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Travel, Pilgrimage and the Family: Displacement, Obligation and Crises of Kinship in Middle English Narrative

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A thesis submitted to the University College Cork in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

October 2017

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Declaration

This is to certify that the work I am submitting is my own and has not been submitted for another degree, either at University College Cork or elsewhere. All external references and sources are clearly acknowledged and identified. I have read and understood the regulations of University College Cork concerning plagiarism.

Signed:

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Edel Mulcahy

October 2017

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Abstract

This thesis aims to provide unique perspectives on responses to medieval pilgrimage by examining the largely ignored interactions between pilgrimage and the family in Middle English narratives. Ranging from the period 1400-1500, well known works such as *The Book of Margery Kempe*, *The Vision of Piers Plowman* and *Sir Isumbras* are examined alongside lesser studied narratives to form previously unestablished links and new conclusions on literary depictions of travel and kinship. The genres and modes of didactic and instructional literature, romance, hagiography, allegory and mystical writing are investigated for model episodes of familial crises of displacement and separation that are brought about and sometimes resolved by pilgrimage, a connection that has been previously overlooked in medieval scholarship. Recurring motifs concerning exile, penitence and the salvation of the individual's soul are read within contexts of gender, audience expectations and the historical contexts and constructs of both pilgrimage and the family. The thesis demonstrates the varied ways both physical and imagined pilgrimages affect the family and explores the language and effects used to realise ongoing and insoluble debates concerning the contradictory obligations of the individual to the family and the Christian life.

Note on Referencing and Citations

The referencing style of the Modern Language Association (MLA), based on the seventh edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writer of Research Papers*, is the used in this thesis.

Editions of primary texts used are specified by first citation in footnotes.

Introduction

To fully understand medieval pilgrimage as an act of devotion and as a social practice (and literary preoccupation) is itself a personal pilgrimage. The physical act of pilgrimage in the Middle Ages was the focus of many debates that considered its legitimacy and that of its participants, bringing to mind the colourful and garrulous Wife of Bath and Langland's palmer festooned with pilgrim badges, resembling a type of overachieving boy scout. Though often seen as an individual venture for personal and pious reasons, pilgrimage, to this day, is often characteristically influenced by familial and social bonds. This thesis aims to demonstrate new readings of both well-known and overlooked Middle English texts across a broad range of genres by examining the frequency and approach of kinship's conflict with pilgrimage.

People throughout the centuries have undertaken religious journeys as a penitential act in search of forgiveness and redemption for themselves. They are undertaken for family members including parents, spouses and children. Spiritual and physical needs of families trigger pilgrimages, and the shape and nature of pilgrimage can also be affected as whole families embark in union on pilgrimage. In a recent literary example of this collective pilgrimage, Andrew Hurley's *The Loney* tells the story of one pilgrim family who visit a desolate part of Lancashire in the hopes of finding a cure for their son. The current surge in popularity of the Camino de Compostela for those wishing to follow in the footsteps of medieval pilgrims shows the attractiveness and continuity of these impulses with family members travelling together with one shared spiritual and emotional goal. This can be witnessed in the journey documented by Peter Murtagh and his daughter Natasha in their 2011 book: *Buen Camino!: A Father-daughter Journey from Croagh Patrick to Santiago de Compostela*. Emilio Estevez's 2010 film, *The Way*, also depicts a familial pilgrimage

of sorts where a father sets out on the Camino to retrieve the body of his son who has died while on the pilgrim route. We can easily acknowledge, therefore, that these impulses persist. On reading medieval accounts we will not stray far from patterns that are recognisable to us. Such journeys that are coloured by familial bonds are not recent developments in the history of pilgrimage, as we observe in *The Book of Margery Kempe* for example. The pilgrimages that she undertakes with her husband and her daughter-in-law at different stages in her life are among many portrayals of a familial or familial influenced pilgrimage in Middle English literature that has been previously overlooked but offer us yet another lens through which we can view and understand the medieval audience, their lives and their expectations. The narratives examined here illustrate travels, both real and imagined, that are stimulated by crises of family.

The act of travelling to sites that are believed to hold a deep spiritual significance and a greater connection to the concept of the divine is not a medieval invention nor is it a purely Christian one. The Early Church encouraged exile in the form of *Peregrinatio pro amore Dei* or pilgrimage for the love of God. The Celtic *Peregrini* exiled themselves from their homes and travelled in small boats to isolated areas such as Skellig Michael, off the coast of Kerry, Iona, the Orkney Islands and the Shetland Islands. Outside of the main centres of pilgrimage including Jerusalem, Rome and Santiago de Compostela, the Cult of Saints sparked pilgrimages to other areas in the subsequent centuries where pilgrims could visit and pray to the relics of a particular saint. Canterbury, Walsingham, York, Bury St. Edmunds, Durham and Winchester are examples of medieval pilgrimage centres in England that attracted large crowds and bolstered local economies by drawing lay and religious people to their shrines and respective saint's relics. While en-route to the larger destinations of Jerusalem, Rome or Santiago de Compostela, pilgrims could also visit sites in Europe

including Assisi, Chartres and Cologne. To add to the money raised from donations and indulgences, sites also sold pilgrim badges specific to the saint or relic present at the shrine, which pilgrims could buy to outwardly display what site they had visited. Looking at this list of shrines and destinations, one could be forgiven for assuming that many used the opportunity for pilgrimage as a way to see places that might have been otherwise beyond their reach. The sheer volume of returning, experienced pilgrims and the multiple guides written in the vernacular, such as *The Stacions of Rome* and *The Stations of Jerusalem*, provided information about the destinations themselves also on non-religious matters such as the best lodgings, safest roads and served as a medieval version of Trip Advisor.

The concept of *curiositas* also influenced the role of pilgrimage in the Middle Ages. Lee Ann Craig defines *curiositas* as "the needless examination of worldly things which do not help one to attain salvation" (22). It manifested for the medieval traveller as a desire to see the world, experience "otherness" and escape the mundane. This preoccupation with the temporal world would have been considered a sin; a distraction from true devotion and a threat to spiritual well-being. By the Middle Ages, pilgrimage had reached the summit of its popularity. As a religious practice in the Middle Ages, it exemplified the development of Christian piety and devotion, both public and private, over a number of centuries.

By the late fourteenth century, pilgrimage had become, at times, an uncomfortable amalgamation of religious ideals and secular experiences. This uncomfortable amalgamation is examined within this thesis and demonstrates the ways in which pilgrimage interacts with literary developments. We see how *curiositas* infused with adulterous desires takes advantage of pilgrimage ideals in the misogynistic works in chapter 1, while we also see how women, such as Birgitta of

Sweden and Margery Kempe, balance their worldly commitments with their desire to undertake religious travel. The lauding of the spiritual, inner pilgrimage over the pursuit of a physical pilgrimage in the examination of the mystical writings also further demonstrates this diminished role for religious tourism in the later Middle Ages.

Pilgrimage, like any religious response, could differ wildly from one person's experience to the next. A pilgrimage that embodied the concept of earthly exile and of man as wanderer could coexist alongside penitential pilgrimages where pilgrims implicitly craved readmission to a Christian world. There were pilgrimages for the purposes of petition and thanksgiving and also pilgrimages that provided the pilgrim with the opportunity to walk in the footsteps of Christ and experience the *via crucis.* Pilgrimage in the later Middle Ages even took the form of an interior journey of the soul, thus removing the pilgrim's need to leave their home in search of the divine entirely. A medieval pilgrim could therefore undertake a pilgrimage that combined a number of these effects, demonstrating the diversity of this religious practice and also the difficulties in establishing a uniform view of this medieval experience. Pilgrimage also offered people in medieval communities the opportunity to leave an otherwise insular or parochial existence within their towns and villages. Travelling for the purposes of devotion and religious fervour often became an occasion to engage in more worldly, secular pursuits. Pilgrimage provided the chance to engage with *curiositas,* and experience what the world itself had to offer. *Curiositas* was therefore considered a temporal distraction from the true path of morality and salvation. A pilgrim might only travel under the guise of devotion to see more of the world, encounter the unusual and the "other" and paradoxically move further from the divine intent expected of pilgrimage.

Christian pilgrimage developed from the fourth century onwards and Dee Dyas identifies some of the anxieties that this development brought. She poses a number of questions that she believes the Christian Church faced at this time, allowing us to better understand the complexities that pilgrimages of the Middle Ages were set to inherit:

> Was pilgrimage to be understood as a metaphor for the whole of life, an inward spiritual journey or a literal visit to a geographical site, whether near or far away? Were there in fact 'holy places', where particular blessings were to be obtained, or was God equally accessible to believers wherever they might be? Was the actual process of travelling meritorious, unnecessary, or even dangerous? Would a visit to the earthly Jerusalem be of value in gaining access to the heavenly city? Should Christians seek material benefits such as physical healing from the intervention of the saints or fix their eyes solely upon eternal rewards, despising earthly suffering? (10)

These questions demonstrate some of the problems and theological concerns relating to pilgrimage as a devotional practice in the Middle Ages and lead to the ultimate question - was pilgrimage truly necessary as an act of devotion? We see the impact of these questions on the literary families of the works examined here. In some negative portrayals of pilgrimage, it is deemed an unnecessary distraction and does not serve a devotional purpose. In others, such as the case of Saint Lucy, however, we see pilgrimage as a necessary development on her path to sainthood and preserving her family.[1]

By the fifteenth century, the debates surrounding pilgrimage and its place as an outward act of piety intensified and the practice began to fall into decline. It had been

[1] Both Jonathan Sumption and Ronald Finucane offer examinations of the wider historical contexts relating to medieval pilgrimage practices. They discuss the role of the Cult of Saints and miracles, highlighting the connection between pilgrimage and the ever-growing devotion to medieval saints.

vigorously condemned by the Lollards, including the preacher William Thorpe (1407), who rejected the concept as religious idolatry and questioned the value of travelling to religious sites. Pilgrims were, according to Thorpe, "great janglers, tale-tellers and liars" (141), just like the Miller in the *General Prologue*.[2] John Wyclif also deemed that religious travel was unnecessary and that pilgrimages on which both men and women participated were an opportunity for lecherous behaviour. Those who formed the Lollard movement consistently criticised the veneration of images of saints and holy figures at pilgrimage sites and the miracles that were attributed to them. The Lollards also held that a true pilgrimage consisted of living a good and honest life according to biblical teachings – in other words not consisting of any journey for its own sake whatsoever. Nevertheless, quests for the Christian life through physical displacement would persist.

The reformers of the sixteenth century followed the condemnations of the Lollards. Those who supported the religious teachings of Martin Luther continued to discourage the veneration of the cult of saints, directly impacting the popularity of pilgrimage. They also believed that such activities, paradoxically, diverted attention away from the veneration of Christ. Peter Marshall, explains that such veneration of saints and their associated shrines "seemed to imply that Christ's sacrifice on the Cross was not in itself enough to bring about the salvation of mankind".[3] With these denunciations from across the channel, from both Luther and John Calvin, the practice of pilgrimage and its associated veneration of images and idolatry were abolished in England in 1538 during the reign of Henry VIII as part of the Second Royal Injunctions. During the Reformation, pilgrimage was no longer deemed necessary in

[2] Thorpe's quote is taken from *The Examination of Master William Thorpe, priest, of heresy, before Thomas Arundell, Archbishop of Canterbury*.
[3] Marshall's reference is taken from his section "Pilgrimage and the Reformation" on the cd-rom, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage*, hence no page numbers.

fulfilling the desires associated with *curiositas* and secular exploration and travel flourished. While the popularity of religious travel declined, the concept of life as a pilgrimage grew from strength to strength and is reflected in a number of Reformation texts including the anonymous *The Passionate Man's Pilgrimage* (1604) and Bunyan's allegorical work of 1678, *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Pilgrimage was revived as a tourist phenomenon during the nineteenth century thanks to archaeological discoveries in the Middle East, writers such as Mark Twain and Hermann Melville visiting Palestine and Thomas Cook bringing tourists to Jerusalem (Dyas)[4]. But the popularity and influence of pilgrimage in the Middle Ages has been difficult to replicate.

Consonant with the concept of pilgrimage in this study is the role and representation of the medieval family and its interactions with patterns of pilgrimage an approach previously not undertaken in the field of Middle English studies. Both the definitions and etymology of the words "kin" and "family" are rooted in Old English, Latin (*familia)* and Middle French (*famile*). According to the OED, kin from the Old English *cyn,* focuses on blood relatives and progeny, while family, from *famile*, includes ties of blood, lineage and the household. This is reflected in the Middle English definition of *familie* as the household, while *kinrede* produces many more variations and meanings including bonds through blood, tribes, nations, race and also friendship. David Herlihy defines the arrangement of the medieval family, describing the structure of the household as a "co-residential community with parents and children – the primary biological descent group – at its core" (*Medival Households*, 132). It is a stable structure reflecting "largely static cultural ideals, indicating who should appropriately live together, how long, and under what terms" (Herlihy, *Medival Households,* 132). This idea of stability and stationary lives is challenged by

[4] Dyas's description of the resurgence of pilgrimage is also taken from the same cd-rom, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage*.

pilgrimage across the following chapters and we will observe the effects of mobility on the literary family, such as that experienced by the exiled women of the romances.

The scholarship regarding the medieval family in historical forms is an extensive one. Broadly speaking, it is concerned with gender roles, structure, class, law and inheritance, parenthood, childhood and religion and to summarise each of these areas would require a thesis in itself. It is simpler to explain where this study fits within the corpus. The following chapters examine Middle English narratives from across multiple genres. The literary models of families and family life that we will see range from the middle-class merchants and bourgeoisie to the gentry and the nobility. Few representations of the peasant family are found in this analysis. The types of family that we see, therefore, reflects the concerns of their contemporary audience and include, among others, parental advice, inheritance, marriage and the household.

This study also draws out ideas of kinship in texts that have been previously overlooked or thought insignificant by others. It builds on the work of Dee Dyas in *Pilgrimage in Medieval English Literature* and Susan Signe Morrison in *Women Pilgrims in Late Medieval England: Private Piety and Public Performance* by expanding on the number of texts examined by both authors. It also focuses specifically on the role of the literary family that engages with or is affected by pilgrimage activities.

Building on the historical contexts explored in both Dyas's and Morrison's studies, this thesis interrogates the expectations of the medieval audience and illuminates the type of families that these works were written for. Who were these mothers, fathers and children who read or had these narratives read to them? Did they fulfil the religious and secular ideals that Herlihy identifies? Both in stable and non-static environments, did children follow biblical teachings and honour the fourth

commandment? Were marriages "monogamous and permanent" (Herlihy, *Medival Households,* 133)? These questions are worth keeping in mind as we try and extract new insights from the works examined in the following chapters. Reading kinship within the context of pilgrimage provides new aspects on previously trodden paths of medieval studies such as issues of gender, representations of piety and the medieval household.

Historically speaking, familial bonds directed every facet of medieval society. According to Georges Duby, "there is scarcely a single aspect of medieval civilization that is not in some way illuminated by knowledge of the structure of kinship" (*Love and Marriage in the Middle Ages,* 105). The family was considered an "organized and stable community" (Herlihy, *Medival Households,* 5) that fitted into society's larger communal constructs. Marriage, motherhood, fatherhood and childhood bound families together by legal, religious and economic means. Medieval land and defined kinship ensured that inheritance of land or wealth was addressed. Barbara Hanawalt explains this solidity of the medieval family in terms of inheritance: "the nuclear family, seen in the light of inheritance customs and practices and kinship relations, was a compact unit, not a porous one" (88). The medieval family, therefore, was a stable entity where rule and governance was determined.

The medieval family could also grow and extend their influence through marriages, thereby creating alliances. Kinship in the Middle Ages was defined as a relationship of the fourth degree (first cousins). A marriage or relationship beyond this level of kinship was considered incest in the eyes of the Fourth Latern Council, as we will see in chapter 2. Representations of marriage appear in many of the examined texts and themes such as the marriage debt, autonomy, inheritance and status inform us of audience expectations associated with husbands and wives.

Traditions of religion further influenced familial constructs as biblical and religious narratives contained many depictions of family. The Holy Family, for instance, conveyed the model to which medieval families should aspire (despite Joseph's comical anxieties of infidelities in the mystery play tradition). Social roles were played out within the medieval family, mirroring the social roles for women and men in the larger community. Family, in the middle class sense, was a patriarchal structure where the wife's place was within the stable environment of the home. As Felicity Riddy notes, the concept of domesticity in the Middle ages was "represented as a prime virtue" (68). Private stability versus public mobility in the form of pilgrimage is central to many of the debates surrounding gender and the disruptive mobile women that we will encounter throughout this study.

Hugh Cunningham states that, "medievalists never seem to tire of proving [Phillipe] Ariès wrong" (27) when it comes to the concept of childhood in the Middle Ages. Ariès, whose study is based on the absence of children from medieval artwork, claims that "there was no place for childhood in the medieval world" (31) and that childhood was just a "period of transition which passed quickly and which was just as quickly forgotten" (31). In the Middle English narratives examined here, young children are often silent but they are present. Their presence can account for actions carried out by their parents: the grief felt by Sir Isumbras and his wife when their children are abducted or Guy's pre-pilgrimage preparations for his unborn son. In general terms, the protection and illnesses of children are often the central motives for parents (oftentimes mothers) undertaking real and literary pilgrimages in the hopes that a divine power will intercede on their behalf. Ronald C. Finucane's examination of six hundred miracle stories demonstrates such parental care where sick children were brought to shrines for a cure by their parents. He describes one young girl with

misshapen hands who was brought to Beckett's shrine in Canterbury by her father (57). These examples and the concern for childhood behaviour seen in the first chapter where courtesy and instruction manuals demonstrate that childhood was a state that the medieval audience may not have fully grasped but were aware that existed. The literary families we will see represent many patterns of kinship in the Middle Ages that were influenced by ever-changing social, legal and religious influences, and demonstrate how the contemporary audience saw themselves and their practices, including pilgrimage, reflected in medieval literature.

The concept of the literary pilgrimage, whether historical, imagined or allegorical, is itself an understudied field in medieval writing, despite recent contributions from Dyas and Morrison. It can be taken for granted as another tradition of the Middle Ages but its versatility as a literary device warrants a more detailed investigation. To a greater extent, the association between family and pilgrimage in medieval texts has also been largely ignored despite associations between familial structures and pilgrimage that are evident in narratives such as *Sir Isumbras*, where the loss of family is followed by the protagonist setting out on pilgrimage. Morrison's contribution provides the closest study to family and pilgrimage as she concentrates on the role of women pilgrims in medieval society in a selection of medieval texts and historical accounts.

To demonstrate this connection in a literary context, the primary objective of this thesis is to provide new perspectives on the role of medieval pilgrimage in literary texts from the latter half of the Middle Ages. This study must therefore encompass an extensive collection of genres, ranging from instructional and courtesy literature to allegorical and mystical texts. The texts that have been chosen for this examination are

from the later Middle Ages, the time when pilgrimage had reached its zenith and its presence in medieval narrative might be taken for granted and overlooked.

The sizable amount of texts discussed in the following chapters are chosen based on a number of criteria. Having a representative number of texts containing significant references to both pilgrimage and family is important to demonstrate their interactions and their undeniable link. The popularity among contemporary audiences and modern critics was also an important fact as it would have been an exercise in futility to ignore *The Canterbury Tales*, *The Vision of Piers Plowman* and *The Book of Margery Kempe* and their various depictions and uses for pilgrimage. I also chose texts based on their thematic and historical connections to each other, such as *The Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* and *The Life of Saint Alexius*. Finally, this study encompasses texts that might have only received a passing mention in other studies. The genre of instructional and courtesy literature along with some of the narratives from the romance and hagiographical genres are habitually passed over in favour of more well-known texts. Examining these lesser-known works alongside popular narrative generates new interpretations of how pilgrimage interacts with ideas of kinship. Despite being a broad analysis, this thesis offers detailed examinations and utilises previously unobserved comparisons, spanning across multiple genres, to build a representative study of family and pilgrimage in Middle English texts; examining the variations of theme over time and literary space.

This thesis possesses five central concerns: the relation of historical and literary pilgrimage practice, pilgrimage and the family – imagined and historical, pilgrimage and gender, pilgrimage and genre, and finally the relationship of habits of reading and interpretation: pilgrimage and the allegorical and mystical traditions.

Through each of these strands, the implications for ties of kinship, never absent, are examined.

Chapter 1 "Warnings and Recommendations: Advice to the pilgrim family" highlights the critical neglect of the concept of religious travel. This chapter gauges the importance attached to pilgrimage by texts for the family - courtesy and instructional works. A reading of courtesy and instructional literature in Middle English determines for us models of familial relationships adumbrated by the impulses of pilgrimage – imagined or historical. The parental advice found within the chosen texts informs us of the implications of medieval gender roles and sexual politics especially within the context of marriage. Obedient and submissive women are lauded as the ideal in many texts but, true to their misogynistic standards, many of the instructional works also contain descriptions of devious disruptive women to serve as warnings. Morrison's description of misogynistic texts that "promote wifelessness as the ideal state" (115) is applicable to many of the texts that we encounter in this chapter, where abused, jaded husbands and devious, wayward wives are seen multiple times. Pilgrimage is often used by these sneaky women to get what they want and is ultimately condemned as an instrument of corruption. Pilgrimage, whether positively or negatively utilised and referenced, offers us the opportunity to observe how certain expectations and social constructs were met, disseminated and enforced.

The ambiguous nature of pilgrimage converges with concepts of unconventional familial relationships between parents and children, brothers and sisters in chapter 2: "Incest and the pilgrim family". Elizabeth Archibald's 'Flight from Incest' motif informs this reading of texts from both didactic modes and the romance genre as it examines how pilgrimage and the taboo of incest engage across these generic contexts. While pilgrimage is conveyed as a negative influence on the

family in the exempla, it is depicted as a more positive influence in the romance works. In these texts, travel and quests bearing similarities to religious travel often reunite the family which has been broken apart by incest. Set against the incestuous narratives of Chaucer and Gower, comparisons with the conventional relationships between parents and children are explored. These comparisons determine the exceptional nature of sexual transgression and transportation suffered by individuals in their families.

Differing generic conventions and how they reshape the representations of practice and interpretation in pilgrimage are addressed and questioned in chapter 3, "Romance and the pilgrim family: Exile and Reunion". The presence of pilgrimage in other romance narratives is explored here, moving away from the motif of incest onto motifs of exile, misrecognition and penitence. This chapter extends the current research relating to the place of pilgrimage within the genre and provides the opportunity to question issues of cause and effect - how pilgrimage impacts on the family or if its contours are conversely determined by familial imperative. This chapter undertakes a detailed examination of *Sir Isumbras* and the protagonist's loss and recovery of family. The subsequent penitential pilgrimage he undertakes is central to our reading, as is an examination of the pilgrimage of atonement found in *Guy of Warwick.*

The disruption of generic expectations associated with medieval romances is also examined through the lens of pilgrimage and familial reunification within *Guy of Warwick.* The genre of romance offers a battleground for secular and spiritual ideals as well as literal battlegrounds for martial figures. While Isumbras is rewarded with the restoration of his title, wealth and family on his return from exile and penitence, Guy retreats further into a life of spirituality. These tensions between worldly commitments

and individual salvation reflect the concerns of their middle-class readership thus providing a foundation for the examination of generic expectations of other works within this chapter. Familial exile and separation through pilgrimage and quests appear through the rest of the romances examined here, including *The Romans of Partenay, Valentine and Orson, Octavian, Paris and Vienne, Torrent of Portyngale* and *Sir Orfeo*. It is their response to the reunion or perpetual separation of the family that offer novel ways to class the literary experience of these texts. A reunion fulfils audience expectations while a continued exile or separation identifies the work as an almost-hagiography. In this reading, the motifs of the disguised pilgrims, misrecognition, supernatural entities, and mothers cast adrift all contribute to a varied pilgrim experience and kinship interaction.

The bond between romance narratives and hagiographical works apparent in chapter 3 provide a condign entry to chapter 4, "Hagiography and the pilgrim family". This chapter revisits the concerns and beliefs relating to pilgrimage and the patterns relating to temporal familial relationships discussed at length in earlier chapters. Hagiographical narratives hold the key to understanding many aspects of medieval society, fulfilling Gail Ashton's promise that "interrogation of this genre is likely to reveal something about late medieval culture, its power relations, its discourse, its ideology" (2). Reading here the *Life of Saint Alexius* extends the connection with the previous chapter and interrogates the disruptive roles of temporal relationships for prospective saints. An analysis of the lives of the saintly women including Mary Magdalene, Saint Lucy and Saint Elizabeth from Osbern Bokenham's *Legendys of Hooly Women* (ca 1443-47) develops models for the role of pilgrimage in the lives of saintly women. Using this model, we will see the contemporary gendered expectations play out in a religious literary context. Through extensive analysis of the

hagiographical works and the represented literary shrines found in the narratives, this examination will proposes a more nuanced sense of conceptions of gender, childhood and the familial structure, extending beyond their designated cultural spaces, amid crises of displacement and obligation.

Allegorical texts and pilgrimages are inextricably linked in Middle English literature and many works adopt the concept of man as singular pilgrim, journeying through life in search of the Heavenly Jerusalem. This allegorical ideal is the central focus of chapter 5: "Allegory and the pilgrim family". Both Langland's well-studied *The Vision of Piers Plowman* and Guillaume de Deguileville's *The Pilgrimage of the Life of the Manhood* treatment of the allegorical pilgrimage is interrogated to draw out the contemporary medieval lay expectations and responses to paradigms set out in these texts. References to and depictions of marriage and kinship are numerous in Langland's work alongside the allegorical gestures concerned with pilgrimage. False pilgrims such as the well-known palmer, the thieving pair of Covetousness and his wife and the collaboration of the pardoner and the "commune woman" to create a false family on pilgrimage all offer glimpses of Langland's contempt and the general mistrust of pilgrimage in the Middle Ages. The issue of gender and pilgrimage is also brought to the fore in this chapter, as with chapter 4, with concerns centred on the mobile or wandering woman. This is examined in detail and explores Leigh Ann Craig's observation that:

> Medieval authors constantly asserted that women's travels outside of the enclosed and controlled space of the home and into the public sphere allowed them to indulge vices such as a greed, pride, lust, and deceit, to their own detriment and that of their families. Pilgrimage was regularly listed among types of problematic public excursions. (23)

The attainment of salvation, according to Langland, is based within the fulfilment of commitments within the home and domestic setting. Physical pilgrimage is to be replaced by a spiritual but immobile pilgrimage of correct intentions within the active life. Correct intent features throughout this examination. Intentions and oaths are often corrupted within the context of pilgrimage where sworn oaths to travel on pilgrimage to seek confession or intercession at holy sites are tainted by immoral behaviour and improper intentions. These improper intentions on pilgrimage challenge the concept of "trouthe" and feed into "*curiositas*". The pilgrim is thus consumed more by the temporal world and moves further away from a dedication to salvation and the divine.[5] Two morality plays, *Everyman* and *The Castle of Perseverance* are also examined in this chapter, demonstrating how the allegorical reading of pilgrimage can be sustained and enforced in contexts of theatrical performance. In these works, we observe a focus on the individual nature of the journey of the soul with the protagonist of *Everyman* realising that he cannot encourage family members and friends to accompany him on his final journey. The analysis of *The Pilgrimage of the Life of the Manhood* is concerned with the use of pilgrimage as a symbol of man's passage through life and questions the language used to deploy advice to live piously and gain entry into the Heavenly Jerusalem. References to the religious institutions of marriage and baptism in this work are addressed here as they highlight the inescapable worldly commitments on man's pilgrimage through life, thus extending the readership to both the religious and lay community.

[5] Chaucer's pilgrims in *The Canterbury Tales* demonstrate the combination of true intent on pilgrimage with corrupt and immoral figures, using the journey for their own entertainment and personal gains. Chaucer's Friar, Summoner and Pardoner are far from dedicated and devout pilgrims and are only part of the pilgrimage for their own gains. Even their tales reflect a form of "debasement of sworn brotherhood" (97, Strohm) thus exposing their lack of intent in all areas of their lives, not just pilgrimage.

The final chapter, "Mystical writing and the pilgrim family", engages with the works of both male and female mystics and their quasi-autobiographical experiences, including Walter Hilton's *The Scale of Perfection*, *The Shewings of Julian of Norwich, The Book of Margery Kempe* and *The Liber Celestis of St Birgitta of Sweden.* All of these offer an alternative interpretation of the spiritual pilgrimage through their somewhat different interactions with daily life and familial relationships. This chapter questions how family life and pilgrimage interact to influence the spiritual experiences of mothers – like Margery and Birgitta. It examines how they strive to balance earthly commitments with desires to live a more spiritual life. Our reading will explore how this devotion to both earthly and Heavenly matters is conveyed in their work and how it is recommended to the reader. This chapter gauges the differences that present themselves regarding the spiritual pilgrimage and the physical place-pilgrimage and also how spiritual relationships are depicted in familial terms between mystic and the divine.

Using methodologies ranging from studies of the liminal, gender and genre analysis and close reading, this study of texts and genres over the next six chapters will provide, in its scale, and in the juxtaposition of narratives and genres, new contextual perspectives on the interpretation of the literary pilgrimage. Pilgrimage received both positive and negative portrayals within these works. One overall observation is that the instructional texts and allegorical works portray pilgrimage as a disrupting force on the family, influencing transgressions or causing a distraction from more spiritual affairs. Romances narratives, hagiographies and some of the mystical narratives, however, portray pilgrimage in a more positive light where it can lead to familial reunions or heightened interactions with the divine. Conflicts between pious, spiritual and secular responsibilities are also seen across each chapter. Read alongside

pilgrimage, this also provides a contextual understanding of the readership of these Middle English texts, their expectations and their world. It will augment previous research in the areas of family and pilgrimage to reshape how we understand the medieval practice and its connection to familial structures.

Chapter 1: Warnings and Recommendations: Advice to the pilgrim family

From the twelfth to the fifteenth century, both parental advice and courtesy literature grew and developed to become one of the most popular kinds of didactic works. The texts examined here date from the later fourteenth century onwards and model medieval expectations of both society and literature in varied historical contexts. They explore the role and place of family in society, the position of women and also the function of pilgrimage not only as a religious practice but also as a secular pastime.

As many of these works cater for the instruction of young women, our reading of pilgrimage will invariably converge with the sexual politics of the Middle Ages. Using issues surrounding women and gender expectations, this chapter addresses medieval concerns and misogynistic interpretations of marriage and ultimately the notion of adultery. Pilgrimage and domestic duties associated with female social roles are thus constantly in conflict with each other in this genre, with pilgrimage often deemed as a negative influence. Along with the gendered implications of these works, the historical fact of the decline of pilgrimage is evidence of the effect of this negative portrayal of religious travel. Pilgrimage for both men and women was beginning to be viewed as a distraction from domestic commitments and as on outlet for transgressive behaviour. Lay piety was moving towards a focus on more stable devotional practices of contemplation and prayer within the home, thus forgoing long journeys to distant shrines. Morrison identifies this change in attitude as a movement "towards a more personal autonomy" (4) and attributes it to the introduction of the annual confession by the Fourth Latern Council in 1215 which she describes as a "watershed event for interior spirituality" (4). Domestic and personal

devotion therefore replaces the search for God outside of the home and this shift can be observed in the instructional texts in this chapter.

The popularity of didactic and instructional texts amongst the laity across Europe during the later Middle Ages is evident through the volume of texts written in a variety of vernacular languages including French, English, Italian and Spanish. Diane Bornstein ascribes this interest in such literature to five relating factors, which include:

> […] the encyclopaedic impulse to classify and define, the insistence upon hierarchy in political and social theory, the actual social mobility and instability of the time, the attempt of the aristocracy to affirm their position, and the rise of the middle class. (13)

Advice literature can prove a difficult area to define within strict boundaries (as with many medieval genres) as it can include works with divergent purposes and forms. For example, one work might emphasise the importance of living a moral, virtuous life (religious ideal) while another might concentrate on the correct running of a household (secular ideal). Cameron Louis explains that "advice literature of a predominantly practical nature rather than a moral one is generally treated under the term Courtesy Books" (2957). According to Louis, this isolates the texts that offer parental advice to instructions on correct behaviour in specific social settings, thus overshadowing issues of morality (3002). This definition is problematic in itself as parental advice can often shift from practical instruction to moral instruction, therefore demonstrating the difficulty and redundancy of attempting to completely segregate religious elements from the everyday lives of those in medieval society.

Advice literature was written for both men and women, boys and girls but its content can differ greatly between the sexes. According to Margaret Hallissy, it

"served the purpose of teaching men what kind of woman constituted the ideal and teaching women how they were expected to behave in order to approximate this ideal" (11). While young girls were prepared for a life of domesticity, boys were prepared for a public life, where they must learn the correct manners at the table, proper conduct among others of higher and lower social classes and how to behave when travelling. This ultimately defines the woman's place within the private setting of the home among her family while the man engaged with a more public role. This placement of the man outside the realm of domesticity can be observed in *The Boke of Curtasye*, a fourteenth-century poem.[6] This text, though not based specifically on familial instruction, offers us a necessary example of a didactic text that possesses a guide on pilgrimage, thus demonstrating the popularity of the practice. Part of this text describes the importance of fulfilling a promise to go on a sacred journey:

> To sayntes yf thou thy gate hase hygt,
> Thou schalle fulfylle hit with alle thy mygt,
> Lest God the stryk with grete venjaunce,
> And pyt the into sore penaunce. (201-204)

Such a promise would more than likely have been made for familial purposes – to ensure either becoming pregnant and the safe delivery of a child or the recovery of a sick child or relative. But the pilgrimage must be completed to ensure correct thanksgiving in case one incurs the wrath of God.

Traveller tips are also provided and describe the correct behaviour while in a "strange contré", with emphasis placed on the importance of humility, lack of greed and keeping to one's self:

> yif thou be stad in strange contre,

[6] From MS Sloane 1986.

Enserche no fyr then falle to the, *Seek no further than what is appropriate*

Ne take no more to do on honde,

Then thou may hafe menske of alle in londe. (231-234)

These two references to pilgrimage in *The Boke of Curtasye* are conventional in their address and could apply to both men and women. But the author directs specific instructions on how to behave on pilgrimage to a male audience from lines 285 to 310. He refers to such practicalities of pilgrimage as refraining from over-indulgence at the table and what to do if a man finds himself sleeping in the same bed as another man in a pilgrim's hostelry. This miscellany of advice also includes a description of how to conduct oneself in the company of a friar on pilgrimage. It ends with a stark warning that a house with a red-haired host or hostess should be avoided at all costs, leaving one to wonder what type of interesting pilgrimage this writer had been part of or had heard about.

Though not referencing family or providing instructions on domestic preparations for pilgrimage, we get a sense from this text of the expectations surrounding the practice and the gendered differences that exist for male and female pilgrims. In this particular text, there is no reference to the type of behaviour that women should exhibit while travelling, implying that the mobile woman is not a welcome or desired entity in medieval society. Even works written by mothers for girls advocate staying within the confines of the home. Pilgrimage was fast becoming seen as an opportunity for people to engage in sinful behaviour and "a potential cause of disorder" (Theilmann, 106). Girls were encouraged to express their piety and devotion at home where they could also fulfil their familial duties and remain with their husbands. This emphasis on the expression of obedience and deference towards husbands is undoubtedly the prerogative of male authors while any behaviour that

deviated from this expectation drew the criticism in the form of misogynistic depictions of sinful, unfaithful women. Piety and proper behaviour in the church, however, is one piece of advice that applies to both genders and a theme explored in greater detail later in this chapter.

Advice works written on conduct within the family were a popular form of literature in the Middle Ages. These were often written by parents for their children. In many cases, 'mothers' writing for their daughters may have been literary devices employed by male authors and could be perceived as a way to maintain control over the place of women in society from a young age. The types of instructions provided ensure that women remain dedicated to domestic life by clearly defining the prescribed female role in the home. Both *How the Good Wife Taught her Daughter* and *How the Wise Man taught His Son* were written during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and are found in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Ashmole 61, a manuscript driven by themes of family and kinship.

Ashmole 61 is a manuscript collection which demonstrates at a miscellany level what this study attempts to achieve in its approach across the genres of Middle English. It is a collection which comprises of forty one texts, all written in the vernacular and dates from the later fifteenth to early sixteenth century. Devotional and instructional themes weave their way through the narratives of the collection alongside comic texts. The variety of narratives builds a suitable compendium that a medieval middle-class family could turn to for both advice and entertainment. Consideration for the miscellany's target audience is clearly evident as family is a constant theme but the depictions of familial themes are far from stagnant.

The bonds between family members, parents and children, husbands and wives, appear throughout the forty one narratives. Lynn Blanchfield has extensively

examined Ashmole's scribe, Rate, and how he edits the miscellany for a family audience. She states that "family and piety are in the forefront of Rate's work" (74). Latin, if present, is used in a simplified manner and certain sections are divided for ease of access and readability on specific topics such as particular sins (Hardman, "Domestic Learning and Teaching" 32). Family as a worldly experience is examined and questioned and warnings are given on the love of family over spiritual affairs. Pilgrimage plays an important role in the collection alongside other devotional practices. *The Stations of Jerusalem* offers a guide for the pilgrim to the physical site of Christ's Passion. The text, however, also provides the family gathered together reading and listening to the narratives of Ashmole 61 with the opportunity to imagine and participate in a spiritual pilgrimage within the comfort of their own home.

This study considers a number of texts from this collection, including instructional works, *Sir Isumbras* and *Sir Orfeo*. It is a miscellany that is representative of the interconnection relationship of the duties associated with family and the role of pilgrimage and travel. For this study, I have chosen the works from the collection that fit within the parameters of family and pilgrimage. This, however, is not exhaustive, and more work could be carried out on the further associations of the texts that I have not addressed here.

The first works that we will read that model the politics of family and pilgrimage from Ashmole 61 appear early in the collection's arrangement and are instructional in nature and unavoidably family orientated. In *How the Good Wife Taught her Daughter,* a mother demonstrates her moral duty as she instructs her daughter on a number of issues including how she should conduct herself when walking about town. She also explains the correct way to run a household. As part of this instruction, the mother also characteristically warns her daughter "to be a gode

houswyfe" on numerous occasions and stresses "byde thou at home, my doughter dere" (77). The text does not mention pilgrimage or travel, thus affirming the necessity of a stable, stationary life for women. *How The Wise Man Taught his Son* also lacks any reference to the concept of pilgrimage. Advice on pilgrimage is therefore absent for both boys and girls in these two works. This absence may in fact demonstrate the contemporary lack of popularity for and decline of pilgrimage and therefore reflects the unwillingness of medieval parents to advocate going on pilgrimage for either gender. This is in stark contrast to the detailed description of correct conduct on pilgrimage found in *The Boke of Curtasye*.

By contrast, *The Good Wife Wolde a Pylgremage* reconciles family life and pilgrimage. It is a mid-fifteenth century poem, found in Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, MS Broghyntyn MS ii.[7] This poem provides an alternative example of the parental advice literature of the Middle Ages as it is the narrator herself who is preparing to go to the Holy Land and is thus providing advice on how her daughter should behave while she is away. It is a lay woman who is undertaking this pilgrimage. She, as a wife and mother, also has a family and domestic responsibilities. This reflects the concept of the active life and the attempts of figures such as Piers Plowman, Margery Kempe and Birgitta of Sweden, to balance secular commitments with a spiritual life which is examined in detail in both chapters five and six.

The title of the work, however, refers to her as being "The Good Wife" suggesting that not only is she a practical and caring mother who wishes to educate her daughter before she leaves, she is also a virtuous wife who will not abandon her duties for just any trivial excursion; she is going on a pilgrimage, a journey with a defined, religious purpose. Felicity Riddy defines the term "Goodwife" as "a term of respect; it

[7] Olim Porkington 10. For this study, I use the printed edition, found in *The Good Wife Taught Her Daughter: The Good Wyfe Wold a Pylgremage: The Thewis of Gud Women* and edited by Tauno Mustanoja.

is the counterpoint of "goodman," which means not only the male head of a household but a burgess or a freeman. The goodwife is both a virtuous woman and a citizen's wife" (68). She is depicted as a figure dedicated to her family but who cannot be there in person for them, resulting in the creation of this poem. Riddy explains that the poem:

> is not, presumably a literal address from a mother to a daughter, since a daughter living at home with her mother learns informally, by example and word of mouth; she does not need a text. It is when their relationship has been disrupted […] that a written text is required to mediate between them. (71)

The Goodwife does not give a reason for why she is going on pilgrimage but studies of the role of female pilgrims in the Middle Ages can provide an insight into potential reasons for a mother and wife to undertake such a journey. Morrison states that this work "reveals that women went on pilgrimage despite being mothers" (144). I would go one step further and argue that women went on pilgrimage because they were mothers, wives, sisters and daughters as they often sought out shrines and sites to perform acts of piety including thanksgiving and to petition the saints on behalf of their family members.[8] This reflects Leigh Ann Craig's assessment where her main inference is that familial obligations influenced women on pilgrimage:

> Women, despite the resistance to their 'wandering', were able to seek shrines and to request miracles and to publicize their experiences and their pilgrimages, so long as their needs and actions were understood to fit into their roles within the household as much as possible. (97)

[8] In chapter 3 of her work, Craig offers many examples in historical accounts and miracle stories of women who ventured on pilgrimage for the sake of family. Among the examples is a vowed pilgrimage to save a woman's nephew from drowning. Both her and her sister fulfil the vow and go on pilgrim to the shrine of Saint Agnes (79).

As we will observe in the final chapter, both Margery Kempe and Birgitta of Sweden have similar experiences to the female narrator and pilgrim of this poem as they attempt to balance their everyday commitments with their desire to express their devotion and spirituality through pilgrimage. Their true devotion to both spiritual and familial concerns is reflected in the narrator of the Goodwife who is about to undertake the long pilgrimage to Jerusalem. As her title suggests, she is a conscientious mother who leaves her daughter a detailed instruction manual on how to preserve her morality. She ensures that while she is praying for her daughter on this pilgrimage, this young girl will be able to follow the advice provided and uphold her worldly and spiritual virtue: "Let no merth ner jollyte this lesson frowe the swage/Then thou schalt have the blys of heyvyn to thy errytage" (81-2). She ensures that her daughter's virtue and integrity are catered for, even while she is absent. In this work, the narrator embodies the expected behaviour of the lay piety. This is demonstrated in the final lines of the poem where the Goodwife requests her daughter to "pray for me/A schort prayer wynnythe heyvyn, The Pater Noster and an Ave" (83-4). Family and lay devotion in the form of prayer both at home and while on pilgrimage are thus distinctly intertwined and the journey itself remains free from criticism.

