded. Nevertheless, explanations of why each tale was composed may aid in discovering common ground between the four earliest “Constance” tales. After Enikel’s version, the clearest constant across the tales is a concern with royal or imperial succession and expansion. Since, like the “Daughter of the King of Russia,” the episode is part of a coherent history with an explicit purpose, Matthew Paris’s intention in making use of the persecuted queen premise should be dealt with before the remaining synoptic versions.

Paris builds the story up to a climax in which Offa promises to build a monastery but fails to do so and is therefore punished. The persecuted queen story prefaces an explanation of England’s early disunity. However, any number of situations could have led Offa to promise a monastery. On the face of it, the failure to make good on his vow has little to do with his wife, though were the anecdote to end on a positive note in which one of Offa’s sons succeeds the throne of a well-managed kingdom, this would necessarily be at least in part thanks to the woman who bore those sons. Offa’s lineage does continue. His wife did her part. Nevertheless, after

the restoration of the royal family, Paris left no doubt that it was the fault of his wife that her husband had drifted into sloth. The author arranged for the contrast to be clear at the start of his tale: Offa initiated his reign as a virtuous monk-king, who laughed off marriage until his magnates left him no choice (Matthew Paris 1684, 964). Even though Offa took as near perfect a bride as possible, the only difference between his state of virtue and state of vice was his marital condition. “Post victorias enim à Domino sibi collatas, amplexibus et ignaviæ necnon avaritiæ plùs æquo indulxit. Prosperitas enim sæcularis, animos, licèt viriles, solet frequenter effæminare” (1685, 968).<sup>69</sup> The embraces of his wife made Offa soft. By the standards of his day, Matthew was not especially misogynistic (cf. Reader 1999, 154), and this retelling of the “Constance” tale need not be interpreted as hostile to women, though Reader (1999, 155) notes, he had a tendency to transplant “male sins onto female shoulders” as he does here. Offa’s wife was virtuous and self-effacing. The erstwhile celibate monarch is not made effeminate by the woman as much as by marriage itself. In his “Constance” tale Matthew addresses what he sees as the paradox of worldly power. Every king must produce offspring; yet the married state corrupts the exercise of proper authority and statecraft. The solution is to support monasticism, yet because Offa fails to do so, his reign does not fulfill its promise.

Among the four 13<sup>th</sup>-century writers of “Constance” tales, Matthew was the most educated. It stands to reason that his version would be the furthest removed from folk culture. But if the basic function of the tale in Matthew’s account of

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<sup>69</sup> “After the victory given to him by God, he [Offa] indulged more contentedly in embraces and idleness, even avarice. Success in the world can often emasculate a manly spirit” (my translation).

English history is kept in mind, we can see that the majority of the narrative is superfluous to his intentions. The vital aspects of the tale for Matthew are the failure to build a monastery, which is the result of marriage and crisis. The nature of this crisis and how the marriage came about are not vital features. For that reason, it can be assumed that the following motifs in Offa's biography did not originate with Matthew, but with his source (be it a lost literary work or an oral tale): 1) hunter separated from party in storm, 2) the discovery of abandoned princess, 3) the incestuous advances of princess's father, 3) the marriage of king with abandoned princess, 4) the call to war during pregnancy, 5) continued persecution of princess by father, 6) second abandonment, 7) chance reunion of family. Other features likely originated with Matthew because these motifs work towards the thematic purpose of the author: 1) the hermit who guided Offa and princess out of woods, 2) Offa's initial reluctance to marry, 3) the hacking to bits of Offa's children and their resurrection by hermit, 4) the promise to found a monastery, and the reasons for and results of failing to fulfill the vow. All of these features are vital to Matthew's intentions. That alone does not disqualify them as folklore. The first list of motifs constitutes the plot's backbone, while the second is a list of details, or allomotifs of events in the synoptic tales. The first two events in the former list are common in fairytales even if they are lacking in the other "Constance" stories. They need not be Matthew's invention. Comparison to the synoptic "Constance" tales will help clarify what originated from the authors, and what is common to all tales.

*La Manekine* stands alone as a romance with little external framework to aid in interpretation. Unlike the “Life of Offa,” it is not embedded in a larger history. Without the context of a historical progression it is more difficult to determine what Philippe de Remi wished to accomplish with the composition of his story. What the author says of his reasons is of only marginal use. He concludes the romance with some unremarkable Christian moralizing: “N’il n’est riens que Dix hee tant / Comme le fol desesperant; / Car icil qui se desespoire, / Il samble quë il voelle croire / Que Diex n’ait pas tant de pooir / Qu’il puist alegier son doloir. / Mout est fox qui en a redout, / Car Dix puet bien restorer tout, / Toutes pertes et tous tormens.”<sup>70</sup> But Joïe was not only restored to her former position; unlike the sufferings of Offa’s wife, hers resulted in positive outcomes. Joïe’s achievement is the unification of three peripheral kingdoms (Hungary, Scotland, and Armenia) under a single monarch with the blessing of the Roman Pontiff.

If *La Manekine* is analyzed on the same terms as the “Life of Offa,” a similar pattern emerges. The folkloric plot is constant, while the details vary. But the details tell us why Philippe de Remi wrote the story. Since they correspond to other steps in “Constance” tales or because they are well-known folktale motifs, the following plot elements may be judged to precede Philippe de Remi’s penning of his romance: 1) queen dies, 2) king is restrained by promise in his choice of second wife, 3) king wishes to marry his daughter Joïe, 4) Joïe flees on the water, 5) and arrives in foreign

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<sup>70</sup> “There is nothing that God hates so much / As the despairing fool; / For if someone despairs, / It seems as if he wants to believe / That God does not have so much power / That he can relieve his suffering. / He who doubts this is a great fool, / For God can well restore everything, All losses and all afflictions...” (translation from Sargent-Baur 1999).

country where she 6) marries local king, 7) king departs, 8) heroine gives birth in his absence, 9) forged letter tells of monstrous birth, 10) second letter orders execution of queen 11) resulting in a second exile, and 12) arrival in a third country, 13) husband arrives in Rome and family is reunited, so that 14) Joïe and her husband ascend to higher power. Some differences with the “Life of Offa” I have not classified as originating from the author because they are likely both parts of a diverse oral tradition. For instance, no compelling reason exists to believe that Philippe de Remi or Matthew Paris would have altered the specifics of the flight/abandonment motif for their own purpose. Whether the heroine finds herself in the woods or on the sea is not of vital importance. On some level both symbolize death. The following motifs probably originated with Philippe: 1) the romantic love (contrary to simple lust) of father for daughter, 2) Joïe’s self-mutilation (see above, 105-6), 3) her husband’s quest for chivalrous glory in France (as opposed to a call to real war), 4) the widower Senator with whom Joïe lodges, 5) the arrival of her lost hand in Rome, its reattachment and the sacramental consumption of the sturgeon.

Most significant are the mutilation and healing of Joïe, alongside her husband’s decision to tourney. The replacement of a call to war with the search for glory on the jousting circuit places the blame for Joïe’s second exile at the feet of her husband. The contrast between the worldly glories he gained in France and the spiritual glory his wife earned in Rome is the axis on which the moral of the story hangs. His arrival in Rome after seeking honor in France signals a shift in his disposition to power. In Rome, for instance, he agrees to live by the senator’s

admonition to abstain from intercourse until after Easter (Philippe de Remi, lines 6637-46), whereas earlier he had tricked his wife into indulging his courtly pursuits. The result of this change of heart is the ascendance of Joïe and her husband to rule over three kingdoms. By living by the laws of the Church the couple earns God's blessing over their regime. This outcome is nothing more than the flipside of Offa's disobedience. The crucial difference is that the King of Scotland was changed for the better by his wife (Joïe herself does not change), while Offa was changed for the worse.

Why this outcome was significant to Philippe de Remi is problematic. But the juxtaposition of Hungary, Scotland, and Armenia against the other two locations that play a role in the plot, France and Rome, can give some clues. All three of the kingdoms united by Joïe and her husband are assigned exotic or even barbaric features,<sup>71</sup> which contrast with the centers of secular and ecclesiastical cultures. Through the restoration of Joïe to her husband and the abdication of her father in favor of her husband these countries increased in civility relative to France and Rome. This is most poignant in Hungary, where the would-be incestuous king no longer reigns, and in Armenia, where civil strife is replaced by the order imposed by Joïe's husband. In the final tour of Scotland, it is only mentioned that the king ordered the land as he saw fit, as though things were somehow not quite correct beforehand (Philippe de Remi, lines 8505-06, consider also the quasi-pagan festival taking place upon Joïe's initial arrival); the transformation of Scotland is less pronounced but no

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<sup>71</sup> These exotic or barbaric traits are as follows: the Hungarian King wants to marry his daughter, the Scots take part in strange religious festivals, and Armenia is racked by anarchy and civil war.

less significant. In the course of events the marginal kingdom becomes the progenitor of a great royal line.

In that sense, a civilizing process is described in *La Manekine* that both raises up Scotland, Hungary, and Armenia, and contrasts the seat of courtly culture with the center of Christian authority. Though the nature of this civilizing process is elusive, it fits with Norbert Elias's (1994) vision of civilization and the centralization of power. What part Joïe and her suffering played in this process is unclear. This is not to say that the tale is ambiguous; the events leading up to the close of the story are plain. The restored identity of Joïe as the daughter of an Armenian princess and Hungarian king bestows the king of Scotland with claims over those other two realms. Joïe's role as heiress in all this is unambiguous; it is the importance of this outcome to the author that requires explanation. All three countries were already Christian; it is not a matter of demonstrating the superiority of Christianity over paganism, as is the case in *La belle Hélène* or *The Man of Law's Tale*. Nor should the process be identified with courtly culture. In *La Manekine* a lust for glory in court activities is at fault for drawing the king away from his wife in her time of need. This version of the husband's absence constitutes Philippe de Remi's peculiar criticism of courtly activities (cf. Harvey 1995, 402). *Mai und Beafloer* applauds the worldly pursuits of chivalry, while issues of courtliness do not figure into the accounts of Jans Enikel and Matthew Paris. It can be said that this critique of the court and its activities is relevant to Philippe's overarching goals, because it is his innovation. Yet Philippe is only incidentally concerned with criticism of societal mores. Instead, his attention



focuses on the establishment of a model of kingship and marriage. The “happily ever after” conclusion of *La Manekine* emphasizes the royal lineage and good stewardship established by Joïe and her husband.