The English translation of a fifteenth-century French text, *The Fyftene Joyes of Maryage*, provides a contrasting image to this 'good mother' and offers us an introduction to other works that contain misogynistic elements including *The Goodman of Paris* and *The Book of the Knight of La Tour Landry*.[9] As Kathrine Wilson and Elizabeth Makowski explain, "the veneration of the ideal woman,

[9] The authorship of the French source of the *Fyftene Joyes of Maryage*, entitled *Les Quinze joies de marriage*, was often attributed to Antoine de La Salle but, as Anne E.B Coldiron states, it is "now recognised as anonymous" (113). Coldiron identifies two possible translators for this work: Robert Copeland and Stephen Hawes (116).

culminating in the cult of the Virgin, appears to have paralleled [a] general decline in women's public power" (110). We can see this in depictions of marriage in misogynistic works where a woman is depicted as a gossiping wife who regularly leaves the house and travels for immoral purposes, leaving a long-suffering husband behind. This perception emphasises Eve Salisbury's observation in her introduction to *The Trials and Joys of Marriage* that "marriage, as an institution, was not always a stabilizing and orderly social force" (1), especially in literature. *The Fyftene Joyes of Maryage* relates to this juxtaposition of the Virgin Mary and the dishonest wife as it is "a parody of the fifteen joys of the Virgin Mary" (Morrison, 114). *The Fifteen Joys of Mary* was, according to Wilson and Makowski, "used as a prayer and a meditation - a persuasion to moral improvement by reflection and imitation" (143) while the *Fyftene Joyes of Maryage* is a misogynistic meditation on disobedient wives. We observe the distorting of a religious text, which offers comfort and solace to the reader, into a secular satire on the misfortunes of unhappy and ill-treated husbands. The concept of marriage and, by association, family becomes a mockery in this text as a result of the depiction of women's actions.

In the case of the *Fyftene Joyes of Maryage*, pilgrimage is not depicted as a virtuous influence on the institution of marriage. Corrupt wives take advantage of pilgrimage to leave their husbands at home and travel, often for the purposes of adultery; a theme that appears in both *The Goodman of Paris* and *The Book of the Knight of La Tour Landry*. The integrity of the family is damaged by the undertaking of a pilgrimage, contrasting with the Goodwife's pilgrimage above. In the Second Joy, the wife seeks to go to "many feestes and assembles eke/and also holy sayntes for to seke/on dyuers pylgrymages". She intends to leave her husband behind and travel with her "gossyppes", confirming that she indulges in further ill-advised and punishable

behaviour: idle talk. Familial integrity is decisively fractured as is the sacrament of marriage because this deceitful wife also intends to commit adultery once away from her home. Pilgrimage is classified in the same secular category as feasting, removing any religious significance from the practice. These occasions bring her away from the safety of her home. They also offer her the opportunity to be seen and also to flirt with and be distracted by riches offered by men. In a similar fashion to the Wife of Bath who desires "to see and eke be seen of lust folk" (552-3) by going to "vigilies and to processiouns" (556) and, of course, pilgrimages, while her husband is in London during Lent.

The wife of the Second Joy attempts to conceal her adultery by stating that her lover is her cousin. The narrator, however, subtly states that "yet it may soo be that this man is as nyghe kynne vnto we as vnto her". Adultery, disguise and concealment are associated with pilgrimage, a theme that will occur again in this and subsequent chapters. False familial figures are used here and in other texts to further emphasise the transgressive behaviours that pilgrimage can induce in those already predisposed to immorality. Pilgrimage in this case produces a corrupted familial structure in the liminal space that is formed on the pilgrim road. The religious significance of pilgrimage is overshadowed by her immoral behaviour. The wife's emphasis on family members when asked by her husband who she will travel with demonstrates not only her own deceptive nature but that of her relations and those who should offer more spiritual guidance including her godmother and godfather:

> My cosyon and my godfader also
> My god moder and many an other mo
> your moder in lawe / whiche is your wyues moder
> My good cosyn your wyfe / and dyuers other

Also the wyues of suche a place in dede

And your cosyn and hers haue ye no drede

Other there be mo / dwellynge in your strete

I dare well saye this company is mete

A kynges doughter for to be amonge

And be ye sure she wyll not tarye longe

The wife uses this comical list of members of pilgrim family to pacify and deceive her husband, insisting that he should not worry, fulfilling the narrative's misogynistic expectations.

We observe further transgressive uses of pilgrimage in the Third Joy as the husband must now contend with a pregnant wife and her entourage of gossips. She demands not only food and drinks for herself and her friends but also that her husband goes on pilgrimage to ensure her well-being and bring an end to her suffering:

Now lyenge in her trauayle payne and wo

This wyfe auoweth twenty waye and mo

On pylgrymage to go for her good spede

To be put out of her grete payne and drede. (Third Joy)

Pilgrimage, in this case, removes the husband from the home and allows the wife to spend time eating and drinking with her group of friends. The wife in the Twelfth Joy makes a similar demand as she encourages her husband to go on pilgrimage:

For whyder it pleaseth her hym out to sende

He shall go quyckely forthe / and there an ende

Unto suche sayntes as she auo we hath made

whiche to perfourme for her he wyll be glade

And whyder it be wynde / snowe hayle or rayne

Upon her byddynge shall he go certayne

This demand for her husband to fulfil her vows of pilgrimage allows her to commit adultery in his absence within her own home. Pilgrimage is a disruptive force and allows for the separation and subsequent distortion of the family both inside and outside of the home.

We can observe the husband's pilgrimage on behalf of a pregnant wife again in the Eighth Joy as "dooth his auowes make/To dyuers holy sayntes for her sake". The wife herself, having given birth to a healthy child, exploits the vows she has made to "our blessyd lady of Rochemadoure" and escapes from her mundane commitments by going on pilgrimage with her gossiping friends:

Unto the feldes then / to roue and playe
She and her gossyppes take the ryde waye
Where as they speke to go on pylgrymage
And fast they entrepryse for theyr vyage
For what thynge so the husbande hath to do
They care nothynge / ne haue regarde therto

Her plan to find an excuse to go on pilgrimage provides a humorous and not wholly unexpected depiction of a manipulative wife in a misogynistic narrative as she tells her husband that their child is "euyll at ease and seke" and she must seek an intervention and fulfil her vow made during childbirth. In this extended passage we observe her ability to mislead and distract her husband with worries concerning their child's health and her request to go on pilgrimage. The husband's reaction is unsurprising within the context of a misogynistic work, as he displays the appropriate reaction to such news - sorrow and concern in a fatherly manner:

Wherof the good man is as angrye eke

And sorowfull and cometh it to see

Whan he it seeth / the teres falle in his eye

For pure pytye / and thenne cometh nyght vpon

His wife quickly acts on her spouse's familial devotion and explains that "neuer shall I be at ease ne gladde/By god tyll I this pylgrymage haue made". She states that "because we do not seke/these sayntes therfore is oure chylde so seke". Her urgings end with a comical and ironic statement, considering the reasons for her true desire to go on pilgrimage: "My loue sayth he god knoweth well your good wyll/And myn also".

Familial integrity is again compromised by this wife's longing to go on pilgrimage. It is implied, like the previous Joys, that she is going on this pilgrimage not only to escape her household tasks but also to travel with a lover; a "gentyll galaunt is / the whiche shall do with ryght good wyll some seruyce her vnto". Expectations of both family and pilgrimage are distorted for the purposes of misogynistic principles to encourage women to remain passive figures within their marriages and fulfil their duties to husbands and households. Pilgrimage here is an inappropriate and unstable activity for women as it promotes deception and creates cuckolds.

The misuse of pilgrimage does not end with this, however, in the *Fyftene Joyes of Maryage*. Morrison observes that "by the late fourteenth century in England, pilgrimage was associated not only with religious activity, not only disguise, but also with subterfuge, lying and disorder" (111). This sentiment is echoed and exploited by the misogynistic ideals of the eleventh Joy where an unmarried, pregnant woman who is acting under the guidance of her mother, uses pilgrimage to find a father for her illegitimate child through devious means. True to misogynistic ideals, the narrator

invites judgement and contempt regarding the actions of this female pilgrim as she replaces true religious conduct with an intention to deceive. The family itself is depicted as a corrupting force in this Joy as her parents help the young false pilgrim plan her deception. The formation of the girl's future family will therefore be founded in deception and dishonesty.

In *The Fyftene Joyes of Maryage*, pilgrimage demonstrates contextual conflicts surrounding the practice and how these can be used to further the medieval misogynistic agenda. As already stated in the introduction, Morrison refers to these types of narratives as ones that "promote wifelessness as an ideal state" (115). The popularity of this edition of de Worde's publication of the *Fyftene Joyes of Maryage* highlights a contemporary appeal for such comedic misogynistic works. Mobile women were a threat to both domestic and social stability and conformity and thus were depicted as devious and lustful figures oftentimes with humorous consequences. The female pilgrim, according to Morrison, is a "subversive act since it defies being fixed. Its very nature is that of movement. Movement suggests change which suggests, in turn, the overturning of order" (99) and the patriarchal fear associated with this is clearly observed in both the *Fyftene Joyes of Maryage* and also the following group of didactic texts. These works, written by older men for younger wives and daughters continue to demonstrate misogynistic ideals and warnings, which repeatedly use the image of the female pilgrim as a cautionary example to promote meekness and obedience within the family home as suitable alternative behaviours.

Glenn Burger defines the changes that were occurring during the later Middle Ages in relation to social groupings and gender roles. By focussing on the ideal of the good wife, this type of work:

> Captures the productive, if troubling, hybridity of the gentry and urban elites she is associated with, straddling as these elites do the various divides of medieval life – public/private, fleshly/spiritual, subordinate/empowered, clerical/lay, aristocratic/bourgeois – in such profoundly ambiguous and contradictory ways". (25)

Burger's observations are clearly identified in two representative works, written by men for young women: *The Goodman of Paris* and *The Book of the Knight of La Tour Landry*. Common themes and concerns, specific to their class, are easily recognised, though one is written for a wife and the other written for daughters. *The Goodman of Paris*, is written by an older husband of the bourgeois class for his new wife who is only fifteen.[10] Though not a Middle English text, it informs us of contexts regarding the expectations of the ideals surrounding female behaviour. Divided into three sections and nineteen articles, it provides the young bride with instructions including the practicalities of household management and selections of recipes. It also includes advice relating to the spiritual needs of the young woman, such as when to pray and the importance of attending mass every day. The necessity for obedience and passivity towards one's husband are reaffirmed repeatedly throughout the work. The guidance offered is associated with how her behaviour will reflect on her husband.

In Article VI, the narrator offers an example of what can go wrong if a wife is not submissive to her husband. He warns of the destruction of "yourself and your husband and your household" (138), something already observed in the *Fyftene Joyes of Maryage*.[11] It is a tale of a married couple who are preoccupied with bickering over who is the wisest, noblest and worthiest. According to the Goodman, the fault lies

[10] The medieval French text of *Le Ménagier de Paris* was written between 1392 and 1394. The English translation, edited by Eileen Power, is used for this analysis.
[11] "ainsi puis je direque par deffault d'obéissance, ou par haultesse se vous l'emprenze , vous destruisez vous et vostre mary et vostre mesnaige" (126).

ultimately with the husband as he "had not lessoned her gently" (138).[12] This results in the wife drawing up a charter of appropriate conduct, which includes her own rights and also how she must behave towards her husband. This charter brings about a temporary peace within the home. When it is invoked during the couple's pilgrimage, the charter results in preposterous consequences. The narrator thus depicts, in a comical fashion, what can happen when women are allowed this level of control. While on the journey, the husband displays kindness and reassurance towards his wife when crossing over a ditch on a narrow plank. He falls into a deep pool and begins to drown. His kindly and patient nature in the form of a long suffering husband is a common feature of misogynistic medieval writing used to highlight the hardship men proverbially must endure at the hands of their wayward wives. He begs his wife to use her staff, a key item for the medieval pilgrim, to help him out of the water. She does not, however, come to his assistance as the correct action is not outlined in her charter and she continues on her journey:

> "Nay nay" quoth she, "I will look first in my charter whether it be written therein that I must do so, and if it be therein, I will do it, and otherwise not". She looked therein, and because that her charter made no mention thereof, she answered that she would do naught and left him and went on her way (93).[13]

Obvious black comedy aside, the staff does not remind her of the type of journey she is on, one that should be born of a desire to become a better Christian through meditation on pilgrimage. She is dependent on her secular document and unable to detach herself from it. Within the scope of misogynistic writing, this woman is too

[12] "[…] le mary qui au commencement, par aventure, ne l'avoit pas doctrinée doulcement" (126).
[13] "Nennil, nennil, dist-elle , je regarderay premiérement en ma cédule s'il y est escript que je le doie faire, et s'il y est, je feray: et autrement, non. Elle y regarda, et pour ce que sa cédule n'en faisoit point mention, elle luy respondi qu'elle n'en feroit rien, et laissa et s'en ala" (127-128).

literal minded and is incapable of interpreting written authority. She relies on a charter to the detriment of her defined role as a wife and care-giver.

This wife's reliance on the charter while her husband drowns is a farcical, misogynistic depiction of women who are allowed too much freedom: decision making is a difficult task and ultimately should be left to men. The irony of the wife leaving her husband to die so that she can continue with her pilgrimage continues to emphasise the simplicity of women's logic. The husband is eventually rescued by a passing lord while his wife is tracked down and burnt for her crime. This exemplum of the absurd is used by the narrator to emphasise the importance of complete compliance of a wife both inside and outside of the home. Leigh Ann Craig has addressed medieval writers' fear of the "unsupervised" woman" and how the consequences of this affect didactic texts:

> [they] would indulge their innate tendencies towards vice, and particularly toward lust, pride, greed, and deceit, to the detriment of their families and their souls. These concerns appeared as satirical portraits of mobile women, and their inverse can be seen in the monitions of courtesy literature. (18)

Rather than demonstrating the inverse which Craig suggests, the pilgrimage of this narrative demonstrates the "satirical portrait of the mobile woman". Though on pilgrimage, this wife does not exhibit a pious or moral character but becomes a comedic figure, making poor decisions with dire consequences for her husband. This description of a woman who has been given too much power and is also unwilling to display obedience towards her husband serves as a warning to the author's young wife to remain at home and fulfil the expectations associated with her gender. The religious journey allows for the removal of both the husband and wife from a domestic situation. Their placement outside of the woman's domain of the home serves to

highlight what can happen if a wife does not exhibit the proper and expected degree of obedience required of her gender and social position.

Pilgrimage also appears in Article VIII of *The Goodman of Paris* which considers the importance of discretion. The exempla found in this article focuses on the story of a woman who leaves her home to commit adultery with a young man. When it comes to her husband's attention that she has been abandoned by her lover, he sends two of her brothers to find her and instructs them to dress her in the manner of a pilgrim of Saint James, bearing cockleshells and wearing simple clothing. He tells those around him how he has sent his wife on a pilgrimage to Spain, on his spiritual behalf. When reunited with his wife in a joyful scene, he instructs her how to behave, stating that "she should visit all her neighbours one after another and show them all a joyful countenance" (186), displaying his devotion to his marriage and his capacity for discretion.

As we have encountered in *The Fyftene Joyes of Maryage*, the idea of pilgrimage as an exercise in devotion is forgotten in both of these didactic texts. In the second story, pilgrimage and familial integrity are bound together. The supposedly religious journey is no more than a distraction and a method to conceal a wife's adulterous ways. Any spiritual representation of pilgrimage is removed and the protection of the family's reputation becomes the focus of the husband. The use of pilgrimage in this deception reflects the decline in reputation and popularity which the practice was facing in the later Middle Ages. *The Goodman of Paris* was written in the late fourteenth century with its author no doubt observing the change in attitudes towards pilgrimage occurring across Europe. James Harpur acknowledges the many reasons for this shift in views:

> If in later medieval times pilgrimages were losing some of their spiritual rigour, as the criticisms of the Lollards and the tales of Chaucer imply, they were only following a general social trend in which, for example, the increase of commerce and growth of universities reflected and stimulated a heightened interest in the external world and knowledge for its own sake, and not necessarily for the sake of God. (125-126)

Pilgrimage, for the author of *The Goodman of Paris*, is a way in which a wife's adultery can be concealed, with her only connection to pilgrimage being the clothing which she is dressed in. The use of pilgrim garb as a disguise will be seen again in later chapters for a variety of purposes. In the case of these instructional treatises, the disguise highlights sinful and fraudulent behaviours that are central to the misogynistic depictions of the wandering women.

Written in French between 1371 and 1372 by Geoffroy de la Tour-Landry, the *Livre du chevalier de la Tour-Landry* was no exception to the ever-growing interest in moral, social and spiritual instruction within the family and domestic environment and bears some similarities to *The Goodman of Paris*.[14] It is a personal text where he is writing for his own daughters, differing from the likes of *The Boke of Curtasye* which is purely a manual for behaviour, directed at masculine values. Geoffroy de la Tour-Landry explicitly states that this book is written for the purpose of instructing his own three young daughters. His wife has died and it now falls to him, as father, to preserve their good name so that they can find a suitable match in marriage. His use of stories

[14] It was a popular text and more than twenty versions exist, written in French, English and also one German version, *Der Ritter vom Turn* (1493). Though William Caxton translated and printed an edition of this text in 1484, entitled *The Book of the Knight of the Tower*, this argument focuses on the anonymous Middle English translation, *The Book of the Knight of La Tour-Landry* found in London, British Library MS Harley 1764, which was completed during the reign of Henry VI. Thomas Wright, its nineteenth-century editor considers that it "displays much more freedom, and is more correct [than Caxton's translation]" (xiv). Even though this may be true and Caxton's translation is overly "literal", Wright also brings our attention to the fact that this "superior" text is from an imperfect manuscript, meaning that Caxton's text cannot be overlooked.

rather than lists of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, provide an entertaining read as they are often taken from the knight's own personal experiences or adapted from well-known stories including, among others, biblical narratives. Maintaining both a secular and a religious balance, the knight consults two priests and two clerks who advise him appropriately:

> …yede oute of the gardein and fonde in my way ii prestes and ii clerkes that y had. And y said to hem that y wolde make a boke of ensaumples, for to teche my doughtres, that thei might understond how their shulde gouverne hem, and know good from euell. And so y made hem extraie me ensaumples of the Bible and other bokes that y had […]. (3)

De la Tour-Landry, undoubtedly concerned for his daughters' moral and spiritual welfare, also has his own personal agendas from time to time including his prudent way of managing money. For example, he denounces the use of makeup and preoccupation with the latest fashion on the face of it for moral reasons but his preoccupation with the expense associated with the latest trends is never far from the reader's interpretation of his warnings. In chapter 12, he recommends dressing simply and avoiding new trends as it is "good to holde the mene astate of the good women" (30) because they will be able to easily maintain this fashion. In chapter 53, he insists that his daughters "putte no thinge to poppe, painte, and fayre your visages, the whiche is made in after Goddes ymage" (69-70).

He warns his daughters not to become too involved in worldly pursuits while at the same time maintaining a frugal lifestyle. This comes as no surprise, especially when the cultural norms of the day are more closely examined. Fathers were the decisive controlling force in the lives of their wives and children. Mothers may have educated their daughters on behaviour and morality but fathers had the last word.

Daughters were in their father's protection until such time as they were married and then their husbands became their custodians. Autonomy was very rarely an option until widowhood.

De la Tour-Landry's warnings also extend to another anxiety of the patriarchal system at the time: the social mobility of women. Women were becoming increasingly active in the public domain through the running of businesses, attending public events and of course travelling and going on pilgrimages. This, however, was problematic for those possessing the belief that women should not leave the confines of their home without a good reason, for example to attend mass. According to Craig:

> Medieval authors further expressed certainty that women's innately immoral impulses would express themselves through opportunities created by mobility. As a woman wandered, medieval authors pointed out, she was available to the public eye. Hence they assumed that her natural inclinations towards pride would entice her to use that public scrutiny as an opportunity to show off fine clothing. Not only would a woman enjoy being seen by others, but she would also have the opportunity to look around. (29)

The knight adheres to this belief to a certain degree but does not explicitly say "women should never leave the home". De la Tour-Landry dedicates chapter 25 to the most objectionable pursuits - "ladies who go to justs and pilgrimages". Pilgrimage, though only mentioned in the title of this section is linked to jousts and feasting, secular activities of purely entertainment value. We have already encountered this association with pilgrimage and secular activities in *Fyftene Joyes of Maryage*. This, therefore, demonstrates the evolution of later medieval social expectations relating to pilgrimage where it was considered a more secular pastime than a religious activity. Pilgrimage had descended into a form of entertainment, an excuse to travel and

"succumbing to *curiositas*" (Davies, 85) by the time de la Tour-Landry had written his book of instruction. As mentioned in the introduction, Craig defines *curiositas* as "the needless examination of worldly things which do not help one to attain salvation" (22) and its outlet had become pilgrimage. It had become merely another social occasion devoid of any spiritual devotion. As mentioned earlier the knight does not command his daughters to stay at home. He does, however, use examples of women with poor discretion and morals at such occasions to frighten his daughters. The advice provided in Caxton's translation of this work is almost identical to that of this anonymous text except that it omits this reference to pilgrimage in favour of "them that gladly go to festes and joustes" (23) thus further demonstrating the contextual decline of pilgrimage in Caxton's time. Pilgrimage had devolved into a more secular pursuit, one where entertainment and socialising merged with *curiositas*, leaving just the appearance of religious commitments.[15]

The knight is preoccupied with the role of true intentions and sincerity when undertaking religious activities in his book. Hypocrisy, like that seen in the characters of Chaucer's Friar and Pardoner (and also the model for Pardoner – the allegorical Faux Semblant from the Roman de la Rose) is a corrupting force on pilgrimage. False intent offers critics of pilgrimage an easy target and the opportunity to easily satirise the activity. In contrast to these debased characters, the knight focuses on praying to God for the correct reasons, which include thanking God rather than expecting requests to be granted. He also emphasises the importance of truthful intentions when attending services or going on pilgrimage. By concentrating on intentions in terms of the chivalric code, de la Tour-Landry reveals his own background as a knight. Raluca

[15] Diana Webb explains the decline of pilgrimage over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth as a combination of two factors, outward criticism of pilgrimage and the monetary aspect to a supposed a religious and spiritual ritual and the shift towards internal piety. (*Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, 260)

Radulescu concludes that "[…] piety is present in a knight's life at different intervals, and a good knight's life should always end with pious service to God" (83).

Chapter 28 portrays a raucous image of a gossiping, chattering congregation: "them that usen to clatre, speke, and iangle atte the masse, in whiche thei shuld haue herde the deuyne seruice of God" (40). De la Tour-Landry explains that a "holy hermite […] had a Chappelle of seinte Iohan in his hermitage" (40) to which many people came on pilgrimage. They did not, however, act in the appropriate manner but talked and "jangled" (gossiped) together. The outcome of this story, like that of the women who attend jousts and feasts is one that is intended not only to educate but also to frighten the intended audience as the hermit sees hellish visions of demons beside those who were talking during the service. This vision resembles the demon, Titivillus, who according to Vicki K. Janik, uses a bag to collect "hurried, mumbled, truncated, or otherwise butchered prayers and ecclesiastical language of religious worshipers" (478).[16] The visions, which the hermit experiences, serve as yet another warning to the knight's daughters on how they should behave at mass, whether it is at home or on pilgrimage.

The idea of wandering without purpose or only with sin or impiety in mind, such as gossip or adultery, is a concern of the knight's and, of course medieval society as a whole. A wandering woman is a liminal figure, on the peripheries of society, who was able to upset the gender expectations and confuse the expected roles. The Wife of Bath is, of course, the most well-known literary example of this type of figure. According to Sarah Salih, "the opposition between the good woman in the household and the bad woman in the street […] inform medieval texts of all genres, which write

[16] He uses this bag on Judgement Day to "force the idlers and slothful to confront their own linguistic sins. In other words he functioned as a kind of monitor, a means to enforce due respect for the language of the orthodox" (478). He appears and is the cause of distractions from prayer and devout behaviour in the morality play *Mankind*, examined in a later chapter.

gendered morality in spatial terms ("At Home; out of the House", 125). Chaucer's colourful portrait of the well-travelled and mobile Wife of Bath challenges and affirms these criticisms of women on pilgrimage and offers a glimpse into the secular, enjoyable and often bawdy aspects of religious travel thus binding it to the idea of *curiositas*. Their desire to travel and explore the world resulted in the concept of these liminal figures of wandering women who "violated or threatened to violate, the spatial boundaries that defined behaviour appropriate to their gender" (Craig, 23). It is therefore not accidental that de la Tour-Landry places two stories containing references to female pilgrims in close succession in his book.

Chapter 33 provides "an ensaumple of a countesse that euery day wolde here thre masses" (46). The knight emphasises the true nature and intent of this woman for his own ends of maintaining the passivity and correct behaviour of his daughters. He highlights her dedication to God, which is demonstrated through her attendance of three services each day. Her pilgrimage is almost the cause of her missing one of these three services as her chaplain falls from his horse. God, however, provides her with the opportunity to meet a saint on her journey who will say a mass for her for which she immediately gives thanks. De la Tour-Landry utilises the humble, devout and largely passive nature of this character to continue his fatherly education. Her liminality is approved of by the knight and condoned by God. This idealistic depiction of a woman on pilgrimage with nothing other than religious concerns would have been the patriarchal epitome of correct female behaviour when embarking on such a journey.

Chapter 34, however, does not paint pilgrimage or women in such a positive light. It is "an ensaumple of a yong lady that had her herte moch on the worlde" (47). The knight explains that she is married but is in fact in love with a squire. To be with

her squire she "made her husbonde to understond that she had uowed in diuerse pilgrimages" (47). The knight reverts to describing pilgrimage as an increasingly more secular activity where adultery can be easily committed, an aspect reminiscent of the adulterous wives in *The Fyftene Joyes of Maryage*. De la Tour-Landry ensures the purely secular, worldly motives for this travel in the story are overt. Both the squire and the young lady comport themselves only that "they might haue her foly speche and communicacion togedre, in whiche they delited hem more thane to saie praieres or seuice to God, or to hav ani deucion in her pilgrimage" (47). They attend the services associated with pilgrimage but spend the entire time making signs at each other and talking. This possesses similar elements to Margery Kempe's abortive affair where she is tempted by a "man wheche sche lovyd wel" (1.4.322) before Evensong on the eve of the feast day of Saint Margaret of Antioch. She is so distracted by his proposition before the service that she could not "heryn hir evyvnsong, ne sey his Pater Noster" (1.4.329-30). The ensuing guilt for her lustful nature results in a descent into despair for Margery where "sche thowt sche wold a ben in helle for the sorw that sche had" (1.4.350).

The behaviour of the young lady and the squire in the knight's story does not escape the attention of God and he strikes her down with a sickness. God's punishment of the lady in the knight's story demonstrates a prevalent attitude towards adulterous women while also providing an example easily interpreted by the knight's daughters. She does not leave the place of pilgrimage but uses it to begin her path to redemption. She receives visions that are then interpreted for her by a holy man. Her deceased parents appear telling her to love and honour her husband, highlighting the importance of family and marriage ties both to characters in the story and also the daughters for whom it is written. She is also shown scenes from hell and is then

addressed by the Virgin Mary. The figure of the holy man, who is interpreting these visions, reinforces the knight's concern with true intent as he says:

> Alle thei that gone on pilgrimage to a place for foule plesaunce more thane deucion of the place that thei go to, and couerithe thaire goinge with seuice of God, fowlithe and scornithe God and oure lady, and the place that their goo to, as ded the squire whanne he come to that place, and that ye hadde more plesaunce in hym thane ye hadde of the plesaunce of God, or on the pilgrimage that ye yede to. (50)

She reinvents herself as a good woman, pious and devoted to both her husband and God and is not tempted by the squire again. She returns from a point of liminality to live a life dedicated to domestic duties and fulfilling commitments of the active life.

This lady has exemplified the fear of the free and mobile woman present in the Middle Ages. She uses pilgrimage as an excuse to lie to her husband and leave her home to commit adultery, putting her moral and spiritual welfare in danger. The knight does not portray pilgrimage as the corrupting influence but as the apparatus through which she can sin and yet also recuperate. Pilgrimage is corrupted by those who go without true intent and the statement that de la Tour-Landry attaches to the end of his story serves as a warning to those who wish to go on pilgrimage:

> And therefor here is an example that no body shulde go in holy pilgrimages forto fulfelle no foly, plesaunce, nor the worlde, nor flesshely delite. But thei shulde go enterly with herte to serue God; and also that it is good to praie for fader and moder, […] for thie impetrithe grace for hem that be alyue. (51)

This story portrays pilgrimage as a force that can have negative effects on marriage, the family and also the soul if undertaken for wrong and impious reasons. Pilgrimages occur outside the safety of the domestic environs, in the liminal space beyond

society's conventional boundaries and de la Tour-Landry emphasises the dangers and temptations of this particular space for women.

The knight's persistent interest in the futility of fashion and makeup is tied to one final reference to pilgrimage in his book. Chapter 53 focusses on women who are more interested in getting dressed up to go on pilgrimage rather than concentrating on the true meaning of such travel. On arriving at their destination, however, they are prevented from entering the church by unseen forces. They must first renounce their interest in such worldly activities as fashion and dress in a plainer clothes. Once they achieve this, they may then enter the church. Here again is the presence of the knight's disdain for vanity and the constant reminder to his daughters to become more attentive to religious matters. This chapter reaffirms this father's concern for the spiritual well-being of his daughters and also his desire to lead a frugal lifestyle. In Caxton's translation, as with chapter 25, no direct reference to pilgrimage is made. It is merely a service attended at church. The place of pilgrimage within Caxton's society is again undermined and ignored.

For Geoffroy de la Tour-Landry, pilgrimage is a practice that must be undertaken with the correct intentions. He perceives it as a dangerous activity for the women in his family regarding their virtues but he does not outwardly condemn its place in society. He is aware that his daughters will have to leave the confines of the home occasionally and may even embark on a pilgrimage at some stage during their lives and so he prepares them for these experiences through these exempla, both positive and negative. His work offers a glimpse into the mind of a father who is not determined to keep his daughters completely hidden away from sight but who adopts a more practical approach in dealing with women's increasing desire for a life beyond the domestic boundaries. His controlling nature as regards clothes and worldly

possessions is overshadowed by this apparently more pragmatic aspect of his character.

Assessing attitudes towards pilgrimage in didactic literature demonstrates that it is a pliable theme reflective of the variety of human responses to it, and its exploitation by those to whom pilgrimage offered spiritual and social appeal. In the sexual politics of the Middle Ages, adultery, particularly adulterous wives, proved to be a popular trope within these narratives. Caroline Dunn explains that its popularity and in particular, the condemnation of female adultery "was far more serious, because it threatened legitimate production of progeny and proper descent of property" (120). It was, as Dunne continues to explain, "a wrong which in Medieval England transcended the boundary between Church and royal jurisdiction; it was a sexual sin but also a secular crime" (120). Pilgrimage, the tool used by treacherous women to achieve their adulterous goals, was experiencing its own dual existence as it straddled the cusp of both religious devotion and secular entertainment by the fourteenth century and therefore, could easily be tied with the notion of adulterous relationships. The patriarchal fears of the mobile woman were also ultimately linked to ideas of adultery and easily identified in the humorous yet misogynistic *The Fyftene Joyes of Maryage*. The complex intertwining of social concerns of the Middle Ages involving sexual activity and gender are also reflected in the varied depictions of pilgrimage within didactic texts based on parental advice.

The presence of pilgrimage in works such as *The Good Wife Wolde a Pylgremage, The Good Man of Paris* and *The Book of the Knight of La Tour-Landry,* which are concerned with parents providing guidance on areas ranging from social to spiritual, demonstrates its connection to familial issues and also its relevance in Middle English literature. *The Good Wife Wolde a Pylgremage* demonstrates how a

mother's responsibility must transcend an absence from the home, in this case in the form of a poem containing suitable advice for a daughter. Both the Goodman and de la Tour-Landry use pilgrimage in a selection of exempla, warning the young women who are the target of their advice of what they may face when leaving the safety of the home. Spiritual safety is far from assured in many cases within these works. These cautionary tales exhibit the desired patriarchal control over female family members, especially regarding their movements outside of the home, in the guise of concern for their spiritual well-being. *The Fyftene Joyes of Maryage* demonstrates what can happen if this desired patriarchal control is not implemented. In typical misogynistic style, the dilemmas of tortured husbands, bound by marriage to abusive, lazy wives depicted in these tales, seek to undermine familial values and women's opportunities to travel on pilgrimage.

Pilgrimage is exploited repeatedly in most of these didactic narratives to demonstrate transgressions that often result in the corruption and even the destruction of the familial and collective groups, therefore demonstrating an inextricable link between both the concept of religious travel and family.

Chapter 2: Incest and the pilgrim family

While chapter 1 examined courtesy literature that focussed on typical familial concerns such as the welfare of children, anxieties regarding mobile women and the worries surrounding adultery, chapter 2 shifts this focus to a more sinister and internal threat that comes from within the family: the taboo of incest. The direct juxtaposition of exemplary and romance modes has not been employed before in readings of medieval incest and pilgrimage. Elizabeth Archibald and Dee Dyas address the presence of pilgrimage and incest in both of their respective studies but they do not attempt to compare the ways in which both engage and influence the presence of the literary family. Their analysis often deal with well-known texts and well-trodden paths but they do not attempt to seek the patterns that can exist between the two or what the differences between these genres reflected contemporary social issues during the Middle Ages.

This chapter, however, demonstrates how differently pilgrimage and incest interact with each other at a generic level and how it impacts on the families of these works. At its simplest level, pilgrimage is the cause of incestuous behaviour in the exempla, typifying late medieval social and religious anxieties: lustful women, domestic destruction, and aimless travel. Though entertaining, these works must still retain a shock factor and a lesson in correct behaviour for their audience. In the romance narratives, however, pilgrimage is the unifying force for families where women are forced into exile-like pilgrimages and men under penitential pilgrimages. They are texts which focus on a joyful ending, despite the threat of incest and an initial separation of family members. On closer inspection, however, we will see how a gendered approach to the examination cannot be avoided, observing the differences between male and female pilgrim figures and their experience with incest.

In a similar manner to modern reactions to incest, medieval society recognised the transgressive act as a social taboo. This instilled a complex and diverse set of anxieties in medieval readership where incest could appear in any genre. The medieval versions of the story of Judas, for example, reveal the place of incest as a literary device.[17] In a plot reminiscent to that of *Oedipus Rex*, Judas kills his father and marries his mother. This act, though unwittingly committed, sets Judas up as the appropriate and expected betrayer of Christ, according to Richard A. McCabe (43). Through these acts, and his eventual suicide, he "comes to embody the ultimate corruption of the flesh" (McCabe, 44). This example demonstrates that the horrifying nature of incest was often used to instil fear and, especially for a Christian audience, instil the fear of committing such a sin. It was also used as a means to denounce those who society and the Church determined to be threats, including some kings, popes, religious minorities and heretics and ethnic groups such as the Irish and the Welsh (Archibald, "Incest" 400). Such denunciations demonstrated how incest was understood in the Middle Ages and how contemporary anxieties could be manipulated using this taboo as a threat to morality. Corruption coming from within the family also tied into medieval fears concerning the "other" and according to George Duby, worries associated with incestuous unions were often "linked to the fear of begetting monsters […]" (*Love and Marriage in the Middle Ages*, 172). Incest was therefore linked to the Deadly Sin of lechery and was a popular device among preachers and clerical writers when attempting to demonstrate that even those who committed such a monstrous sin could still be redeemed if they were genuinely repentant (Archibald, *Incest and the Medieval Imagination*, 7).

[17] Found as part of the story of Saint Matthias in the *Legenda Aurea* by Jacobus de Vorgaine that was translated by Caxton in the 15th century.

The Church's deliberation during the Middle Ages over the appropriate degree of relationship at which family members could marry ensured that this was not only a societal and legal issue of consanguinity but also an issue of morality. This deliberation eventually led to the Fourth Lateran Council's classification of an incestuous relationship as a union with a relation of the fourth degree, which includes cousins, or closer. Until the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, incest was identified as a relationship of the seventh degree. Medieval regulation of marriage not only focussed on unions between blood relatives but also on those with a spiritual connection such as godparents and godchildren. Archibald observes that even a social connection or an acquaintance could also deem a marriage incestuous and up until the thirteenth century: "most people living in small communities could not legally marry anyone they knew" (*Incest and the Medieval Imagination*, 41).The idea of incest would, therefore, have been openly discussed in medieval society and this openness would ultimately have been reflected in the literature of the time.

The word incest rarely appears in Middle English literature and according to Elizabeth Scala, "while incest was a 'topic', it was not a term often used. The sin we would designate as incest was more often dealt with under other rubrics, such as fornication or adultery" (*Incest and the Medieval Imagination*, 1240); in other words, sins associated with lechery and lustful behaviour. This in turn meant that such sinful conduct would have been under the scrutiny of the Church and appeared in many sermons and religious writings.

Classical stories containing incestuous affairs would have held some influence over medieval authors but, as Archibald explains in her chapter "Incest Stories", "[…] medieval readers and writers seem to have preferred home-grown versions, no doubt in part because they could accommodate concerns arising from the Christian doctrines

and beliefs" (21). The concept of consanguinity was a significant issue in the Middle Ages and canon law was becoming increasingly more involved with the suitability of marriage partners among the lay community. Medieval writers were more willing to identify and discuss the variety of incestuous unions and are summed up below:

> Today we tend to think of incest as abuse of vulnerable young women by aggressive older men, but medieval writers were quite ready to accept that a mother might want to sleep with her own son, or that a sister might be in love with her own brother (a daughter's desire for her father is rarer, though it does occur. (Archibald, "Incest Stories" 17)

In the first half of this chapter, we see how didactic literature assesses this complex interpretation amongst a variety of incestuous relationships. These exempla portray pilgrimage as a damaging force on the family, especially when influenced by incestuous relationships and desires, usually fuelled by implied female lustfulness. The second half, however, diverges from this undesirable depiction of religious travel. As it progresses from exemplary texts to romance narratives, the analysis demonstrates that pilgrimage is not always a destructive force as it can often reunite families that have been torn apart by incest. The gendered experiences of pilgrimage are again reinforced. Our expectations surrounding the misogynistic portrayals of women in medieval literature, especially within the exempla, continue to be realised through further readings of texts where it is typically the woman who plays the transgressive role and initiates the incestuous relationship.

These works serve the misogynistic agenda and reflect the contemporary attitude of medieval culture where a woman's role is limited to the home. The courtesy and didactic literature examined in the previous chapter provides us with warnings of what can happen when a woman leaves her home for questionable reasons. The

didactic texts examined in the first part of this chapter, however, realise the dangers that the lustful female, who was feared and condemned by the patriarchal system, can unleash within the domestic sphere. These attributes, paired with the already questionable pursuit of pilgrimage create an environment where the worst transgressions can occur, thus aligning the dangers of pilgrimage and unnecessary travel with the dangerous of the mobile and dangerous woman.

Though they still continue to fulfil a misogynistic expectation where women are submissive victims, the act of pilgrimage is realised in a more positive light in the romance narratives. Themes concerning displacement and exile are interrogated at length with readings of the motif of familial separation and reunification through quests and pilgrimage. In many instances, it is the father who is responsible for initiating the incestuous relationships with his daughter. These daughters, who are frequently passive figures and continue to contribute to the expectations associated with misogynistic literature, are displaced or are exiled from their home thus commencing a life resembling that of a pilgrim. A real pilgrimage of devotion is often undertaken by the male characters for a variety of reasons, usually with a focus on seeking penance and mostly instigate a recognition and reunion scene with loved ones who have been previously lost through exile or displacement. The texts discussed here do not follow an identical pattern but each offer alternatives and conflicting models of the crises of pilgrimage in the literary family.

The importance and influence of Middle English exempla in their contemporary society cannot be underestimated as these literary works would have been widely circulated in various tale collections and read both in public and private spheres. Thomas Cooke highlights this by explaining that “the repetition of stories in […] collections reveals their widespread and intertwining connections and source-

sharing" (3269), thus signifying their prevalence and popularity among medieval audiences. Collections of short narratives were common during the Middle Ages and even translated works from across Europe were gathered together resulting in a very large corpus of extant tales found in collections such as *The Alphabet of Tales* and the *Gesta Romanorum*.

Such collections of tales possess many different genres but it is exemplary narratives that appear most frequently. According to Cooke, "exempla were not new to the Middle Ages; such illustrative stories go back to antiquity. Nor was the religious use of exempla new to the Middle Ages" (3269-3270). Their popularity was due in part to their demonstrative role in sermons of clergymen and also to their inclusion in collections, written both in Latin and the vernacular. This variance in their position as both written and oral works can pose some problems with interpreting their generic and their contextual role. Cooke explains that:

> The exempla as they have come down to us in these collections are not, of course, in the precise form in which a medieval audience heard them. As brief written texts they were really only preacher's aids or models, to be delivered according to the talents and disposition of individual preachers and the circumstances of the occasion. (3270)

Differences ranging from levels of piety to their use of extraordinary events can be found within these works and a description of these differences is provided by Larry Scanlon who distinguishes two types: the sermon exemplum and the public exemplum. Scanlon not only provides a definition of types of these exemplary tales, he also verifies their importance regarding the relationship between the medieval Church and the laity:

> […] the dominant theme is clearly the Church as the institutional focus of lay devotion. Both the exempla concerning church ritual and those concerning sins and virtues should be seen as thematizing the increased engagement with the laity that occurred in the wake of the Fourth Lateran Council, and in particular with the stress on confession and penitence. (70)

Exempla therefore sought to create a dialogue between the Church and the lay community in an accessible and easily-disseminated manner, focussing on religious practices, such as confession, to counteract sinful behaviour. Exemplary tales remained a popular genre up until the later Middle Ages, particularly in association with religious didactic discourse. Such works slowly fell from favour, however, in the fourteenth century due to opposition of the Wycliffites to their use in sermons.