While Philippe’s model of ideal marriage finds itself paired with a critique of chivalrous culture, and the final papally sanctioned marital state contrasts to the failed love match that was rent asunder by the machinations of the queen-mother, his concept of marriage was not reactionary. The mother-in-law represents the forces of secular tradition in *La Manekine*. Her apprehension over Joïe’s questionable lineage is normal in a society of clan-based authority. Part of Philippe’s purpose in composing his story is to express a vision of matrimony dependent on neither the familial property interests nor the excessive emotions prescribed by secular chivalry, which can be twisted to lead a man to marry his own daughter, or for that matter lead a king to take up with a girl he found washed up on the beach. Instead, marriage should be blessed by, and depend upon the Church. With this stance the writer endorses the jurisdiction over marriage Rome had fought for since the 11<sup>th</sup> century (Brundage 1993, 183).

Philippe de Remi’s idealization of ecclesiastically sanctioned marriage is nonetheless stitched into a pre-existing plot in which marriage to a particular woman leads to an altered or expanded political order. The promotion of a new concept of marriage as divorced both from concerns of property and secular love only supports the final outcome of the tale: the increased holdings of the King of Scotland. Despite, and in conjunction with the consideration given to marriage, Philippe described a

regime change. The focus of any political interpretation of *La Manekine* should be found in the relationship between Rome and the outlying Christian peoples, for though the implications of the tale work themselves out in the far-away kingdoms presented in *La Manekine*, it is Rome that apparently authorizes the king to marry his daughter, and it is in Rome where the conflicts of the plot are resolved. The crucial part played by the “Constance” heroine is not the Christianization of a territory, but the creation of a functional relationship with the Roman See. Hence the story is not about conversion but about the spread of Latin Christianity to distant lands already converted by missionaries with questionable Celtic or Byzantine credentials. The political geography of *La Manekine* is most notable for what it lacks, namely any mention of the Roman Empire, manifest either in the Byzantine form or the western Holy Roman form. The Church replaces the Empire. This fact is what most significantly places *La Manekine* as literature of the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, when Constantinople was under weak Latin control. The situation permits Philippe to imagine a feudal state from the far west to the distant east, but more significantly prompts the wish-fulfillment behind *La Manekine*, namely the opportunity for the expansion of Latin Christianity both eastwards and northwards.

Yet Philippe does not imagine this process of consolidation in imperial terms; the King of Scotland remains only king, unlike Mai, who becomes emperor. No matter how distinguished the royal line established by Joïe and her husband, their significance does not pretend to universalism. More important to Philippe is the process that brought about the ascendance of Joïe. *La Manekine* acts as a foundation

myth for the imperial papacy of the High Middle Ages. From beginning to end of the romance, secular authority bows to the Pope.

The setting of Philippe's romance fits with the scene of his contemporary Europe despite the author's statement that his tale took place at some earlier point. After the preface the first line in his tale is "Jadis avint qu'il ert .i. rois..." (Philippe de Remi, line 49). "It happened of old that there was a king..." or as Sargent-Baur translates "There was once upon a time a king..." But this "once upon a time" statement is intended to create the illusion of timeless myth. Like any myth, it pretends to be about the past when the present is at stake. As Zipes has described the appeal of modern fairy tales, they pretend to be eternal and ahistorical (1994, 7), even though they were created under particular circumstances to serve particular, conservative ends. Philippe's agenda is not necessarily conservative (this descriptor would be inappropriate for the 13<sup>th</sup> century), but he does intend to demonstrate a reordering of society on theocratic terms. The stage Philippe de Remi created for Joïe to wander reflects the creation of the idealized Christendom of Papal universalism.

In a similar fashion, the author of *Mai und Beaflor* places his romance in an idealized past. "Ez stuont hie vor Romisch rich / sô hôch und sô werdeclich / daz diu werlt vil nâch gar / diente und gehôrte dar"<sup>72</sup> (*MuB* 2006, 5-42). The current state of the Roman Empire is not discussed, but the implication is that the glory of Rome is no longer what it was. With the exception of the brief period of Constantine's residence in the city, there never was a time in Rome when Emperor, Senate, and

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<sup>72</sup> "The Roman Empire once stood here so powerfully and worthily that the world totally served and obeyed her" (my translation).