The representation of incest in medieval exemplary works differs greatly from the incest depicted in romance narratives as it is used in its most extreme capacity as a didactic device. It draws on the audience's existing expectations concerning lecherous behaviour and uses incestuous unions to cause shock, repulsion and horror at both the act itself and its consequences. The influence of incestuous affairs also differs in its relationship to gender roles in exemplary texts. Women in these didactic texts are associated with deliberate and intentional incestuous affairs. These subversive characters use the distracting and dividing force of pilgrimage to their own advantage, resulting in the destruction of the bonds of family. The shock and revulsion that their actions stimulate in the medieval audience is created by the perversion of the space that they are supposed to maintain and care for: the home. Archibald explains this within contemporary misogynistic principals:

> the initiator of a consummated liaison known to both partners to be incestuous is more likely to be a woman than a man: women's appetites were notoriously insatiable, and like their ancestor Eve they had no self-control. (6)

The type of wayward and insatiable woman who is associated with incestuous desire is sometimes connected with miracles attributed to the Virgin Mary. In chapter 466 of *The Alphabet of Tales*, a mother who has developed a strong bond with her daughter's husband is worried that "kurste tongis" (318) are spreading rumours, accusing them of an incestuous relationship. Though no incest occurs in this text, the mere threat of people believing the rumours is enough for the woman to kill her son-in-law and in a horrifying scene, she returns the son-in-law to the bed he shared with his wife,. On the revelation of her crime, she is condemned to death but the Virgin Mary intercedes for her and she escapes her fate. Unnatural familial closeness is demonstrated here and an uneasy and distorted domestic scene is created by returning the dead son-in-law to the marriage bed. The mere threat of incest has caused a horrific reaction but it also permits the demonstration divine intercession for those who are deemed to be truly contrite.

Alongside warnings regarding the transgressive female, exempla also seek to demonstrate the power and importance of contrition and forgiveness. This is in stark contrast to the women in romance narratives who are usually the victims, attempting to stave off a father's advances. This illustrates male rapacity at its worst, but seemingly shows its violence only in the context of incest.

The exploitation of incest by the structures of pilgrimage and travel forms the basis of the first part of this chapter, where the variations in the gendered roles of pilgrims in these particular texts have largely gone unnoticed. Within this representative range of exempla taken from *The Alphabet of Tales*, we see an

unrecognised son dressed as a returning pilgrim, a father leaving on pilgrimage which creates an opportunity for a mother to commit incest with her son and a daughter who murders her father before he leaves on a penitential pilgrimage. The final tale included in this examination is *The Incestuous Daughter*. This particular work appears in *The Alphabet of Tales* and also in another collection from the fifteenth century, *Jacob's Well.*[18]

In "The life of Secundus Philosophus" (tale 710 of the *The Alphabet of Tales),* we encounter an incestuous relationship between a mother and son.[19] For the mother, this act is unintentional and the incest is initiated by her son as part of a test. This tale explores the life of the young Secundus who leaves home to study philosophy. During his studies he is told of the lustful nature of women and 'hard tell that evur-ilk woman was incontinent' (476). When he eventually returns home as a young man he goes unrecognised within his household and passes for a pilgrim as he arrives with the expected accessories; the 'skrypp and a staff' (477). Like the tale in *The Goodman of Paris* where the husband disguises his wife as a pilgrim to hide her adulterous tendencies, Secundus uses pilgrimage and associated accessories as a disguise, causing the corruption of its spiritual purpose and of his family.

In this case, the pilgrim disguise, and its associated liminality enhances Secundus's anonymity, which he exploits in a test to confirm whether all women are lustful. While staying in his home as an unknown pilgrim, he succeeds in seducing his mother and lying with her in her bed. He does not consummate the union, stating "It is not wurthi to me to fyle þat vesselł at I come oute of" (447). His mother, however, having learned the true identity of her mysterious bed-fellow, "fell in a deade

[18] This collection of sermons by an anonymous author, from the mid fourteenth century, is located in a unique manuscript copy, in Salisbury Cathedral Library MS 103. It also appears in the Dux Moraud as a text fragment, extant in Bodleian Library MS Eng. Poet f.2. on the reverse side of a fourteenth-century Assize Roll.

[19] A fifteenth-century translation of the *Alphabetum narrationum*, written by Etienne de Besançon

swownyng & spak neuer wurd after" (477). Her passivity in the face of seduction is not excused by the narrator or by God, and her supposed lustful nature is tested to its limits. The actions of both mother and her disguised son result in their silence for the rest of their lives: "he vnderstude þat his wurdis was cauce þeroff, and he kepiḋ sylens & wolde not speke" (477). This atonement through silence thus emphasises the gravity of the aborted incestuous relationship

The pilgrim Secundus offers a sense of the fear associated with the corrupting and dangerous force of the foreign and the unrecognised within the domestic environment. The liminal space from which the returning pilgrim comes from threatens the concept of rigid social constraints and expectations, reinforcing medieval fears of the unknown and "otherness" and the chaos that it could bring. The false pilgrim in this case serves as a warning against the blurring of lines between the liminal other and the boundaries of the home. The decline of pilgrimage was fuelled by views that such travel and mobility provided the opportunity for transgression that would not be possible within a stable community. As Diane Webb explains, "the abolition of pilgrimage would clearly serve to restore both theological propriety and a wholesome social discipline" (*Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, 256). The religious purpose of pilgrimage in "The Life of Secundus Philosophus", similar to the tale of bickering spouse in *The Goodman of Paris*, is undermined. The reader of this exempla is exposed to the idea of an untrustworthy pilgrim who easily exploits the supposed female lustfulness. The disguised Secundus, bearing all the paraphernalia of pilgrimage brings a transgressive influence from the liminal space to the stability of the home.

An earlier exemplum found in *The Alphabet of Tales*, chapter 320, offers the depiction of another close relationship between a mother and son. She is described as a

"wurthie womman" (221) at the beginning of the story. The incestuous relationship is preceded by her demonstrations of love for her son, which include constant physical contact. Her husband decides to go on pilgrimage to "a fer land", a decision that allows his wife the opportunity to fulfil her incestuous desires with her son. This corrupted relationship eventually results in pregnancy.

Pilgrimage, therefore, has led to the degeneration of family. The model of kinship here becomes a perverse image of expectations concerning familial love. The father's absence from the social construct of the family in favour of the liminal community on pilgrimage disrupts the reader's expectations and again reinforces the idea of stability and safety within the established community. The narrative serves as a warning of what can happen when the patriarchal head of the family and household travels away from his life and his responsibilities. The mother cannot restrict her lustfulness. As with the Secundus narrative, pilgrimage facilitates the worse of humanity's sinful behaviour and inverts the expected image of the family.

The mother, however, exhibits repentance for her sinful behaviour by praying to God and Mary for help when she realises that she is pregnant. But she does not fully trust in God to forgive and provide for her. Once the child is born she kills it, heaping mortal sin upon sin. Pilgrimage and the subsequent incest, is the inadvertent means for infanticide. The mother's transgressions do not go unnoticed and she is brought to court to atone for her actions. Her interrogation is carried out by a demon in disguise.[20] Her eventual redemption, made possible by sincere contrition and divine forgiveness, can be seen by all at court. This includes the demon who after seeing her sorrow and display of penance, claims: "This is not thatt synner nor that man-queller that I accusid; ffor this is a holie womman, and Marie, the moder of Criste, stondith by hur

[20] The demon is dressed "in habett like a clerk" (222).

& kepis hur" (223). Her confidence in the power of penance and contrition allows for her to be "delyverd", resuming her initial moral reputation.

Pilgrimage is a device used in this work to remove the husband and father from the familial environment for what we can assume is a virtuous reason (his purpose for travelling is not described). The undertaking of a pilgrimage prompts the beginning of the sinful acts that occur once a family member is removed from the safety of the domestic confines. Paternal absence, legitimised by the piety associated with pilgrimage, emphasises but also facilitates the depravity and lustfulness of those left behind. Pilgrimage is the catalyst for the destruction of the family on a series of levels. Only the mother's true feelings of contrition and repentance, through confession, lead to her final salvation.

This tale therefore reflects the expectations of the audience of the exemplum as it moves from portraying complete familial disorder using shocking subject matter to depicting the salvation of an individual soul when true repentance is demonstrated. Lay piety and religious teaching ultimately focus on the notion of personal salvation through prayer rather than activities such as pilgrimage, a concept that we will see in the later chapters on allegorical works and mystical writing.

Moving from immoral mothers to immoral daughters, *The Tale of the Incestuous Daughter* is an exemplum that begins with the destructive force of incest on the family and ends with a moral concerning the importance of penance, contrition and forgiveness for the individual for the worst transgressions when there is apparently no hope of salvation.[21] Just the mere mention of pilgrimage in the hope of salvation

[21] *The Incestuous Daughter* exists in three manuscripts; Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Ashmole 61, University Library Ff.5.48 and Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson poet. 118. But, as George Shuffelton emphasises: "they may best be seen as three copies of the same text with considerable variation" (489). The version used here is taken from Carl Horstmann's nineteenth-century collection of Middle English texts, *Altenglische Legenden*: *neue Folge*. This edition provides the most complete version of the tale using both the Ashmole and Cambridge versions as its source.

results in patricide. The wife's virtuous character - the "best woman [..], And fulle of almys-dedis" is juxtaposed with the daughter's descent into a debauched existence and 'wanhope'(line 21) or despair, also considered a sin as it demonstrated lack of belief in God. Her temptation to seduce her father is brought about by "the fende of hell" who "put in hir a harde wille/Hur fadur luf to wynne" (line 26-27). The father is also encouraged by the same fiend to desire his daughter and commit a "dedly synne" but it is the emphasis on the daughter's moral destruction and the ultimate destruction of her family that drive the narrative.

Both the 'wanhope' and the temptation experienced by the daughter demonstrate her detachment from her family and from the protection of the divine, casting her into a liminal space that is quite the opposite of the one a pilgrim would expect to experience. The result of her incestuous affair with her father is the birth of three children whom she subsequently murders, a reaction that we have previously seen in the exempla. The pregnancies and subsequent murders of the children are only the beginning of the daughter's descent into depravity. Incest is the precursor to a host of intra-family homicides: her babies and also of her mother who uncovers the affair.

The girl's father decides to seek forgiveness for the sins that he has committed and is instructed by his confessor that if he truly repents, he must go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He is offered the opportunity by his confessor to seek forgiveness by journeying to the place "wher god was whik (*quick*) & dede" (105). Penitential pilgrimages were a "feature in a repertoire of available penalties" for bishops and archbishops (*Medieval European Pilgrimage*, 235) according to Diane Webb. Rome was often the pilgrimage destination for those who committed incest.[22] On his return

[22] One example used by both Webb and Sumption is that of Alexander III, who on discovering that incest was a common occurrence in Sweden, instructed the bishop of Uppsala to issue those accused of the sins of parricide, infanticide, bestiality and incest to travel to Rome to visit the shrines of "Saint Peter and Saint Paul, that in the sweat of their brow and the labour of the road they may avoid the

from confession, the father in *The Tale of the Incestuous Daughter* rejects his daughter's advances. In retaliation, she verbally attacks her father and claims that it was at his behest that she murdered her children and her mother:

> Fadur, wyckud man,
> Haste thou tolde the prest oure synnes ychan,
> Fulle ille thou shalt hit lie.
> Thou made me furst my thre childur to sloo
> And my dere modur also
> To the hert forto smyte. (121-126)

This is the only mention of the father's demand that she carry out these atrocities, which may lead the audience to question who is the victim in this tale. Her resentment and cruelty towards her father later in the text, however, complicates seeing her as a victim.

Having outlined his plans and desires to go on a penitential pilgrimage, however, this repentant sinner is murdered by his daughter. Though he has confessed and acknowledged his depravities, he is denied his opportunity for atonement. The pilgrimage is thus aborted. He is ultimately damned for his actions with his intended penance undone by his daughter's vengeance and despair – a dramatic satisfaction, but a moral outrage. Incest, dramatically and luridly, destroys the fabric of this family, beginning with the subversion of the father-daughter relationship and the reversal of generative and sexual roles. Contrary to nature, the daughter kills her life-giver, her father rapes his offspring. Through her actions, the incestuous daughter condemns both of their souls to damnation, destroying familial bonds not only in this world but

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wrath of the heavenly judge and earn his mercy" (Webb, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in the Medieval West*, 56).

also in the next – possibly fitting with an audience's expectation that the father is spiritually unqualified to be redeemed by pilgrimage.

Her life of 'wanhope' after her destruction of her entire family is summed up in the line "she hopid neuer heuen to wynne, for the synne that she was inne" (166-167). She leaves her community with three men of dubious character; a corrupted version of the family she has lost. George Shuffleton believes that these "felawes thre", serve as a reminder of her actions and of the three sons she has borne and murdered (489). Having left her home, the daughter is also living a depraved life of displacement, on the peripheries of society thus replicating a distorted version of her father's forcibly abandoned pilgrimage.

Unlike her father, she does not outwardly seek forgiveness but happens upon it by accident. She encounters a bishop who can see visions of demons surrounding her, "Foure fendis […] hongyng fast aboute his hals" (199-200). These demonic figures, who bind her in chains, are an externalised portrayal of the corruption of her soul and can only be seen by the bishop. He finally encourages her to confess her deeds and recognise the error of her ways. Her sorrow for what she has done purges her of the demons that surround her, her tears breaking their bond: "Terys felle her een froo/Down on hir brest cowthe thei goo/Hur colars thei alto-breke" (226-228). She dies and goes to heaven, having first confessed and repented her sins before the bishop, demonstrating that no sin is too large for God to forgive.

This would have been a shocking story for people to hear, built on the most extreme possibilities of human behaviour but it would certainly have provided a preacher with a captive audience if it had been used as an exemplary tale during a sermon. It is likely that this particular tale would have been more frequently found in

collections and miscellanies of written tales created for reading in a domestic and family environment rather than the catalogue of a preacher (because of its length).

This is verified by its inclusion in MS Ashmole 61. The context of the version found in this particular manuscript remains firmly rooted in its focus on family. There is, according to Shuffelton, a "strong interest in domestic life, both its duties and its joys" (11), addressing varieties of familial contexts within a selection of genres. Ashmole's *The Tale of the Incestuous Daughter* presents a familial structure that is not observed in other works in the miscellany. The family is destroyed by the daughter with little hope of a reunion or an interceding miracle. As Shuffleton explains, it is "the salvation of the individual and not the family unit" (489) that is highlighted. Again, the destruction of the family allows for a greater development concerning the redemption of the individual's soul; a progression from the influence of familial bonds to a more inward focus. This reflects Dyas's observation that "the primary meaning of pilgrimage within Christian thought is concerned with the journey of individual believers through an alien world to the homeland of heaven" (247).

The inclusion of *The Incestuous Daughter* within the miscellany of texts in Ashmole 61 could be for didactic and entertainment values for its gentrified owners. But this focus on the individual's salvation means that the tale, like other texts found in the collection such as *The Station's Of Jerusalem* and *Stimulus Consciencie Minor*, might have offered readers time to meditate and reflect on their own sinful existence.[23] This movement from the influences of the collective to personal salvation is a theme that will appear again in the discussion of allegorical and mystical texts.

Other patterns of familial and matrimonial dysfunction, such as adultery and murder, appear in the versions of *The Jealous Wife* and *The Adulterous Falmouth*

[23] *The Tale of the Incestuous Daughter* is the only work in the entire collection of Ashmole 61 that contains references to incestuous behaviour.

Squire in Ashmole 61. Using the most radical examples of man's capacity for sin, these stories emphasise the efficacy of contrition whatever the transgression may be. They demonstrate that 'wanhope' can force humans further away from their Heavenly reward but appropriate trust in God's ability to forgive even the most heinous crime will bring them closer to the divine. The stability of God's love is shown repeatedly in the face of the most extravagant permutations and corruptions of human love.

Medieval romance narratives offer a different interpretation of medieval views concerning incest and pilgrimage than those we have examined in the exemplary tales. Women in romance narratives that reference incest tend to be depicted as victims rather than the lustful initiators or willing participants of incestuous desires. Unlike the examples above, they are idealised models of female behaviour. Violence or outspokenness against incestuous desires on the part of the female heroine is not expected. Instead, they must suffer in states of exile and relinquish control over the journeys that are forced upon them. The men, however, use pilgrimage as a response to the sins, including incest that they have themselves committed and are fully in control of their travels. In most cases, it is the fathers who begin to desire their daughters, sometimes in response to losing their spouse. All of the relationships discussed here, with the exception of Gower's "Apollonius of Tyre" remain unconsummated, which is in stark contrast to episodes of incest found in the exempla.

The incestuous threat in romance works often propels the daughters, such as Emaré, from their homes, initiating a familial narrative space of travel and adventure for the audience. Kathryn Gravdal explains that:

> In a literary culture in which the female character is ubiquitous but carefully confined to the private space of the home, the heinous incest story is one medieval narrative that projects the heroine out from the setting of the

> patriarchal home. The incest narrative affords the medieval poet a wealth of gendered plot possibilities otherwise absent from romance or lyric texts of this time. (289)

In this section, Archibald's 'Flight from Incest' motif is addressed amid the operation of gestures of familial separation and reunion. The present discussion will delve deeper into the contextual implications of incest in medieval literary works, examining specifically how family contours of journeys and pilgrimage are re-shaped by the presence of incest.

In stark comparison with the devious and often cruel women found in tales and exemplary narratives where incest is deliberate and intentional, the heroine of *Emaré* is good, virtuous and possesses no inclination towards wanhope' nor a desire to commit any sinful act. *Emaré* is an example of one of the texts that form part of the popular Constance-group.[24] The other texts from this group include *Erle of Tolous*, *Le Bone Florence of Rome*, *Lay le Freine*, *Octavian* and *Triamour*; each possesses a strong focus on family (Knight, 110). Andrea Hopkins develops this further, explaining that this group of texts that are influenced by folk tales "are primarily concerned with the enforced separation, undeserved sufferings and subsequent joyful reunion of a family" (123) while Michael Johnston terms this motif as "Families under Duress". The number of references to this theme within romance scholarship determines its popularity.

Approaching a reading of these works using a gendered analysis reveals a host of expectations and contemporary social issues. There is no need to warn readers of

[24] The Constance group is a group of romance narratives, histories, tales and legends where a young noble woman (mother or victimised daughter), who is persecuted by family, exiled and then reunited and reinstated, usually with a higher status. This group contains a number of Middle English romances including Chaucer's *The Man of Law's Tale* (whose heroine provides the name for the group), *King of Tars*, *Florence of Rome*, *Emaré*, and the second exemplum in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, among others. This is a useful term for this analysis as the narratives examined address the motifs associated with exile, loss, recognition and reunion experienced by the heroines.

the potential lustful nature of women in these romances as is the case in the exemplary narratives. This would lead us to consider if the romance narratives offered another avenue to the misogynistic writers of the day by modelling and emphasising the ideal female pilgrim, one who is pious, obedient and lacks full autonomy over her travels. The exiled romance heroines are, in fact, vulnerable individuals, at the mercy of both worldly figures and, in some cases, supernatural entities. They are women who are "dispossessed, vilified, exiled and subsequently vindicated and restored to an even better version of their original high status" (Hopkins, 123) but their vindication and restoration is often out of their control.

In the case of *Emaré,* lines are blurred concerning the behaviour of characters, where virtuous behaviour can be overshadowed by lust and desire. Emaré's father, Artyus is described as being "the best manne in the world that lyvede thane" (37-38). Artyus's initial capacity for good ultimately serves as a warning to readers that corruptness can occur at any time and lustful and sinful desires do not elude even the best of people. The narrator describes Artyus's wife in great detail at the beginning of the narrative. Attention is paid to her beauty and goodness thus emphasising the significant loss for her husband upon her death. This depiction of the perfect wife could be read as an attempt to understand and explain Artyus's eventual unnatural reaction and lust for his daughter, a trope that we do not see concerning the incestuous women in the exempla.

Legitimate love in *Emaré* is championed through a decorative golden cloak, given as a gift to Artyus, where each corner depicts lovers from romance history; "Ydoyne and Amadas", "Trystram and Isowde", "Florys and Dam Blancheflour" and finally "Babylone the sowdan sonne/ the amerayels dowghtyr hym by" (158-9). Each of the historical romances depicted in the cloak's corners establish terms of mimetic

true and natural love. These expected terms will challenge and highlight Artyus descent into incestuous desire. The audience of this text must be reminded of the expectations of love and how Artyus will seek to disrupt such expectations. Unlike the tale of *The Incestuous Daughter*, the wife and mother must be dead or considered to be dead in romance narratives for a father-daughter incestuous affair, attempted or consummated, to occur. This allows the reader firstly to empathise with Artyus's disruptive grief for his wife's death that will eventually fuel his lust for his daughter.

His request for permission from Rome to marry his daughter reveals a troubled conscience where his prohibited desires need to be recognised by the Church. Archibald believes the granting of his request to marry his own daughter to be a remark on the Church's dealing with the issue of incest, referring to it as a "dig at clerical corruptibility" (*Apollonius of Tyre*, 25).[25] In the wake of the lack of support from both subjects and Church, Emaré outlines the consequences of her father's advances and attempts to reason with him, explaining, at a basic level, that "God in heven hyt forbede" (251) and then going into detail explaining that "Yyf hyt so betydde that ye me wedde/And we shulde play togedur in bedde/Bothe we were forlorne!" (253-255). Her awareness and imagination of sex with her father are realised in rather prim and euphemistic language by the poet. She does not elaborate on any other negative outcomes of their "pleying" except the spiritual consequences - how they will be damned.

She is exiled for speaking out against her father and rejecting his incestuous desires, cast adrift at sea in a rudderless boat. Her exile resembles the pilgrimages of the Early Christian Irish monks who, according to Dyas:

[25] It also echoes Walter's false papal bull in *The Clerk's Tale* that endorses his divorce and feigned marriage to his daughter.

> sought out desolate places in which to pray and do battle against the forces of evil. Ireland denied them the deserts to which the hermits of Egypt and Palestine had retreated, so they launched forth in small boats to seek 'deserts in the ocean'. (96)

Emaré's drifting in the wilderness does not cause her to fall into despair but, like the monks, enhances her connection with the divine: "The Lady fleted forth alone/To God of Heven she made her mone/And to hys modyr also" (313-315).

Emaré, unlike her female counterparts in exempla like *The Incestuous Daughter*, does not fall prey to 'wanhope'. Like an ideal pilgrim, she endures suffering, including food and water deprivation and exposure to the elements to experience the "grace of Goddes sond" (332). She is the idealised female pilgrim; prayerful, obedient and only leaves because exile has been forced upon her. Emaré begins a new life in "Galys" but must endure more hardship thanks to her new mother-in-law.[26] Emaré is again subjected to a distortion of familial bonds in this marriage and she is cast adrift again, this time in the company of her young son. Emaré's second exile on the sea brings her safely to Rome as a result of the "grace of God yn trone" (680). Both the destination and also the hardships endured by Emaré on the journey begin to portray her exile in terms of pilgrimage rather than aimless wandering at this stage of the romance. Her constant trust in God to deliver her safely continue to reaffirm her representation as a true and ideal pilgrim.

Pilgrimage is used in these narratives in a more positive and harmonising light than in exemplary works. While pilgrimage can often be the catalyst for the act of incest to occur in the exempla, resulting in the collapse of the family, it is a force that reunites families in the romance narratives. We see, however, that all pilgrimages are

[26] Georgiana Donavin interprets this scheming on the part of the mother-in-law in these romance narratives as a form of jealousy that is fuelled by incestuous desire for her son, a mirroring of the father/daughter desire.

not made equally and that a gendered experience of the religious travel definitely occurs. As a form of penance for believing he caused the death of his wife, Emaré's husband decides to go on pilgrimage to Rome in order to confess his sins to the Pope: "Thorow the grace of God yn trone/I woll to the Pope of Rome" (820-821). Emaré's father also undertakes this same penitential journey to Rome:

> The emperour her fadyr then
> Was[s] woxen an olde man,
> And thowght on hys synne,
> Of hys thowghtyr Emaré
> That was putte ynto the see,
> That was so bright of skynne.
> He thowght that he wolde go
> For hys penance to the Pope tho,
> And heven forto wynne. (949-957)

Both journeys reflect contrition for past sinful behaviour. The search for forgiveness, especially in the case of the Emaré's father, demonstrates an act of true intent. Both of their journeys are undertaken for a specific, familial-related purpose. Both men, however, have chosen to go on pilgrimage. It is not an exile that it forced upon them but a penance that they desire. Though she is the epitome of the ideal pilgrim, Emaré remains a victim who lacks autonomy over her journey. Her exile-pilgrimage is an uncontrolled drifting at sea and is the result of the crimes of others,. The audience of this romance are constantly reminded of the expectations surrounding women, pilgrimage and penance. Emaré does not get to control her pilgrimage experience and she does not require a search for penance. She does, however, demonstrate a true

devotion and belief in God. The men who have exerted their cruelty over her, control their pilgrimage experience and the expected penance.

Along with this gendered experience of pilgrimage, we also see how the concept of religious travel attempts to repair broken family bonds. Unlike, for example, the pilgrimage found chapter 320 of *The Alphabet of Tales,* where the father's absence from the home because of pilgrimage causes the ruination of the family, the pilgrimage here is a more positive force. The desire of both Emaré's husband and father to seek forgiveness for sinful behaviour by going on pilgrimage reunites the fractured family in this work and results in an eventual reconciliation between husband and wife, father and daughter.

Sir Eglamour of Artois addresses the theme of incest alongside other social taboos such as illegitimacy. The birth of Cristabelle and Eglamour's child outside of wedlock not only highlights contemporary social anxiety surrounding illegitimacy, it also influences the incestuous theme that occurs later in the work. According to Thomas Keuhn:

> Illegitimacy mattered because it resulted in penalties for the illegitimate. By canon law and penitential teaching, illegitimacy sprang from sinful actions on the part of the parents. That sin, parallel to the sin of Adam and Eve, set a stain (*macula*) on the children. The mark justified the lesser status and disabilities that fell on them. It also heightened the sense of shame and embarrassment at the illegitimate pregnancy and birth. The greater the sense of stigma attached to illegitimacy, the greater the penalties. (395)

Because of Cristabelle and Eglamour's "sinful actions", both mother and child are cast adrift. While at sea, her son is carried away to the "lond of Israell" (line 824) by a griffin, a similar motif to the abduction of children by mythical creatures in *Sir*

Isumbras. This abduction continues to fuel the expectations of this romance narrative as it allows Cristabelle's son, who already occupies a space outside expected social conventions by being an illegitimate child, to become an increasingly more liminal figure, who is separated from his mother.

As these romances were popular with the ever-growing gentry class in England in the later Middle Ages, this illegitimacy and loss of kinship and entitlement would have reflected the concerns of their audiences. The building of suspense through the separation of mother from son further develops the expectations surrounding the attempted incest that will appear later in the narrative. When he is found in Israel, the child is named Degrebelle, meaning "lost beautiful one".[27] Having lost her son, Cristabelle eventually arrives in Egypt. Further contemporary moods are reflected in the fact the writer of this romance ensures that both countries that provide shelter to Cristabelle and her son have Christian rulers. This reflected a desire and a commitment of the readership to further to crusading ideal and win back these territories eventually.

Eglamour, having discovered the exile of his lover and his new-born son, defeats the Earl and seizes power of the land. It is at this point in the narrative that we again see a gendered experience of pilgrimage. Cristabelle is a passive figure, forced to experience exile and the unknown, possessing no control over her travel. Eglamour, on the other hand, decides to undertake a pilgrimage to the Holy Land,. Eglamour instead travels to the centre of the world: Jerusalem and the Holy Land. He spends fifteen years there amongst the heathens. This again displays some similar features to the self-imposed exile and pilgrimage undertaken by Sir Isumbras but ultimately

[27] Translation is taken from footnote 842 of the TEAMS online edition, edited by Harriet Hudson. In earlier footnotes, Hudson explains that the narrator of *Sir Eglamour of Artois* employs a form of "pseudo-French" for the names and that "Prynsamour (prince love) and Eglamour are compounds with amour, the latter perhaps arrived at by conflating something like OF egaré, "lost one," as in the names Egaré and Degaré (found in Emaré and Degaré respectively). Cristabelle suggests 'clear or bright beauty'".

demonstrates the difference between the experiences and expectations surrounding men and women on pilgrimage. The narrator uses the concept of travel to distant lands to emphasise the penitential purpose of Eglamour's journey and also to initiate the separation and return motif we have come to expect of these romance narratives.

Degrebelle, now a fully grown man, also undertakes a journey of his own. Unwittingly, he attempts to win his mother's hand in tournaments organised by the ruler of Egypt. They are subsequently married but the near incestuous union is prevented when Cristabelle realises their mistake. Marrying her son is unintentional 'almost' incest but she refers to their union as "a sybbe maryage" (1138).[28] Eglamour's return journey from his pilgrimage to the Holy Land initiates the reunion of the family. He engages his son, ignorant of their familial connection, in battle. Death, like incest, is averted due to the just-in-time recognition sequence and the family is immediately reunited. Illegitimacy is suspended with this reunion. Helen Cooper explains the importance of these reunions in terms of lineage in romance narratives:

> The return of the victims in these stories amounts to a guarantee that the true line of descent does indeed run through the children, whatever the suspicions of the reigning monarch. Their recovery is a mark that the succession is ensured by God Himself; that bastardy does not inhere in the infants, that they are indeed true born. (*The English Romance in Time*, 117)

For the audience of the romances, confirming the reunification of the family ensured that patriarchal lineage, status, wealth and land is now protected and also endorsed by the divine.

[28] According to the Middle English Dictionary "sibbe" is an adjective defined as "related by blood or marriage".

The father's deliberate pilgrimage to the Holy Land sets in relief Cristabelle's aimless drifting in the ocean. She, unlike Eglamour, is not in control of her patriarchal-mandated crisis. The family's reunification too relies on the male experience of the purposeful pilgrimage. The female exile, through attempted, or even suggested, incest allows for even more complications to occur as it creates an ambiguous and dangerous environment that results in unintentional close calls with incestuous marriages. The male pilgrim, on the other hand, resolves this ambiguity and fulfils the expectations of the romance narrative ensuring that accidental incest cannot occur due to the familial reunion.

The Breton Lay, *Sir Degaré* presents themes of illegitimacy and incest amid patterns of dysfunctional familial relationships and displacement. It also reflects many of the social concerns of the time. Incest is the foremost anxiety but, as Cooper explains, it "may well have as much to do with anxieties over property transfer as with anxieties over incest" (*The English Romance in Time*, 327). Similar to *Sir Eglamour*, the loss of his wife influences the actions of the widowed father and king. Father-daughter incest is insinuated in the close relationship between this patriarchal figure and Degaré's mother and his controlling behaviour when interacting with her suitors. Implied incest, however, is not the only danger for Degaré's mother. She is also raped by a fairy knight and becomes pregnant. The idea of father-daughter incest is invoked by the daughter who fears that people will think her own father is the father of her child: "Men wolde sai bi sti and street/That mi fader the King hit wan/And I ne was never aqueint with man!" (168-170). She is not in a position to refute their claims if they are made and remains a passive victim like Crisabelle and Emaré.

Following his birth, the child, like Degrebelle, is instantly marginalised by being born outside of wedlock and also by having an otherworldly father. The baby is

put in the care of a hermit. who provides him with the name Degaré, which means "almost lost".[29] As in *Sir Eglamour*, this early detachment from the familial structure, and especially from the maternal figure, yields the dramatic and moral space for incest to flourish.

Abandonment and incest are closely related in this narrative. When old enough to understand his lack of identity, Degaré insists that he must travel to find both his mother and father in order to gain knowledge of his origins and achieve a level of acceptance in the world. Degaré is not a passive pilgrim figure like the women of the previously discussed romances. He is decisive in his desire to travel and his illegitimate origins encourage him to go out into the world on a personal pilgrimage to seek his parents and his lineage. Neither Cristabelle nor Emaré are described as looking like pilgrims and are not given the opportunity to prepare like pilgrims when they are exiled. Degaré, however, follows some of the expectations surrounding planning for a pilgrimage. He prepares for his journey without armour or horse as, according to Julia Bolton Holloway "to ride a horse for the whole journey invalidated the pilgrimage" (*The Pilgrim and the Book*, 8). Degaré instead states that "Ich wil have first another thing!" (324) and cuts down a branch from an oak tree. From this, he fashions a *bourdon*, otherwise known as a pilgrim's staff.

He hew adoun, bothe gret and grim,
To beren in his hond with him,
A god sapling of an ok;
Whan he tharwith gaf a strok,
Ne wer he never so strong a man
Ne so gode armes hadde upon,

[29] This interpretation of the name Degaré is taken from the TEAMS edition online, edited by Anne Laskaya and Eve Salisbury who use the Advocates Library of Scotland MS 19.2.1 (Auchinlek MS) as their base text.

That he ne scholde falle to grounde;

Swich a bourdon to him he founde.

Tho thenne God he him bitawt,

And aither fram other wepyng rawt. (325-34)

This imagery related to pilgrimage and the spiritual journey provides an insight into preparations that Degaré undertakes for this quest. Such preparations can be associated with liminality and liminal status in the Breton Lays. In *Sir Orfeo*, the protagonist prepares for his departure by abandoning his kingdom and dressing as a pilgrim to pursue his self-imposed exile that will inevitably lead to the reunion with his wife.

The narrator of *Sir Degaré* observes that this is not only a quest concerned with family and lineage but also one that focuses on spiritual well-being: an apparent response to his otherworldly conception. The religious elements of this secular quest, that include Degaré taking on the guise of a pilgrim, fashioning a staff and commending his journey to God, can be read as attempts by the writer to reconcile illegitimate and supernatural origins. The ceremony and prayers associated with a pilgrim's departure formed part of an initiation process where the individual left behind their mundane life and was propelled "by the power of invocation and scriptural association into a special order of pious wayfarers, singled out by their distinctive dress and accoutrements" (Rivard, 137).

Degaré's pilgrim's identity, though still a liminal one, outside of the typical social boundaries, could be described as his primary heroic identity. His secular mission, with religious connotations, offers a sense of purpose and hope that he will discover where he has come from, reflecting the habitual romance theme – the displaced youth. Degaré's adoption of a pilgrim's status through the carving of a staff and assuming an accepted liminal position in society (more so than an illegitimate

child of supernatural origins) to unearth his lineage reflects Victor Turner's understanding of pilgrimage as an initiation where "the pilgrim is an initiand, entering into a new, deeper level of existence than he has known in his accustomed milieu" (8). Degaré also settles his debts with the hermit and finally receives the items that were found with him as a baby.

These resemble the actions carried out by pilgrims before they leave home, who ensure their finances are in order and receive their pilgrim identity that usually includes a cross, a satchel and a bourdon. Dyas acknowledges the importance of this type of preparation before a pilgrim departed: "lengthy absences would require the settling of debts, the making of wills and arrangements for the protection of assets left behind (137). Holloway also explains that the would-be pilgrim, in terms of the law, "was as if dead in the temporal world in his quest for eternal life" (*The Pilgrim and the Book*, 8), an appropriate summation of Degaré's current social position. In the case of Degaré, he receives items that were left with him as a foundling. These items are part of his unknown identity and, like a pilgrim's accessories, remind him of the central purpose of his quest: to find his family. He then commends his journey to God, further heightening the pilgrimage imagery of a solitary journey:

> Ne so gode armes hadde upon,
> That he ne scholde falle to grounde;
> Swich a bourdon to him he founde.
> Tho thenne God he him bitawt,
> And aither fram other wepyng rawt. (330-334)

With the "bourdon" Degaré has fashioned, he is able to kill the dragon he encounters along the way, thus presenting registers to the reader regarding a pilgrim's own battle with the devil and sin while on a pilgrimage. The Earl, who he saves, provides him

with a horse and armour demonstrating an evolution from pilgrim to crusader for Degaré.

Degaré continues with his adventures leading to the eventual winning of his mother's hand in marriage through a series of tournaments. The narrator seems directly address the audience with the following warning which stresses the complications and the immoral implications that can come about if one "spouseth wif for ani mede / And knowes nothing of hire kin / Ne sche of his" (616-618). The narrator continues to build the suspense by stressing that this is a marriage between mother and son: "So dede Sire Degarre the bold / Spoused ther is moder / And that hende levedi also / Here owene sone was spoused to" (621-624). In now a familiar gesture, the crisis of this incestuous union is averted before the relationship can be consummated as Degaré follows the hermit's advice and ensures his new bride tries on the magical gloves that were found with him as a child. A quasi-Cinderella gesture, this use of gloves provided by a supernatural being prevents incest from occurring between mother and son and, according to Gail Ashton, has "the power to rectify this family's dysfunction" (55).

This pattern of using objects as tools for recognition continues when Degaré encounters his father in battle, who recognises the distinctive "pointles" sword that his son is wielding as the one he had left with Degaré's mother. He is able to prove his paternity by producing the missing tip and refitting it to the sword. The phallic symbolism cannot be ignored as the mending of the sword could be read as the reunification of the male lineage within Degaré's family and also, as Salisbury and Laskaya suggest "the replacement of its point by a father, who has carried it around for twenty years, suggests a restoration of patrilinear authority" (96).

The family are brought together through the recognition and restoration of tokens. Degaré's individual quest, characterised by gestures of pilgrimage, initiates the reconciliation and reunion of this displaced family. The inclusion of supernatural themes such as an otherworldly father and social concerns regarding illegitimacy and incest are offset by the religious influences that Degaré is exposed to in his life. It seems to be implied that though illegitimacy can be rectified through exposition of familial lines through easily recognised tropes, there would be no such resolution if the unintentional incestuous union had been consummated. Incest therefore is rendered a more horrifying act and sin than illegitimacy.

From the time of his abandonment, Degaré is exposed to Christian ideals, as a result of his surrogate parent – the monk. His quest, though not to a specific religious site but to find his true family and identity, resembles the journey of a solitary pilgrim. In contrast to the female pilgrims and exiles from the other romances, such as Emaré, Degaré is in control of his journey and is never depicted as a passive figure. Fulfilling certain expectations regarding gender, pilgrimage facilitates the search for one's identity and lineage in *Sir Degaré*, contrasting with the female protagonist's need to escape or their experiences of forced exile. His quest evolves, allowing him to move from a liminal existence to one where family is found and restored thereby depicting pilgrimage as a unifying force.

The Man of Law's Tale offers us Chaucer's variant on this formula as the narrator spends a great deal of time explaining in his prologue how Chaucer would never write about such a distasteful topic as incest:

> But certainly no word ne writeth he
> Of thillke wikke ensample of Canacee,
> That loved hir owene brother sinfully –

Of swiche cursed stories I sey fy! -

Or ellis of Tyro Appollonius,

How that the cursed kyng Antiochus

Birafte his doghter of hir maydenhede,

That is so horrible a tale for to rede. (77-84)

He does not simply ignore these incestuous stories, "of swiche unkynde abhomynacions" (88) or merely mention their type but employs the rhetorical device of *occupatio*. He demonstrates that he has knowledge and understanding of narratives that retain themes of incest, referring to them by name including "Canacee" and "Apollonius of Tyre", both of which are found in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*. They are "cursed stories" but ones that are endlessly rehearsed and recognised. According to Elizabeth Scala, "excluded from the level of conscious narration, [these stories] are brought, concomitantly, to the reader's attention" ("Canacee and the Chaucer Canon", 21). This suffuses the Man of Law's own version of the story of Constance. Though possessing no overt reference to incest, it informs our reading of *Emaré* and those in the Constance group as a set of variations on its themes, include the casting adrift by mothers-in-law.

This iteration of the Constance/ Florence/ Griselda pattern narrative outwardly disparages other incestuous narratives and then provides a moral alternative where belief and trust in God is constantly emphasised. Examples of female preservation during exile at sea are described in detail:

She blesseth hire, and with ful pitous voys

Unto the croys of Crist, thus seyde she:

"O cleere, o welful auter, hooly croys,

Reed of the Lambes blood ful of pitee,

That wessh the world fro the olde iniquitee,

Me fro the feend and fro his clawes kepe,

That day that I shal drenchen in the depe. (449-455)

Constance resembles her fellow maligned women who have been cast adrift in incest narratives through her reactions to her circumstances. Her consistent trust in God while drifting aimlessly in the ocean is yet another example of the ideal woman and the ideal pilgrim. The sea becomes her version of Jerusalem where her perceived sins shall be washed away in this penitential exile.

Issues concerning incest's replacement with the exchange of women constantly emphasise the ongoing debate on sexual politics so prevalent in *The Canterbury Tales*. Marriage and its role in medieval sexual politics subverts incestuous themes and replaces "unkynde abhomynacions" with arranged marriages and the exchange of women. According to Claude Lévi-Strauss "marriage between outsiders is a social advance (because it integrates wider groups). It is also a venture" (48). The depiction of marriage, where it is used to both continue the family line and also develop trade connections, demonstrates the theory put forward by Levi-Strauss that refers to the link between the promotion of the exchange of women and the unlawfulness of consanguinity: "[…] the Man of Law has depicted a society in which women are exchanged, and the prohibition of incest is universal and necessary to that social organisation" (Dinshaw, 97). Literary incest is firstly condemned in the prologue to *The Man of Law's Tale* and then removed completely from the narrative, replaced with the trading of women. Incest prevents the expansion and evolvement of familial lines and fortunes, an issue that would have drawn the attention of the gentrified readership of this romance. This argument is seized by Yvette Kisor who describes the father-daughter incest as "violat[ing] the principal of exchange on which that society is built,

and incest narratives reveal this violation" (144). Chaucer directs a commentary on a social taboo towards a more acceptable and identifiable social issue concerning the use of marriage in society as a form of commerce.