Pope existed as powers that interacted with each other, but nevertheless that is the Rome depicted by the author. The picture corresponds more accurately to the scene in 11<sup>th</sup>- and 12<sup>th</sup>-century Constantinople, in which Emperor and Patriarch were nearly indistinguishable, and the Senate continued to exist as an aristocratic club and pool of educated administrators, which on occasion could influence the outcome of events (Brand 1968, 57). That the tale migrated westward from the Byzantine Empire at some point during the crusading era has been considered likely since the romance was first published (*MuB* 1974, VIII). This assessment has suffered little alteration since then (cf. Krappe 1937, 365-66, and Mertens 1994, 392 though the latter comments on thematic issues more than on the plot).

It is unremarkable that a western retelling would neglect to differentiate New Rome from the original (see above, 16 n. 8). Nevertheless, the geography of *Mai und Beafloer* is significant because the romance expresses anxieties about Empire and the position of Rome therein. Whereas *La Manekine* moves between the outskirts and heart of Christendom, *Mai und Beafloer* moves between the imperial center and a cultural, economic center. Next to anachronisms, such as the French language being spoken, the pretense that this tale takes place during the height of Roman power is contradicted by the apparent lack of control Rome maintains over Morea, a nearby kingdom. But communication in French is not merely an anachronism; it signals the impotence of Rome. As Bloch (1977, 218) wrote of the vernacular in medieval literature: “The movement away from Latin, away from Dante’s *grammatic*, was, in essence, an abandonment of the hope of restoring Rome, an endowment of the

diverse, historically corruptible vernacular with a claim to permanence equal to that of the universal and eternal *lingua romana*.” Applied to the “Constance” group as a whole, it is significant that the only account conveyed in Latin makes no mention of Rome. Jans Enikel and Philippe de Remi both send their heroines to Rome, just as in *Mai und Beaflor*.

The powerlessness of the imperial center is reinforced by the incestuous and uncontrolled advances of the emperor against his daughter. Again, the “once upon a time” statement that places the story in history is deception; *Mai und Beaflor* addresses contemporary conditions despite the setting. Though the introduction is literally misleading, it illustrates the political concerns of the author. The centrality, power, and prestige of Rome and her Empire, or lack thereof, are primary issues. The golden age described at the beginning of the tale is a transparent lie when projected onto the past, but the author holds out the golden age as a possibility for the future.

The extreme display of emotion in *Mai und Beaflor* has little to do with the folkloric chain of events (cf. Classen 1998, 330), but this aspect of the romance provides an important insight into the intentions of the author. The interaction between religion and courtliness takes place on a different footing than that in *La Manekine*. Both chains of events that brought about Joïe’s exiles are couched in courtliness; her father falls in love with her according to the trappings of courtly love (Philippe de Remi, lines 467-502), while her husband abandons her for chivalrous glory (lines 2465-513). No such condemnations of courtliness appear in *Mai und Beaflor*. The emperor Teljon is introduced as well-mannered: “Er chunde sich schone

halten...”<sup>73</sup> (*MuB* 2006, line 125). The violent nature of his sexual advances towards his daughter indicates that he had abandoned chivalry. The devil is made responsible for his actions (*MuB* 2006, lines 785-94). Satan’s attack on the king’s desires is cast equally as an attack on love: “Minne, daz was dir getan. / Es moht niht heizen minne. / Der tiwel im di sinne / gantzlich het erblendet / vnd in an minnen gar geschendet”<sup>74</sup> (*MuB* 2006 lines 822-26). For this author courtliness and Christian morality are a close pair if not identical.

Stripped of courtliness and emotion, the plot is nearly identical to that of *La Manekine*, except that the action takes place between Rome and Greece. Hence, the following motifs probably make up the skeleton of what the author was working with: 1) queen dies, 2) father attempts to rape daughter (identical to the “Life of Offa”, 3) Beaflo flees in boat, 4) arrives in foreign country and marries local king, 5) husband called off to war, 6) letters bearing news of birth and orders in response intercepted, 7) Beaflo exiled second time as a result of interception, 8) husband returns from war and discovers what has happened, 9) Mai sets off on account of lost wife, 10) family reunited. The following motifs are probably from the author: 1) the extreme asceticism/depression of Beaflo in reaction to incestuous advances, 2) intercepted letters do not tell of monstrous birth, but of infidelity (accompanied by oral message with only good news), 3) Beaflo returns to her home city, 4) Mai impales his mother

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<sup>73</sup> “He could behave well...”

<sup>74</sup> “*Minne*, that was inflicted upon you. It cannot be called *Minne* The devil totally mixed up his mind and through *Minne* caused him harm.”

(as opposed to imprisoning her), 5) the son of Mai and Beaflo becomes king of Greece.

Exactly as in *La Manekine*, Beaflo's father abdicates in order to make way for the ascension of his son-in-law and daughter to rule over Rome. The crucial difference, however, is that Mai becomes emperor, not mere king over an extensive, disparate feudal state, but the sovereign over the universal Christian Empire. The Pope is not an important figure at the conclusion of the tale. He is never appealed to for permission. Teljon only asks that he anoint Mai as emperor, and the Pope agrees to the request. He does not heal Beaflo (she was never injured), nor does he negotiate or instruct on the value of marriage. The author of *Mai und Beaflo* sees nothing wrong with a love match on courtly terms. Despite the strong piety of the author, the imperial renewal at the end is secular, not spiritual.