Religious and moral stability also oppose and replace incest in this tale. This is summed up in Alla's decision to convert to Christianity and also in the undefined amount of gold he also includes in this expensive transaction:

"by tretys and embassadrie,
And by the popes, mediacioun,
And al the chirch, and al the chivalrie,
That in destruccion of mawmettrie, (*Idolatry)*
And in encrees of Cristes lawe deere,
They been accorded, so as ye shal heere:
How that the Sowdan and his baronage
And all his liges sholde ycristned be,
And he shal han Cunstance in mariage,
And certain gold, I not what quantitee;
And heer-to founden sufficient suretee.
This same accord was sworn on eyther syde. (233-244)

King Alla's pilgrimage to Rome to seek penance for the death of his mother, reinforces the theme of religious devotion, mirroring the pilgrimages undertaken by the husband and father in the incestuously influenced narrative of *Emaré.*

Though Chaucer condemns and replaces the offensive incest themes, incestuous narratives still indirectly influence his work. Pilgrimage, as with the incestuous romances, is responsible for reuniting the family but it is within the remit

of the male agenda concerning penitence. Alla's decisive pilgrimage results in him meeting Constance in Rome.

Exile, resulting in directionless voyages evolves in these romances and mutates according to gender. The women are forced to undergo periods of banishment that result in aimless wandering while the men of these narratives elect to go on pilgrimage for a specific penitential purpose. The interface of these two types of journeys, however, result in the eventual reunification of the family unit thus fulfilling the expectations of the genre using the exile and return motif. For the men of the romance, an exile or quest becomes an opportunity for self-development or to complete a test. Diane Speed highlights that the protagonist's eventual restoration signals a "return to order for himself and his society" (146). For the returned exiled women, however, there is no such impact as they rely on a reunion with their male counterparts. Their tests embody the submissiveness expected of them as they are forced to rely on God's mercy and influence (and the mercy of mortals) to survive rather than exhibiting active displays of prowess or strength.

Gower's *Confessio Amantis* can be read as the target of the Man of Law's jibes as he directly mentions two incestuous stories found in the narrative: "Apollonius of Tyre" and "Canace and Machaire". In total, five of the books in the *Confessio Amantis* contain an incest tale. Georgiana Donavin offers a concise description of the types of incestuous tales where she explains that "some are allegories suggestive of a desire between kin in order to convey a spiritual message" while others "highlight the need for ecclesiastical laws on incest" (5). "Canace and Machaire" does not possess any reference to pilgrimage but it is an important text in realising the impact that imagined incest has on the domestic environment and demonstrates not the condemnation found in the exempla, but Gower's almost tolerance of the taboo. Found in Book Three, the

opening of “Canace and Machaire” describes how a brother and sister grow up spending all of their time together. They are encouraged by Cupid, who “bad hem ferst to kesse” (169). Donavin addresses this illicit encouragement from Cupid, explaining that:

> since the expressed purpose of these narratives is to illustrate sins against love so that Amans might thoroughly confess to Genius and purify himself for Venus’ court, the lurid spectre of Venus flirtatiously cavorting with her son Cupid provides a backdrop for the whole work. (5)

Non-Christian deities indulge in incestuous desires and therefore encourage these mortals to do the same. Many excuses are made for the brother and sister including that they are blind to their transgressions and that it is beyond their control:

> Nature, tok hem into lore
> And tawht hem so, that overmore
> Sche hath hem in such wise daunted,
> That thei were, as who seith, enchaunted.
> And as the blinde an other ledeth
> And til thei falle nothing dredeth,
> Riht so thei hadde non insihte. (175-181)

The narrator is strikingly sympathetic – the strident excoriations of incest in exemplary narratives are absent. He instead provides a non-prescriptive acknowledgement of the ‘joys’ of incest. Young, innocent and unsocialised, they appear ignorant of their actions and are at the mercy of their desires. The destructive force of an incestuous affair is only realised when Canacee becomes pregnant. The incest in this text, as in the exempla, leads to spiralling transgressions: illegitimate birth, suicide and infanticide through exposure. Even though the narrator does not outwardly condemn

Canacee and Machaire, the final outcome of Canacee committing suicide and the exposure of her child serves as a warning that incest, an unspeakable sin itself, can lead to other atrocities. As David Benson observes "rather than the fruitfulness and harmony of honest love, the sinful love of Cancee brings only isolation and death" (106). The family, like the one found in the *Incestuous Daughter* is morally corrupted from within by the unbidden and uniquely non predatory nature of sibling incest. It is also ruined through a catalogue of resulting mortal transgressions: murder and suicide.

Gower begins the section of Book 8, which contains the story of "Apollonius of Tyre", with a more detailed exploration of the biblical history of incest thus setting the scene for the incestuous affairs to come. He includes descriptions of incestuous incidences found in the Bible. Through this, Gower prepares the reader through an exploration of this taboo's relationship to canon law and how the influence of sins such as greed, and lust can promote an incestuous nature. Incest is compared to food and is linked to the sin of gluttony, where it might seem sweet at first but it will eventually become bitter-sweet.

> For al such time of love is lore,
> And lich unto the bitterswete;
> For thogh it thenke a man ferst swete,
> He schal wel fielen ate laste
> That it is sour and may noght laste. (190-194)

Linking gluttony to incest further enforces the concept of how insatiable appetites influence transgressive behaviour and what happens when these appetites are unconstrained. Gluttony is a step on the path to worse sins. It is an easily recognisable sin and serves as a real warning for the audience of these narratives that lust is not the only sin that can influence such a horrendous sin as incest.

The story of Caligula and how he took the virginity of his three sisters is also included in this history of incest, together with the story of Lot. Genius authorises his condemnation of the evils of incest in the Bible while also setting the scene for the subsequent story.

The incestuous relationship found in "Apollonius of Tyre" is between a father and daughter. But, unlike Emaré, Antiochus's daughter is not exiled and is unable to flee. Genius emphasises that this king's downfall lies in the fact that he is rich and wants for nothing. The excess and pride of this man has lead to dangerous deeds: "Bot whanne a man hath welthe at wille, the flecssh is frele and falleth ofte" (289). The rape of his daughter is depicted as being particularly vicious. As in the exempla, this variation of incest is consummated, unlike the incestuous intent of Emaré's father. It is an intentional act, unlike the romances of *Sir Degaré* or *Sir Eglamour*. Ignorance and blindness are permitted in the previous tale of incest, "Canace and Machaire". The same excuses are not afforded Antiochus even though "him thoghte that it was no sinne" (346).

His sinful nature becomes increasingly more prominent and the narrator emphasises his arrogance by depicting how pride and lust affect his ability to rule. For example, he commits to posing a riddle to those who seek his daughter's hand in marriage. Those who answer incorrectly are beheaded. Apollonius answers correctly but his discovery reveals the incestuous and illicit affair between Antiochus and his daughter. This discovery immediately puts Apollonius in danger. This incest propels the quests. It also hinders a natural union between Apollonius and Antiochus's daughter, and again brings ruin to a family at the height of fortune's wheel.

In exile, Apollonius falls in love and marries a king's daughter. He is summoned back to Tyre, which results in the loss of his wife in the storm. This,

however, is only the start of his family's disintegration. Thaise, his daughter, is left in Tharse and Apollonius states that he will not shave his beard until his daughter is ready to marry, a practice strongly associated with male pilgrims during the Middle Ages who left their beards grow while on pilgrimage.[30] Apollonius assumes the guise of pilgrim but it is for the secular purpose of a familial commitment rather than for religious or penitential purposes.

Thaise, like the exiled queens of the previously discussed narratives, also experiences a life of instability and turbulence. She escapes Tharse but is captured and sold into slavery. Her noble upbringing, however, allows her to retain her virginity and become an advisor to those who come to her. Though maintaining some level of power, she is not in control of her life and becomes yet another representative of a passive female protagonist: a controlled counsellor and an ideal model of virtue.

Father and daughter are reunited during her state of slavery. On a journey to see the tomb of his daughter, Apollonius is again blown off-course and lands in Mitelene. He does not leave his cabin but remains inside in a state of despair in his cabin:

> That for the conseil of noman
> Ayein therinne he nolde come,
> Bot hath benethe his place nome,
> Wher he wepende al one lay,
> Ther as he sih no lyht of day. (1602-1606)

Thaise, in her role as advisor, attempts to speak with her unrecognised father. Through a series of events that ensue, Apollonius develops feelings for this unknown woman: "His herte upon this maide caste/That he hire loveth kindely/And yit he wiste nevere

[30] This practice demonstrated their dedication to the ascetic life and the inner spirituality of the pilgrim while also signifying their detachment from the worldly concerns of fashion and outward appearance.

why" (1706-1709). But like *Sir Degaré* and *Eglamour of Artois*, a recognition scene averts a potential incestuous crisis. Apollonius's unrecognised daughter is depicted as a care-giver in the guise of an advisor. This role results in her becoming the target of his affections, fulfilling expectations associated with passive women in romance narratives. The responsibility of recognition falls to the father, not the daughter and thus Thaise remains an ideal yet submissive model.

Despite the detailed description of the adventures and trials experienced by Apollonius, Genius leaves the story of this hero and returns to Antiochus and his sinful behaviour in the end for a final judgement:

> With al his Pride whiche sette his love unkindely,
> his ende he hadde al sodeinly, set ayein kinde upon vengeance,
> and for his lust hath his penance. (2004-2008)

Antiochus's incestuous behaviour and decadent lifestyle are not forgotten and are among Genius's central concerns and reasons for telling this story. Donavin explains that "Gower's chaste fathers and daughters who transcend mutual attraction provide a virtuous antidote to those who indulge incestuous vice" (14). Apollonius and Thaise are exemplary models for redeemed father-daughter relationships. The examples of natural and unnatural love, which are provided by the narrator, offer Amans and also the reader the opportunity to follow the model of the appropriate amatory paradigm and eschew the corrupted version.

Through a closer examination of works and genres that have not been compared before, we observe the pliability of the theme of incest and its relationship to pilgrimage in this chapter. Both Archibald and Dyas, in their studies of incest and pilgrimage, examine a smaller collection of narratives without cross-generic analysis and in so doing, fail to establish the overall contextual connections that can be derived

from such an examination. From exempla to romance we have seen how the sexual politics of the age play out through its contemporary literature. In didactic narratives, the misogynistic writers ensure that women, amid patterns of pilgrimage, are portrayed in an unyieldingly negative light. They are depicted as corruptible and corrupting forces in the exempla that tempt and lead men down a morally depraved path. These literary female pilgrims are immoral and susceptible to lustful, incestuous behaviour.

When compared with the romance narratives, however, we see that it is the paternal figure who aggressively prompts incest. They often begin their lives as good men but descend into familial rapacity following the death of their wives. Their daughters must then escape from this corrupting and sinful environment. This 'flight' from threatening patriarchal figures is in stark contrast to the incestuous affairs of the exempla where consummation of the relationship is more often than not intrinsic to the story. This consummation ensures that the audience is suitably shocked and engaged. The familiar becomes the horrifying and the concept of safety within the home degenerates into a space fraught with danger and sinful behaviour.

While in exile, the women pilgrims of the romance narratives, such as Emaré, and Constance, represent passive yet ideal models in both life and pilgrimage. They are pious and trusting in the will of God to ensure their safety. Incest offers the female protagonist of these stories to escape from her enclosed, domestic life resulting in numerous adventures that are out of her control. Separation, not only from her father's incestuous advances but also from her husband at a later stage, removes her from the familial ideal on numerous occasions. In contrast to the exempla, it is the fixed pilgrimage of the male protagonist who is in search of penance and forgiveness that initiates the reunion and the rebuilding of the family. For the male protagonist of the romance narratives, pilgrimage remains a positive, unifying force. In the case of

Degaré, for example, we see him perform traditions resembling those of pilgrims before they begin their journey. Though the representation and purpose of pilgrimage in these two genres differ greatly, it demonstrates that both the family and gestures of pilgrimage in these Middle English texts are connected and dynamically blended, whether it is portrayed in a positive or negative light, as a moral lesson or as a form of entertainment.

Chapter 3: Romance and the pilgrim family: Exile and Reunion

In the previous chapter the disruptive influence of incest on the family unit amplified prior critical readings, including those carried out by Archibald and Dyas, to provide new assessments on the purpose of pilgrimage in Middle English exempla and romance. Though Dyas does address some of the well-known romances, this chapter will delve into disregarded thematic associations between family and pilgrimage in a mixture of popular and also overlooked narratives. For this chapter, the assessment of further disruptive themes including patterns of misrecognition, exile and reunion, caused and sometimes resolved by the act of pilgrimage, will continue to support this new reading of medieval romance narratives as they engage with a pattern demonstrably inter-modale and inter-generic. Our readings, if confined for now to ostensibly a single genre - romance, and its shadings into saints' lives will articulate the preoccupation of audiences with identifiable patterns of travel and familial conduct and violence – recurring nightmares for medieval society for which gestures of pilgrimage rarely offer relief.

The flexibility of pilgrimage as a literary device in medieval romances reflects the flexibility of the medieval author's own attitude to the genre of romance itself and the "similarly variable medieval response to their content by medieval audiences" (Radulescu, 37). The role of pilgrimage and its impact on the literary romance families has been greatly overlooked despite the amount of scholarship available on the genre itself. This chapter will remedy prior studies of genre by the breadth of context and reading undertaken here. The often ignored works have been a necessary addition to this study as their narratives and themes are not as one dimensional as some might think and warrant a closer examination. These overlooked narratives discussed here help us to rethink the expectations of medieval audiences, especially the rising gentry

class of the later Middle Ages who were both literate and had the means to indulge their literary tastes by commissioning the creation of personal miscellanies. According to Michael Johnston:

> romance provided the gentry - late medieval England's emergent social class - with a particularly powerful vehicle for expressing and exploring their unique, emergent, socio-economic identity.(1).

This is reflected in the themes of the following narratives and how the concept of pilgrimage is exploited to fit with the expectations of the gentry class. The gentry while having the means to purchase and commission miscellanies for their homes would also have the means to undertake a pilgrimage. This meant that they would expect references to this form of travel to appear in their favourite genre, therefore combining literary incidences of pilgrimage with expected familial themes in these works.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section examines the following narratives: *Torrent of Portyngale* (c. 1400), *Octavian* (c.1450), *Paris and Vienne* (c. 1485), *Sir Orfeo* (c.1488). *Valentine and Orson* (c. 1550) and *The Romans of Partenay* (c. 1500).[31] These works, ranging over the course of a century from the later Middle Ages, contextualise the concerns and the interests of their respective societies. These later romances did maintain many of the themes of their predecessors. They also evolved, however, to reflect a number of social developments including the changing face of crusading ideals (Manion, 107) and the rise of the gentry class. As Manion goes on to explain, crusading and pilgrimage practices became more distinct during this time and this is reflected, as we will see in *Octavian, Valentine and Orson, The Romans of Partenay* and *Paris and Vienne* and also in the later discussion of both

[31] The earliest version of *Sir Orfeo* dates to the early fourteenth century, but for this analysis, I use the version of *Sir Orfeo* found in the fifteenth century miscellany, Ashmole 61.

Sir Isumbras and *Guy of Warwick*. Wealth, land and social standing were also themes which would have been popular with the gentry class. As Johnston explains:

> Romances allowed this class to claim participation in romance, a genre that had for several centuries formed the primary literary vehicle for the expression of the aristocracy's values and ideological commitments. (48)

This can be tracked in the texts discussed, ranging from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries where protagonists (if they do not follow the saintly path) regain their full wealth and status and possibly more after they have suffered losses. The "social imaginary" mentioned by Johnston is thus identifiable and the audiences of these later romances "would have derived secular as well as spiritual benefits from pondering on the messages delivered through these texts" (Radulescu, 78).

The works that are central to this analysis are family romances that reveal themes concerning religion and the supernatural, exile, identity and parental expectations and thus depict expected variations in the portrayal of families and pilgrimage in Middle English texts. We also observe the development of personal salvation. Despite the best attempts of protagonists to pursue a family-based pilgrimage, religious journeys are more often than not reduced to an individual venture reflecting the contemporary attitudes towards salvation and personal piety. The second part, while also addressing some of the themes mentioned above, discusses the differing roles of piety in two popular male-centric romances considered to be quasi-hagiographical in their content: *Sir Isumbras* and *The Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, leading us into the hagiographical discussion of chapter 4.

Though these narratives are considered family romances, they often describe individual journeys and the actions and adventures of the sole protagonist. Radulescu explains that these episodes "are another lesson meant to teach a ruler to increase his

prowess in arms, and turn back to his secular responsibilities once his penitential journey is over" (72). Establishing who exactly the medieval readership of these texts is a difficult task, often with ambiguous results. As Carol Meale states "its [romance] audiences resist generalisation" (*Readings in Medieval English Romance*, 225). As a genre, romance could "subvert the social patterns and hierarchies enacted in the world outside the text" (Meale, *Readings in Medieval English Romance*, 255). Therefore, this description of loss and gain in terms worldly position and possessions would have appealed to a mix of contemporary classes; the mercantile, the gentry and the nobility. In terms of the spiritual and devout influence in these narratives, Johnston notes: "the religious elements of the romances should not preclude us from seeing the class appeals simultaneously encoded therein" (154). We will see how this impacts on a gendered reading of these narratives where women must remain family orientated while the male protagonists can freely choose to travel as a pilgrim, revert to their previous status or transcend their familial roles and become saint-like figures.

Generic expectations are challenged and sometimes shattered within the romance narratives of this chapter especially in cases where more religious, didactic objectives are evident. Secular romances are offset against those with more hagiographical tendencies to demonstrate the fluidity of the genre and the difficulties in strict romance classification. The concept of family is central to romances read here as their narratives are structured around its reunification or its continued separation. Pilgrimage often becomes the deciding factor by either bringing about the reunion of the family or prolonging its separation, thus forming a more spiritually focussed individual for whom family is a mere distraction.

In the second part of the chapter, a comparison of the two works, *Sir Isumbras* and *Guy of Warwick* demonstrates the evolution of the secular knight to spiritual

pilgrim and hermit and from spiritual ignorance to the search for penance. It attempts to answer the question: can chivalry and piety coexist within the romance narratives and what does it mean for depictions of family in these works? Penitential practices inform the journeys of the two protagonists of these works. Andrea Hopkins addresses medieval penitential practices and how they are portrayed in four romances including *Sir Isumbras* and *Guy of Warwick.* Her study informs this chapter's analysis of how family is affected by penance in these works. For example, atonement in *Guy of Warwick* is the motivation for its protagonist to engage with a life of pilgrimage and leave behind his wife and son. Both *Sir Isumbras* and *Guy of Warwick* contain familial themes and descriptions of pilgrimages made by the protagonists, but with differing intentions, events and outcomes.

Beginning with the earliest of the romances discussed in this chapter, *Torrent of Portyngale* demonstrates the balance of the secularity of certain romances, working with what Mehl refers to as "simple piety" (60). It is a narrative which bears many similar motifs to those present in *Octavian* and also *Sir Eglamour of Artois*. This romance, though not openly referencing a pilgrim journey, is a necessary inclusion in this discussion as it demonstrates how gestures of the quests impact on the familial unit. The family of this fourteenth century romance are in a constant state of movement.[32] Desonelle, who gives birth to Torrent's twin sons out of wedlock, is exiled and cast adrift by her father, Calamond. Demonstrating familiar romance motifs, the children are taken from her by a griffin and a leopard. They are later found in Jerusalem and Greece and taken into the care of the respective rulers of these countries. Desonelle herself is taken in by the King of Nazareth. The destinations of

[32] The complete version of this work is found in Manchester, Chetham's Library MS 8009 (Mun.A.6.31). It is late fifteenth-century miscellany manuscript and what James Wade describes as "household book". This resembles Ashmole 61 in its inclusion of religious, didactic and entertaining texts for a middle-class house hold.

Jerusalem and Nazareth reflect the "simple piety", which Mehl believes is the narrator's attempt to "outdo Sir Eglamour" (59). These references highlight the persistent interest in the Holy Land and the Crusades of the time and highlight the contemporary interests that no doubt appealed to the gentrified readership.

Torrent's quests, his defeat of the unjust king Calamond and becoming king of Portugal in his stead reflect the "amplification of the hero's exploits" (60). He, like his lover and children, is a character who is in constant movement as he travels to fight five different giants and, having become king, sets out for the Holy Land on a crusade against the Saracens, demonstrating his "pious devotion to Christian duty" (Wade) and resembles, in part, the journeys of Isumbras and his family.

Desonelle is not condemned from a religious perspective for giving birth out of wedlock. Her exile comes from her father, not from God. Desonelle displays the correct form of patient, maternal piety when she is cast adrift. She prays to Christ to intercede for their safe arrival to "some good londe on to lende/ That my chyldren may crystonyd bene!" (1835-1836). Again, we see the lack of control of the exiled woman over her fate and destination in comparison to the defined crusading journey of Torrent. Desonelle must remain within her maternal role but Torrent can forgo his paternal duties in favour of a crusading ideal. Family is a constant for the female pilgrims but a hindrance for the male pilgrims.

The familial reunion only comes after a series of jousts, where Torrent encounters his sons. It is not a religious endeavour such as pilgrimage that reunites the family in this case but knightly, even militant, secular activities. Desonelle recounts the story of her family's separation at a celebration following the jousts thus completing their reunion and fulfilling the expectations of the genre. In contrast with Guy and Raymond, Torrent's joy is not found by transcending the spiritual boundaries

by becoming a holy hermit. Instead, his joy is found, like Isumbras, in recovering his family. The reunion does not stop at the central family in the narrative, but also includes a return to Portugal where Desonelle is reunited with her mother. Torrent, in retaliation for Desonelle's exile reduces Calamond, her father, to the same fate and casts him adrift in an unsuitable boat that is full of holes. Torrent then leaves Desonelle's mother to oversee his newly acquired kingdom while he travels to the Holy Land. Torrent's family are not only reunited but their initial separation has brought them prestige and worldly success. One son becomes the heir to the King of Jerusalem and the other to the King of Greece. The family's success is balanced by Torrent's pious efforts as "he did make up-tyed /churches and abbeys wyde/for hym and his to praye" (2658-2660).

Though *Torrent of Portyngale* does not possess overt references to pilgrimage, it models the secular patterns expected of romances including family, quest and reunion. These patterns thus demonstrate the gentry's expectations: the ambitious, social climbing family, regaining of worldly success and wealth and the fulfilling of Christian commitments as regards funding the Church and participating in the Crusades.

Octavian provides a dynamic variation on the noble woman as a figure of exile and ideal pilgrim in Middle English literature. [33] The family unit is central to this romance. Octavian and his wife, to their distress, remain childless following seven years of marriage. Their desire to have children is so great that they build and dedicate an abbey to the Virgin Mary in the hopes that their displays of devotion will aid in the

[33]This romance derives from a much longer Anglo-Norman work, which itself was derived from the French *Florent*. The Southern version found in the London, British Library MS Cotton Caligula A.ii and the Northern version found in the Cambridge University Library MS Ff. 2.38 and the Lincoln Cathedral Library Thornton MS 91 are significantly condensed adaptations of this work and, according to Dieter Mehl, "reduce their source to about a third of its size" (79). For this section I refer to Maldwyn Mill's edition in *Six Middle English Romances*, based on the Cambridge and Thornton manuscripts.

granting of their wish. Their appeal is successful and "The lady was wyth chyldren two" (83). This familial wish-fulfilment bears a price, initiating the sundering of the family even as it is formed. By giving birth to twins, Octavian's wife is suspected of infidelity, a suspicion that is aggravated by Octavian's mother, a figure reprised from *Emaré* and Chaucer's *The Man of Law's Tale*. She places a servant boy in the bed of Octavian's wife while she is recovering from giving birth and sends her son to observe the scene, taunting him: "For thou myght no chylde have/Thy wyfe hath take a cokys knave" (116-117). She segregates the family by stating that her son is not the father of the twin boys and that his wife has been unfaithful.

Octavian believes his mother and the dissolution of familial life is continued by imposing a life of exile on his wife and children. His wife's exile does not come from a desire to escape like the heroine of *Emaré* nor a divinely imposed exile as in the case of Isumbras. Dieter Mehl observes:

> the Emperor is not criticized for his unjust wrath and the cruel treatment of his wife because the poet is in an evident hurry to pass on to the consequences of his action, the wanderings of the lady and the dispersal of the family with the eventual happy reunion. (80)

We are therefore provided with an abridged narrative, containing the necessary scenes relating to family separation while moral themes and judgements regarding the behaviour of characters are kept to a minimum, therefore allowing the audience to experience a happy resolution. It does not possess the same level of didactic instruction as *Sir Isumbras* or *Guy of Warwick*. There is no divinely imposed exile, just intercession at the appropriate times and a significant lack of criticism concerning those who are at fault.

Octavian's nameless wife, endures her exile "like a saint" (Mehl, 81), providing a suitable figure within this romance who could be admired if not emulated. Her faith remains intact. This can be seen in even the most adverse situations such as her journey, where her children, in a familiar gesture in romance, are abducted by an ape and a griffin that then loses the child to a lioness. The loss of her children does not cause this mother to fall prey to despair. She accepts these occurrences as a penance from God for some unknown vice that the narrator does not disclose: "Lorde, the sorowe that Y am ynne/ Well Y wot hyt ys for my synne" (437-438). Having experienced the final separation from her family, she vows to "serve the, lorde,whyll Y leve/Into the Holy Londe" (401-402). Her enforced detachment from her home and family, resembles the detachment that was necessary for pilgrims who sought to achieve a higher level of devoutness. It echoes the desires of the pilgrim Guy and the pilgrim Paris. This demonstrates that pilgrimage could indeed evolve from an exile made by choice or an exile imposed upon an individual.[34] Though not an overtly didactic work, *Octavian*, therefore, provides its contemporary readership with the idealised image of a female pilgrim in the guise of the Emperor's wife.

Octavian's wife's decision to embark on this pilgrimage is immediately rewarded. While she travels on the pilgrim boat bound for the Holy Land, she is reunited with one of her sons who is still in the care of the lioness. Pilgrimage, like that in *The Man of Law's Tale*, *Paris and Vienne* and *Sir Isumbras,* is its own reward: it serves to initiate familial reunion and fulfil the patterns of romance. Pilgrimage in another form also assists in the reunion as a burgess of Paris, who had been "a palmer for sevyn yere" (572), buys the other abducted child from a group of outlaws on his return journey. On arriving home with him, he explains to his wife, that "whyll Y

[34] Historically, pilgrimage was used as a form of punishment for a selection of serious crimes. Pilgrimage could be forced on members of the clergy for fornication and for particularly heinous crimes such as the murder of a bishop. (Sumption, 91).

plamer was/ Thys chylde Y gate wyth my flesche/ in the hethen thede" (613-615). This burgess, Clement, gives the false impression that he has committed adultery while undertaking a pilgrimage, but this may have been a familiar subject for medieval audiences. It also may have reflected a true contemporary concern for the audience of *Octavian* as adulterous behaviour would have been easy to conceal while on pilgrimage. Opposition to pilgrimage was continuing to grow and its critics, including the Lollards, questioned its necessity as part of devotion while also highlighting threats to one's morality when undertaking such a journey. As we have previously observed, Morrison outlines the general issues which Lollards had with pilgrimage, explaining that:

> Essentially, a Lollard's attitude towards pilgrimage depended on his or her attitude toward images. Genuine meritorious physical pilgrimage should be performed by visiting the poor, sick and infirm, not relics or images. Not only do Christians risk being idolaters by going on pilgrimage to venerate a particular image, but they risk being exploited as well. (64)

She also goes on to explain in the following chapter the concept of the intermingling of the sacred and the profane (in terms of gender) on pilgrimage stating that "there exists no absolute division between the sacred and the profane in pilgrimage, since everyday life may invade 'sacred' space" (92). This is what we witness in Clement's act of deception: a falsification of adultery and illegitimacy while attempting to fulfil a pilgrimage. The religious aspect of pilgrimage for Clement, like those we have seen in the didactic works of the first chapter, is replaced by a worldly falsehood. Despite the suggested impious nature of the presence of this child, however, Clement's pilgrimage again assists in the familial reunion of *Octavian.* The child, named Florent, becomes part of this burgess's family until he begins to demonstrate his noble qualities. We see

again what Mehl has identified as the translator's possible rush to familial reunification where didactic tendencies are kept to a minimum and certain immoral behaviour is excused, ignored or left unexplained.

This ambiguity is also reflected in the figure of Octavian who, unlike his counterparts in *Emaré* or *The Man of Law's Tale*, neither seeks forgiveness nor displays any contrite behaviour for his treatment of his wife. He does not travel to Rome on pilgrimage as penance for his wrongdoings. The final familial reunion occurs as a result of crusading ideals where they are brought together to protect Christianity from the Saracen threat rather than as part of a penitential process. Octavian's wife, though innocent, believes that she is being punished for an unspecified sinful act and, having lost her family, decides to serve God in the Holy Land. Her husband makes no such promise and never shows remorse for his cruel actions. Though providing the reader with the pious and devout character of the Emperor's wife, the narrative does not become an edifying work similar to *Guy of Warwick* or *Valentine and Orson*, characterised by lifelong exile and abnegation. Expectations of the romance genre are fulfilled in *Octavian*, with the family reuniting after a long and arduous separation and exile, with pilgrimage initiating the reunion and eventually being overshadowed by the presence of a crusading motif.

Octavian can thus be defined as a more secularly-oriented romance than *Sir Isumbras*. For a contemporary lay audience, it would have provided situations that on the face of it appear to be exaggerated but may in fact have seemed more recognisable and denotative of realism to medieval readers, especially the gentry class who would have had to balance secular responsibilities with their piety. Melissa Furrow observes how *The Mirrour of Life* denounces romance narratives: "*Isumbras* and *Octavian* parade their militant Christianity, but are a poor source of theological instruction about

religion" (233). Desire to reunite and to protect Christian values in a militant fashion drive this romance and thus demonstrates Cooper's observation that "romances at the centre of the genre assume that desire can and should be fulfilled, that there will be a point when it comes to rest" (*The English Romance in Time*, 48). Though significantly abridged, *Octavian* succeeds in demonstrating Furrow's observation on the criticisms of religious ideals in romance texts that "celebrate generosity, love, victory rather than poverty, chastity, obedience" (233). It is a text that is not consumed by devoutness. A worldly narrative is permitted to develop where the family unit, a temporal creation, is influenced by religious practices, such as pilgrimage, but not defined by them.

The Middle English prose narrative of *Paris and Vienne*, translated from the Provençal in 1432, also follows Cooper's interpretation of desire in romance narratives while being presented with a new familial model. It is a narrative that represents the "lay point of view, from the world where faithful love expressed in marriage is the best form of living" (Cooper, 26: "Caxton and the Mainwaring versions of Paris and Vienne"). The narrator presents a passionate love between a young couple who attempt to elope. As Paris and Vienne are young, parental relationships play a crucial role and provide further examples of the variants of familial models in Middle English texts. Though a form of entertainment, as Cooper notes, *Paris and Vienne* could also be read as a "model of good behaviour, a kind of courtesy book" (26, "Caxton and the Mainwaring versions"), bringing many ideals within the scope of this narrative, from crusading to familial.

Parental expectations for their children are significant both for a father and his son, and a father and his daughter. Paris's father, Jaques, becomes ill while his son is away, competing in a tournament. On his sickbed, Jaques professes that "hys desease came for his sone Parys/ by cause he loste so hys tyme/ and that he wente alway wyth

the bysshop of Saynt Laurence/ wherof I fere me that he shal become a man of relygyon" (25). Jaques reveals his sadness brought about by his son's abandonment of his chivalric vocation in favour of the religious life. Along with sadness, Jaques also demonstrates fears that he will have no heir. His sorrow is comparable to the rage Geoffrey in *The Romans of Partenay* exhibits when he hears the news that his brother Fromount has become a monk, even if the episode in *Paris and Vienne* does not share the same brutal consequences. The fears of Jaques regarding his son's decision to abandon his chivalrous lifestyle for a life of prayer and contemplation reflects social concerns and echoes fears familiar to the audience of *Paris and Vienne*. These fears embody contemporary concerns relating to lineage and inheritance: "I haue no moo chyldren but hym/ I wote not what I shall doo wyth the goodes that god hath gyuen to me" (25). In time, however, he realises that this is not the case and that Paris wishes to marry Vienne.

This is in direct conflict with the Dauphin's expectations for his daughter, which include marrying someone of a higher rank. These conflicting parental expectations come to the fore when Jaques travels to speak with the Dauphin and ask for his daughter's hand in marriage on behalf of his son. Sending Jaques away, the Dauphin emphasises his disgust regarding his daughter marrying one from a lower rank by claiming that "I wold rather make you a none or a menchon" (nun) and threatening that only for his previous good service that he would "smyte of hys hede" (39) for even asking such a thing.

This parental conflict of interests results in the initiation of the next stage of the young couple's adventure as they attempt to escape the constraints of the class divide that keep them apart. The consequences of their failed attempt to run away together result in Paris becoming an exile while Vienne must endure suffering at the hands of

her father because of her refusal to marry anyone else. Paris acknowledges that their abortive escape will also have serious consequences for his parents when he exclaims "Oh alas my fader and my moder what shal befalle of you/whan the doulphyn shal knowe/ that I haue stolen from hym his doughter" (45). The family thus emerges as a central structural concern of this narrative. Similar to Felice's reaction when she realises that she will be separated from Guy, Paris threatens to kill himself with his sword. Vienne, however, provides the voice of reason and states that if he goes through with it "I shal deye also/ and so shal ye be cause of my deth as well of your owne" (45). Suicide is averted with exile and separation taking its place.

Paris, while travelling on the ship that will bring him to Genoa, adopts the appropriate behaviour of one in exile and is described by his travellers as such: "he had be a fool/ for alleyway he was pensyf and ymagynatf/ and unnethe wold speke ne say a word" (47). Like Sir Orfeo's self-imposed exile, when he arrives at his destination, he lives a solitary life "in grete hevynesse and sorowe" (47). This life of exile progresses even further when, in a letter to his father, Paris states that his intent is "to serue god and our lady from hens forth" (53). He explains that this will be accomplished through travelling the world "to seche holy pylgrymages" (53). He states his intentions to his father and ensures that if he is to die on his journey that Edward will take his place, exhibiting preparations which are similar to those made by Guy for his son before his departure. Paris's devotion can be clearly seen while he is on his pilgrimage and he uses this devotion as an incentive to continue with his travels:

> And he had alle waye faste byleve in our lord Jhesu Cryste / and in the glorious vyrgyn marye hys swete moder/ And thus abydyng in thys maner he had grete

> wylle to goo to Iherusalem to the holy sepulture/ for to see the holy sayntuaryes/ & for to accomplysshe the holy pylgremage. (69)[35]

Alongside this devotion, a level of *curiositas* is also observed in Paris's travels as he adapts to certain cultures. Though his devotion is not in doubt, he does take on the guise of a Moor and "also lerned alle the custommes and maners of the contree" (69). This pilgrimage is not wholly for the progression of his own piety but is often an opportunity for Paris to experience new countries and cultures, opportunities that the audience of this romance might have taken advantage of themselves. It is also a time when he can think about Vienne, demonstrating the constant balance of temporal concerns with spiritual devotion.

Paris's pilgrimage and peripatetic lifestyle are in stark contrast with the life Vienne must lead following his escape and exile. For her unsuccessful attempt to elope with Paris, her father imprisons her. For her refusal to marry a suitor of his choice she is condemned to remain in prison. Paris's mobility emphasises the trapped lives of those he has left behind but it also allows for the initiation of the reunion between the two lovers. His travels serve as his understanding of and connection with the language and culture of the Moors. This cultural assimilation allows for the rescue of Vienne's father who was captured while on a failed crusade. After a series of events, Paris is revealed, reunited with Vienne, and the Dauphin grants permission for him to marry his daughter. In the case of *Paris and Vienne*, pilgrimage made by choice evolves from a forced exile that has separated family and lovers into a reunifying pilgrimage that fulfils all the expectations of the genre.

The well-known and popular Breton Lay, *Sir Orfeo*, provides an alternative example of a pilgrim in Middle English romances that cannot be overlooked in this

[35] Cooper explains that "foremost among the principles of behaviour presented for imitation is the active readiness to engage with whatever comes, or even to seek it out." (*The English Romance in Time*, 51)

chapter especially when it is taken from the family-orientated miscellany of Ashmole 61.[36] According to Shuffleton, *Sir Orfeo* differs not only in its form from its fellow romance, *Sir Isumbras*, because it is written in four-stress couplets rather than tail-rhyme but also because it is "exceptional in nearly every other sense as well" (9), including its treatment of themes. *Sir Orfeo* incorporates Celtic and Classical mythology into its narrative, providing a different reading of a variety of literary conventions to previous romances examined in this chapter.

It is a work, which according to Corrine Saunders "plays with English dynastic history and Christian chivalric ideals: Orfeo is a model of English kingship and emblem of chivalry" (*Cultural Encounters*, 3). Family still forms the central theme for *Sir Orfeo*, but its treatment is different to other texts in this collection of narratives. The focus is on the spousal relationship between an evidently childless Orfeo and his wife. Children are not present in this narrative allowing for marital, secular love to form one of the central themes. Another difference is the corrupting force of the fairy king and not, as in the case of Isumbras, the Saracens. It is the "other" that threatens the stability of Orfeo's family and instigates his exile, a similar motif to that found in the *Romans of Partenay*.

The grief that Orfeo experiences following the abduction of his wife accords with the language of loss of both the pleasure of the world and also secular love. His exile, bearing some resemblance to that of Isumbras, is self-imposed. Orfeo's loss of power and also the loss of his worldly goods are a result of his choice to become a hermit and lead an ascetic life in the wilderness. Secular love and its subsequent loss bring about a spiritual development where Orfeo adopts the image of a holy man in the

[36] This fourteenth century adaptation of the Orpheus legend exists in three surviving manuscripts: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 61, Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS Advocates 19.2.1 (Auchinleck) and London, British Library, MS Harley 3810. This discussion focuses on the version found in Ashmole 61.

wild. Saunders identifies this as the poet's attempt to "employ both romance and hagiographic conventions of exile, with their respective thematic associations of loss in love and penitential quest for grace" (*Cultural Encounters*, 5). This combination of romance and hagiographical themes may give the impression that, like previous romances where this occurs, such as *Guy of Warwick, The Romans of Parthenay* and *Valentine and Orson*, generic expectations may not be fulfilled and *Sir Orfeo* may in fact end as a hagiographical narrative. This, however, is not the case as romance conventions, which Rosalind Field lists as "the forest of exile, the disguise of the hero, the rescue of the beloved" (48), all lead to the reunion of husband and wife and the restoration of power.

Pilgrimage characterises Orfeo's exile. It is self-imposed. He does not undertake a quest to find his wife but leaves his kingdom to live a life in isolation. Orfeo's experiences at this stage do not conform to the expected quest of the romance genre. Hurley confirms this, stating:

> the romance quest seems to be an inversion of the holy man's flight into hiding. Young knights emerge from obscurity, often from uncertainty about their parentage and true home; saints knowingly choose obscurity and poverty, abandoning their great families, possessions and knightly duties. (66)

He takes a staff with him and "he had nether gowne ne hode/schert, ne non other gode/bot an harpe he toke algate" (231-233). His status as a poor pilgrim is emphasised by his decision to go barefooted in a manner similar to Guy. This focus on Orfeo's poverty is continued with contrasting descriptions of his present condition as a hermit with his previous life demonstrating a loss of worldly land, status and wealth for the gentrified audience. Orfeo's penitential pilgrim persona, however, becomes redundant having seen his wife with a fairy hunting party. Though Orfeo takes his

staff with him when he decides to find and rescue his wife, he also brings his harp, denoting a shift from pilgrim to minstrel. This shift is confirmed when he reaches the entrance to the fairy realm and states "I ame a mynstrell, lo/ to glad thi lord with my gle/And it hys suete wyll be" (373-375).

Having found his wife, Orfeo returns to his kingdom but maintains his identity as a minstrel to secretly observe the steward who he has left in charge. He does not revert to the disguise of an exiled pilgrim. Orfeo's pilgrim image and exile serve to set the protagonist on the correct path to reunite him with his lost wife. Once he has found and rescued her, he does not need to return to a life of exile but can return to his kingdom and regain his power and prestige. Pilgrimage and exile, like those found in *Emaré* and *The Man of Law's Tale,* initiates the reunion of the husband and wife. Rather than driving Orfeo further into an ascetic life, pilgrimage and exile allow him to return to his kingdom, fulfilling romance expectations.

The mid-sixteenth century *Valentine and Orson* does not follow the path of *Sir Orfeo* in fulfilling its generic expectations. It is a romance, like *The Romans of Partheny*, that offers its audience a combination of Christian piety that is threatened by the Turks (reflecting social concerns) with supernatural wonders, patterns of familial separation and adventures and quests. These expected tropes, however, do not bring about the anticipated ending in the prose version examined here. Cooper, having listed the typical romance elements that clutter the text of *Valentine and Orson* suggests this purpose for them:

> For four-fifths of its considerable bulk, almost every conceivable expectation that one might have of romance is fulfilled. They are set up, however, not to affirm a generic faith in the attainability of secular ideals under God, but in

> order to be systematically destroyed at the end. ("The Strange History of *Valentine and Orson",* 156)[37]

Generic expectations, as with *Guy of Warwick* and *The Romans of Partenay* are inverted and destroyed. Reunions are not permanent and heavenly rewards are emphasised over worldly happiness and thus resembles a quasi-hagiographical narrative.[38]

Family relationships between siblings can be seen throughout *Valentine and Orson*. We observe the relationship between Pepyn, king of France and his sister Bellesant who marries the Emperor of Greece. The depicted sadness at her leaving following her wedding denotes the closeness of the siblings, and also establishes the scene for the cruelty she is subjected to following her rejection of the archbishop's lecherous advances.[39] To maintain his innocence, the archbishop lies to the Emperor about his wife, casting her in the role of the pregnant calumniated queen. Family is separated not by another family member but by a religious figure, because the Emperor "believed lightly the words of a false Archebysshop for he had his truste in hym more then in any man of the worlde" (18), even above his own wife.