Mai's origins in Morea are therefore significant. Philippe de Remi chose his locations for their exotic and distant (yet Christian) character. Morea, however unrealistically paradisiacal, is nearby, chivalrous, and Latin in character. In short, Mai rules over a Franco-Byzantine crusader state. Even though Mai's journey to Rome is religiously motivated, it is his emotional sincerity and courtliness that differentiate him from his father-in-law (at least in comparison to Teljon's attempted rape of Beaflo) and propel him to the imperial throne. Compared to *La Manekine*, *Mai und Beaflo* is a simpler endorsement of synthesized Christianity and chivalry.

*Mai und Beaflo* is for that reason more straightforwardly imperialistic than *La Manekine*. While Philippe de Remi appears to have struggled with the question of

how secular and spiritual authority should interact, and he decided that the spiritual should take precedence over lay authority, the writer of *Mai und Beaflo* concludes that courtly love and crusade can renew a decadent empire. However foreign satire was to this author, one would like to see irony in Mai's attainment of his father-in-law's throne, for he is not significantly different from Teljon. When Mai's emotions get the better of him, he kills his mother. Contrary to the great sin of Teljon, Mai's deed is accompanied by very little religious language. It is narrated as an act of madness (2006, 6908-14). The only reference to the Christian body of myth is a comparison of Eliacha to Judas. Where Teljon is condemned for his lack of control, Mai is excused, if not backwardly praised due to his sincerity (as though Teljon's lust had been insincere). The failure of the author to confront the similarity between Teljon and Mai exposes the weakness of the text. No reason exists to think that Rome will be any different under Mai but that the author narrates Mai's sin as a sympathetic crime of passion, while Teljon allowed himself to be influenced by the devil.

Vaz da Silva wrote that the essence of a fairy tale is rejuvenation (2002, 163). The daughter replaces the mother, the son replaces the father. Neither *La Manekine* nor *Mai und Beaflo* need be over-interpreted to see that such occurs in them. The heroine's mother expired at the outset, and her mother-in-law either conveniently dies in prison or is murdered. Both authors make a point of bringing back the incestuous father that he might abdicate in favor of his son-in-law and daughter. Vaz da Silva (2002, 171) made this observation regarding the tale types "Cinderella" and "Dragon



Slayer,” and, as he further wrote “...the dragon slayer and his victim are essentially one.” Propp (1983, 363) made a similar comment: “celui qui est né du dragon tue le dragon.”<sup>75</sup> Philippe de Remi deals with the cyclical nature of the folk material by using his heroine to introduce papal theocracy; if Joïe and her husband live happily ever after and if their children become great kings and queens, it is because they are subordinate to the Church. Matthew Paris uses the same folk material to demonstrate the futility of hereditary monarchy. Offa fails to become a great king because he fails to break the sequence of corruption brought about by women. Even if Offa does not attempt to seduce his daughter, the same woman who tempted the King of York made him soft. The author of *Mai und Beafloer*, however positive his interpretation of the oral material, does not succeed in pointing out an alternative to the progression of corrupt fathers replaced by corrupt sons. In that sense, *Mai und Beafloer* is the romance most similar to a wondertale. The slaying of the dragon is forthrightly manifest when Mai runs his mother through. The equivalence of the younger and elder generation is clear. Only Jans Enikel used his version of the “Constance” plot for a different thematic purpose.

Despite the variety of uses for which these romances and pseudohistorical anecdotes were composed, consistent themes are evident which may be projected back onto the oral antecedent of all four stories. The primary subject is rejuvenation and renewal, as in the archetypal fairy tale described by Vaz da Silva. Each author attempts to use renewal and royal succession to make a moral point. A second

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<sup>75</sup> “He who is born of the dragon, kills the dragon.”

prominent theme (absent in the “Life of Offa”) is the relationship between the Byzantines and Latins both on a secular and ecclesiastical level. This is least pronounced in Philippe’s romance because he attempted to broaden the scope of the unification theme beyond the East-West axis. Jans Enikel and the author of *Mai und Beafloer* specifically deal with the theme of division between Latins and Easterners. Enikel is concerned with religious division, while *Mai und Beafloer*, by specifically noting that the son of Mai and Beafloer becomes the king of Greece attempts to depict a reunified Roman Empire on Latin terms. Since Philippe was more concerned with legitimizing universal papal authority, he found it necessary to address not only the question of Greek Christianity but also those areas of Western Europe that may have made use of non-Latin rites. Nevertheless, it would seem that the oral source material must have addressed relationships between East and West. In the final chapter, I will explore a possible account for the injection of this tale into Western Europe.

## Chapter 7

### The Persecuted Queen and Roman Identity

Beside the role of moral exemplar,<sup>76</sup> the 13<sup>th</sup>-century “Constance” heroine was a vehicle of political foundation myths. In both respects she is the descendant of Rhea Silva, Lucretia, and the mother of Clement. As presented in the extant tales, these myths do not directly engage the Latin Empire of Constantinople, but the stock figure of the persecuted queen was reformed in the wake of Byzantium’s fall. The synoptic tales delve into the question of reestablishing the authority of Old Rome either on religious or secular terms, and therefore glossing over the sack and conquest of Constantinople. The most significant feature, in this sense, is the absence of Constantinople in the 13<sup>th</sup>-century “Constance” tales. The 12<sup>th</sup> century could not afford to ignore the eastern Rome. The *Kaiserchronik* must explicitly portray and defend the transfer of Roman authority to German emperors. Just before Charlemagne enters the narrative, the poet declares that because the throne was empty (i.e. occupied by a woman, Empress Irene) and the rightful emperor had been murdered, “Von dannen wart Rômisc rîche / gesceiden von den Criechen”<sup>77</sup> (KC, lines 14278-79).

In the 13<sup>th</sup> century it was no longer necessary to justify the assumption of Roman identity because there was now only one Rome. Greek Romans, who had historically claimed Rome as their own, had been temporarily conquered. One

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<sup>76</sup> Jans Enikel provides a conventional but lean portrait of his heroine as virtuous. But unlike the other writers Enikel does not invest many words for praising her character.

<sup>77</sup> “Thence became the Roman Empire / separated from the Greeks.”

objective of the synoptic tales was to establish an appropriate relationship to Rome in a post-Byzantine world. Where before there had been an ideological and historical dispute over which Rome was the true Rome, after 1204 the question redeveloped into the problem of forging a Catholic identity in the relationship of provincials to central Christian authority. Whether the resolution of this problem occurred on secular-imperial terms (*Mai und Beafloer*), ecclesiastical-imperial terms (*La Manekine*), or bourgeois terms (Jans Enikel's "Daughter of the King of Russia") depended on the author. The geography of the different versions stems from the writers' needs in facing the question of Roman identity.

As denizens of the Holy Roman Empire, Jans Enikel and the author of *Mai und Beafloer* were interested in the consumption of eastern Romans into the authority of western Rome. Philippe de Remi was more concerned with establishing a post-Roman relationship with Rome. He separated the spiritual authority located in the city from secular authorities, which might be located as far away as Scotland.

The "Constance" heroine is intended to be the mother of a new Christendom. Her part as founding mother comes across most clearly in *La Manekine* and *Mai und Beafloer*; Matthew Paris inverted her myth to explain the lack of political unity in Offa's time, while Jans Enikel subverted the myth to illustrate a disheartening view of the relationship between eastern and western Christians. However, the theme of East and West is consistent in the synoptic tales, and for this reason, I consider that aspect fundamental to the rationale of the "Constance" group in the 1200s.

Interest in the East was a natural consequence of the intensifying contact between Latin Christian and Greeks. Since the Western Empire had broken up into several barbarian kingdoms, and more significantly since the attentions of the eastern emperors were turned toward Muslim expansion causing the Popes to rely on Franks instead of the eastern emperors for protection, tension had existed between Latins and Byzantines in the political, social, and religious arenas. However, in so far as little personal contact existed between Byzantines and western societies, these tensions were mostly confined to the diplomatic sphere of high ecclesiastical and secular society. The First Crusade brought Westerners of all backgrounds into contact with every level of the Byzantine social order. Despite the effort to collaborate against Muslim expansion, the alliance between Latin crusaders and the emperors quickly proved to be fragile. The bad faith, miscommunications, foul-ups, misery, successes, and failures of the first century of armed pilgrimages can be read about in any general history of the Crusades. Dismal relations between crusaders and the Byzantines, along with the incompetent leadership of the Angelan dynasty, brought about a situation in which, when a mix of Venetian, French, and Austrian crusaders found themselves in 1204 without the financial and military support promised to them, they did not hesitate to take what was owed to them by force. The details of the Fourth Crusade need not be recounted here. For our purposes it suffices to recognize that in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century Constantinople fell and the Latin Empire of Constantinople, alongside a few Greek successor states (the most important of these was the Empire of Nicea), continued in its place.

The outcome of the Fourth Crusade, though it did not weigh as heavily as the loss of Jerusalem had, was nevertheless a defining event for Western Europe.<sup>78</sup> Pope Innocent III disapproved of what the Venetians and crusaders had done. He had excommunicated the entire crusade at one point, though eventually the excommunication held only for the Venetians, who had effectively forced the crusaders to attack the Christian city of Zara (Zadar) on their behalf (Riley-Smith 2005, 154-56). Nevertheless, the fall of the Orthodox emperors, replaced by a Latin (Baldwin IX of Flanders), offered the hope of an end to strife between the Churches. Innocent III entertained high hopes for these possibilities in his letters to the crusaders (Andrea 2000, 135-36 and 156). Most optimistically, one could imagine that the Empire would be reconstructed as it had been under Constantine I, exactly as was imagined by the author of *Mai und Beqflor*: a single Christian Empire capable of repelling the Saracens.