The treatment of Bellesant by her husband is significantly more cruel than those of the calumniated queens of other romances and, in a similar situation to Octavian's wife, she is first threatened with the prospect of execution, a sentence that is then commuted to exile. She is protected by her noble lineage and also her pregnancy. A change in the sibling relationship is evident. Having heard about his

[37] Cooper also explains that "even the characteristic most widely considered definitive for the genre, the happy ending, can be absent without destroying the sense that one is dealing with a romance" (*The English Romance in Time,* 9) thus demonstrating that this can only be read as a romance.
[38] The prose version of this work, translated from the French prose *Valentin et Orson* by Henry Watson and printed by Wynkyn de Worde, is used for this examination. The French version itself had been transformed into prose from an earlier metrical romance from the early fourteenth century that was disseminated throughout Europe, with fragments found in Middle-Dutch, Low-German and Old-Swedish while a source entitled *Valentine and Nameless* is found within the Low-German version.
[39] The archbishop takes the place of the figure of the mother-in-law in other comparable texts such as *Émare* and *Octavian.*

sister's situation, Pepyn also chooses to believe the libel and is more concerned with his own reputation saying that "by her I am greatly diffamed and put unto great dishonour" (35), emphasising not only how the word of a woman was no match for that of even a corrupt archbishop, but also how the purity of female family members affects the male reputation.

Her exile results in the typical romance trope that Johnston refers to as "families under duress" (51) where her two babies are abducted, resembling patterns present in *Sir Isumbras* and *Octavian*. One is taken by a bear and the other is found by his own uncle, Pepyn, who is unaware that the child is his nephew. Orson remains in the forest and is brought up by the bear while Valentine is raised in Pepyn's court.

Both men thrive in their contrasting environments. Orson becomes a large wild man, feared by travellers passing through the forest. Valentine, displaying his noble yet unknown origins, flourishes in the courtly lifestyle. It is apparent, however, that they are still displaced figures. Orson becomes increasingly more bestial, eating men and animals raw, representing the liminal life. A member of court refers to Valentine as nothing "but a fundleynge and a poore child" (54), a status that undoubtedly was a concern for the gentry audience as he is without lineage or family. This can only be rectified by the reunification of the family, which begins when the brothers find each other, despite being unaware that they are siblings. Valentine finds Orson and realises that fighting him is futile. He brings his brother back to the court of Pepyn and promises to teach him the ways of the world and "the holy fayth" (69) and ensures that he is baptised.

Valentine addresses the issue of the ambiguity of his birth and uses imagery associated with pilgrimage such as the bearing of the cross when he explains why he must begin to search for his family. He states that:

> I bere a cross upon my shoulder, the whiche is also yelowe as the fine golde. I can not tell from whence cometh to me suche a sygne, wherefore I am purposed never for to rest unto the time that I have knowledge of my natiuitie. (85)

This is similar to Isumbras carving an image of the cross onto his body as part of his penance to distinguish him as a pilgrim.[40]

Messengers feature in many medieval genres. These messengers can often adopt the guise of a pilgrim who then uses the associated anonymity of such a guise to carry news within the narrative. Blandyman , the servant of Valentine and Orson's mother, Bellesant, takes on a pilgrim's garb to deliver a message to Pepyn's palace. While on the road, he meets the two young brothers, who are still unaware of their origins and their familial connection. Blandyman's anonymity is enhanced by his pilgrim's garb and he continues unrecognised to the palace of Pepyn where the brothers have been staying. Blandyman brings news of Pepyn's sister, Bellesant, thereby encouraging Pepyn to realise that the two brothers who have been staying with him are his nephews, guiding them towards a more complete familial reunion. Though still a secular motivation for dressing as a pilgrim, it is a more positive image of the 'false pilgrim' in comparison to what we have encountered in the exemplary narratives or what we will see in *The Vision of Piers Plowman*. This meeting on the road between the unrecognised Blandyman and the two brothers could reflect a deeper religious significance relating to the "Emmaus Tale" (Luke 24) where an unrecognised pilgrim Jesus, meets two disciples on the road. Holloway explains that "the Emmaus Tale was linked to pilgrimage because Luke's gospel text had Cleophas term Christ, 'peregrinus', 'stranger', or as it was understood in the Middle Ages, 'pilgrim'" (*The*

[40] James A. Brundage offers a detailed examination of the taking of the cross, its associated meaning and rituals for the crusading ideal in 'Cruce Signari: The Rite for Taking the Cross in England', referring to the connection to the blessing associated with pilgrim clothing and accessories.

Pilgrim and the Book , 28). While the pilgrim Blandyman guides the brothers on their correct path so too does the newly-resurrected pilgrim Christ guide his disciples from despair to hope.

The reunion develops further with the whole family including the Emperor, Bellesant and the twins reuniting between battles. It is at this point, however, that the associated expectations of romance are overturned as the family members do not remain together for long. Orson and his new wife return with Pepyn to his kingdom. Pepyn promptly leaves on pilgrimage to the Holy Land after receiving a vision. This pilgrimage, however, allows his two sons to plot treasonous acts against their father while he is in the Holy Land. Though this is not the central family of this work, we can observe how the untrustworthy cousins of Valentine and Orson use their father's pilgrimage to seek revenge for his preferential treatment of the twins over them bearing affinities with Mordred's usurpation of Arthur.

Pepyn is captured while on his pilgrimage, and he and his companions are treated as Christian spies. This episode, considering when this prose version of this romance was available, reflects the fears and concerns of later medieval public with regard to the Muslim opposition to Christianity. It also reflects genuine concerns of lineage, dynastic heritage and the idea of heirs for the gentry class. While pilgrimage might have been an accessible pursuit for those of the gentry class, it might have caused problems if a parent died abroad or estates were not run correctly in their absence.

One tragic event weakens the generic expectations of this romance as Valentine kills his father on the battlefield without recognising him. This, in turn, prompts Valentine to travel to Rome on pilgrimage "to be shryven of his synne" (312) in a similar fashion to Raymond and Geoffrey in *The Romans of Parthenay*. His

penance is to live his life as a silent pauper within the confines of his own castle, an exile in his own home.[41] He is not physically detached from all that he has known but it is his silence that causes the greatest divide. This silence is only broken when Valentine dons a disguise of a pilgrim to protect his wife from a treasonous plot against her. In this pilgrim's disguise, he can speak to his wife and also inform her that her husband is alive.

At the end of his seven years of penance, Valentine does not return to his life of luxury and power and dies a hermit. Similar to *The Romans of Partheny* and *Guy of Warwick*, the secular life is eschewed in favour of the spiritual path. He is canonised and a shrine is built for him. Cleremond, like Felice in *Guy of Warwick*, becomes more charitable and following the death of her husband she becomes a nun. Orson also follows a saintly path as he decides to "renounce all worldly honoure" (326) after receiving a vision and he too becomes a hermit. He follows in the footsteps of his brother and after his death, he also becomes a saint.

Valentine and Orson is a romance where heroic self-identity and family are intertwined. Identity not only comes from an awareness of one's parents, but also from an awareness of siblings and extended kin. Familial completeness following reunions provide the reader with the expected generic motifs of romance while familial separation initiated by volition, exile or death announces a shift in generic perceptions from romance to hagiographical expectations. The role of pilgrimage is minor in this long romance where quest, adventure and dynastic inheritance are key themes. It has no set function to either separate or reunite the family of Valentine and Orson but is used in a variety of ways that structure the narrative in specific, important episodes. These episodes include the disguised pilgrims of Blandyman and Valentine, Pepyn's

[41] Cooper states that "one extreme form of penance requires the sinner to act the part of a mute fool at court and to eat only what he can seize from the dogs" (*The English Romance in Time*, 89).

demonstration of piety and Valentine's display of penance after he has killed his father. The presence of pilgrimage in *Valentine and Orson*, though diffuse, demonstrates that it was a practice that could be readily exploited to shape and prolong the narrative.

Familial relationships amid crises of pilgrimage and penitence are central to the Middle English *Romans of Partenay,* a sixteenth-century translation of a fifteenth-century French text, which emphasises the theme of "trouthe" and worldly achievement within a familial context. This can be observed in the spousal relationship between Raymond and the otherworldly Melusine. The success of their marriage and subsequent lives relies on a pledge made by Raymond that he will never question where his wife goes every Saturday. While he upholds his part in this arrangement, they lead prosperous lives, build a successful kingdom and conceive many children. Their successful lives are founded on the acquisition of wealth, land and reputation. This is balanced with the unusual disfigurements and marks that their children bear, denoting their connection to a supernatural entity through their mother who is half-fairy, half-human and must spend one day each week in serpent form. Otherworldly themes, therefore, confront religious devotion throughout this text. This is observed during Melusine's initial meeting with Raymond in the forest, a landscape often associated with the supernatural in medieval romances, where she appears to need to affirm that she too is a Christian:

> Y am, after god, your next frende trulye,
> Wordly catell I-now shall be brought,
> But loke me truste And beleue verille,
> And dubte ye no-thing of goddys that am noght,
> I noght beleue in hys vertues weought;

Yut I you promise that I do beleue

Ryght As holy Catholike feithe doth yeue. (456-462)[42]

Though she is a supernatural being, Melusine attempts to align herself with religious ideals and God's influence on Raymond by emphasising that she is a Christian. On her wedding day, she is described as being more than human but her otherworldliness is described as being more connected to that of the angels than to a secular supernatural figure: "it was noght no humayn body lyke/But more better semed a thing angell-lyke" (937-938). The language of beauty used here bears a semblance to the description of May at her wedding in Chaucer's *The Merchant's Tale* where she is also described in terms of light: she was "lyk the brighte morwe of May/Fulfild of alle beautee and plesaunce" (1748-49).

This image of the ethereal Melusine on her wedding day, however, juxtaposes her partial transformation into a serpent, imagery that connects her to the serpent in the garden of Eden, further distancing her from the Christian beliefs she desires to follow. Her supernatural origins cannot coexist with her Christian faith and will ultimately influence the future of her marriage and family. Melusine's desire and delight regarding the decision of her son, Fromount to become a monk is eroded by the ensuing destruction of her family. Both she and Raymond are thankful for their children's worldly and spiritual attainments but Melusine's happiness at having a holy man for a son is emphasised:

Yut god be thanked, haue we here full ny

On off our sones monke in An Abbay

Which daily for us besechith god an hy; *pray to God daily*

Wher god praith to socour vs truly, *spiritual aid*

[42] "I am after God your best friend; but you must trust to me entirely. Do not doubtingly think that I am not on God's side". (123)

That neuer vs haue in oblivion;

For assigned hath will our sones echon. (2702-2709)

This felicity does not pass to all of her other children. Fromount's brother, Geoffrey disdains that his sibling should leave a life of chivalry for an enclosed life as a monk. His anger leads him to burn Fromount's monastery to the ground, killing all those inside, including Fromount. Familial dysfunction through sibling rivalry is realised here in the language of sacrilegious destruction.

In *The Romans of Partenay*, the family is its own cause of disintegration due to fratricide. As with the parricide committed by Mordred (the product of an incestuous union) in *Le Morte D'Arthur*, familial destruction is also aligned with social destruction. Incest, however, is replaced by the fear of the otherworldly in this context. Familial degeneration is furthered by Raymond's discovery of his wife's secret and the breaching of the foundational taboo of their marriage; that on Saturdays, she possesses the lower body of a snake. He does not reveal his discovery until he hears what Geoffrey has done and begins to blame Melusine and her otherworldly nature for this, revealing that he has broken his pledge to his wife. The final act of betrayal between husband and wife comes with Raymond denouncing her as a snake and further criticising his own offspring: "ha! Serpent! Thy line in lif no good shall doo!!" (3548-3549). Melusine's human anguish, in response, can be seen through her admonishment of Raymond, stating that it is his public disclosure of her condition that has brought ruination to their family and has cursed them both. Melusine must now live as a snake and Raymond must now live alone, without his spouse and with the consequences of his rash actions.

Both father and son reveal that they are remorseful for the destruction caused by their actions. Geoffrey, in a manner similar to that of Sir Gowther, comes to his

senses after his frenzied attack on the monastery and displays a contrite attitude. He decides to search for another giant to slay. While on this quest, he uncovers the complete story of his mother's supernatural condition. This story within a story reveals a previous generation of his family who was the cause of its own destruction. He hears the story of how Helmas, king of Albany had looked upon his wife Presine after she had given birth to three daughters, despite having sworn to her that he would not. He is then imprisoned within a mountain while Presine proceeds to raise their three daughters. Presine gives Melusine, the eldest, the gift of life according to the order of the fairies. This gift comes with the condition that she must take the form of a serpent one day a week, repeating the cycle of supernatural influences and broken marriage oaths.

Raymond, however, copes with his losses with a contemplative attitude, deciding that all of his familial troubles are a consequence of his personal sins and misdeeds and that a pilgrimage to Rome will set him on a path to redemption. Unlike Sir Isumbras, who has lost his wife through divine intervention, Raymond has lost his otherworldly wife because of his own impatience and, unlike Isumbras, Raymond's pilgrimage is self-imposed. He prepares for his journey like any other pilgrim, instructing Geoffrey, who has returned from his quest, to look after his land and to raise his younger brother, Thierry. He also instructs Geoffrey to rebuild the monastery he has burned down as part of his penance. Geoffrey and Thierry accompany their father on the first part of his journey and Geoffrey uses this time to tell the story he has learned about his mother. This first part of the pilgrimage allows Raymond to learn the story of his wife thereby creating a sense of fulfilment regarding his knowledge of her origins and, as with Geoffrey's initial discovery regarding his mother's lineage, this further retelling of the story fulfils this romance's role as an origins story for the

Lusignan family. Pilgrimage, therefore, offers this father and his sons the platform on which the family can uncover familial truths and begin to rebuild their relationships thus aligning with patterns of recovery in romance.

In a manner similar to *Valentine and Orson*, the expectations of romance are not realised in *The Romans of Partenay*. Raymond, having completed the rest of his pilgrimage to Rome alone, confesses his sins to the Pope and receives his penance. He does not, however, return home but travels to Montserrat where he becomes a hermit. He undertakes this self-imposed exile for the salvation of his wife, whom he has condemned to live as snake:

> So in wild exile all hys lif using
> For fair Melusine his loue, wife, and spouse,
> In many somers And winters being,
> Which that he hath lost by dedes shameuous,
> Ans serpent become wonder hideous;
> Sayng, neuer wold his put in oblyuy
> Ne in that contre neuer entre surely,
> Neuer-For- neuer in hys life no day,
> Where hys suete loue loste by hys owne speche. (5132-5139)

Raymond provides the audience with the model of a pilgrim that they can identify with, as he demonstrates regret for losing his wife and attempts to make amends using spiritual means. Like Isumbras, he continues to balance secular issues concerned with temporal commitments, such as family, with those of a religious nature. His love for his absent wife not only demonstrates the imperatives of worldly relationships but also ensures that he undertakes the required actions of a pilgrim and exile that has embarked on a journey of atonement for the salvation of another. This bears some

similarities to his son's own pilgrimage of atonement. Geoffrey also travels to Rome and confesses his sins to the Pope. He is instructed to rebuild the monastery, a task that he has already begun, and is also instructed to seek out Raymond, who is now a holy man, in an effort to save his soul for having caused the death of his brother. He must demonstrate penitence for his actions as the Pope explains that "For your brother soule ye be in danger" (5245). Geoffrey succeeds in finding his father and expresses a wish to stay with him. This desired attempt at a familial reunion is quickly suppressed as it would imperil Raymond's penance. He must remain detached from the world and his family. Pilgrimage, quest and exile, unlike in the romances *Emaré*, *The Man of Law's Tale* and *Sir Isumbras*, mandate the family's disunity in this narrative; their individual souls are the object of their individual quests. Salvation, as we will encounter in the allegorical dramas of chapter 5, as here, relies on the journey and actions of the individual rather than the collective.

Guy of Warwick and *Sir Isumbras* present differing perspectives regarding the position of exile, pilgrimage and the family in Middle English narratives. Both share a storyline where, as Hardman and Ailes describe, "the hero makes amends for a life of worldly pride by travelling as a poor pilgrim to the Holy Land" (56). Rhiannon Purdie has addressed the difficulties that can be attributed to classifying such romances, paying particular attention to *Sir Isumbras*. She examines the problematic nature of definitions and explains that "the terms 'homiletic romance', 'exemplary romance', 'edifying romance' and 'religious romance' have all been proposed as a means of stretching the romance genre to accommodate [such] texts" (*Anglicising Romance*, 115). She also identifies further sub categories including: romances of trial and faith

and religious romance with sub categories such as secular hagiography and secular legend (Purdie, *Anglicising Romance,* 115).[43]

Rather than cause ambiguity, these types of definitions display the duality that can be observed throughout *Sir Isumbras* for example; the constant balance between the secular and the sacred. It is this duality, in particular the devotion to family and devotion to God, which would have made it a desirable text for a medieval lay readership, especially the gentry; for example Isumbras's transformations from knight to pilgrim and from pilgrim to king.

Though these attempted classifications of the religious romance are numerous, the texts themselves deliver common themes that focus on penitential and devotional aspects of life alongside the chivalric characteristics expected of romances, reflecting how ideas of loss and recovery are often intertwined with a crusading ideal (Manion 104). These romances from the later Middle Ages reflect how society was interacting with and responding to the concept of the crusades and pilgrimage.

Religious romances are not impervious to ridicule despite their spiritual themes and are referred to in *The Speculum Vitae* as "veyne carping" or idle, worthless talk (xx).[44] This classification, however, is where the similarities between the romance narratives pertaining to the lives of Guy and Isumbras end. Guy's exile and pilgrimage are self-imposed while Isumbras's journey is one driven by the loss of his worldly possessions and family. The adventures in which Guy partakes while on his pilgrimage are described in detail, while the descriptions of Isumbras's adventures are kept to a minimum. Dieter Mehl observes that:

[43] Purdie lists the critics associated with each term including Laura Hibbard for "romances of trial by faith", Dieter Mehl for "homiletic romances" Hanspeter Schelp for "exemplary romance", Maldwyn Mills for "edifying romance", Andrea Hopkins for "religious romance" and Ojars Kratins for "secular legend" and "secular hagiography". (*Anglicising Romance*,115)

[44] As with Hopkin's reference to the *Speculum Vitae*, this description is taken from the quoted text by J.O Halliwell in *The Thorton Romances*, from Oxford, Bodleian MS 48. The "veyne carping" refers to narratives including *Octavian*, *Bevis of Hampton*, and *Guy of Warwick* (xx).

> The poem does not attempt to give a colourful description of romantic incidents, but concentrates on the exemplary story of a knight whose happiness is suddenly turned into misery and who in all his sufferings proves himself a humble and patient Christian until everything he has lost is returned to him. (91)

Isumbras therefore is a representative for the gentry class of one who can experience both salvation and also reinstatement of status.

Sir Isumbras is an early fourteenth-century work found in nine extant manuscripts.[45] The version found in Ashmole 61 is used for this discussion because of the collection's familial influence and focus. The themes of *Sir Isumbras* are echoed and repeated in other texts found in Ashmole 61 and create an image of what Shuffleton describes as "provincial gentry families" (15). The court of Isumbras would therefore not have seemed so removed for the audience of Ashmole 61. Johnston also affirms that this is the case of the version of *Sir Isumbras* found in the Heege manuscript as "it makes particular appeals to the gentry in its celebration of the hero's successful ascent into the ranks of the titled nobility" (154). Isumbras is therefore a model for restoration amongst the gentry class in all iterations of the narrative.

Isumbras's heedlessly secular lifestyle is evident as his generosity is measured in terms of how much gold and fine clothing he gives to the minstrels in his court: "Mynstrels lovyed he welle in halle/ And gafe theme rych robys of paule/ And gyfts of glytering gold" (19-21). Isumbras's interest in worldly goods outweighs the prescribed devotion that he should exhibit regarding spiritual affairs: "Bot in hys herte a pride

[45] Hudson describes the variations that exist between these manuscripts in her introduction to *Four Middle English Romances*: *Sir Isumbras, Octavian, Sir Eglamour of Artois, Sir Tryamour*. She explains that the earliest manuscript, London, Gray's Inn MS 20, bears many similarities to the version found in Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College MS 175, but that these differ greatly from the Lincoln Cathedral MS 91 (Thornton MS), Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Ashmole 61, and the Heege Manuscript (Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland Advocates' MS 19.3.1) as they concentrate on the more heroic aspects of the texts.

was browght/ Of Godys werkys he goffe right noght/ Hys mersye he sette nott byghe" (31-33). This does not go unnoticed by God who "wold no lenger byde/ Bot sente hym sorrow inne hyghe" (35-36). Isumbras, however, is given the choice when this "sorrow" should befall him: as a young man or in old age. He is aware that the loss of his wealth will result in a life of greater hardship and that he will have to resort to a vagrant lifestyle, as he states, "In youth I may both ryde and goo/ When I ame olde I canne not so" (55-56). He therefore decides to accept his penance and life of hardship as a young man. It is a text that "catalogues the markers of gentry identity that are stripped away from the protagonist once he chooses to take his suffering now rather than old age" (Johnston 154). The loss of possessions is almost instantaneous as Isumbras's horse dies beneath him and his hawks and hounds flee into the woods; "iche onne diverse weye" (69), a foreshadowing of things to come.

The theme of familial love and devotion is evident when concern for the safety of each other is exhibited by all family members despite the dire circumstances of loss of home and wealth: "Than the lady bade them be blythe/ For yonder I se your fader onne lyve/ For nothinge be ye drade" (100-102). Isumbras decides that their penance as a family should be to "Go seke ther God was quke and dede/And sprede was on the ride tre" (122-123). Even though his penance is forced upon him, Isumbras makes many crucial decisions as he decides when and where he should undertake it. His choice to journey to the Holy Land allows the audience to anticipate an intended familial pilgrimage at this stage. According to Elizabeth Fowler, "the medieval ceremony of taking the cross initiates legal, spiritual and financial responsibilities that were elaborated by the fourteenth century in canon law, visual art, and poetry" (107). Isumbras, in an exaggerated gesture of becoming a pilgrim and demonstrating his commitment to his "spiritual responsibility", cuts a cross into his chest and goes to

confession: “A crosse he cutte upon hys brest/And schryved them both unto the preste” (127-128). As a family, they become true pilgrims upon leaving their home and friends, experiencing hardship in the form of poverty, starvation and thirst, bearing similarities to the experiences of Emaré and Constance in the rudderless boat. However, this raises the following questions: is this a true pilgrimage? Since the family is intact, can they be considered penitential exiles and can they completely devote themselves to such a journey?

The notion of the complete family pursuing a pilgrimage to the Holy Land is short lived. The penance expected of Isumbras is not limited to physical hardship but extends to emotional suffering when the family become separated, beginning the familiar romance trope where two of his sons are abducted by a lion and a leopard, fulfilling Johnston’s definition of “Families under Duress” (51). These abductions are quickly followed by that of his wife who is taken by the Sultan. Isumbras is offered great riches by this almost virtuous heathen, first for his fighting skills as a knight and then for his wife. He maintains his role as a defender of the Christian religion by refusing to fight for the Sultan, but loses his spouse. Gestures of familial and matrimonial devotion, reflected by the anguish regarding separation, are again observed when Isumbras’s wife states that now “My welth this dey fro me is lorne” (323), demonstrating that her joy is not found in material wealth but in her husband and her family.

The final act of separation involving the family occurs when Isumbras’s remaining child is taken by a griffin. His pious desire to travel to the Holy Land has seemingly not shielded him from the punitive loss of his family thus moving from a pilgrimage of the collective to a pilgrimage of the individual. The penitential pilgrimage of this particular romance advances the family’s separation. The isolation

imposed on the family members and especially on Isumbras himself emphasises the necessity of separation and seclusion from all that is familiar while embarking on a penitential journey. Isumbras's family must be taken from him and separation must occur to further his suffering. This isolation from the familiar also allows him to concentrate on the purpose of his exile and the salvation of his own soul, resembling the allegories discussed in chapter 5.

Isumbras in complete contrast to his noble origins trains as a blacksmith and following more than seven years of hard work, symbolically reforged and refined, he becomes a defender of Christianity where he fights the Saracens, wearing armour that he has crafted. Having defeated the Saracens, Isumbras once again becomes a pilgrim. In stark contrast to his previous attempt, he does not have his family with him at the outset.

Isumbras's preparation is focussed on his individual journey where he "ordeyned hym scrype and pyke/ And made all palmer lyke" (508-509). His role as a pilgrim can only be fulfilled as a solitary figure that experiences isolating penance. Atonement must be performed in isolation. Isumbras continues to be aware that this is in fact a necessary penance for his previous preoccupation with worldly goods and it is made clear that "Of penans was he never yrke/ For his grete mysded" (539-540). His role as a penitential pilgrim is acknowledged by God, whose messenger refers to him as a "palmer" (550). This acknowledgement of Isumbras as a pilgrim by a higher power is followed by confirmation of his forgiveness. Rather than an instant reunion with his family, however, he must continue with his pilgrimage even as he "wyste never whether to go" (560).

His poor pilgrim's clothing and dishevelled appearance admits Isumbras to the court of his long-lost wife where he receives alms. Recognition and reunion, however,

are not immediate. Isumbras, despite regaining his strength, still exhibits anguish over the loss of his family where "he wepyd for his wyffe and his childer thre" (659). Paradoxically, it is gold, the initial cause of this knight's suffering that leads to the recognition scene. His wife recognises the gold that she had bestowed on her husband before her abduction by the Sultan. Isumbras becomes king of this land and is reinstated to his noble lifestyle. According to Hopkins: "Having abandoned the identity of the 'sir Ysumbras' for that of 'the poure
palmere' after the battle against the Sultan, he now changes back to his true, knightly self, with the improvement also of being crowned king" (139), again reasserting that this will not bear the ending of a hagiographically inspired romance.

In a further reference to the gentrified audience of *Sir Isumbras,* the protagonist rises above his original station to become king. Material goods are the reason for Isumbras's suffering and loss but they are also the catalyst for his restoration and reunion with those he has lost. He does not remain a penitent exile but, in fact, provides the exemplary model for those who do not desire or cannot adequately achieve an ascetic lifestyle. Even though "a ryche kynge was Syr Isombras/ In more welthe than ever he was" (724-725), he has served the appropriate penance and now acknowledges his earthly inadequacy before God. Through this new found piety, he also fights for militant Christianity:

> Crystindom he kepyed that tyde:
> Sondys he sente full wyde
> To them that hethen were.
> Bot thei turned to his assentte,
> He seyde iche one thei shulde be brente
> With doro and myche care. (726-732)

This desire to protect Christianity and to convert non-Christians reinforces his recently discovered spiritual devotion. These actions reflect a social concern regarding the role and purpose of the crusades for the romance's readership, realising the enduring dialogue on the crusades in terms of "betrayal, inheritance, and interreligious marriage" (Manion, 104) it also initiates the final reunion between Isumbras and his abducted sons. The return of Isumbras's wealth and status has led to the reunion of his family. Isumbras's life of privilege has come full circle with the bonus of added reverence for the divine. Manion defines this reunion with the crusading ideology:

> *Sir Isumbras* aligns its protagonist's social recovery with the political recovery of the Holy Land in order to critique and celebrate knighthood for a mixed audience; only through his penitential experience as one of the poor, common people does Isumbras learn […] what it meant to be a knight. (94)

Isumbras's penance therefore influences his regained secular status in society.

Hopkins's examination of the role of penance in the narrative of *Sir Isumbras* asserts its unimportance; that "nowhere is the motif of penance articulated with any force: nowhere does Ysumbras express remorse or sorrow for the sins he is supposed to have committed" (124). She speculates that gestures of sorrow would be "tears of self-pity, brought on by the pathetic contrast between his former wealth and ease and his present indigence" (138) and for the "loss of those he loved and all his sorrow" (138). Tears are not shed because of separation from God but because of the consequences brought on by this lack of devotion.

Consequences of this persistent attachment to the world are the loss of family for Isumbras and narrowly escaping the loss of their Christianity. Unlike Guy's personal decision to go on pilgrimage, Isumbras's penance and pilgrimage are not self-imposed but are forced upon him. but unlike the calumniated queens, he does get a

choice on when he can undertake it. He does not leave behind a life of comfort like Guy, a divine force takes everything from him. This could explain the absence of force behind his penance identified by Hopkins.

Fowler addresses the social aspects of the figure of Isumbras, extending Hopkins's description of mundane crises within the text. According to Fowler:

> Romances echo saints' lives when they re-imagine the plot of divestment and reinvestment that is the basis of hagiography: rather than investigating what makes a person holy, they ponder what makes a person rich, or virtuous, or triumphant, or a king. (99)

It indeed echoes a saint's life but *Sir Isumbras* cannot follow the same path in the end. The protagonist is too committed to the world and his responsibilities, as a leader, as a father and as a husband. The terms associated with religious romance might be more applicable to the case of *Sir Isumbras* as it contains religious themes within a romance setting than if we were to refer to it as a hagiographical romance. Exile and pilgrimage do not result in a continued detachment from the temporal as the family is reunited and the hero reinstated.

The type of ascetic penance that is present in other narratives such as the source for this romance, *Saint Eustace*, or even *Guy of Warwick* would not have provided an achievable model of piety for audiences of *Sir Isumbras*. The presence of *Sir Isumbras* in the family-focussed Ashmole 61 manuscript, among other texts that include prayers, short exemplary narratives, a guide to the Stations of Jerusalem and Sir Isumbras's own hagiographical source, *Saint Eustace*, highlights that this particular romance must fulfil the expectations of its genre by not only providing enjoyment for its reader, but also presenting its audience with a familiar figure who is bound by secular responsibilities, such as family and religious obligations.

Read with *Sir Isumbras*, *Guy of Warwick* reflects what Diana Childress identifies as themes and motifs that are common to both texts, including the most significant: "a happy ending, whether on earth or in eternity" (311). In her study of hagiographical and romance texts, Margaret Hurley describes how the expectations of romance are reinforced by certain themes including the realisation by certain protagonists that they are in fact tied to the temporal world:

> Because no new society is the goal of a knight's efforts, his reward, unlike the saint's, consists in a return to and glorification by the secular society which sent him forth. His apotheosis does not consist in being received among the followers of the Lamb, but in being acknowledged as good a man as Gawain. (68)

This would have resonated with the gentry class. Being able to balance piety with this "glorification by the secular society" would have been seen as the most achievable model for most of the audience for these narratives.

The implications of reading 'religious' romances as didactic literature continue in *Guy of Warwick* and demonstrate Hopkins's statement that:

> There is a strong case for arguing that most Middle English romances are, if not didactic, then certainly exemplary, and that there is no fundamental generic difference between those romances in which the hero's piety and his conscious relationship with his Maker are accepted but not explored in depth, and those in which the aspects of his heroic character are given prominence. (77)

These two observations by Hurley and Hopkins can be applied to this study of the Middle English *Guy of Warwick*, a popular, widely-known romance among its

contemporary medieval audience.[46] But it is the references to it within other works that emphasise *Guy of Warwick*'s status in Middle English literature. Hopkins provides a list of where these references can be found; in *Sir Thopas*, *Beues of Hamtoun* and William of Nassyngton's *Speculum Vitae*. This particular reading concentrates on the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, which appears in the Auchinleck Manuscript. Its recent editor, Alison Wiggins, describes its presence in the manuscript and explains that the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* is:

> preceded in the manuscript by a couplet *Guy of Warwick* […], a romance that deals with the early years of Guy's life […]. The stanzaic Guy, dealing as it does with the later years of Guy's life, is thus presented as a sequel to the couplet Guy. (3)

Though she refers to the texts that precede and follow the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, Wiggins makes it clear in her introduction that even though it displays some connection to the couplet *Guy of Warwick* and *Reinbroun*, as "it was originally composed and intended to be read as an independent romance" (4).

The Stanzaic Guy of Warwick is not without hagiographical influences and bears many similarities to *The Life of Saint Alexis*. Both texts pivot on the choice the protagonists make to leave their wives not long after they have been married. This decision to leave all he has known, fought for and desired sparks Guy's transition into a life of exile rather than a comfortable life of romance achievement. His persuasive speech to Felice early in the work describes his wish to marry her and how he "schal never spose wiman" while she lives (59-60). The importance of the marriage between its parties is constantly addressed during this early stage of the narrative. When Guy is asked by Felice's father to consent to marry his daughter both his vigorous agreement

[46] There are five extant manuscripts containing the text that was translated from a thirteenth century Anglo-Norman romance - Gui de Warewic. Of the five manuscripts containing versions of this text, two are only fragments.

and the earl's obvious delight display a good match and the beginnings of a happy and content medieval marriage:

> Than seyd th'erl, "Gramerci,"
>
> And in his arems he kist Sir Gii
>
> And thonked him mani a sithe.
>
> "Sir Gii", he seyd, "thou art mi frende,
>
> Now thou wilt spouse mi dohter hende
>
> Was I Y never are so blithe." (146-156)

The celebrations are described as a lavish affair that last a fortnight and where gold, silver, jewels and rich garments are not in short supply (a lavishness parodied in Chaucer's *The Merchant's Tale)*. The opulence of this occasion contains some similarities to Isumbras's court where worldly goods and courtly preoccupations overshadow any religious intention.

One night, however, after the celebrations have concluded, Guy begins to examine his conscience while staring into the sky: the narrative is keen to realise his internal dilemma in discernible gestures of doubt. He is not prompted or given a choice by a messenger from God, as in the case of Isumbras, but is tormented by the thoughts of his previous deadly deeds as a knight: "Bot wer ad wo ichace don wrought/ And mani a man to grounde ybrought" (259). Guy is not prompted to lead an ascetic lifestyle by wealth or frivolous behaviour but by the violent acts that he has committed as a knight. The shift from Guy's desire to seek worldly rewards to pursuing those of a spiritual nature can be seen during the course of his explanation to Felice where he addresses his lack of piety and his preoccupation with secular issues such as love: "Ac for thi love ich have al wrought/ For His love dede Y never nought" (295-296). Thus a conflict between spiritual and earthly knighthood is realised.

Guy's resolution to become an exile culminates in his description of how he will undertake such a venture:

For His love ichil now wende
Barfot to mi lives ende
Mine sinnes forto bete
That whoreso Y lye anight
Y schal never be seyn with sight
Bi way no bi street.
Of alle the dedes Y may do wel,
God graunt thee, lef that halvendel
And Marie His moder swete. (304-312)

This is not the first nor is it the last reference to Guy's desire to display his new-found penitential nature ostentatiously: through walking barefoot as a pilgrim, he hopes that physical suffering will atone for his sins. In fact, he mentions it three times, clearly stating the level of abnegation he wishes to achieve through reaffirming that he will complete the pilgrimage "barfot". The final time he states his intentions, explaining:

Y schal walk for mi sinne
Barfot bi doun and dale.
That ich have with mi bodi wrought,
With mi bodi it schal be bought
To bote me of that bale. (344-348)

The power of Guy's language and his intentions to leave his wife for a life of pilgrimage and exile result in Felice misunderstanding the reasons for his departure and placing them within the realms of worldly vices; she believes her husband is leaving her for another woman. In her despair, she poses the ultimate threat to familial

separation and destruction: suicide, “For sorwe itchil me slon” (324). Felice is a figure bound by worldly constraints in this narrative, but her desire to keep her husband and the prospect of a family is apparent and would have resonated with the lay audience.

Felice provides Guy with a suite of pious romance alternatives to his proposed exile where she urges “Schrive thee wele in word and thought” (328) and “Chirches and abbays thou might make” (331), thus assuring the audience that she is not tempting her husband away from religious deeds. These will not, according to Guy, help him atone for the acts that he has committed and Felice emerges as a character who cannot understand the spiritual reasoning behind Guy’s decision.

The family only serves to hinder the life of a penitent as they attempt to persuade Guy to stay through an array of pious inducements. Felice’s final attempt to keep him from his journey is the disclosure that she is pregnant with his son but even this fails to stop him from leaving. He remains practical and makes provisions for his son to be trained in the ways of a noble man and organises for him to receive his father’s sword when he comes of age. This replicates the plans that many pilgrims made before setting out on their journey. It also resembles the preparations of Orfeo and Gowther who consign their realms to the rule of diligent stewards. Again, we see the differences between Isumbras and Guy: Isumbras attempts to complete his pilgrimage as a father and husband, while Guy discards his mantle of family-man and noble man.

Felice’s despair is amplified by Guy’s departure and she attempts to fulfil her threat to kill herself with the same sword that he has left for his son. She is prevented by her father, friends and her own thoughts of her unborn child. This emphasis on the nascent family, centred on Felice, stands in relief to the image of the isolated pilgrim embodied by Guy. The family serve as the achievable models which the audience of

this romance could identify with. Felice's description of Guy's self-exile to her father provides an insight into those who are left behind. Guy refers to his intended exile as walking barefoot for his sins and as a "jurné" (381), but it is Felice who refers to it as a "pilgrimage" (426), stating that "He is walked in pouer wede/To beggen his mete with care" (440-441). She names it as a pilgrimage, demonstrating that even though she is distraught, she now understands the significance of his departure and must explain it accordingly to others who may think he has departed without purpose.

The pilgrimage of Guy is described in detail as the narrator ensures to name the sites that he has visited including Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Antioch. His mood as he "welke about with glad chere" (520) is in stark contrast to the distress of his wife and family that he has left behind. Guy finds greater solace in travelling to the various pilgrimage shrines "thurth mani londes fer and nere" (521) on his journey as a penitent than if had he remained at home surrounded by family. Similar to the characters found in hagiographical, allegorical and mystical texts discussed in later chapters, Guy's focus is now on the salvation of his soul and he concentrates on heavenly rewards through self-imposed exile rather than earthly concerns. Dyas, while explaining the place of pilgrimage and Jerusalem in the Bible, describes the significance and reasoning behind this form of penitential exile:

> The city, as envisaged by the Apostle, offered peace, comfort and healing in the presence of God, an appropriate goal for wary, foot-sore pilgrims, scarred by the trials and temptations of a world in which they could no longer feel at home. (25)

Family ties are therefore a part of the temporal distractions for Guy and for "to winne him heven-mede" (528) he must detach himself from these comforts and concentrate on spiritual affairs.

Guy creates a new identity for himself within this liminal space that allows him the freedom to pursue his penitential pilgrimage without familial ties or responsibilities. This new identity also provides the opportunity later in the narrative to engage in battles and fights without being recognised. He seeks to reconcile his past identity as a knight with his new penitent identity by becoming a new, unknown figure. After his battle with Amoraunt, he reverts to his pilgrim status and travels to Greece to seek "halwen of that country" (1688). His impoverished clothes and his lack of armour during these phases of his pilgrimage reflect his palmer's status.

When donning his armour for battle, he leaves behind the status of pilgrim and regains one of a knight and warrior. In one meeting with the emperor he equates his lack of family with a lack of armour: "Y no have here no sibbered/No Y no have wepen no armour bright" (2142-2143).[47] This further highlights Guy's detachment from the temporal concerns of the past. Family and armour define his life before his penitential exile and serve as reminders of his worldly preoccupations. According to Dyas "the decision to live as a penitent, obedient pilgrim on earth would be amply recompensed in the heavenly Jerusalem" (25). Guy must therefore focus on his individual salvation through his pilgrim identity that will ultimately bring him greater rewards in the afterlife.

Guy's return to Warwick brings with it the expectation that he, like Sir Isumbras, is to be reunited with his family. His return even bears many similarities to Isumbras's reunion with his wife. But as Alison Wiggins correctly observes: "the narrative structure of his adventures have been seen as exile-and-return, but his voluntary travels and pilgrimage are not really exile and the return is not dynastic" (47). He remains among the poor to receive food, provided by Felice who has become

[47] This reference to "sibbered" translates as family or kin in this instance.

a generous benefactor to the destitute. As a woman, Felice has been forced to live her life at home while Guy was able to leave and participate in pilgrimage and adventures, continuing the gendered expectations of romances. According to Martha Driver, "the performance of charitable works and, for wealthier aristocratic women, the foundation of churches and abbeys were religious obligations in the later Middle Ages" (142). Piety through pilgrimage is not an option for the women of the romance narratives, emphasising the importance of remaining at home and looking after domestic affairs.

Guy does not wish to make his return known and, rather than be reunited with his wife, he leaves for the forest where he instead becomes a hermit. This romance, which appositely consists of many entertaining battles and descriptions of foreign lands, suddenly begins to transcend typical generic boundaries associated with romance narratives and turn towards the hagiographical, confirming Kathryn Hume's observation that "a true *vita* must follow its protagonist to his death" ("The Formal Nature of Middle English Romance", 164). He takes the place of the previous hermit who has died and:

> With a prest he spac of that country
> That dede him Servise ich day
> And of his sinnes gan schrive/
> With him he hadde a page
> Tat served him in that hermitage
> Withouten chest and strive. (3388-3393)

Pilgrimage does not permit a family reunion but, in fact, causes the initial separation and contributes to Guy's final decision to remain detached from all that he knows and become a hermit. He does not return to a comfortable existence at home with his family and friends, but decides to continue his life of exile and prayer. Guy's

individual salvation moves beyond the boundaries of the physical pilgrimage and becomes an inner journey similar to what we will examine in the case of the medieval mystics in the final chapter.

This chapter has examined the generic implications of the diverse representations of pilgrimage in an equally diverse range of Middle English romances and how these representations interact with the literary family. Pilgrimage cannot be easily summarised as a specific literary device in these works. Often it is a simple gesture to realise the disguise of romance heroes so that they can transcend the boundaries of exile. This can be seen in the case of Valentine who must leave his penitential exile to warn his wife of a treasonous plot. The pilgrim's attire often forms a greater part of their identity especially in the case of those undertaking a penitential pilgrimage such as the ascetic elements seen in *Guy of Warwick* and *Sir Orfeo*. Pilgrimage also interacts with typical conventions of romance narratives, such as love, war, illegitimate birth, piety and supernatural elements, and can either fulfil or disregard expectations.

Repeatedly, where narratives fulfil generic expectations, pilgrimage can aid with familial reunions, setting them on the right path, as in the cases of Paris and Isumbras. However, in instances where romances do not fulfil their generic expectations, pilgrimage becomes the separating force, often developing into a self-imposed exile where the protagonist does not seek a reunion with his family and instead focuses on personal salvation through an inner spiritual journey. This is seen in the penitential pilgrimage of Guy, the initial pilgrimage and subsequent exile of Raymond in *The Romans of Parthenay*, and the pilgrimages and exiles of the brothers, Valentine and Orson.

Interactions between pilgrims and families can assist in a type of classification, as it can establish whether the romance work can be read as either a religious romance, where the protagonist remains an isolated figure who achieves spiritual wealth, or as a typical romance narrative where the protagonist is reunited with his family and regains lost power and worldly riches, like Isumbras and Orfeo. Family reunions follow one of two paths in these works. They either become an objective towards which the protagonist will work, thus serving as a model for the ideal achievable model for its audience. Or families become a distraction from the spiritual path for the protagonist thus stressing a turning point in expected romance behaviour. Reading specifically through a gendered lens, we see that this is usually an issue encountered by the male protagonists. Escape and continued detachment from the mundane is not an option for the calumniated wives, mothers and daughters of these texts, a trend that we will see again in the hagiographies in the next chapter.

The numerous categories defined by various critics on how to classify religiously influenced romances demonstrates, however, that organising and defining romances is not a simple task. Secular hagiography is an unreliable term for such works as *Sir Isumbras* and *Guy of Warwick* and diminishes the implications of the true hagiographies. From all categories that Purdie lists, religious romance is the most suitable term for the religiously influenced works discussed here as it does not evoke a complete detachment from the temporal world. Regardless of their endings, the romances discussed here are rooted in the temporal. They are influenced by such elements as family and quest with pilgrimage as the link between both the worldly and religious environments. Any further classification here would cause ambiguity and confusion, considering the variety of themes and their implementation.

Within this collection of texts, pilgrimage and its relationship to the family serve a diverse number of functions. At the most basic level, we are exposed to a selection of medieval familial relationships. often idealised, yet still recognisable. We encounter episodes of penance and atonement associated with family and also individual men and women, where men have full control over their travels and pilgrimages while women are forced into exiles, usually by rudderless boat on the sea. Secular and religious themes are found within all examined works and constantly vie to either fulfil expectations or confound them within the context of pilgrimage and familial experiences. This chapter thus provides a nuanced method to re-read and re-evaluate familiar tropes and themes within these romances of the latter Middle Ages while also paving the way for our readings of medieval hagiographies in chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Hagiography and the pilgrim family

Romance and hagiographical genres share many similar tropes and themes and, in the words of Purdie, share "an extensive border" ("Generic Identity and the Origins of *Sir Isumbras*", 114). More than merely a generic no-man's land, this border, even to mix metaphors, offers fertile ground for the themes of our study. The first part of this chapter is dedicated to the common features of both romance narratives and hagiographical texts, examining the source for the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*: *Saint Alexius*. Within this, and all of the saints' lives in this chapter, the expectations of and impact on the contemporary audience shed light on the purpose of these texts for a lay readership. We see temporal familial relationships such as those between father and son and husband and wife give way to spiritual dedication in *Saint Alexius* while engaging in pilgrimage. The texts encourage exploration of the potential for the layperson to achieve such religious fervour and interrogate the divergences from the romance narrative.

The second half of the chapter addresses issues concerning gender, more specifically women on pilgrimage. In sharp contrast to Alexius, whose family proves to be a distraction from his saintly mission, the women saints demonstrate that in some cases they must retain their domestic roles alongside their saintly experiences and thus cannot withdraw from the world in the same manner as their male equivalents. The lives of the saintly women discussed, including Mary Magdalene, Saint Lucy and Saint Elizabeth, provide insights into medieval social concerns concerning women. These lives are taken from Osbern Bokenham's collection of lives, written, according to Ashton, "from the heart of patriarchal power structures, simultaneously defining the female as saint and as idealised woman" (3). The contextual analysis employed here regarding familial pilgrimages, reasons for such travel and disease provide the readers

with the expected idealised behaviours of female saints. Each of these saints' lives offers an individual perspective on the presence of pilgrimage and the role of family in Middle English narratives. We move from the saint-like behaviour of courtly literary figures from the previous chapter to the literary depictions of saints, whose lives were well-known and often echo the lives of chivalric heroes.

The Life of Saint Alexius, an influential text upon *The Stanzaic Guy of Warwick,* discussed in chapter 3, describes the renunciation of worldly goods through the undertaking of a pilgrimage and a life dedicated to asceticism. It also describes the effect this renunciation has on the family that the saint has left behind. The narrative is summarised by Neil Cartlidge as a "paradigm of the many saints who dramatically exemplify the confrontation between the affective ties of the family and the individual's compulsion to sanctity" (*Medieval Marriage Literary Approaches,* 78). This "confrontation" allows the audience of this saint's life to witness both the ideal in the saintly Alexius and the achievable in his deserted family. The temporal family for Alexius is the distraction from his desired goal of a unity with the Holy Family.[48]

With this narrative's extensive history, variations expectedly occurred, with certain themes and episodes developing to accommodate the interests of a lay audience and the changing social habits of the Middle Ages. Janice Pinder identifies this evolution of the French poem, *The Chanson de Saint Alexis* using the example of marriage:

> Vernacular saints' lives, however, were written mainly for lay people […] and were vehicles for Church teaching aimed at them. Therefore, the older ascetic

[48]The popularity of this saint's life throughout the centuries is evident, with its origins dating back to a fifth-century Syriac narrative. In the tenth century, a Latin account of The Life of Saint Alexius was translated from Greek that, according to Christopher Kleinhenz:

> became the source of all Latin and vernacular accounts composed thereafter in the west, including a famous French poem (Vie de Saint Alexis from the eleventh century) and Bonvesin's De Vita Beati Alexii in Lombard verse (thirteenth century). (969)

> model of avoidance of marriage at all costs, such as was embodied in the original legend of St. Alexis, needed to be counterbalanced by the Church's more positive teaching for laymen. (19)

Marriage and familial issues become prevalent themes in the later vernacular versions of *The Life of Saint Alexius*.[49] Just as the romance narratives appealed to the consideration of the gentry readership, saints' legends and lives such as *The Life of Saint Alexius* also needed to reflect the immediate spiritual concerns of this emergent class.

The expectations and preferences of a lay audience are considered from the onset of this work as its narrator strives to include references to secular glory and physical strength, characteristics that are emphasised almost immediately and relate more to temporal advantages found in romance narratives than to a saint's life:

> Alle that willen here in ryme
> Hou gode Men in olde tyme
> Louenden god almigth,
> That wewn riche of grete valour,
> Kynges sones and Emperoure,
> Of bodies stronge and ligth. (1-6)

The narrator provides a short introduction to *The Life of Saint Alexius* explaining what his audience should expect in terms of renunciation of familial relationships and worldly comforts: "He forsook confort of al his kynde/Richesse he lete al bihynde"

[49]Furnivall's edition of *Adam Davy's 5 dreams about Edward II* (used for this examination of the life) addresses four version of the life taken, from six manuscripts, which include, Oxford, Bodleian MS Laud 622 (fourteenth century), London, British Library MS Cotton Titus A XXVI (late fifteenth century), Oxford, Bodleian Library Vernon MS, leaf 44 (thirteenth century), Oxford, Bodleian Library Laud MS 108 (thirteenth century), Oxford, Bodleian Library Laud MS 463 (fifteenth century) and Oxford, Trinity College MS 57 (fifteenth century).

(49-50). [50] This audience of the later Middle Ages are thus presented with a perfect saintly figure that possesses the will to abandon worldly luxuries that they themselves would be familiar with. He is the exemplar of an ascetic goal that might not be achievable or even desired by the contemporary audience. But his family and their experience would have certainly been recognisable.

Following this introduction and establishment of expectations, the narrator introduces the parents of Saint Alexius: Eufeniens and Agloes. Their childless state evokes sympathy and possibly mirrors the concerns of the lay audience regarding maintaining a family's lineage. Their desire to have a child is reflected in their prayers: they "besought god in heuene/Sende hem a childe, with mylde steune/to maken hem blithe and gladde" (106-108). Their wish is granted in this markedly family-inflected saint's life. Patrick Vincent, in his discussion of the Old-French *La Vie de Saint Alexis*, highlights this relatable desire for fatherhood for the contemporary audience and asserts that "the introductory portrait of Eufemien is complete in our minds. We understand and feel with him. He embodies, albeit somewhat ideally, the joys, cares and aspirations common to most fathers" (531). Once their prayers are answered and Alexius is born, the model family is complete and the focus turns to the disruptive development of the saint.

As a young man, he is given the opportunity to participate in the contemplative life: "Alexius was sett to boke/To gode maistres tha hym toke/ And wise of clergie" (133-135). He is also given the opportunity to experience the active life of a knight in the court of the emperor:

To the Emperour whan he was brought

[50] The narrator also states that "Alexius is his name in storie" (52) – suggesting historical registers. In the other versions of *The Life of Saint Alexius* in Furnivall's edition, the narrative is referred to as a "lyfe", "tale" and "vita". The audience's expectations and understanding of what this narrative is about are thus shaped from the very beginning of this work by its self-definition.

there dedes of Armes were ywrought
to lernen chiualyre;
there might he sen in tour[na]mnet
what knigth was dougtties of dent
And man of most maistrie. (139-144)

These two stanzas set up the conflicts that will appear repeatedly throughout this hagiographical narrative: the decision to dedicate his life to spiritual devotion or to pursue a life dedicated to the upholding of the secular institution of chivalry and demonstrating devotion to his temporal lord. The conflict is further enhanced by the influence and involvement of Alexius's family in his life who could be perceived as a distraction and threat to the young man's saintly path as they are more focussed on the temporal world and their secular responsibilities. The narrator clarifies that this is not intentional on the part of the family as he emphasises that Alexius's father "loued hym al his lijf" (147) and desires that "he migth hym avaunce/And wynne hym a wijf" (149-150). This reflects concerns that may have been a factor in the lives of the audience. Vincent reveals this hook for the lay audience, observing that:

> We are encouraged then to imagine that the first listeners to the recitation of the *Alexis*, seeing in the circumstances of the story their own real works, the expression of their own fears and hopes, their own problems and conflicts, in short, involving themselves in the poetic experience, would be affected, as critical readers usually are, by the situation of the family of which Alexis was a part. (530)

Further temporal relationships are forged through the marriage of Alexius. It is carried out with the expected ceremony and reverence, a fact stressed by the narrator when he states that it was "As custume was and shulde be" (166). This reverence reflects a

family's ability to participate in expected religious events within their lay status or, according to Lisa Bansen-Harp, the capability of "the saint's parents [to] understand Christian precepts at a level where these principles are compatible with life in the temporal social order" (84). Alexius's abhorrence of the wedding is a continued display of the conflict between his own spiritual desires and his expected dynastic role. Alexius's commitment to his father continues to enforce his temporal ties as he goes through with his wedding "to fulfille his faders wille" (185).

Alexius's commitment, however, is soon transferred from his temporal father to his Heavenly father. His desire to be an obedient son fails to prevent Alexius's departure on his wedding night. Having talked his wife into living a life of chastity and devotion to God, he leaves saying "In pilerynage now wil I go" (232). As Bansen-Harp has identified, "Alexis already loves God above all else. For him, the bride represents an earthly desire that would distract him from his celestial *talent*" (13) and so their wedding becomes the catalyst for his departure. This contrasts to how Guy's departure unfolds in *The Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*. Alexius's aspirations are always toward the spiritual. For Guy, his spiritual awakening is sudden, and he believes that he must atone for his past violent acts by setting out on a penitential pilgrimage.

The manner of their departures, however, is similar in both cases, telling only their new brides about their decisions. In *The Stanzaic Guy of Warwick*, Felice is the more relatable figure as she displays outward frustration at her husband's sudden desire to follow a life dedicated to atonement. Alexius's bride, however, remains passive and almost silent, accepting her place is now "to louen Iesu that dyed [on] rood" (222) and to play the part of the wife of this soon-to-be saint. Alexius like Guy, also undertakes his pilgrimage "on his bare feet/his soule to make clene" (269-270),

further demonstrating his desire to experience hardships and lead a life of temporal exile.

As Alexius departs for his new ascetic life of pilgrimage and prayer, the narrator issues a conventional catalogue of what he has left behind, beginning with his comfortable lifestyle and worldly belongings:

> Thus he that had riche wedes,
> Heige hors and gode stedes,
> And Armes brigth and shene,
> Al he leet the godes gret. (265-268)

Alexius himself does not mention this loss of wealth and status but the narrator states that "Ofte it fel in his mende/Of his fader and moder hende" (271-272), revealing that the saint, though now on pilgrimage and away from his home, does not forget his parents. This continues to demonstrate the influence of family on this saint and his subsequent life of poverty. Despite removing himself from a life of wealth and status, Alexius remains part of this temporal world and his family is his tether to his worldly existence. His pilgrimage thus defines his duality as one who is influenced by aspects of both the divine and the worldly.

Alexius does not feel the same joy of being released of his earthly ties as Guy does in the romance narrative. He approaches shrines and churches "with herte meke and lowe" (288), demonstrating a true devotion that is in stark comparison with Guy who "welke about with glad chere" (520). Alexius passes through unspecified lands and visits the expected pilgrimage sites of the Holy Land. He feels joy, not at being free to undertake a pilgrimage, but from his experiences at one particular site, the "chirche of seint Marie" in Athens:

Alexius was glad and blithe,

His joye couth he noman kithe,

In herte ne in thought,

Whan he might seen in signe

Hou goddess ymage fair and digne

In his moders barme was brought. (295-300)

Having left his family and his home, Alexius has found solace in a religious image he has encountered on pilgrimage that depicts a familial bond between a mother and her son, Mary and Jesus. This experience demonstrates his detachment from his worldly family and his attempt to assert a new connection with his spiritual family. The familial nature of this text is developed through this depiction of the Virgin Mary and her son emphasising what Patricia Healy Wasyliw refers to as the "cultural interest in the parent-child relationship" (91). Wasyliw continues, explaining that the :

> rise in the worship of the Virgin Mary was accompanied by increasingly domestic depictions of her role as the mother of God; worship of the infant Jesus, with iconographic emphasis placed upon his human qualities, also expanded throughout this period. (91)

This mention of Jesus's human qualities as a child could also relate to what Alexius observes in the image he sees in the church, augmenting the connection between Christ and saint. According to Philippe Ariès in his discussion of medieval images of the Virgin and child, "the artist would stress the graceful, affectionate, naïve aspects of early childhood […]". Ariès refers to them as "features of sentimental realism" (34). Alexius's encounter with this particular image of Jesus and Mary may therefore indicate a rebirth or reversion to a spiritual childhood before he can progress any further on his saintly path. Though pilgrimage has separated him from his earthly

family, it has brought Alexius to this church in Athens and initiated his acceptance into a new, spiritual family.

The narrative does not ignore the temporal family that Alexius has left behind. The audience sees the effects of his departure on their lives. The depiction of the family's worries and hardship at his departure bring a realistic element to the work and provide the contemporary audience with an opportunity to empathise with people with whom they may have felt an affinity with. Vincent asserts "they play a full and necessary part in the story, they compel immediate and lasting sympathetic attentions and contribute to the understanding of the Christian lesson" (529). Eufeniens's primary concern is that he no longer has an heir and cannot have another since his wife "is barayne and ek olde" (379). The anxieties of Alexius's wife are because she now finds herself in a liminal and indefinable space as she is "both maiden and wijf" (418). It is one that resembles the situation of the Virgin Mary and reflects contemporary concerns of the medieval church relating to chastity in marriage. According to Connor McCarthy:

> The model of Christ's parents was an important one for the Church's theory of chaste marriage: as we have seen, the consensual theory of marriage allowed the justification of the marriage of Christ's parents as being fully complete despite non consummation. But although the Church allowed marital chastity, it did not necessarily encourage it in practice. (116)

The lay medieval audience would have frequently encountered issues relating to matrimonial chastity in hagiographical narratives of the virgin martyrs, Mary of Oignies and Saint Birgitta of Sweden. This particular virgin bride is not the saintly protagonist of the narrative, however, and provides an insight into the human consequences of Alexius's pilgrimage. Her reactions are described quite closely by the

narrator. She is forced to go to Alexius's mother "and praied hir þat she most duelle wiþ hir" (436-7). Without her husband, she relies on her mother-in-law for both lodgings and clothing for seventeen years.

A further human reaction to the departure of Alexius is found in the despair and grief of Alexius's mother where she "lay yswowen a longe stounde/And roos vp al afrayed" (386-387). Her despair is reflected in her clothes, which are "symple and blake" (400) and her behaviour: "litel she sleep and mychel gan wake/and fasted euery daye" (401-402). She is mourning for the death-like state that accompanies the departure of a pilgrim. This is a fractured family, one whose grief reflects the inability of those committed to temporal duties and who cannot comprehend the new role adopted by Alexius. These are the recognisable models for the contemporary audience, ones that undoubtedly gained sympathy and understanding for their plight.

Alexius continues on his pilgrimage, maintaining his status as a poor pilgrim and its associated anonymity until a discovery of his saintly condition results in him fleeing "werldes honoure" (520) to preserve his humility. Alexius emerges as an ideal pilgrim who does not deviate from his journey. As a result of a great storm, the pilgrim ship on which he is travelling brings him home. Maintaining his pilgrim identity and its accompanying anonymity, he goes to his former house "als a straunge man" (646) to seek alms from his father. Though unrecognised, he is treated well and "thai loued hym more than any man" (691). He is cared for by his parents and his wife and in return offers them a connection with the divine. Eufeniens explains this reciprocal relationship:

He shal be kepte wiþ honoure,

His peynes forto lask,

To seien his bedes, & bidde for me

To veray god in trinite,

fforto he be roted to ask. (680-84)

Alexius' return, albeit anonymous, demonstrates the balance of the spiritual and temporal world and the human cost at the expense of a saintly life which runs through this hagiographical narrative. It attempts to offer its audience both the ideal and the achievable models within the context of the religious life and the temporal world. Not all who were exposed to *The Life of Saint Alexius* could hope to become a saintly figure but they could identify with the family who could neither follow Alexius nor become part of his new-found spirituality. Instead, they provide a model of a compassionate, lay family who take in the unrecognised Alexius and care for him in his state of poverty. They, in turn, receive saintly protection, prayers and blessings from Alexius. In short – the poor should be treated as
family.

The literary pilgrimage of *The Life of Saint Alexius* is a multifarious device. It allows Alexius to leave his home and family to become the ascetic, saintly figure he wishes to be. But his pilgrimage also demonstrates the consequences of his saintly desires on his family that he has left behind. Alexius, as a returning pilgrim, occupies a new role in this familial structure. He has no desire to return to his former status within the household and is seemingly unconcerned with reuniting with his family fully. Alexius does, however, care for the spiritual well-being of his parents and his wife thus demonstrating that family is both a distraction and serves as a means for salvation in his pursuit of saintliness. The family is never fully reunited, as is the case for Sir Isumbras, but the presence of an unrecognised pilgrim, as in the *Stanzaic Guy of Warwick* and *Valentine and Orson*, offers a semblance of a familial reunion.

Moving from the male-centric narrative of *The Life of Saint Alexius* to a group of lives focussing specifically on female saints, we see a variation in how family and pilgrimage interact with the protagonists. Family, for the male saints and quasi-saints such as Alexius and Guy, is often a burden and a distraction. For the women discussed here, family occupies a different role. The group of Middle English texts that focus on the life of Mary Magdalene demonstrate the popularity of this female figure during the Middle Ages. Her identity as a repentant sinner was an appealing influence on both medieval artists and writers and is reflected in the cult that evolved around her legend. These Magdalene narratives, however, do not present one clearly defined figure but one that is an amalgamation of three women from the New Testament: the woman who is named as Mary Magdalene, Mary of Bethany and also the woman who is unnamed and who washes the feet of Jesus.[51] This fusion of women associated with Christ allowed for the creation of an ideal penitent who could be both admired and emulated. These texts convey the medieval expectations associated with a female saint and their family. According to Susan Haskins:

> Mary Magdalene's progress from the state of sin to sanctity mirrors the way in which, through the personae she assumed, she represented and reflected not only the medieval Church's notions about women, sin and redemption, but also the social concerns of the Middle Ages. (222)

The cult of Mary Magdalene was one of the more popular cults of the Middle Ages and this is reflected in what Reames identifies as "the high ranking of her feast day in the summer calendar" (52). Her shrine in Vézelay, France was also a popular destination among medieval pilgrims. Finally, the sheer number of extant retellings of

[51] Sherry L. Reames addresses this amalgamation and explains that "biblical exegetes in the Latin West tended to equate the three from the time of Gregory the Great, but the various New Testament passages about these women were first woven into a single narrative vita in a tenth-century sermon attributed to Odo of Cluny" (51).

her life are also a testament to her fame among the medieval laity. This chapter addresses multiple versions of this saint's life including "The Lyf of Marye Maudelyn" found in Osbern Bokenham's *The Legendys of Hooly Wummen*, *Mary Magdalene* in the Digby play, and the account of her life found in the *South English Legendary*. Examining these different versions will allow us to gauge the presence of this saint and her connection to pilgrimage in Middle English literature.

The Legendys of Hooly Wummen, written by the Augustinian friar, Osbern Bokenham for a lay audience, dates to the fifteenth century and comprises thirteen legends.[52] Sources for Bokenham's collection include Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea* while Chaucer's influence is clearly seen in the friar's work throughout the collection. Diane Watt compares his narration to both the pilgrim-narrator of *The Canterbury Tales* and the aged lover in the *Confessio Amantis* (67). The legends in Bokenham's collection are written in verse and they vary in length. The total number of lines of the collection is 10616 with the longest being "The Lyf of Marye Maudelyn", which comprises of 1331 lines. According to Shelia Delany, Bokenham:

> chose the female legendary not as a system of classification, not to illustrate the virtue of virginity or to exhort his readers to it, and not generically subsumed within another kind of writing, but as a carefully crafted and distinctive instance of a very demanding genre. (32)

"The Lyf of Marye Maudelyn" found in *The Legendys of Hooly Wummen* is unique for several reasons. It is the longest work in the collection and was commissioned in 1445 by Bokenham's most esteemed patron, Lady Isabel Bourchier, Countess of Eu and sister to Richard the Duke of York. It is also the only story "to narrate the life of a sinner redeemed" (Delany, 53), a popular topic for the medieval

[52] It is found in one manuscript; London, British Library MS Arundel 327.

laity. The narrative is made up of three parts; the proluctory, the prologue and the legend itself. Within the proluctory, Bokenham describes the tale's origins, narrating his experiences during the course of twelfth night celebrations in 1445 where he meets Lady Isabel Bourchier and is asked by her to write an account of the life of Mary Magdalene. This request emphasises not only the noble woman's devotion to this female saint but also her desire to possess her own copy of the saint's life in the vernacular. According to Bokenham's account, she places particular emphasis on Mary's transition from a life of sin to a life of purity, brought about by her interaction with Jesus, in her explanation of her devotion. This hope for salvation from a life of sinfulness is one that made the cult of Mary Magdalene very popular in the Middle Ages. Devout lay women, such as Lady Isabel, though married and the mother of four boys, could strive to emulate Mary's redemption with the help of Bokenham's work. Gail Ashton recognises that this may be the reason for his popularity. She states that: :

> Of particular interest is Bokenham's treatment of the two complementary strands of his narrative framework, namely the holy and the feminine. The pair overlap most clearly in the series of typically late medieval virtues he ascribes to his saints, a code undoubtedly recognised and even demanded by his audience. (33)

Along with this depiction of balancing holy and feminine virtues, Bokenham also sets up the work's sense of movement and reliance on travel by stating that before he attempts to fulfil Lady Isabel's request, he must go on pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela:

> My pylgramage hade, wych promsyd
> I to seynt Iamys wyth hert entere
> Had to performe the same yere,

There to purchase thorgh penitence

Of myn oolde synnys newe indulgences;

Where men contryth thorgh clere confessyoun *contrite*

Mown of her synnys han plener remyssyoun. (5092-5099)

This personal information provides the reader with an understanding of the life of this author but also serves as a comparison between the type of pilgrimage he undertakes himself and the type of pilgrimage that he will later write about in "The Lyf of Marye Maudelyn". His pilgrimage is very different from the one that he narrates. Both religious and lay perspectives are addressed in the two types of pilgrimage described in this section of *The Legendys of Hooly Wummen.* This "prolocutorye" is followed by a "prologe" where Bokenham clarifies which Mary he will speak of:

I mene not mary wyth-owtyn synne,

Wych of al mankynde bare the solace,

But hyr I mene wych of hyr trespace. (5265-5267)

This description continues to affirm that it is not Mary the mother of Jesus but in fact a sinner who was redeemed by choosing "an outward penaunce & inward contemplaycyoun/and vpward blys" (5281-5282). In other words, not the exemplar for medieval motherhood but rather of the retreat from worldly love; the one, who unlike the perpetual virgin, can be emulated. Neither is she a virgin martyr but a disciple of Christ, willing to journey for the purpose of conversion. Following a brief summary of Mary's journey from a life of immorality to virtue, Bokenham offers a prayer to the saint and specifically appeals for her to watch over the patron who has commissioned the writing of this particular legend, Lady Isabel: "Counfort hyr, & kepe hyr both heyl & sounde/And alle temptacyouns help hyr to escheu" (5357-5358). Mary Magdalene

is connected with both a lay person and noble woman in this instance. Family, from the outset is central and is a departure from the life modelled by Mary Magdalene.

The legend itself provides a more detailed account of the life of Mary Magdalene, describing her beauty but also the sinfulness associated with such beauty:

> For al his youthe in dislauynesse
> Of hir body so vnshamefastly
> She dispendyd, & in synfulnesse
> So comoun she was, that ful pytously
> Hir name she lost, for of foly
> So in the cyte was sprungyn hir fame,
> That 'Marie the synnere' thei ded hir name. (5402-5407)

Bokenham's description of Mary's descent into promiscuity resembles Henryson's account of Cresseid in *The Testament of Cresseid*, where he too describes both her beauty, referring to her as a "the flour and A per se (*paragon*) of Troy and Greece" (78-9) and her sexual transgressions:

> To change in filth all thy feminitie,
> And be with fleschelie lust sa maculait, *so defiled*
> And go amang the Greikis air and lait, *early and late*
> Sa giglotlike takand thy foull plesance! *whorishly taking pleasure*
> (*Cresseid*, 80-83)

The sinful woman of Henryson's poem must contend with the punishment of leprosy. This was considered a venereal disease and would have afforded its sufferer alienation and isolation from society. Mary Magdalene, however, does not endure this type of social quarantine and is, in fact, elevated to sainthood for her repentance.

The next section of Mary's legend is concerned with travel. Following the death and resurrection of Christ, many disciples are persecuted, including Mary, who is cast adrift in a rudderless boat with Maxymyn, Lazarus, Martha and Marcella. By "goddys prouydence" (5771), they are directed towards Marseille where they attempt to convert those there to the Christian faith. Following initial doubts by the pagan prince and his wife regarding the newly arrived Christians, Mary appears to them in a series of visions at night. This emphasis on visions rather than actually appearing before the queen, highlights Mary's detachment from a dependence on the bodily presence that dictated her previous sinful life and maybe seen as an attempt to emulate the Virgin Mary. From this, conversion to Christianity becomes one of the central themes of Mary's legend and is inextricably linked with the concept of family, procreation and continuing lineage. Mary does not have her own family in this instance but instead influences this royal family. The prince asks Mary to justify her faith and she directs him to seek Saint Peter at Rome where "dayly myraclys" (5890) can be witnessed.[53]

The prince and his wife are encouraged by this but have a condition of their own before they convert to Christianity. They ask Mary to "preye/ thy god to us that a child be bore/To been oure eyr; we ask no more" (5896-5898), which she agrees to do. This intercession results in the prince's wife becoming pregnant and confirms the prince's decision to travel to Rome: "He hym dysposyd fully for to beleue/And to

[53] This bears similarities to the Pagan Irish of *Sir Owain* who require proof of the existence of God before they convert:

> And al thai seyd commounliche,
> That non of hem wold sikerliche
> Do bi his techeing,
> Bot yif he dede that sum man
> Into Helle went than,
> To bring hem tiding
> Of the pain and of the wo
> The soulen suffri evermo. (13-20)

Petyr he purposyd to take the waye" (5907-5908). His wife, though pregnant desires to travel to Rome with him but he insists that such travel in her condition is dangerous and states that "I shal goon for us both two/Thys holy pylgrymage for to do" (5925-5926). He will travel as part of his and his wife's conversion and as a thanksgiving for his unborn child. His wife, however, continues to plead to be allowed to go with him. Following his assent, Mary Magdalene prepares both pilgrims for their journey:

> And she the shuldrys of hem both two
> Of crstys cros wyth a tokne dede sygne
> That the deuyl hem ageyns shuld not malyngne. (5938-5940)

Similar to the attempted pilgrimage of Sir Isumbras, his wife and his sons, the family of this narrative will not stay intact for the entirety of this journey despite Mary Magdalene's intercession for safe passage to Rome. This echo of a romance narrative tempers this seeming hagiography. Its focus is now on two heathen nobles who seek a connection with the divinity of which Mary speaks, thus offering readers a depiction of both a physical and spiritual quest in search of God. Mary's journey from sinfulness to redemption gives way to a portrayal of the dedication to conversion and the difficulties that can occur.

While on their pilgrimage across the sea, the princess gives birth during a great storm and dies. The prince leaves both the body of his wife and his new born child on an island as he believes that the child will die in his care without his mother and continues on his pilgrimage to Saint Peter in Rome. He is now separated from his family by both death and space and can dedicate himself fully to understanding the Christian religion by continuing his pilgrimage with Saint Peter to the Holy Land where he is shown "euere place/wher cryst prechyd & suffryd & roos ageyn" (6036-6037). This pilgrimage, unaccompanied by his wife, allows him to become immersed

in the places of the Bible just as we will see in the case of Margery Kempe. Mary Magdalene has set this in motion in the hopes of conversion. As Sarah Hopper acknowledges, she "has come to be known as the patron saint of repentant sinners and the contemplative life" (118). In this case it is not a repentant sinner but a hopeful convert. The prince is, however, pursuing a contemplative experience while on his pilgrimage. He prays and "lern[s] of the feyth dylygently" (6039-6040) but must complete this on his own.

The prince's return journey, after two years of contemplation and pilgrimage in the Holy Land sees his reunion with both his child and his wife. Stopping at the island where they left the body of his wife, the prince discovers that his child is still alive, having been watched over by Mary Magdalene. The prince gives thanks to her stating that she has now shown him that "grace fer passyth naturys power" (6087). With this acknowledgement of Mary's involvement, the miracles continue and his wife is brought back to life. The pilgrimage for the individual male pilgrim in this case is interrupted by encountering the miracle of his still living child and then by the further fantastical feat of his resurrected wife. The prince's previous tragedies which influence his initial pilgrimage through the Holy Land are thus erased on a return to the island when he experiences personal miraculous events.

The pilgrimage of this narrative serves to both separate and reunite the family of the prince. We again observe how a family cannot travel together on pilgrimage, even one where conversion is at stake. The prince's wife does not awaken from death until he returns to the island. The prince's pilgrimage experience now involves two miracles where his wife, though apparently dead can still breastfeed the young child thus allowing him to survive on the island. Having observed this, he gives thanks to Mary Magdalene and prays for the restoration of his wife, a prayer that is answered.

However, expectations regarding pilgrimage as an individual journey are altered when the princess awakes. She informs her husband that in her death-like state, Mary Magdalene also brought her to the places he had visited:

> So blyssyd Mawdelyn of hir good grace
> Wyth yow me led & shewyd yche deel,
> Wych in my
> mynde I prendyd haue weel'.
> And anoon to rehersyn she began
> Hir husbondys iourne euene by & by,
> And what the seyde & where & whan,
> And fayld in no point substancyally. (6120-6126)

This trope of a deathlike state can be seen in many other Middle English romance narratives, including the story of Sir Gowther.[54] The prince fulfils the physical pilgrimage with Saint Peter while the princess fulfils the spiritual pilgrimage with Mary. Though now bearing some similarities to a familial pilgrimage, the princess's experience reflects gendered expectations and compromises concerning women as mothers. Her body, though seemingly deceased, needs to continue its maternal duty by remaining on the island to provide nourishment for her child. Her spirit, on the other hand, can be transported to follow in the footsteps of her husband, providing a substitute for the physical journey. This demonstrates a real division of spiritual and bodily, and in this case, maternal, obligations. The spiritual journey of the princess here relates to Craig's explanation that:

[54] In this work, the emperor's mute daughter falls from a tower but through God's intervention is awoken to identify Gowther and declare that he has been forgiven for his past transgressions. The apparent death and spiritual journey of Herodis in *Sir Orfeo* also bears many resemblances to the princess in this narrative.

> Devout Christians not only described revelatory visions, they also sought to create visions in a less inspired sense by deliberately imagining themselves into religiously –significant settings or engaging in imagined conversation with sanctified figures. (241)

This inclusion of the princess's spiritual pilgrimage, accompanied by Mary Magdalene, shows a continuation of the conversion process of her husband. It appears to address the medieval gendered expectations where a mother must remain with her child rather than endure a physical pilgrimage and become a supplementary feature of a miraculous experience for the prince. Craig sums up the ambiguity that:

> […] later medieval women were left with a set of mixed messages. Pilgrimage was physically and spiritually beneficial (and indeed, at times, necessary) for all Christians, but at the same time it was dangerous to their souls and to the stability of their families. (277)

Bokenham has attempted to create a compromise where the woman can remain with her child and also participate in a pilgrimage with just a slight alteration of expectations. Gail Ashton describes the style that the narrator ascribes his collection stating that:

> Of particular interest is Bokenham's treatment of the two complementary strands of his narrative framework, namely the holy and the feminine. The pair overlap most clearly in the series of typically late medieval virtues he ascribes to his saints, a code undoubtedly recognised and even demanded by his audience. (33)

The woman's role as mother is maintained in this legend while the maternal nature of Mary herself is emphasised.

Pilgrimage as a reaction to conversion in this saintly narrative results in the separation of a family in similar circumstances to those we have seen in the romance narratives of the previous chapters. Despite their best efforts to undertake a pilgrimage as a family, death intervenes and the husband must make the journey alone. Once his pilgrimage is complete, the devotion demonstrated by this prince is rewarded. Miraculous events reunite the newly converted prince, princess and their young son thus demonstrating that familial bonds transcend not only pilgrimage but also death through the intercession of the maternal saintly figure of Mary Magdalene.

Pilgrimage and travel with holy intent is not limited to just the legend of the Mary Magdalene in Bokenham's collection. The opening of "The Lyf of Saint Lucye" offers us a description of a relationship between a mother and her daughter, a "nobyl virgyne" (8971) who must go on pilgrimage to prevent the destruction of their family. Lucy's father dies when she is a child. Her relationship with her mother is threatened when the older woman contracts dysentery and suffers from it for four years. Bokenham provides a detailed explanation of the sickness, while also (helpfully) bringing the audience's attention to how illnesses can be identified. Bokenham describes the effect of dysentery on the humours of the body but also claims that he does not presume to know everything except that "this syknesse/is ful greuous, as bern wytnesse/kun thei best that han experyence" (9013-9015). This concentration on disease suggests the concerns of Bokenham's contemporary audience, as described by Clarissa Atkinson: "the intense suffering caused by hunger and illness, by the deaths of children and of parents, was a constant presence in the experience of late medieval people" (149). The sickness that Lucy's mother endures represents this "constant presence".

The audience's familiarity with the circumstances of Lucy and her mother does not stop with the illness and its associated fear but continues with Lucy's solution to the problem: going on pilgrimage. Motives for embarking on pilgrimage were as diverse as the people who undertook the journey itself. The many miracle stories linked with various pilgrimage destinations reveal that one of the primary motives for pilgrims was to seek the intercession of a saint. This intercession usually involved requesting a cure for either themselves or for a family member. Davies explains that:

> the motives for going on pilgrimage included the search for a variety of blessings. Foremost among these must be noted the quest for health. Saints were regarded as doctors, more capable than soi-disant professionals and often less costly. (5-6)

The "quest for health" in the case of Saint Lucy, however, is not portrayed as a quick and easy fix for her mother's sickness. Lucy convinces her mother to travel to the tomb of the martyred virgin "Seynt Agas" (9022). Bokenham emphasises that those who go on pilgrimage to this place, go with "holy entent" (9025), displaying his own approval, and also that of his audience, of the practice.

This is now a familial pilgrimage where both mother and daughter undertake the journey. Pious and earnest intent, in the case of "The Lyf of Saint Lucye", is denoted by the sick person themselves suffering through the journey to plead for and earn the saintly intercession. Pilgrimage, though approved of by Bokenham, appears to come with certain rules and expectations as regards correct procedure and plays an important role in this early episode of Lucy's life. Bokenham provides a thorough description of the mother and daughter's physical pilgrimage to the tomb of Saint Agatha, offering details similar to those found in pilgrim guidebooks. Despite her sickness, Lucy's mother takes part in the ceremonies held on the saint's feast day at her tomb:

And not-wythstondyng hyr syknesse,

She and Lucye hem thedyr dede dresse.

And whan thei doon had her pylgrymage

And offryd, as than was the vsage,

And performyd was the processyoun,

In wych yerly was red and of custom

That of the reed flyx no remedy myth han *dysentery*

Tyl she had touchyd wyth feythful entent

The hem benethyn of hys garnement. (9033-9043)

"Feythful entent" is again stressed by the author who states its necessity when seeking a cure for "the reed flyx". Lucy represents this "feythful entent" and conveys this to her mother by encouraging her to go to the relics of the saint herself and touch the clothing. Her fervent belief is reflected in her persuasive speech to her mother:

Modyr, yf thou yive ful credence

Of this gospel on-to the sentence,

Belue that agas hath euere present

Hym for whos name she suffryd torment;

Wherefore I counsel that thou hyr graue

Wyth ful feyth touche, &thou shalt haue

Of thi syknesse soon remedye. (9045-9051)

The contemporary audience of this work would have certainly been familiar with particular behaviours associated with pilgrimage sites, including the touching of an actual relic and the desire to be in close physical proximity to the saint's earthly remains, and this can be seen in Lucy's explanation of the importance of being present with "ful feyth".

Even though the health of Lucy's mother is the reason for this pilgrimage to the tomb of Saint Agatha, the focus begins to shift to her daughter following the completion of their pilgrimage rituals. Lucy receives a vision from Saint Agatha who informs her that her mother, thanks to Lucy's "feyth" and "goodnesse" (9070), has been cured of dysentery. The saint then predicts that Lucy will have a fate similar to hers and will become a martyr. This familial pilgrimage, completed by mother and daughter together, has succeeded in its search for saintly intercession not only for a cure for a mother's illness but also in preparing a young girl destined for sainthood herself.

Pilgrimage, in this hagiographical narrative, is performed in the company of family members, which is in stark contrast to works such as the previously discussed legend of Mary Magdalene where a wife cannot travel with her husband to give thanks for becoming pregnant. The fear of the wandering woman assuredly will not have applied to two figures such as these at a pilgrimage site. Leigh Ann Craig describes an historical account of another two perfect female pilgrims. A mother of young boy and her sister go on pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Agnes of Montepulciano,to fulfil a promise made for the child's miraculous revival after a drowning incident in a bathtub:

> In making their pilgrimage, the two women collaborated in the creation of a positive image of themselves and their actions, one in which women's pilgrimages could be portrayed as something more than potential problems or tolerable aberrations. Instead, they could be presented as praiseworthy examples of God's grace at work. (80)[55]

This echoes the journey made by Lucy and her mother. They do not wander aimlessly from shrine to shrine but go directly to the tomb of Saint Agatha and behave

[55] De S. Agnete," *Acta Sanctorum*, April II, 810.

appropriately with correct intentions and motives. This reaffirms the expectations of Bokenham's audience in relation to gender and family. Craig explains that, "medieval women were expected to care for the health of others" (93), which in this case is portrayed by a daughter bringing her ailing mother to a shrine in the hopes of finding a cure. Craig also goes on to discuss how women were more likely to seek intercession for a chronic illness while men sought out pilgrimage sites and the associated cures for accidents, continuing to address the gendered differences of pilgrims and the "normative femininity" that readers come to expect (95).

Lucy's actions and pilgrimage also addresses the audience's concerns regarding domestic roles. As Lucy's mother has suffered from a debilitating condition for the last four years, her role not only as mother but also as one who runs the household is at risk. According to Craig, an illness such as dysentery could "have hampered women's ability to render services to their families" and thus "it [was] acceptable for women to travel to seek help for themselves" (95). Pilgrimage, in this sense, not only sets the scene for the development of the saintly figure of Saint Lucy but also seeks to restore the correct familial arrangement, a mother as caregiver and restored to a domestic role with a new-found connection with the divine. Craig states that "a woman who succeeded in obtaining a miracle […] had both access to divine grace, and acted as a holy vessel or a conduit for it" (129). Lucy steps beyond the female pilgrims of medieval miracles that Craig describes and becomes a saintly figure herself. Her wish to preserve her virginity and dispose of her wealth is now supported by her newly-cured mother.

The Life of Saint Elyzabeth, also taken from Bokenham's female-centric collection, renders the effects of pilgrimage and the crusading ideal on the married life of a saintly female figure. The "complementary strands" that we have previously seen

Gail Ashton identify as "holy and the feminine" continue to thrive in *The Life of Saint Elyzabeth*. Elizabeth exhibits a feminine ideal, correcting the balance between the active and the contemplative life. She, unlike Lucy, is unable to preserve her virginity and her actions during her marriage prove most significant, demonstrating what Ashton refers to as "an idealised code of conduct which goes beyond passive endurance of an embraced suffering, instead exemplifying a way of *living*" (33).