The first order of concern for most, however, was reunion of the Churches. Emperor Baldwin called for a council to link New Rome with Old Rome (Andrea 2000, 110). This statement underscores the mutual identity of church and state in both East and West, for Baldwin's clerics make no distinction between the political and spiritual Rome. In retrospect, the reunion was not to be. In part, this is due to the failure of the Latin Emperors to effectively consolidate control outside of Constantinople, which after the sack of 1204 was a burnt shell of its former glory

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<sup>78</sup> Baldwin's letter to Pope Innocent III (Hageneder 1997, 259 and Andrea 2000, 108) places Jerusalem ("civitas sancta") in an equal and dichotomous relationship with Constantinople ("civitas regia"). In terms of religious value, the two cities were unequal, but the crusaders wished to elevate and justify their deed by associating Constantinople with the effort to maintain a military presence in Outremer.

(Madden 1993, 93). The larger reason was, as Innocent III himself eventually conceded, that the brutality of the sack embittered the Greeks against the West. His famous statement to Cardinal Peter Capuano on this quandary is as follows: “Quomodo enim Grecorum ecclesia, quantumcumque persecutionibus affligatur, ad unitatem ecclesiasticam et devotionem sedis apostolice revertetur, que in Latinis non nisi perditionis exemplum et opera tenebrarum aspexit, ut iam merito illos aborreat plus quam canes?”<sup>79</sup> (Hageneder 2001, 232). Resentment over these events survives today. In 2001, Pope John-Paul II made an apology for the sack of Constantinople and other matters of contention between Orthodox and Catholic Christians after having been subjected to protests by conservative Greek ecclesiastical groups and a public rebuke over the matter by the late Archbishop Christodoulos (Walsh 2001 under “The Pope among the Orthodox”).

The resources necessary to support Constantinople against the threat of conquest by Greeks or Bulgarians diverted western energies away from Jerusalem thus ultimately harming the crusading movement (Angold 2003, 114). Again, Pope Innocent noted the dilemma that in the aftermath of the Latin conquest of the Eastern Empire, the Holy Land was bereft of a crusading military presence (Andrea 2000, 164). In any case, the Latin Empire did not survive even sixty years. In 1261 the kingdom of Nicea took Constantinople and reestablished Greek Orthodox control under the dynasty of the Palaiologoi.

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<sup>79</sup> “For how will the Greek Church, afflicted to some degree by persecutions, return to ecclesiastical unity and devotion to the Apostolic See, a church which has seen in the Latins nothing except an example of affliction and the works of Hell, so that now it rightly detests them more than dogs?” (Andrea 2008: 166).

For this half-century, the hope of a reunited Christian Church and Empire remained alive. It is perhaps no coincidence that all versions of the “Constance” group studied here were likely composed between 1204 and 1261, with only Jans Enikel’s anecdote of East-West alienation possibly postdating the fall of the Latin Empire. It is no great leap to posit that if, as has been assumed for so long, the plot behind *Mai und Beafloer* had drifted westward from the Roman Empire, then it had been formulated not long before it began to migrate. The story would have then been composed in the milieu of late 12<sup>th</sup>- and early 13<sup>th</sup>-century Byzantium. The most significant event in the East from this period is the foundation of the Latin Empire.

The largest problem faced by researchers into the “Constance” group is the gap between the simplicity of positing an original “Constance” plot and the impossibility of describing that original. But the first four “Constance” tales offer some clues. All of the vernacular tales center their conclusions on Rome and employ an East-West theme. This indicates a starting point in the Latin Empire that served the interests of the Frankish military elites attempting to consolidate control over the Romans.

No such tale of a persecuted queen is found in any of the extant chroniclers of the Fourth Crusade. One story in the *Chronicle of Morea*, however, may indicate that such a tale once existed. This chronicle is preserved in a Greek translation of an Old French original. The Greek was written later than the early “Constance” tales. But the chronicle shares the milieu of Frankish Morea with *Mai und Beafloer*, which, if the comparison is legitimate, demonstrates my proposition that much of the inspiration



for the “Constance” group grew up in Frankish-controlled Greece. This is significant because the Chronicle is of some historical value but, similar to numerous medieval chronicles, contains much that is invented and folkloric. One such passage tells of how Geoffrey of Morea, married the daughter of Emperor Robert (reigned 1221-1228). This story does not involve the foundation of the Latin Empire, but it does bear some resemblance to the “Constance” group.

Emperor Robert contracts a marriage between his daughter and the king of Aragon. The unnamed princess sets out to the Iberian Peninsula with two galleys. Underway she stops in Morea and is invited by Lord Geoffrey as a guest to his castle. His counselors, anxious about succession, encourage the lord to take the woman as his wife. They assure him that the anger of the emperor would be short-lived and he would come to accept the situation. Geoffrey is convinced, and the Bishop of Olena persuades the princess to accept too. The emperor’s galleys return to Constantinople. Upon hearing the news Robert is upset over the disruption of his plans to form an alliance with Aragon. Geoffrey sends messengers to Constantinople to ask forgiveness for what he had done. He appeals to their common dilemma of being far from France, both at war with the Romans. Finally, Geoffrey offers to be the liegeman of the emperor.

Robert, taking council, decides for peace since Geoffrey is closer at hand and could be useful as an ally. In negotiations Robert gives Geoffrey the Dodacanese Islands, bestows on him the title of prince, and awards him the office of Domestikos of Romania (*Crusaders as Conquerors* 1964, 144-48). Later Prince Geoffrey dies childless regretting that he had not founded a monastery he had promised (1964, 151).

In no sense is this a foundation myth, but the themes resemble those of the “Constance” group, and it explains the status of Morea on similar terms as *Mai und Beaflo*r. If this anecdote had any basis in fact, the story would be unremarkable. Since, however, it is ahistorical (*Crusaders as Conquerors* 1964, 146 n. 89), the

structure of the story should come into scrutiny. The subject matter resembles that of a compact, rationalized version of a persecuted heroine plot. First, a princess is fated to marry a distance king, apparently against her wishes since she was willing to rebel against her father's plans. This is an allomotif of the incestuous father comparable to the marriage contracted by Custance's father in the "Man of Law's Tale"; the distinction between a husband too close and one too far need not be significant in folktales (see above, 81). Second, she travels by sea. Third, she lands on the shores of a foreign kingdom. Fourth, the local king takes her as wife with her consent. Fifth, her husband and father are reconciled, so that sixth, the son-in-law makes political gains. On his deathbed, Geoffrey resembles Offa; both have regrets and attribute their misfortune to having not built a monastery they had promised to build.

The structural and thematic similarity to the "Constance" cycle is loose but nevertheless striking. The anecdote comes to nothing in the *Chronicle of Morea*. Probably the author knew an oral tale of similar basic content, took it for history, and recorded it as such. It acts as a simple, if false, explanation of the bond between the Latin capitol and the Franco-Greek province. As in the "Life of Offa," the concerns are of a local nature.

Be that as it may, I submit that this tale points towards the existence of an oral tradition of royal daughters married to the wrong man. Whether the first husband was to be her father or a distance prince is unimportant. The point of such a tale would be that the fortunate husband made gains on account of his marriage to the rebellious daughter. The western tradition behind the "Constance" group was clearly more than

what is found in the Chronicle of Morea, but the same fundamental themes are present. This variation of the “persecuted queen” motif developed in the East, perhaps under the circumstances of the newly founded Latin Empire.

Zipes (2006, xii) introduces folktales in *Why Fairy Tales Stick* as memes that arise out of the cognitive dissonance created by the suffering and banality of every day life. An example he gives is Cinderella, which he believes caught on “...because it was addressing issues of child abandonment, family legacy, sibling rivalry, and parental love. Many of these contested areas or issues remain with us, or they have been transformed in some way” (2006, 115). The conflict between expectations of parental love and the facts of abandonment and abuse gave rise to the Cinderella myth. In a similar fashion I contend that the problematic nature of Christian crusaders attacking the foremost Christian city in the world required justification, for though the hatreds between Latins and Byzantines could be intense, both sides acknowledged each other’s identity as Christians (though not necessarily as Romans). That crusaders should not attack Christians was axiomatic. Still, while the initial siege, burning, and sack of Constantinople was vicious,<sup>80</sup> without the benefit of hindsight, the birth of Latin-Byzantium offered hope to Western Europe. The historical situation brought guilt, joy, and optimism. The myth of the persecuted queen was employed to mitigate or reconcile these emotions by making eastern Romans and all Christians dependent on an appropriate relationship with the first Rome. The desired future of unified Christendom and Empire, written as the past,

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<sup>80</sup> Angold (2003, 111) argues for a sack less brutal than that which Niketas Choniates (1984, book 9) described.

was mapped out by three authors groping towards a new idea of Christian Europe not long before Christendom was to be permanently shattered. Philippe de Remi dreamed of a future without the vexing problems presented by Eastern Christianity. Constantinople is written out of the story; at the end of his tale, the royal family glides to and from an exotic eastern kingdom with no thought given to religious difference. The author of *Mai und Beafloer* thinks of the day when the war with the Romans is over, and Old Rome can regain its historic stature. As in *La Manekine*, the second Rome is absent. Referring to the inhabitants of the former eastern Empire as Greeks, the text takes away their identity as Romans, and bestows it upon them again as the subjects of Beafloer's son. In opposition to the romances, Jans Enikel's story results in nothing, just as he must have known that the Latin Empire of Constantinople had resulted in nothing. Clearly, Matthew Paris had different goals and worked with different material or was most creative in adapting the legend for his own purposes. But despite the differences in the particulars of his story, the thematic connections to the synoptic tales are strong enough to justify including it as a part of the "Constance" group.

The persecuted heroine either chased from her home by a lustful father or sent away to a distant prince, only to be exiled a second time, survived long after the Middle Ages. Perhaps on account of the violent, sexual nature of the introduction, the descendants of the "Constance" tales never made it into the modern American fairy tale canon. Another factor may account for its current obscurity. The "Constance" tales were especially suited for an international stage, which appealed to

those with monarchic and imperialist pretensions. Cinderella always stayed at home because nationalist states would have little use for a transnational princess. But this is a different story.

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