She establishes her spiritual devotion as a child, rejecting the normal childhood pastimes and focussing on a life of prayer: "Yet whan to pleyn aftyr chyldryns guyse[…]/And yche othyr chasyd in dyuerse wyse/ Euer to chercheward she ded fle" (9569-9572). This period of Elizabeth's life ends with her portraying the ideal behaviour of a medieval noble woman, obeying her father's demand to marry:

> To the wych astate thow she sothly
> Loth were, yet she assentyd ther-to
> Neythr for luch nere lykng of his body,
> But hyr fadyrs wyl for she wold do. (9673-9676)

Her obedience towards her father, a theme absent from both "The Lyf of Marye Maudelyn*"* and "The Lyf of Saint Lucye", displays Bokenham's fulfilment of audience expectations regarding the passive and dutiful roles of young women in medieval society. Elizabeth is married to the "Langrauye of Turyngye" - the Landgrave or Count of Thuringia (9689) but passivity is also challenged as Bokenham also states that she sees this marriage as an opportunity rather than a loss:

> An in that astate that she myth also
> Educatyn, yf hur fruht god dede sende,
> Them to hys seruyse; this meuyd hir, lo,
> To this conclusyoun to condescende. (9677-9680)

Elizabeth accepts her new active role as a wife, mother and carer of the sick but also displays a continued spiritual connection with God through her continued devotion to prayer. Her humility and "mekeness" are emphasised by Bokenham, reflecting his conformity to the expectations of the society for which he is writing. Ashton identifies this throughout his entire collection, explaining how the feminine ideal is promoted throughout:

> His texts laud the female saint but diminish the woman. Significantly, they also offer a model of behaviour which has strictly defined parameters. Activity and disruption are only permitted to women if they subscribe to an external framework of both sanctity and femininity imposed by the male and mediated by him. Thus, the text, instrument of clerical authority, contains and controls them. (36)

This can be applied to Mary Magdalene's guidance of the princess's spiritual pilgrimage rather than a physical journey and the clearly defined and specific pilgrimage of intent of Lucy and her mother. Pilgrimage exists for these women but within strictly controlled patriarchal structures.

In the case of Saint Elizabeth, pilgrimage does not present itself as an option for her but rather as one for her husband who can become a crusading pilgrim. The pilgrimage found in this narrative follows the ideal of the crusading pilgrim. Brundage confirms this association stating that:

> The history of crusade institutions is largely grounded in the history of the pilgrimage tradition in the period before 1095. Indeed, the crusade itself was a pilgrimage, though a pilgrimage of a special kind. (3)

He goes on to explain that "so close-knit are the ideas of crusade and pilgrimage, that Latin writers down to the end of the twelfth century invariably refer both to pilgrims in

the non-crusade sense and also to crusaders by the same word, peregrinus" (10). Elizabeth carries out the duties of caregiver, nursing the sick and providing food and clothing in hospitals for pilgrims and the poor. This confines her to the home:

She ther-yn has so gret affeccyoun,
That pylgryms and al men in pouerte
To herberwyn she vsyd wyth deuyoun.
Wherefore an hospytale in the vale doun
Euene vndyr the castel she dede make,
In wych tho that up shuld not clymbyn moun
Shuld receyuyd ben and hyr almes take. (9994-10000)

Her association with pilgrimage must present itself through her husband instead. It is Elizabeth herself who suggests the idea that the Landgrave should go on a crusading pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Her passionate speech reflects a displaced desire to see the sites where Christ walked. Though she must continue her *imitatio Christi* at home, carrying out good works, her husband can physically travel to: "Ierusalem and al that cuntre/In wych cryst made hys bodyly pylgrimage/An for oure sake ther deyid on a tre" (10081-10083). Bokenham uses the figure of Elizabeth to demonstrate medieval society's awareness and perception of the contemporary dynamics of pilgrimage and the crusades (with one legitimising the other). While urging her husband to undertake a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Elizabeth passionately explains how she believes his noble intent could serve the crusading ideal:

Where yf thou woldyst wyth a deuouth entent
To delyuern yt exercysn thi corage,
I ne kan seen where yt myth bettyr be spent. (10086-10088)

Elizabeth continues by explaining that this "deuoth entent" coupled with dying while on this pilgrimage could provide the pilgrim or crusader with an indulgence, allowing him to go directly to Heaven.

> For who be the cours of the fatal whele
> In that holy journe happe for to deye,
> If he be clene he goth a sykyr weye
> To heuenewarde, for he may not fayle. (10091-10094)

Elizabeth's concentration on fighting for a religious cause, and the rewards associated with it, reflects a wider belief in the reasoning behind the crusades. Brundage explains that

> the notion of death in battle for one's fatherland as a means of sanctification was one which the early middle ages generally found repugnant. The attitude was different, however, when it was a question of death in defence of the heavenly fatherland of all Christians, for this was martyrdom - a universally acknowledged path to salvation. (22)

Elizabeth's role is not to go on this pilgrimage herself but to be the driving force behind her husband's own decision to go and follow this "path to salvation". Her counsel reflects the contemporary expectations of Bokenham's audience while also maintaining her influence and saintly characteristics.

Elizabeth's steadfast nature continues after the Landgrave consents to go on the journey as she is the only one who does not cry on his departure. In Elizabeth's final speech to her husband before he departs, the audience observe a balanced picture of a noble wife who has been happily married and also a potential saintly figure. She describes her worldly connection with the Landgrave saying that:

Wyth what affeccyoun and how entirely

I the loue, dere spouse, and euyr haue do,

No man knowyth but god and thou and I

Wych not oonly in fleshe bodyly, lo

By the know of spousayle ioynyd hath us two. (10113-17)

She then explains their spiritual aspect of their marital union:

But in spyryth eek thrgh hys cheryte

So to-gedyr confedryd hath so

That impossible ys undo the knot to be. (10118-10120)

She is portrayed as a faithful wife who has a deep affection for the husband whom she was forced to marry, fulfilling expectations surrounding obedience and passivity in the face of patriarchy. This is balanced by her ability to encourage her husband to leave without expressing distress. This final part of her speech indicates an acceptance of her husband's role as crusader and pilgrim in the service of Christ, which serves as an explanation of her lack of sorrow and emphasises her saintly attitude where devotion must come above family at all costs.

Elizabeth's husband has now become "crysts owyn knyht/ Armyd in uertu and in cheryte" (10130) and embarks on his journey to the Holy Land where he dies "in goddys cause" (10134), fulfilling Elizabeth's description of dying while on pilgrimage. By urging her husband to go on pilgrimage and crusade, Elizabeth has, in fact, paved the way for her own transition into widowhood, where her saintly endeavours can evolve. Pilgrimage and crusade, though not an exercise that Elizabeth can partake in, have in fact provided her with a voice and influence within a marital context. They have also aided in the deconstruction of her family, thus allowing her to continue with her *contemptus mundi*, casting her further into the saintly sphere.

Elizabeth embodies a level of ambiguity and balance between the passive, obedient expectation of a wife and the passionate devotion of a female saint, returning to Ashton's identification of "the holy and the feminine".

This study of hagiographical narratives is by no means exhaustive but it demonstrates the countless ways in which family and pilgrimage interact with the lives of saints. From a generic perspective we see how the laity are informed of their limitations that include being consumed by temporal relationships and concerns, but we see how they are informed of the possibilities to make up for these limitations. Expectations are driven not only by these generic conventions but also by gender expectations. We see the differences in how literary families interact with the saintly figures in their lives. For Alexius, the male representative, in this study, family is a distraction from his path to asceticism. He cannot be a husband and son and also follow a saintly path. Ties must be severed and he can only interact with his family again as an unknown pious pauper.

For the female saints in Bokenham's collection, however, family is an essential tool and influence in their saintly development. They fulfil the expectations of their gender within the author's construct of controlled femininity. Family members for the female saints are not the distraction that they are for Alexius and Guy. Family members and familial obligations are there to ensure that these female saintly pilgrims inform the readership of their roles. Obedience and a caring manner are highlighted at every possible opportunity, locking them into their expected gendered functions and help in the attainment of their saintly mantles. The differences between the experience of Alexius and the female saints in terms of their familial responsibilities and their experiences of pilgrimage provide us with an understanding of the audience's expectations for saintly narratives. Asceticism and seclusion is the ideal for male

saints while female saints, sometimes unable to preserve their virginity, must continue to fulfil their roles as wives and mothers and act according to the prescribed social constructs constantly asserted throughout these texts.

Chapter 5: Allegory and the pilgrim family

The allegories of stage and page of *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, *Everyman*, *The Castle of Perseverance* and *The Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of Manhode* display the struggles that exist between the domestic life and the spiritual life, and how they affect the individual's salvation. Allegorical journeys narrate in symbolic language the consequences of man's exile from the Heavenly Jerusalem. They also identify the paths through life, both good and bad, that determine if man can find salvation and return to Heaven. The pilgrimage of life offers the opportunity to live a good life, but it is itself impermanent. Life as a pilgrimage was used by the early Fathers of the church who recommended that "the journey from the physical earthly city of Babylon to Jerusalem, City of God, requires detachment from the entanglements of the physical world" (Nievergelt, *Allegorical Quests,* 25), thus proposing *contemptus mundi*.

The popularity of the Christian tradition of depicting life as a pilgrimage towards the Heavenly Jerusalem and salvation is demonstrated by its presence in a large number of works from the later Middle Ages, including William Langland's narrative poem *The Vision of Piers Plowman* and Guillaume de Deguileville's *Le Pelerinage de la vie humaine* and its Middle English prose translation *The Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode*. The pilgrimage of life depicted in both of these texts, despite the differing circumstances of both protagonists, demonstrates a complex journey through worldly distractions in search of a reunion with the divine. This metaphorical pilgrimage is also present in two Middle English morality plays; *Everyman* and *The Castle of Perseverance*, which thus offers an additional performative perspective on the concept of life as a journey, through the genre of medieval drama. Within all of these works, familial and social ties play roles of varying degrees of importance. This chapter closely reads how these ties diverge. It

also questions the role of women in these texts and how the figure of the disorderly female pilgrim can affect the concept of the journey of life. Comparing Chaucer's Wife of Bath to the wandering women in *The Vision of Piers Plowman*[56], we see the misogynistic interpretations of the notion of disrupting femininity. Craig describes these interpretations in terms of their links with the notion of a focus on the temporal world as the "castigation of female pilgrims [which] grew in part out of an attack by medieval clerical writers on *curiositas*, the needless examination of worldly things which do not help one to attain salvation" (21). The depictions of wayward women in these narratives offer insights into both the gender politics of the Middle Ages and also how such figures were interpreted by the medieval audiences of these works. Questions of the mobility of women, wifely devotion, motherhood, or lack thereof, are interrogated to gain deeper insights into the roles of these texts in medieval society.

Pilgrimage plays a central role in *Piers Plowman*. Like *The Canterbury Tales*, it provides its audience with a framing structure, which justifies a sequence of narratives. Mary Carruthers explains that:

> *Piers Plowman* is a poem of searching, structured according to a series of pilgrimages – the pilgrimage of the folk on the field in the *visio*, Will's pilgrimage in the Vita de Dowel and Vita de Dobet, which brings him at last to Unity – Holy church, Conscience' pilgrimage at the end. And the pilgrimage motif early in the poem is cast in terms of a search for St. Truth. (10)

This discussion inevitably engages with the most central and well-examined themes and concepts of Langland's work, reading familiar ideas of satire and personification. It goes further, however, and questions how the text's portrayal of

[56] Hereafter referred to as *Piers Plowman.*

family and pilgrimage may have been interpreted by contemporary audiences.[57] As with the previous chapters, we read the conflicts of pilgrimage with marriage and kinship here, exploring how allegorical life is affected by allegorical pilgrimage, while also examining the depicted patterns of the quest and wandering. Throughout this chapter, new readings of the narratives continue to gauge Morrison's observation that:

> men and women in the Middle Ages, whether historically extant or imaginatively constructed, do not exist in a spiritual vacuum on pilgrimage. Social ties of marriage and parenthood bind them in their activities, but also provide the structure for inner freedom and spiritual salvation. (148)

It relates these texts – the summit of medieval imagination and of the impulses of wish-fulfilment – to the realities of fourteenth-century life, and gauging the implications of recent studies on the medieval family. Teresa Tavormina states that the scholarship based on *Piers Plowman* "has tended to overlook such domestic elements in Langland's work" (ix). This chapter extends Tavormina's conclusions by gauging how these "domestic elements" and issues concerning family affect and are affected by the perception of pilgrimage within an allegorical context. It also develops the studies made by Dyas regarding concepts of the physical pilgrimage and the pilgrimage of life.

Langland embraces the concept of life as a pilgrimage in his writing. Dyas identifies three main strands extant within this concept. The first is the interior

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[57] Langland's allegorical work survives in three distinct versions: A, B and C. The manuscripts that contain these versions are described by C. David Benson as a:

> bewildering mixture of forms of *Piers*, including six A-Texts completed with C endings; two distinct B traditions and evidence of an alternate C tradition; three B Texts with A and C openings ; one B version that eventually turns into an A-Text; and most of all, a Huntington library manuscript (HM 114) that is a careful conflation of all three version by a sophisticated editor […]. (96)

The B text, edited by A.V.C Schmidt, is the primary source for this study, with occasional references to the other two texts, where significant differences contribute to conclusions. Despite Tavormina's examination and judgement that version A was directed towards a female readership, I focus primarily on Schmidt's edition of the B text as it contains the most relevant and complete themes for this analysis.

pilgrimage, "which roughly corresponds to the Contemplative Life and includes monasticism, anchoritism, meditation and mysticism". The second main strand is moral pilgrimage "which corresponds to the active life, manifesting itself in a life of daily obedience to God in the place of one's everyday calling and a commitment to avoid, in particular, the pitfalls of the seven deadly sins" (6). Finally, the third strand is the pilgrimage of place, "which includes journeying to saints' shrines or other holy places to secure forgiveness for specific sins or more general indulgences, to seek healing and other material benefits, to learn and to express devotion" (6). These are evident in the depictions of pilgrimage put forward by Langland and are discussed to cast a new light on how these types of pilgrimages react to the presence of familial elements.

Life as a pilgrimage has its contrary: life as a wanderer, one who travels without purpose or direction; moral or social. Within *Piers Plowman*, Langland addresses this representation of aimless wandering in a number of ways, one including the representation of Cain as a wanderer in Passus IX. Within this narrative, the medieval audience is exposed to the sin of fratricide and God's punishment. Following the murder of his brother, he is condemned to walk the earth, a familiar trope of exile, which Dyas refers to as an "alienation not only from God but from human society as well" (73). Wit retells this story of the curse placed on Cain and his descendants and its legacy for marriage; what Tavormina describes as "bad marriages and untimely or extramarital sexuality" (83). Wit blames Cain's sinfulness, which begins with the murder of his brother, on the time of his conception:

> Wastours and wrecches out of wedlock, I trowe,
> Conceyved ben in yvel tyme, as Cym was on Eve.
> Of swiche synfulle sherewes the Sauter maketh myde:

Concepit dolorem et peperit iniquitatem.

And alle that come of the Caym come to an yvel ende. (120-124)

Langland's focus on the correct form of marriage reveals that *Piers Plowman* is not just a satirical commentary on the religious and political state of England in the fourteenth century. It is also a text that addresses the contemporary anxieties including marriage and human relationships. As Tavormina acknowledges, "Langland seeks to draw his audience much closer to lawful and loving marriage, the root of Do-wel" (83).

Cain is the opposite of this ideal and contemporary medieval audiences would have been fully aware of this transgressive identity. His depiction as a child conceived "after the fall…in the period of transgression" (Emerson, 833), becoming a covetous brother preoccupied with earthly interests and evolving into the first murderer of this world by committing fratricide all stress his liminal status. Cain is a figure who is bonded to worldly acts and sinfulness rather than to heavenly rewards. Tavormina argues further that even "his very name means "possession [..] getting in both the reproductive and economic sense" (85).[58]

Familial destruction, in this case through the first murder, results in banishment and perpetual wandering: the most emphatic archetype for all future times, of transgressing the bonds of family. Maintaining proper familial values ensures that an individual is on the right path on the pilgrimage of life, with the destination of the Heavenly Jerusalem as a focal point of this journey. Sinful behaviour, starting with conception at the wrong time (such as after the fall of mankind in the case of Cain), followed by a concentration on worldly values, and finally ending with murder, gives rise to a life of aimless wandering, a further detachment from the expected path

[58] This is a popular etymology for the name Cain but others also exist where it is also related to "reed" rather than "gotten" or "acquired" (Murdoch, 18) as the newly-born Cain immediately finds herbs, grass, corn or a reed to help Eve with the pain of childbirth.

towards God and possible redemption. Wandering, the committing of sin and a preoccupation with worldly activities deepen the rift between God and man while committing to family life and "Do-wel" offers a well-defined purpose: to seek salvation and God.

Banishment and descriptions of wandering, however, are not limited to descriptions of Cain. According to Dyas:

> Wandering in Langland's analysis of human society appears to function as a highly significant spiritual indicator. The inhabitants of the 'feeld ful of folk' are frequently defined in terms of their stability – or lack of it. (148)

It is clear throughout his work that Langland has reservations regarding the current state of pilgrimage in the fourteenth century. Within his description of the "feeld ful of folk" in the prologue, Langland describes the hypocritical nature of pilgrims:

> Pilgrymes and palmers plighten hem togidere
> For to seken Seint Jame and seintes at Rome;
> Wenten firth in hire wey with many wise tales,
> And hadden leve to lyen al hire lif after.
> I seigh somme that seiden thei hadde ysought seintes:
> To ech a tale that thei tolde hire tonge was tempred to lye
> Moore than to seye sooth, it semed bi hire speche. (Prologue:46-52)

In Passus V, Langland extends this imagery of those who travel impiously and specifically identifies the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela again. He offers an alternative to the physical act of travelling to seek a connection with the divine, using the character of Reason who urges that they should now "Seketh Seynt Truthe, for he may save yow alle" (57). Despite describing it as a pilgrimage, Langland ensures that the audience regards this type of travel as redundant in terms of furthering their

spiritual ideals and that it could be equated with aimless wandering because it is not undertaken with correct intent.

Pilgrimage actively accelerates vice and sin among its participants and intentions are far from pious or sincere. As we have seen in the exempla, employing pilgrimage for nefarious reasons such as adultery results in damnation and torment while pilgrims with correct intentions are rewarded by God for their devotion. Pilgrimage emerges as a form of escapism from the quotidian, including familial responsibilities and work. Rather than creating a closer bond with the divine, it actually effects further detachment, ironically misdirecting the pilgrimage of life. Langland is putting forward the notion that both types of pilgrimage cannot coexist; life as a symbolic, spiritual pilgrimage must be seen as the more appropriate choice to the physical pilgrimage.

The character of Envy demonstrates one of the first examples of Langland's disapproval of pilgrimage. Envy confesses to the trouble he has caused his neighbours including having "maad his frendes be his foon thorugh my false tonge" (95). His hypocritical nature is further exposed as he explains that when he goes to church, he selectively "preyes for the peple as the preest techeth/ For pilgrymes and for palmeres" (104-105) and cries before the altar but immediately turns around and focuses on a parishioner's new coat. Through these references to pilgrimage, Langland successfully associates Envy's false nature with otiose religious travel by having such a deceitful figure pray for those on pilgrimage.

Envy's portrayal of False nature, and its connection to pilgrimage, is continued by Covetousness, who explains the dishonest behaviour of both him and his wife. He explains to Repentance that he, in fact, has been on pilgrimage:

Ac I swere now (so thee lk!) that synne wol I lete,

And nevere wickedly weye ne wikke chaffre use,

But wenden to Walsyngham, and my wif als,

And bidde the Roode of Broholm brynge me out of dette. (224-227)

Both he and his wife go on pilgrimage to Walsingham to escape their debts. Repentance questions Covetousness and asks "Repentedestow evere? [...] or restitucion madest" (228). This familial pilgrimage, however, is not what it appears to be. Covetousness states that in the lodgings that he shared with a group on the way, he "roos whan their were a-rest and riflede hire males" (230). Pilgrimage for Covetousness and his wife is not an occasion for repentance. Pilgrimage is an outlet for them to commit sins.

Pilgrimage is yet again depicted as a refuge for the corrupted characters of society. In this specific case, the institution of pilgrimage is further tainted by a husband and wife, united in venal and kleptocratic matrimony. The corruption demonstrated by Covetousness cannot be suppressed by falsifying atonement while on pilgrimage. Du Boulay's discussion on the role of confession in *Piers Plowman* could also equally apply to a discussion on the role of the pilgrimage of place:

> His [Langland's] real point is that mere obedience to the regulation about annual confession cannot be a substitute for an attempt at repentance, and that people should be taught this. He speaks simply for interior Christianity. (69)

True repentance and proper living do not rely on structures that can breed corruption. Confession and salvation are ultimately accomplished at home. Pilgrimage becomes an accelerant to vice as demonstrated by this particular couple, who leave their domestic confines and their responsibilities, go on pilgrimage and journey further

away from “Do-wel” and God. This is an ideal representation of Dyas’s description of the Christian pilgrim in “real life” who:

> was still trapped in a fallen world, confronted by sin, vulnerable to temptation and often unable to discern clearly the voice of God. Progress therefore was frequently unsteady, even erratic, plagued by lapses, misunderstanding and falls from grace. (146-47)

The physical act of journeying to a pilgrimage site can therefore be seen as one of these lapses while on the pilgrimage of life itself and travelling for such purposes could possibly “divert Christians from seeking to experience God in their daily lives” (Dyas, 168). Pilgrimage, corruption and insincere intentions interweave throughout Langland’s work. The satiric portrayals of pilgrims does not stop with this depiction of a corrupt couple. It is also seen in one of Langland’s most memorable figures: the Palmer, who is unaware of Saint Truth. His portrayal has been examined by numerous Langland scholars and used as the primary example of Langland’s disdain for pilgrimage. He is “apparailled as a paynam in pilgrymes wise” (516) but it is the “hundred of ampulles on his hate” (520) that launches Langland’s satiric commentary on pilgrims. He possesses:

> signes of Synay and shelles of Galice,
> And many a crouch on his cloke, and keyes of Rome,
> And the vernicle bifore, for men sholde knowe
> And se bi hise signes whom he sought hadde. (Passus V, 520-524)

He states that he has “sought goode Seintes for [his] soule helthe” (Passus V, 531), but it is clear that his only desire is to travel and boast about where he has been and what he has seen. This is confirmed when he claims to have never encountered Saint Truth and, furthering this satiric description of pilgrims, declaring that “I seigh nevere

palmere with pyk ne with scrippe/asken after hym er now in this place" (Passus V, 536-537).

This dysfunctional character can be seen in Morrison's interpretation of Langland's treatment of social structures, including the family, where she states that "when individuals do break free from societal structures, like the family, they generally end up leading 'disorderly' lives – as minstrels, wanderers or beggars" (147). Piers, who appears at this point in the text as a true pilgrim with correct intentions, offers to lead the "feeld ful of folke" on a pilgrimage in search of Saint Truth.

The monetary aspect of pilgrimage is also addressed as Piers is instantly presented with money in payment for his guidance. Piers, as the opposing figure to that of the Palmer, states that "I nolde fange a ferthyng, for Seint Thomas shryne" (Passus V, 557), quickly asserting that worldly issues such as money should not influence a pilgrimage in search of Truth. This, however, is quickly forgotten by two of those who wish to accompany Piers on this pilgrimage.

Toward the end of Passus VI, further corruption of pilgrimage is observed as the Pardoner decides that, since he will not be known on this journey, he will bring a box containing his "brevettes and a bulle with bishops lettres" (640). This use of pilgrimage as an opportunity to sell pardons provides further proof of its corruption and, as Morrison explains, "the Pardoner clearly is satirized for wanting to make money on unsuspecting pilgrims" (111). The corruption continues as the "Commune Woman" decides to collude with the Pardoner for the duration of this pilgrimage and pose as his sister. In this case we see a parody of the family on pilgrimage through the formation of an immoral pairing. Morrison describes this woman's attachment to the Pardoner in this way:

> While the duplicity of the Pardoner lies in the connection between finances and spirituality, hers lies in the connection between coin and sex. Furthermore, her faked familial connection with him disguises a potentially illicit sexual connection. (112)

Langland uses the image of the corrupted family of this section to comment on contemporary society's disregard for true spiritual intent and the weakening of what were previously seen as religious activities. Sin is sheltered and permitted by this illicit family. The decline of pilgrimage is well and truly addressed at this stage of *Piers Plowman*.

While we have seen the idealised feminine models in Bokenham's works of the previous chapter, Langland exposes us to the lustful Commune Woman. Ruth Mazo Karras examines the role which prostitution plays in medieval culture and how it interacts with the misogynistic preaching of the time. She highlights a number of different categories in which the dangerous behaviours of women are outlined but makes the observation that "men are not considered under such categories; they are presented as wicked individuals or wicked because they are human, not because they are men" (*Common Women*, 106). The Commune Woman's sinfulness, therefore, could be read as a consequence of her gender and a product of her lustfulness and her sexual profession. She could be viewed as the more immoral of the two characters and it could be, as Karras states, "an effort to displace onto them [women] the responsibility for the sins of men who could not control their own temptations" (*Common Women,* 110). The Pardoner cheats fellow pilgrims but the presence of the Commune Women incorporates issues of sex, lust and false incest. Langland does not outwardly condemn her however and his satirical focus is placed on the Pardoner and his actions. He thus uses a misogynistic trope to criticise these bogus religious deals.

We have been presented with two cases where a family on pilgrimage, real or fabricated, is a damaging force, especially for other pilgrims, thus embodying the worst aspects of human behaviour including deceit, thievery and sexual transgressions. Morrison highlights the issues regarding gender and pilgrimage and explains that "the sexual female pilgrim is a figure of disruption and danger, evoked by artists who then carefully control her through irony and satire" (112). Those occupying a liminal space, such as pilgrims, cause disorder and none more so than a female pilgrim. This Commune Woman uses pilgrimage to corrupt and distort both pilgrimage and the idea of the family.

Langland successfully combines two central concerns of his age in this episode: the problems associated with women who desired to go on pilgrimage and the worldly issues that can corrupt the true purpose of pilgrimage, relating back to the Craig and her description of the "castigation of female pilgrims" by clerical writers and the link to *curiositas* (21). Women in the eyes of these clerical writers are both facilitators of and willing participants in *curiositas.*

The Canterbury Tales provides us with the most well-known example of a mobile medieval woman, the Wife of Bath, whose motivations for pilgrimage seem anything but pious. At a time when embarking on the longer pilgrimages to the Holy Land and Europe was a complicated, expensive and often a dangerous undertaking for all pilgrims, Alison had been to Jerusalem three times and has also travelled to Santiago de Compostela, Cologne and Boulogne (*The General Prologue*, 463-466). As we see in the following passage, Alison's wanderings and pilgrimage are anything but reverend:

So often tymes I to my gossyb wente,

For evere yet I loved to be gay,

And for to walke in March, Averill , and May,

Fro hous to hous, here sondry talys –

Firstly, we see here how Alison demonstrates that she likes to travel; to wander – the reason is irrelevant.

That Jankyn clerk, and my gossyb dame Alys,

And I myself, into feeldes wente.

Myn housbond was at Londoun al that Lente;

I hadde the better leyser for to pleye,

And for to se, and eek for to be seye of lusty folk.

Secondly, we observe that this is not a romantic notion of wanderlust – she travels to see people, not things. Thirdly, she chooses and prefers to not be in the company of her husband. With her husband absent during Lent, a time for reflection and repentance, she is free to pursue her own entertainment.

What wiste I wher my grace

Was shapen for to be, or in what place?

Therfore I made my visitaciouns

To vigilies and to processiouns,

To prechyng eek, and to thise pilgrimages,

To pleyes of myracles, and to mariages,

And wered upon my gaye scarlet gytes. (*The Wife of Bath's Prologue*, 544-559)

In the final section of this passage, we see that all the modes and traditions we have seen in this study – sermons and their associated narratives, plays, pilgrimages – are confirmed out her mouth here as vehicles for recreation and sociability.

Reading this, we see that religious activities for the Wife of Bath are merely another way to pass the time alongside a host of secular interests. She upsets domestic

stability in every way. She is a childless, defiant woman. Her lack of family and obedience in the face of patriarchal expectations allow her to move from her gender's defined space within the home and travel from house to house in search of gossip, an activity which resembles a perverse pilgrimage of sorts. Alison does not make distinctions between her wanderings for gossip and "sondry talys" and the religious ceremonies that she attends; all are social occasions.

She does not go on pilgrimage to pray for her family or seek intercession but goes because she desires to see these destinations and also because she can. By moving from her domestic, sheltered space to public events, such as pilgrimage, Alison is aware that attention is focussed on her and she fulfils Craig's observation, based on Jean de Meun's *Roman de la rose*, that:

> Public excursions […] were not just a matter of feeding a woman's pride by allowing her to be seen; they were a matter of being seen while looking good, a goal which intertwined pride with greed. (35)

Chaucer's Wife wears vibrant coloured clothing on her current pilgrimage to Canterbury and also mentions that during Lenten wanderings, she also wore bright scarlet robes. Her young husband, Jankyn, attempts to dissuade her from her constant travelling, quoting from Ecclesiasticus: "where he comandeth and forbedeth faste/Man shal nat suffer his wyf go roule aboute" (651-652). Pilgrimage as a wife and, later as a widow, for the Wife of Bath is one of the activities through which she can assert her authority and her freedom within a male-dominated society.

Motherhood is not an option for this most vibrant of Chaucer's pilgrims. Her childless state and her wandering exist because of the genre in which she appears. If she had been part of a hagiographical account, Chaucer may have portrayed Alison as a more maternal figure. According to Morrison: "motherhood is a factor for

hagiographical and quasi-hagiographical texts" (144) and we have seen that Alison is not remotely saintly in her actions and thoughts.

A lack of familial completeness is a factor within Chaucer's work as the only complete family appears within the *Tale of Melibee* (Morrison, 145). This generic distinction sets it aside from *Piers Plowman* where complete family units exist as a reminder of temporal structures within a spiritual context, revealing Langland's "sense of the social dynamics of spiritual life" (Morrison, 145) among the laity.

The C-text of *Piers Plowman* exhibits a strategy to evoke a corrupting femininity within a familial context amid the pilgrimage of life. Kytte, the wife of Actif, prevents her husband from taking part in the pilgrimage to Saint Truth.[59] Pilgrimage, as with the clergy in Langland's text, can be a vehicle for both good and bad. Actif approaches Piers to explain to Truth that he cannot leave his wife to become a pilgrim:

> Thenne was ther on heihte Actif an hosbounde he semed;
> 'Ich haue ywedded a wyf', quath he, 'wel wantowen of maners;
> Were ich seuenyght fro hure syghte synne hue wolde,
> And loure on me and lyghtliche chide and seye ich loue anothere.
> For-thy, Peers ploughman ich praye the telle hit Treuthe
> Ich may nat come for a Kytte so hue cleueth on me.
> (C-Text: Passus VIII, 299-304)

Langland's commentary on pilgrimage is two-fold in this dialogue between Piers and Actif. The opinion of Actif's wife that the only reason why he is leaving is because he "loue[s] anothere" strengthens the belief that pilgrimage was often seen as both an opportunity to escape everyday life and also an opportunity to commit adultery

[59] In the C-text, this character appears as Actif while in the B text he appears as Haukyn. In all cases he represents the "ordinary man trying to do the best he can in the world as he finds it" (Rudd, 152).

(similar to Felice's worries about Guy's fidelity). This episode also reflects the distraction that familial bonds could cause during the pilgrimage through life. Kytte's jealousy results in Actif's unwillingness to leave in search of Saint Truth, thus serving as a reminder "of the responsibilities, trials, and spiritual distractions of the active, married life" (Tavormina, 195).

Not all pilgrims are depicted as corrupt or immoral in *Piers Plowman*. Will's interior pilgrimage evolves from one of wandering for the sake of *curiositas,* where he "wente wide in this world wondres to here" (Prologue, 4) to one where he develops an understanding of the spiritual life:

> Til the day dawed thise damyseles carolden,
> That men rongen to the resurexion – an right with that I wakede,
> And called Kytte my wif and Calote my doghter:
> Ariseth and reverenceth Goddes resurexion,
> And crepeth to the cros on knees , and kisseth it for a juwel! (Passus XVIII, 428)

The recurrence of the name "Kytte" as the name of both Actif's and Will's wives may reflect Langland's wish to ground these characters within a worldly, often corrupted existence, as they are linked to immoral women. Tavormina acknowledges this stating that "Langland may have chosen to use the names to reinforce our awareness of Will and Actif as members of what Chambers called 'the whole body of sinning, penitent laity'" (195). Langland's choice of names of Actif's and Will's family ensure that we do not forget that they are sinners and still pilgrims and exiles in this world.

In this passage, we not only see Will's spiritual development in terms of his pilgrimage through life but also what this development means for his family. Morrison explains that:

> Will's pilgrimage is one not devoid of family ties. While Will is distracted by family and everyday life, in the end his family's salvation – symbolized through their participation in the Easter liturgy […] rests on his ultimate understanding of God and his own role as a Christian soul. (148)

The bonds of family can result in a distraction from the path to the Heavenly Jerusalem, but they can also offer an example of how salvation can be achieved for both characters within the text and also their readers. By releasing Will from his wandering life and allowing him to understand his responsibility as a Christian, a father and a husband, Langland provides an attainable paradigm that both he and his lay audience can follow. This representation does not denigrate the mundane chores of everyday life. It promotes them as a way to attain salvation if carried out with correct intent. This both resembles and diverges from the way in which the families of the saints and saintly figures of the hagiographical and religious romances are depicted. At the very least they are merely distractions and at most, they are minor figures that the contemporary readership can learn from and possibly emulate.

Langland's Will, however, promotes a positive image of the routine of daily commitments. Bolton-Holloway describes this as "progress[ing] from carnal pilgrimage to the vita veritas" (*The Pilgrim and the Book* , 94). Though Langland provides us with the ideal figure who understands the true way to seek to salvation in the ploughman, he, like other pilgrims, is still bound by responsibilities of a worldly nature rather than a spiritual one. He is not, however, corrupted by these responsibilities but provides a model for those who choose to follow the same path as him. Piers completes the expected obligations prior to going on a pilgrimage, including writing a will. He explains that:

For now I am old and hoor and have of myn owene,

To penaunce and to pilgrimage I wol passe with thise othere;

Forthi I wole er I wende do write my biqueste. (Passus VI, 83-85)

Within this will, he arranges his burial: "the kirke shal have my caroyne, and kepe my bones" (91). Piers also ensures that his wife and daughters are included: "My wif shal have of that I wan with truthe, and namoore/And dele among my doughtres and my deere children" (Passus VI, 96-97). These considerations confirm Piers's exemplary role as a figure within the active life that combines his search for salvation with the appropriate actions of a man who has worldly responsibilities, thus demonstrating how one can live a good life and achieve "Do-wel":

I wol woshipe therwith Truth by my lyve,

And ben His pilgrim ate plow for povere mennes sake.

My plowpote shal be my pikstaf , and picche atwo the rotes.

(Passus VI, 101103)

The active life is one of the central concerns for Langland in *Piers Plowman*. In exploring the theme, the text considers the balance between worldly commitments such as family and religious devotion amid the pilgrimage of life. Langland's preoccupation with the correct form of living pushes aside the need for corporeal pilgrimage to shrines and focuses on the stability of domestic life for the lay community.

Travelling and delinquent wandering using the guise of the physical pilgrimage lead people further from their path to salvation. In reading *Piers Plowman,* we observe the complicated nature of Langland's opinions regarding contemporary pilgrimage to well-known shrines. To him, physical pilgrimage attracted those he would deem corrupt; a truth embodied by Covetousness and his wife and also the well-travelled

Palmer, who is covered in tokens from his travels but brings nothing back of note - he knows nothing of Saint Truth. The imaginative spiritual journey through life becomes an appropriate substitute for place pilgrimage in Langland's allegory. Within the active life, however, distractions from the path to the Heavenly Jerusalem are unavoidable and often include worldly commitments and family obligations, a pattern we observe in the morality plays of *Everyman* and *The Castle of Perseverance*, which denotes further the relationship between the allegorical pilgrimage through life and its conflicts with the family.

The morality plays grew in popularity during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and are made up of a small corpus including *The Pride of Life*, *Mankind* and *Wisdom*, *Everyman* and *The Castle of Perseverance*. For this section, we will read *Everyman* and *The Castle of Perseverance* as representative texts within the tradition of morality plays. The didactic strategies and how they engage with family and pilgrimage offer an informative vision of the importance of place, space and the role of individuality in the Middle Ages. These performative texts offered the medieval audience a new way in which they could engage with didactic material. The audience are not preached at from a pulpit by a member of the clergy but are offered a performance and visualisation of allegorical journeys, characters and events. Drama transforms the imaginative space where the audience become viewers and listeners; their imagined landscapes become reality on the stage. The audience's level of involvement depended also on the staging of these plays. If the morality plays were staged in the round and actors performed on a *platea*, the audience formed a circular space around this performance and created a sense of enclosure and ritual. J. L. Styan explains that

> The roundness suggested the world itself : it made of the platform stage or other acting area a microcosm which enclosed its hum an inhabitants. It encourages a degree of symbolism in the arrangement of the action: the acting space, the *platea*, became a battleground for the forces of light and darkness, with man himself caught in the middle. The stage became the moral arena. (42)

This interaction with performance and the ritualistic nature of viewing and visualising didactic, allegorical texts also offered a new way in which the audience interacted with the concept of the allegorical pilgrimage through life. These are not merely texts which the audience could meditate on privately. They are dramatic works which encourage participation in imagined allegorical journeys and interaction with familial allegorical figures. They are works that occupy a visual part in a social, physical space for their audience.

Though the morality plays work within a social performative space, they encourage the viewers to also consider the journeys of their own souls. The concept of self-knowledge and self-examination had become important to medieval society especially following the introduction by the Fourth Lateran Council of annual confession for all Christians. This inward reflection on everyday life or as Colin Morris states "an assessment of conduct" (73) and its influence on redemption became a popular theme in many texts including the morality plays. These interior dramas grew alongside the miracle and mystery plays but differ greatly:

> Morality plays have invented actions – unlike biblical plays, liturgical or other whose subject is universal human history, seen in terms of divine purpose and divine intervention in it - even though they may be (and usually are) composed of traditional materials and share a common concern with the destiny and

> destination of a single but representative human soul. If biblical plays are histories, moralities are homilies. (Proudfoot, 92)

The connection between medieval sermons and morality plays is fundamental to understanding the role these works played in their contemporary society and how audiences engaged with them. A.M Kinghorn describes the morality plays as a "sermon cast in dramatic form, in content and intention didactic and in plot allegorical" (112). Allegory becomes dramatized, played out on the stage for the audience to both listen and observe characters who relate directly to their own lives. Religious writers could therefore convey the importance of following a moral path in the vernacular language. The morality plays, as Robert Potter explains are "the theatre of demonstration" and are "both didactic (in the sense of teaching Christian doctrine) and ritualistic (in the sense of 'proving it')" (16).

The Middle English *Everyman*, a late fifteenth-century translation of the Dutch *Elckerlijc,* is concerned with the goal of the pilgrimage of life - the preparation for death. V.A. Kolve observes that:

> the pilgrimage in question is not that of "human life" – in the manner of *The Canterbury Tales* or *The Castle of Perseverance* or Deguileville's *Le Pelerinage de la Vie Humaine*. That pilgrimage has been underway since Everyman's birth and is hardly spoken of here (80).

Coming under Roy Mackenzie's classification of "moralities dealing with the summons of death" (202), the play deploys the metaphor of the journey and remains fixed on the important theme of man's repentance and salvation. As Hardin Craig explains, "the doctrine of man's salvation is the oldest and most clearly defined of all Christian doctrines, and is the oldest morality theme" (64). Siegfried Wenzel argues that morality plays are "not a genuine pilgrimage of life" but demonstrate "a debate, a

dramatic struggle between various powers over the possession and fate of man's soul" (382). These varied rationalisations of the morality plays demonstrate the difficulty in extracting a clear-cut definition of their themes. Death, salvation and the metaphorical journey vary in their roles but nonetheless provide the medieval audience with a vision of life as a pilgrimage.

Everyman follows a similar plot device to other works that contain the metaphor of the pilgrimage of life where the plot centres on an individual who becomes detached from society and family and must embark on a pilgrimage towards death. Despite multiple interactions and encounters with allegorical figures from his life, Everyman must inevitably travel alone. Family is a distraction from the true path to death and salvation. Distractions abound on Everyman's journey and he attempts to persuade those he meets on his way to join him.

In the opening of the play, God instructs his messenger, Death, to meet with the character of Everyman and explain that "a pylgramage he must hym take/Which he in no wyse may escape" (68-69) and not return. Everyman, who attempts to bargain and bribe the figure of Death, asks for more time as "all unredy is my boke of rekenynge" (134). Death in turn explains how this journey cannot be postponed or avoided but states that Everyman may not have to endure this journey alone and that "yf ony be so hardy/That wolde go with thee and bere thee company" (157-158), he may have companions on his travels. Following Death's final warnings and departure, Everyman frets that he will travel on this pilgrimage with "no maner of company/To helpe me in my journey, and me to kepe" (185-186), further emphasising the importance of the actions of the individual rather than the collective.

Allegorical figures representing worldly relationships each approach Everyman in turn before he sets out on this final pilgrimage. Each encounter represents a

continued distancing of the individual from worldly friendships and associations. Fellowship approaches him first and his refusal is the first indication that Everyman will be forced to make this journey alone. On hearing that this journey is commanded by God through his messenger Death and that there is no return, he quickly reneges on all his promises to travel with Everyman and, among many protestations, states that "I wyll not go that lothesom journay/Not for the father that begat me" (268-269). The unwillingness of Fellowship to undertake this journey initiates the pattern of isolation that is formed between Everyman and those he is closest to.

Kindred and Cousin enter, following Fellowship's departure. On seeing them, Everyman believes that he has found his companions for his journey in those with a familial connection. These characters represent the expectations of familial roles. Not only does Everyman presume that these characters will travel with him towards death, they themselves also believe that they can offer assistance. Cousin states that "Yf ye be dyposed to go ony whether/Fo wot ye well, we wyll lyve and dye togyther" (323-324) while Kindred says that "In welthe and wo we wyll with you holde/For over hys kynne a man may be bolde" (325-326). As with Fellowship, however, Cousin and Kindred, on hearing Everyman's request, refuse to accompany him on his journey. Cousin even makes a comical excuse by claiming that "I have the crampe in my to" (356) and issues a warning to both Everyman and the audience that "I wyll deceive you in your moste need" (358). Kindred avoids using excuses but instead offers Everyman a maid who will travel with him in his place. Kindred's worldly preoccupations and lack of understanding regarding the role of Everyman's journey are reflected in his description of this companion as he states that "she loveth to go to festes, there to be nyce/And to daunce and abrode to sterte" (361-362). For him,

worldly pleasures, in the guise of this maid, offer a distraction from the journey that he too will inevitably face and attempts to also use these distractions on Everyman.

Following Kindred's departure, Everyman becomes aware of how he cannot rely on his family and friends while facing this pilgrimage: "For fayre promyses men to me make/But whan I have moste need, they me forsake" (370-371). Family bonds only offer excuses and a reinforcement of the fear of death in the face of Everyman's journey. Cousin's departing statement, however, exposes one of the reasons for this disinterest in travelling with his family member. He bids him farewell and explains that "Also of my owne, an unredy rekenynge/I have to accounte" (375-376). This statement does not provide another excuse to avoid going on pilgrimage with Everyman but rather highlights that Cousin must pursue his own pilgrimage toward Death and balance his own accounts; another allegorical figure becoming an Everyman. Family cannot help nor accompany him on this particular pilgrimage and thus the individual's role in their own salvation is emphasised.

The collective, in this case the family, cannot be held responsible for the salvation of the individual; Everyman himself must seek penitence and make the journey, from death to the afterlife, free from the worldly constraints of familial bonds. Each family member must also do the same when their time comes. Everyman's claim that "My kynnesmen promised me faithfully/for to abyde with me steadfastly/And now fast awaye do they flee" (381-383) demonstrates that the worldly bonds of family and the promises made in this life cannot transcend the pilgrimage to Death and the journey beyond. Within this allegorical depiction, life offers distractions and broken oaths while the pilgrimage proposed by Death offers Everyman an opportunity for redemption through a solitary journey, "a goal he shares with other men" (Schell, *Strangers and Pilgrims*, 13) but one he must complete alone.

In contrast to *Everyman, The Castle of Perseverance*, written circa 1425, offers "the whole ontology of man, opening before his birth and ending after his death and his judgement before the throne of God" (Klausner, 1). It does not invoke family structures as *Everyman* does. It focuses on the singular man as Mankind and his interaction with the allegorical figures of Vices and Virtues he encounters through his life. It is *Everyman*, with family replaced by vices and virtues. This play presents a constant struggle for salvation through the maintaining of balance between worldly actions and the preservation of man's soul, or simply the balance between body and soul.

In contrast to the last journey of Everyman, Mankind in *The Castle of Perseverance* does not interact with representations of his family and friends. In his opening lines in scene iv, Mankind 'begins' – he describes his symbolically instantaneous birth: "Aftyr oure forme-fadyres kende/This nyth I was of my modyr born" (275-276). Successive lines narrate the solitary nature of the pilgrimage of life on which Mankind is about to embark, initiated by a natural and bodily separation from his mother and family: "Fro my modyr I walke, I wende/ Ful feynt and febyl I fare you beforn" (277-278). Such separation, inherent in all human beings, brings anxiety as Mankind expresses his uncertainty in this world:

> Whereto I was to this werld browth
>
> I ne wot, but to woo and wepynge
>
> I am born and have ryth nowth
>
> To helpe myself in no doynge. (288-291)

In a mode resembling Everyman, whose "repentance begins with contrition as a result of his estrangement from the external attributes upon which he had always depended – Fellowship, Kindred and Cousin, and Goods" (Potter, 53), Mankind is estranged from

his maternal bond thus allowing him to begin his journey. Instead of worldly relationships, he is assigned two spiritual guides – one good angel and one bad angel. After his birth, these two engage in a debate on a the merits of a life of prayer and focus on heavenly salvation and a life of worldly wealth and success. Mankind decides to follow the bad angel who promises him that he "schalt be a lord" (429). This promise made by the angel, however, comes with the condition that "othyrwhyle thou muste be fals/amonge kythe and kynne" (432-433). Family are thus a target for sin and corruption, unavoidable in an earthly existence. Rather than a preoccupation with collective involvement, the text maintains a concern for the individual's struggles with worldly affairs and spiritual salvation including family and friends. This concern demonstrates the centrality of one's own role in his/her journey and redemption.

Travel and movement are at the forefront of both of these morality plays but always within the context of an individual journey rather than one reliant on the stimulus of the collective or familial devotion. The social bonds associated with friendship and family are the embodiments of worldly distractions and offer little help to the protagonist on his search for salvation during his pilgrimage. The pilgrimage of life in these allegories emphasises the necessity for the individual to take responsibility during the course of his own journey, shifting focus from external distractions to internal spiritual awareness. This is also observed in *The Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode.*

The volumes of extant manuscripts containing Guillaume de Deguileville's *Pelerinage de la vie humaine* (over one hundred) demonstrate the importance and popularity of this fourteenth century work and its themes across the centuries.[60] The anonymous Middle English prose translation, from the early fifteenth century, *The*

[60] Translations exist in English, German, Dutch, Latin and Spanish. This work by Deguileville, a Cistercian monk, was circulated in two versions: one composed in 1331 and a longer one in 1355.

Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode, provides a description of an allegorical journey in the form of a dream vision that is initiated by the birth of the speaker and closed by his subsequent vision of the Heavenly Jerusalem. In this text, the of act of pilgrimage propounds the precepts of *contemptus mundi*: the world is a lure from the divine, and life is a journey towards death ending in either salvation or damnation. This depiction of life as quest is different as Deguileville's speaker represents the ideal of the monastic life, not that of everyman. In contrast to Everyman, he does not ask family members or friends to join him on his journey. Distractions are based on the individual actions and the effects of the personified sins rather than the external influences of family or friendship. The concept of the exile from Heaven and the pilgrimage through life for this writer, a monk, depicts an individual's journey that is, in this case, shaped by monastic ideals and ascetic values. Marco Nievergelt emphasises the importance of the self in this work and explains that:

> The *Vie* is no longer concerned with absolute timeless moral or metaphysical abstractions but rather with the individual Christian's experience of them and the need to identify, understand and conceptualise sin in order to overcome it. (*Allegorical Quests,* 29)

Everyman and Mankind are not bound nor influenced by the ascetic boundaries that Deguileville's speaker must follow and they can participate in the active life. This difference between the active and spiritual life, specifically referring to the social and familial bonds, is highlighted by Fr. D. Logan:

> what motivated entry into the religious life was ideally a desire to live a fuller Christian life, to spend one's life in service to God, to be dedicated to personal spiritual perfection without the distraction of the world – without the

> encumbrance of property and the distraction of family – in the setting of a community sharing ideals. (75)

The speaker's lack of social and familial ties and worldly commitments, however, do not allow for a sinless journey through life to the Heavenly Jerusalem as he encounters similar threats to his salvation during the course of his travels. He is still subject to temptation by the Seven Deadly sins, despite instructions and direction offered by Grace and Reason. He is only freed from worldly distractions when he locates and enters the Ship of Religion, the ideal of the monastic life: "the ship, quod she: bi his name is cleped Religioun. She is bounden and bounden ayen, fretted with obseruaunces. As longe as it is so bounden, it may not perishe ne faile" (161).[61] It is a ship built by Solomon's wife as a reminder that her husband had predicted the coming of Christ. It is bears symbols associated with Christ including the Tree of Life and is guided by a divine force.

Though the speaker's direct familial bonds are not referenced in *The Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode*, some associated practices are addressed including baptism (common to all) and marriage (clearly the province of the family) through dialogues concerning the Seven Sacraments. The speaker, like his lay audience, cannot escape the rite of baptism and his inclusion of his own baptism in the text demonstrates that whether one is destined for either the active or contemplative life, we are all affected by original sin.

Baptism, according to Grace, offers the pilgrim monk the necessary cleansing following his nine months in the womb – consonant with in the language of *contemptus mundi.* The womb is the initiatory site of the 'filth' of the world: "for if thou loo{ke} whenes thou comest, and the hows [ful] of dunge in whiche thow hast be

[61] A similar allegorical ship is also found in *The Quest for the Holy Grail*, which also "reflects a Cistercian spirituality" (Milbank, 95)

ix monethes, thou hast miche neede to washe thee" (6). Baptism, in the case of the speaker's journey, marks a detachment from his mother in a physical sense and sets him on his first steps towards a contemplative life. For the lay readership, baptism marked a commitment and inclusiveness with the Church and set them on the path of the active life. Neither path for the lay and religious communities is considered the easier option when seeking salvation.

The misogynistic cleansing associated with the ceremony not only purifies the speaker but also allows for him to be marked with a cross (like Sir Isumbras) and identified not only as a pilgrim but also as a crusader who will travel to Jerusalem:

> Thilke shal helpe thee to passe, to bathe thee, to washe thee; thilke shal also crosse thee, for he shale see anoon that thou wold go ouer the see and conquere Jerusalem: and for that thow shalt the lasse drede thine enemyes he shal sette a crosse upon thi breste, another bihynde thee and also another upon thin heed for thou shalt the lasse drede alle mischeues. He shal enoynte the as a chaumpioun, so that thou shalt not preyse at a bode alle thine enemyes. (7)

This scene emphasises the detachment from familial bonds not only concerning the cleansing following the birth but also by urging the speaker to become a crusader. Family or godparents are not mentioned; the focus remains on the individual and his salvation. This is in stark contrast to the expected baptism ceremonies of the medieval period described by Barbara Hanawalt who explains the commonplace procedure:

> After the midwife washed and bundled up the new-born child at home, it was ready for its spiritual cleansing. The baptismal ceremony was elaborate. The father sent off messengers to get the godparents to come to the church, posthaste. The godmother or midwife carried the baby to the church, perhaps

> as part of a joyous procession. […] Finally, the party returned to the parents' house for the traditional gift giving and feasting. (172-173)

There is no doubt that this was a social occasion for the medieval family and their new child. It delivered the child from a state of liminality into "the congregation of Christian faithful" (Cressy, 98). It was, according to Cressy, a time that "both the individual recipient and the community at large were supposed to profit through participation in its mystery" (98).[62] This sense of kinship is removed from the narrator's own baptism whose initiation into this life of pilgrimage and eventual asceticism must be carried out alone.

The sacrament of matrimony is also revealed to Deguileville's protagonist later in this discussion of the seven sacraments as he observes the ceremony being performed by a priest. This, as Avril Henry explains in her notes to the Middle English text, is "the only sacrament irrelevant to the dreamer's monastic life" (35). He remains detached, observing rather than participating in the ceremony, unlike his previous experience of being baptised. He sees a couple coming together from the east and the west and witnesses their marriage:

> And sithe I sighe as me thuhte a woman toward the west, and a man toward the est, that comen bothe to the official anoon. And eche of hem took him his hand, and he took hem and ioyned hem togidere and sithe seide hem, as me thouhte : "Ye tweyne shule be bothe oon, and iche of yow bere trowthe to oother. Neuere dayes of youre lyue shalt her departing be maad of yow tweyne, but ther be certeyn cause, and bi Moises that is there. Now keepeth wel this sacrament, and loueth yow togideres trewlich. (11)

[62] Even though Cressy's study on baptism focuses on the period following the Reformation, it is also applicable to the medieval performance of the sacrament.

The speaker remains separate from this lay practice but he emphasises the importance of such a ritual for those who do not wish to pursue a religious life. The text therefore becomes an exemplary process for all, not merely those eligible for the enclosed life. John Witte explains that:

> marriage […] came to serve as a remedy for the individual sinner to allay lustful passion, to heal incontinence, and to substitute a bodily union with a spouse for the lost spiritual union with the Father in paradise. Rather than allow sinful people to burn with lust, God provided the institution of marriage, wherein couples could direct their natural drives and desires toward the service of each other, their children, the church and the broader society. (82)

Marriage, family and social ties are beyond the reach of the pilgrim monk in this work but such aspects of medieval life must be addressed when taking lay readership into consideration. This embodies what Nievergelt refers to as the "individual Christian experience" (*Allegorical Quests,* 29-30) and, through such references, *The Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode* becomes "a vernacular handbook, a metaphorical 'map' or itinerarium for travellers to the New Jerusalem" (29). Though the pilgrim and his ascetic existence are central to this pilgrimage through life, the individual journey of other pilgrims is not ignored. Marriage and the maintaining of a family occupy important positions along the way of the lay person's pilgrimage through life and the opportunity is taken by the author to offer moral instruction on the importance of dedication in marriage. The ascetic narrator, however, serves as a constant reminder to the audience that a more focussed life dedicated to prayer and self-denial might offer a superior route towards salvation.

Everyman, *The Castle of Perseverance* and *The Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode* present readers with allegories that maintain focus on the individual journey

through life towards death. In these works, family and social ties are encumbrances on the path to salvation amid the pilgrimage of life. *Everyman* demonstrates the fickle nature of the relationships associated with Kinship and Friendship, who must abandon him and allow him to pursue his final journey towards death alone. In *The Castle of Perseverance*, breaking Mankind's maternal bond marks the beginning of the pilgrimage of life. Family ties and earthly relationships are seen as distractions and possibly a corrupting force that threaten to inhibit the pilgrim's individual experience and potential salvation. These allegorical pilgrimages are easily derailed by the presence of family and *The Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode* continues to emphasise the significance of individuality and spiritual pilgrimage established in the morality plays. Familial bonds are displaced to the realm of the theoretical, through a discussion of the seven sacraments, including baptism and matrimony. The pilgrimage of life can include these two aspects of earthly existence and Deguileville attempts to reconcile their presence, demonstrated through the pilgrim's observation of the marriage ceremony. These rejections of familial and social ties in a worldly setting contrast with Langland's complex treatment of the pilgrimage of life in *Piers Plowman*.

The family is also identified as a moral impediment as in the case of Covetousness and his wife. Langland, however, understands that avoiding familial ties and social bonds is not possible for those who undertake the active life. The individual's quest for salvation during the pilgrimage of life is intertwined with the lives and actions of his family and the extended bonds of his society. The physical pilgrimages and wanderings that Langland repeatedly condemns are replaced by responsibilities to social and familial structures. If such responsibilities are undertaken

correctly, they offer Will a safe path through worldly distractions and onto salvation in the afterlife.

We have seen how allegorical pilgrimages are deployed, read, and experienced in different forms in the varying genres and modes. Within the morality dramas, the journeys through life use examples of those who follow the wrong path to constantly warn their audience of earthly diversions and concerns. The dream visions of *Piers Plowman* and *The Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode* focus on two variants of the individual journey through life. Langland's vision offers pilgrims multiple examples of where they can live balanced lives and still travel towards the Heavenly Jerusalem. The dream of the ascetic monk in *The Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode,* addresses secular concerns but within a theological context through an examination of the Sacraments. These allegories, though belonging to different genres highlight that the pilgrimage through life is one's own responsibility. Sins and earthly distractions are part of an individual's pilgrimage through life. Their own choices will ultimately lead them further down a sinful path or towards salvation. These concerns will now be seen on a different visionary level in the next chapter – the revelatory experiences of the mystical writers.

Chapter 6: Mystical writing and the pilgrim family

The form of the dream vision, the gestures of spiritual pilgrimage and *contemptus mundi* found in the allegorical *Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode* have introduced us to controversies to be explored in this final chapter as it assesses the texts associated with the medieval mystical tradition and the effects of interior pilgrimages. We thereby move from a simulated spiritual experience found in allegory to the 'authentic' revelatory record of imaginative and spiritual encounters. How spiritual pilgrimages are achieved and how they influence or are influenced by familial ties vary greatly in the texts examined here. Reading the works of two well-known medieval female pilgrims, Margery Kempe and Birgitta of Sweden, illuminates the uses and forms of the physical pilgrimages undertaken by these women. Our analysis explores the volatility of their familial relationships, particularly for these women's roles as both wives and mothers, and examines the attempts made by both of these women to achieve a sense of aloneness with God while remaining in the world.

Conversely *The Shewings of Julian of Norwich* realises the concept of the spiritual journey as utter detachment from the world. Here, references to the concept of the physical pilgrimage and earthly familial ties are absent, with the spiritual journey of the soul, in the company of a spiritual Heavenly family, taking precedence. From a fourth author, Walter Hilton, *The Scale of Perfection* and the *Epistle on the Mixed Life* sustain alternate readings of the spiritual pilgrimage. *The Scale of Perfection* is a treatise on the contemplative life, where physical pilgrimage is deemed an unnecessary act. *The Mixed Life*, on the other hand, is written for those who seek a balance of the active life, which is fraught with impediments to spiritual fulfilment. This text explains how the layman must not attempt to forgo commitments made in the active life in favour of a spiritual exile.

This chapter, therefore, examines references to pilgrimage, both physical and spiritual and their connection to models of family. The language that realises familial roles such as that of mothers, fathers and children, both earthly and Heavenly, will be explored and we will observe the influence of the family on the spiritual pilgrimage of the soul toward the Heavenly Jerusalem.

The spiritual pilgrimage is one of the central concepts of medieval mysticism. By creating a sense of exile through a detachment from earthly ties and influences, the medieval mystic begins to bridge the gap between the worldly experience and the divine on an individual, personal level. This type of exile and isolation, initiated by the Desert Fathers, according to Dyas, "spread into Western Europe inspiring not only the Celtic *peregrini* who sought their own deserts in the ocean, but the coenobitic orders developed by Benedict and others" (206). As Dyas goes on to explain it also influenced the concept of "enclosure as journey" (210) where:

> The exile which they experienced, the wilderness to which they retreated, were not physical but spiritual. Though the actual distance traversed may have been small, their enclosure signalled a decisive movement as they renounced attachment to the world in favour of an existence 'lived out in the presence of God alone'. (210-211)

We will encounter variants of this type of enclosure, pilgrimage and journeys to salvation in the following works.

The Book of Margery Kempe is a biographical account of a mother, wife and pilgrim, which documents how she attempts to live both an active and contemplative life during the fifteenth century. Critical interest in determining the authorship of this text demonstrates its importance not only as a literary account but also as a contextual reference for contemporary issues such as gender, sexual politics, practices of

devotion, and issues of kinship. The book may not be written by her own hand but even in dictating her story to a scribe, Margery remains, as Anthony Bale states, "undoubtedly the main subject, protagonist and source" (xviii). The extant manuscript of Margery's narrative dates from the mid-fifteenth century and may, as Liz Herbert McAvoy states in her abridged translation of Kempe's work , be "an early – even a direct – copy of the original" (5), creating a very real and tangible connection to the social issues of late medieval England.[63]

Margery's book provides a unique perspective on women in the English Middle Ages. It is an account in her own words of her own personal experiences. She has spent time as a pilgrim who undertakes both physical and spiritual journeys while also occupying the role of mother and wife. Many depictions of the family are present in this text, characterised by Margery's direct participation, her personal experiences and her own narrated observations of her relationships with others. She experiences visions of the Holy Family, interacting with them, and ultimately participating in the family through her own marriage to Christ. On a more mundane level, Margery's writings provide an account of a female pilgrim who attempts to live a chaste life.

Guillaume DeGuilleville's narrator, as we have seen, leaves this world to undertake the contemplative life. Margery, however, remains within the active life. She, unlike other mystics, does not seek to become physically detached from the world. This is demonstrated by her many encounters with both lay and religious figures and her continuous desire to seek out holy places through pilgrimage. Catherine Akel develops this even further, stating that "by remaining in the community and not entering a religious institution, she is constantly made aware of her failure to fulfil these secular roles by the presence of and interaction with her family,

[63] Citations are from Staley's edition of *The Book of Margery Kempe*. Passages are cited by book, chapter and line number.

friends and neighbours" (117), thus indicating the problematic nature of her ambiguous role in society. She remains a liminal figure for most of her life continuing to travel and attempting to find her place within society. The life that Margery puts forward in her book is grounded in the contention with authority and with the familial and social relationships associated with middle-class life. She marries John Kempe and gives birth to fourteen children but these roles of wife and mother are often at odds with her spiritual life.

For example, even though Margery is married, she seeks to live a chaste life, free from the sexual obligations imposed by her husband and the constraints of marriage. As Lynne Staley explains:

> holy men and women were presented as breaking with or as challenging the institutions of society. The issue of sexuality was a particularly important one for female saints, for by their wishes to lead celibate lives, women signified their espousal of a new and less socially defined existence. Unbound by the physical and patriarchal structures of marriage they could cultivate a spiritual relationship to God whose terms were frequently described by their hagiographers as freer – and, in fact more amatory – than any available to them as actual wives. (2)

This desire to live a celibate life and balancing of temporal relationships is reflected in Margery's marriage to John but also her marriage to Christ. Chastity within marriage and pilgrimage become connected in Margery's book as the tension between both are addressed while she and her husband "go vysyten certeyn places for gostly helth" (Book 1, chapter 10, lines 505-506). While they are "komyng fro Yorkeward", John states that "Ye arn no good wyfe" as she claims that she would rather see him die

rather than have a sexual relationship with him again. This initiates a discussion on Margery's desire to remain chaste in their marriage, which John refuses:

> I pray yow, suffer me to make a vow of chastyté in what bysshopys hand that God wele. 'Nay' he seyd, 'that wyl I not grawnt yow, for now may I usyn yow wythowtyn dedly syne and than mygth I not so'. (1.11.536-539)

Further along the road, they come to a cross that John sits under and from this position he makes his demands of Margery again:

> My first desyr is that we schallyn style togedyr in o bed as we han do befor; the secunde that ye schal pay my detts er ye go to Jherusalem; and the thrydde that ye schal etyn and drynkn wyth me on the Fryday as ye wer wont to don. (1.11.545-548)

Margery's decisions and the effect they have on her family and the responses of society are reflected not only in her husband's demands but also where he makes these demands. This takes place while they are on a pilgrimage to "many dyvers placys". Their liminal position outside of the domestic confines allows her husband the opportunity to confront Margery about her decision to live a chaste life while also demonstrating a much larger problem for women pilgrims and travellers during the Middle Ages, a fear for maintaining chastity, which she has preserved for the last three years, and ultimately a fear of being raped while on the journey.

Pilgrimage is used as a bargaining tool by John. To allow Margery the freedom to fulfil her desire to travel on a longer pilgrimage to Jerusalem, she must first fulfil her marriage debt and agree to return to their sexual relations. She must also settle his debts before she leaves. Female autonomy to go on pilgrimage can only be accomplished by resolving spousal complications and monetary problems, according to a male figure. Only a transcendent inner dialogue with Jesus can cut mundane bonds

of family and wedlock that constrain Margery. With this appeal to the ultimate authority, Margery is granted leave to end her fast. She returns to John proposing a new agreement:

> Sere, Grawntyth me that ye schal not komyn in my bed, and I grawnt yow to qwyte yowr dettys er I go to Jerusalem. And makyth my body fre to God so that ye nevyr make no chalengyng in me to askyn no dett of matrimony aftyr this day whyl ye levyn, and I schal etyn and drynkyn on the Fryday at yowr byddyng. (1.11.567-570)

According to Catherine Akel:

> Margery realigns her earthly familial priorities. […] after [the] assurance of her earthy family's salvation, Margery is bolder and more aggressive in requesting John's vow of chastity. […] Her spiritual needs cannot be met without John's consent. Her navigation of the public sphere is still restricted by earthly familial ties. (119-20)

In the case of Margery Kempe, chastity and the opportunity for pilgrimage are dictated by the earthly ties of marriage and subsequent monetary obligations. Unlike her anchorite counterparts, such as Julian, who are detached from such worldly bonds, she is still reliant on her husband's permission and involvement in her spiritual affairs.

Margery's authority, however, is superseded by her own intimate access to Christ. Margery's life offers a diverse picture of the singular and exceptional spiritual life of a mystic and also the everyday difficulties experienced by a medieval woman. This paradox is further reinforced by a later discussion with Christ where he explains his love for women in all states, whether they are a virgin, widow or wife:

> Ya, dowtyr, trow thow rygth wel that I lofe wyfes also, and special tho wyfs which woldyn levyn chast, yyf thei mygtyn have her wyl, and don her besynes

> to plesyn me as thow dost, for, thow the state of maydenhode be mor parfyte and mor holy than the state of wedewhode, and the state of wedewhode mor parfyte than the state of wedlake, yet dowtyr I lofe the as wel as any mayden in the world. (1.21.1114-1119)

This acceptance of women in any of the states and with varying familial commitments is also present in Birgitta's writings, demonstrating not only the desire of these women to live a chaste life within marriage but also a shift in societal expectations regarding lay women's spirituality in the later Middle Ages. Only the ultimate authority, Christ, through the medium of a woman's vision, can remonstrate with paternalistic judgements concerning the place and identity of the ideal women in medieval society.

Margery's subsequent journeys that follow this agreement with John demonstrate her wish to travel to holy sites to further her connections with the divine and also the practical problems faced by female pilgrim. She explains that she had "a desyr to se tho placys where he [Jesus] was born and wher he sufferyd hys passion and wher he deyd, wyth other holy placys wher he was in hyslyve and also aftyr hys resurrexyon" (1.15.723-724) but fears the journeys as "sche had no good to go wyth" (1.15.727) .

Pilgrimage for Margery is constantly reliant on the influence and goodwill of others. She requires her husband to grant her permission and now depends on her travelling companions, thus reflecting the necessity of embarking on a pilgrimage as part of a group for the purposes of safety. Jesus reassures her, explaining that: I schal send the frendys anowe in dyvers contreys of Ynglond to help the. And dowtyr, I schal go wyth the in every contré and ordeyn for the; I schal ledyn the thyder and brynge the ageyn in safté, and noon Englyschman schal deyn in the schyp that thow art in. I schal

kepe the fro alle wykked mennys power (1.15.728-732) – a checklist of the travails of travel.

Margery's pilgrimage following this promise, which echoes Jesus's last words in the Gospel of Matthew, "behold I am with you always even unto the end of the world", is a familial one where she and her husband "went forth into the cuntré" (1.15.737-738), demonstrating her attempt to maintain a balance between her spiritual concerns and her worldly obligations. Craig explains the significance of this particular part of Margery's pilgrimage, that "to go on pilgrimage with a spouse eliminated possible disagreements and restrictions imposed by the husband" (144). For Margery, John's presence also represents a form of support of her pilgrimage and her affective piety, contrasting with the encounters she has with other pilgrims at a later stage who ridicule both her clothing and loud crying. This familial presence on pilgrimage provides Margery with some comfort, offering readers a model of spousal support:

> for he was evyr a good man and an esy man to hir. Thow that he sumtyme for veyn dred lete hir alone for a tyme, yet he resrtyd evyrmore ageyn to hir, and had compassion of hir, and spak for hir as he durst for dred of the pepyl. But alle other that went wyth hir forsokyn hir, and ful falsly thei accusyd his thorw temptacyon of the devyl of thyngys that sche was nevyr gylty in. (1.15.738-742)

The succinct and simple language of emotional security, denoting a compassionate man, 'good' and 'esy', secures Margery's career intermittently in the most recognisable of human relationships. Her husband provides her with the protection and support not seen in her other companions on pilgrimage.

Margery and John's marriage develops from being a relationship that rejects and prevents the idea of a wife and mother embarking on a pilgrimage to one where it

provides the only aspect of solace and protection on the journey in the form of a male guardian. She describes the treatment she must endure from her fellow pilgrims without her husband later in the text where they cut and ruin her dress and make her sit at the end of a table, creating a parody of a family meal with Margery playing the role of a chastised child. They even remark on her husband's tolerance of her unusual spiritual devotion and compare their experience to that of John stating "thei wold not suffren hir as hir husband dede whan sche was at hom and in Inglond" (1.26.1410-1411).

Journeys and travelling often mark changes in Margery's familial life. The maintaining of her chastity was negotiated while returning from York and God's commandment that "sche shuld no mor chyldren beryn" (1.17.865-866) is marked by a journey to Norwich. Margery's mobility and family life, though at odds with each other, are inextricably linked. While on her pilgrimage through the Holy Land, her earthly familial ties have diminished but her ties with the Holy Family become stronger through her visions. This is demonstrated by an inner dialogue with the Virgin Mary, which ends with her being admonished: "And therefore, dowtyr, yyf thu wylt be partabyl in owyr joye, thu must be partabil in owyr sorwe" (1.29.1696-1697). The family, for good or ill, human or divine, must share both sorrow and joy. According to Akel, "Margery reinvents those familial bonds through her visions, thus fashioning a spiritual family in which she is a direct participant as daughter, wife, and mother" (117) and, in a similar way to an earthly experience of family, must endure the bad aspects with the good.

Margery's experiences of the Holy Family are not limited to interior visions. While on pilgrimage, she encounters a woman who:

> had the ymage in the chist, whan thei comyn in good citeys, sche toke owt the ymage owt of hir Christ and sett it in worshipful wyfs lappys. And thei wold puttyn schirtys ther upon and kyssyn it as thei it had ben God ymselfe. And whan the creatur sey the worship and the reverens that thei dedyn to the ymage, sche was takyn wyth swet devocyon and swet meditacyons that sche wept wyth gret sobbyng and lowed crying. (1.30.1796-1801)

On this part of her journey, Margery is faced with a spiritual evocation of her role as mother, through the presence of this devotional Christ doll. While her husband and children remain in England, Margery experiences another aspect of motherhood through this encounter as "sche had hy meditacyons in the byrth and the childhode of Crist" (Book 1, chapter 30, lines 1802-1803). The use of these dolls breaks, according to Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, "the transparent wall that separates reality from its figuration" (329) and enhances a performative and social aspect to Margery's religious experiences, which may bear similarities to the dramatic portrayals in the morality plays. Margery bridges the spiritual gap with a physical manifestation of the child Christ and, in doing so, highlights a popular vision of the time: the humanity of Christ. This Christ doll becomes a substitute for Margery's own children in the text. We only ever encounter two episodes pertaining specifically to her children, one in referring to the birth of her first child in the first book and one referring to her son's efforts to turn his life around. McAvoy highlights this experience in terms of a gendered experience outside of the family home:

> This image of the Christ-child and the feminised scenario which encompasses him, therefore, provides a site for the displacement of patriarchal socio-religious discourse by asserting this exclusively female ritual as being of a

> superior eschatological value to those embraced by the men who hover around the margins of the narrative. (57)

The presence of this doll and Margery's reactions to it also continues to support the concept of her spiritual marriage to Christ. Mary Dzon explains that this combination of erotic and maternal influenced piety was typical within medieval religious devotion: "the Christ Child was not simply the beloved of the Virgin Mary, but also the spouse desired by Christians who sought a deeper spirituality" (40).

In this instance, we observe a shift from the initial complications that Margery faced that include securing authority to travel to the more sinister social controls deployed against women: the fear of rape and robbery. Amid this feminine experience of devotional practice, she again consolidates her earthly role of mother with the concept of spiritual motherhood. She experiences motherly affections as the women who witnessed her weeping in the company of the doll, offer her a bed and take care of her. This affective piety continues when Margery arrives in Rome. Instead of dolls, children themselves evoke strong emotions in Margery as "sche schuld than cryin, roryn, and wepyn as thei sche sayn Christ in hys childhode" (1.35.2012-13). Her spiritual devotion breaches earthly decorum once more. She transcends spiritual boundaries and sees Christ in her physical surroundings. Her pilgrimage allows her to witness internally the Nativity and the Passion and also provides her the opportunity to interact with her visions in a tangible way where she acts as a mother: "oftyntymes sche wolde a takyn the childeryn ot of the moderys armys and a kissed hem in the stede of Criste" (1.35.2013-2014).

Margery's short description of her return to England also signifies her return to her earthly family as her husband travels from King's Lynn to Norwich to collect her. She, however, becomes sick following her return home and pledges that she "myth

sekyn Seynt Jamys" (1.44.2458), suggesting that she may suffer from a form of devotional wanderlust. Margery's ability to travel is impeded, however, following her husband's fall after which he remains incapacitated for the rest of his life, requiring constant care. The exigencies of charity and the family now appear aligned. Margery describes the reaction of the community to his fall. Her neighbours construe her absence as negligence and condemn her, saying that she "was worthy to ben hangyn for hys deth" (1.76. 4251). They criticise her desire to travel as they believe that these pilgrimages were an outlet for her lust:

> And therefo to enchewyn alle perellys thei dwellyd and sojowryd in divers placys wher no suspicion schulde ben had of her incontinens, for first thei dwellyd togedir aftyr that thei had mad her vow, and than the pepil slwndryd hem and seyd thei usyd her lust and her liking as thei dedyn beforn her vow makyng. And when thei wentyn owt on pilgrimage er to se and spekyn wyth other gostly creaturys, many evyl folke whos tongys wer her owyn, faylyng the dreed and lofe of owr Lord Jhesu Crist, demtyn and seydyn that thei went rathyr to woodys, grovys, er valeys to usyn the lust of her bodiis that the pepil schuld not aspyin it ne wetyn it. (1.76. 4253-4261)

Margery's spiritual life is again at odds with her role as John's wife. Her integrity as a female pilgrim is brought into question, this time by her own community: those who have witnessed her constant absences from her home and family. Their critical opinion of her desire to travel reflects the attitudes regarding female pilgrims during the later Middle Ages: the fear of the wandering woman.

We have seen this fear in earlier chapters personified by characters such as the common woman in *Piers Plowman*, reinforcing Craig's observation of the gendered concerns that arise around pilgrimage and the transgressive opportunities it affords –

greed, pride, lust and deceit (23). As a married woman, Margery's vow of chastity is questioned and ridiculed and her travelling construed as a means to facilitate and conceal sexual activity. This libelling brings Margery's need to go on pilgrimage to a close and she asks Christ to allow her husband to live for one year so that she can remain at home and take care of him to clear her name. Again, we see that all familial roles must have their constraints. She will not, however, be constrained in her desires indefinitely.

Margery must now fulfil her long neglected role as wife and mother within a worldly context – but only for a while. Her position can be seen as the contrary of that of many women who would have remained at home and then go on pilgrimage as an intercessor, if necessary and seek a miracle on behalf of a sick family member. Craig explains the historical differences regarding the role of intercessor and gender:

> When they sought out the saints, women were far likelier than men to be acting in a caregiving capacity. If we examine individual cults, we find that while the proportion of women who acted as intercessors varies from one-fifth of all women to more than four-fifths of all women, that of men acting as intercessors ranges only from one-fifth to just shy of two-fifths of all men. (92)

Morrison also provides a further insight into the gendered reasons for seeking intercession as she explains that "relief from crippling diseases and blindness were to be associated with the lower class and more commonly women, while non-healing miracles were most often for upper-class men" (3). We therefore see how Margery fulfils certain gendered expectations. Family now dictates her ability to go on pilgrimage.

The home has become the centre for Margery's religious experience. Christ instructs her that "Thu schalt have as meche mede for to kepyn hym and helpyn hym

in hys need at hom as yvf thu wer in chirche to makyn preyrys" (1.76. 4273-4274). Her life as a mobile pilgrim is inverted and she must pursue a life of stability within the domestic confines of her home.

Her continued role within the family, in this case as mother, can be observed at the beginning of Book II as she describes her relationship with her son who she believes is too focussed on the worldly aspects of life and "whom sche desyryd to a drawyn owt of the perellys of this wretchyd and unstably worlde" (2.1.12-13). Margery instructs her son to follow a more spiritual path and to avoid money and sex as she can see that these vices are already leading him away from heavenly salvation: "Many tymys sche cownselyd hym to leevyn the worlde and folwyn Crist in so meche that he fled hyr company and wolde not gladlych metyn wyth hir" (2.1.15-16). He ignores his mother's warnings and avoids her like the plague. Margery states that if he does not mend his ways that she will pray for God to punish him. Following a sickness he develops while travelling on business overseas, he returns to King's Lynn and to her and she prays for his forgiveness.

This episodes shows us an extreme form of Margery's parenting skills, conditioned by the precepts of *contemptus mundi*: she would rather see her son suffer in this life rather than the next. She is rewarded with a son who renounces his debauched ways and follows a path not unlike her own. He marries and has a family and also goes on "many pilgrimagys to Rome and to many other holy placys to purchasyn hym pardon" (79-80). Margery's spirituality and her associated pilgrimage play a large part in her son's redemption. Her ministry and devotion are most successful among her own family.

Margery returns to her life as a pilgrim following the death of her husband. Widowhood offered many medieval women the freedom to become pilgrims as they

were no longer dependent on a spouse to grant them permission to travel. Their families were grown up and also, in many cases, they had the resources to fund a pilgrimage. Craig explains the more positive aspects afforded to widows on pilgrimage:

> The status of widowhood was an ideal form of this devotion [pilgrimage]. Again canon law regarded widows as *miserabiles personae,* entitled to the protection of the church and of the church courts, and widows also had no husband who might deny them permission. Indeed widows looked to no direct authority figure at all. (145)

In Margery's case, the death of both her son, the only child discussed at length in her book, and also her husband, offer her an opportunity to return to her earlier pilgrim ways. Margery wishes to travel with her now widowed daughter-in-law back to her home to Danzig, which Yoshikawa believes is Kempe:

> presenting the journey not as on occasion to demonstrate her as a peripatetic pilgrim but rather as another notable example of her charitable commitment to the demand of active life, that is, her daughter-in-law's travel back home. (130)

Family rather than pious stimuli prompt this decision to travel in this late stage of Margery's life. She describes three responses from her community to her sudden decision to travel, which address not only this familial motive for travel but others too:

> The pepil that herd therof had gret wondyr and seydin as thei woldyn. Sum seyd it was a woomanys witte and gret foly for the lofe of hir dowtyr in lawe to putte hir selfe, a woman in gret age, to perellys of the see and for to gon into a strawnge cuntré wher sche had not ben beforn ne not wist how sche schulde come ageyn. Summe heldyn it was a dede of gret charité for as meche as hir dowtyr had beforn tyme left hir frendys and hir cuntré and cam wyth hir

> husbond to visityn hir in this cuntré that wolde now halpyn hir dowtyr hom ageyn into the cuntré that sche cam fro. Other which knewe mor of the creaturys levyng supposyd and trustyd that it was the wille and the wekyng of almythy God to the magnifying of hys owyn name. (2.2. 194-202)

In this passage we see a commentary on the travel through the eyes of an older Margery. Referring to the "perellys of the see" and the "strawnge cuntré", Margery becomes more associated with the earthly dangers of life as a mystic who is still grounded in the temporal world. We also see a strong debate between familial and divine love where some view Margery as the doting mother-in-law ready to help her son's wife home while others, who knew her well, see it as journey influenced by God. This passage demonstrates Margery's dual existence, straddling the active and contemplative lives, where she must demonstrate both responsibilities to kin and devotion to the divine.

As Margery is now an elderly widow, the criticism she receives from her surrounding community shifts from one of questioning her commitment to her vow of chastity to one of concern for her safety on this journey. She encounters problems similar to those experienced during the course of her earlier pilgrimages where she travelled alone, including fears for her safety and her chastity. She attempts to keep pace with one companion who "had no compassyon of hir ne not wolde abydyn for his. And therfor sche labowryd as long as sche myth tyl that sche fel in sekenes and myth no ferther" (Book II, chapter 3, lines 327-328). Her crying and demonstrations of affective piety, which were prevalent in the earlier books, now give way to the more mundane problems associated with aging, emphasising what Yoshikawa refers to as "pious acts of the active life" (130). Margery's last pilgrimage continues to emphasise

her attempt to balance the spiritual devotion with a life in the world and this, could be read as a consequence of familial motivation. As Yoshikawa goes on to discuss:

> the difficult journey is an opportunity to convince Margery that God accompanies her along the path of integrated life she obediently pursues: she develops a sense of God in life as saviour, protector, guide and confidant. (131)

Margery, like Will in *Piers Plowman,* must remain in the world. She uses pilgrimage as an opportunity to become physically closer to the divine but she is often constrained by ties of kinship and responsibilities. Her physical pilgrimages often reflect her spiritual path through life. Both are fraught with difficulties of balancing the active life with the contemplative and her devotion to both her earthly and her spiritual family.

The female mystic Saint Birgitta of Sweden provides Margery with the model of a woman trying to reconcile spiritual devotion and worldly obligation. The parallels between Birgitta and Margery include their mystical experiences, family life, desires to remain chaste within marriage and also a desire to travel to holy sites on pilgrimage. Margery often makes her readers aware of the influences Birgitta has on her life. She desires to use her travels to imitate her role model despite the difference highlighted by Atkinson which include "social background, education and background" (35). As McAvoy states:

> A most important aspect of Margery's manipulation of her identity as a mother is to be found in her textual identification with the hagiographical figure of the maternal saint, who gained in popularity from the thirteenth through to the fifteenth century. (44)

Birgitta fits this description of this "maternal saint" as does Margery's other exemplar, Elizabeth of Hungary. Both of these women "were wives and mothers who were called

to the life of perfection and spent a lifetime trying to fulfil their own vocational needs in the face of opposition from family and society" (McAvoy, 44-45).

The literary tradition of the revelatory vision that Margery invokes was a popular religious mode. Texts adhering to this tradition claimed "to impart direct messages from God" (Sahlin, 19). Birgitta's writings followed in a long line of previous writers and their revelations, often experiences of monks and clerics after death (Sahlin, 19). Birgitta's *Revelations*, however, typify the move towards the concept of affective piety prevalent in the later Middle Ages, which, as Sahlin explains was "characterized by imaginative reflection on the humanity of Christ and the use of emotions for cultivating intimacy with God" (20). Her writings were assembled and edited posthumously and disseminated in both Latin and numerous vernacular languages. Birgitta experienced over seven hundred revelations in total. Alphonso of Jaén structured Birgitta's work, dividing it into books, numbering seven in total and within these books, chapters referring to the revelations.[64]

The number and dissemination of manuscripts containing Birgitta's work reveals its significance within the corpus of mystical writings and the international popularity of this particular female saint's life. Atkinson explains that "devout lay and clerical people in England had taken the Swedish saint to their hearts, and that Birgitta's writings made visionary women and their literary productions more than respectable" (35-36). She goes on to explain the influence of the *Revelations* and the Birgittine Order in England during the fifteenth century, stating that:

> The large number of surviving manuscripts and early printed copies of *Lives* of the saint and fragments of her *Revelation*s testifies to the enthusiasm for

[64] The anonymous Middle English translation, *The Liber Celestis of Saint Bridget of Sweden,* found in the London, British Library Claudius B I MS dates to between 1410 and 1420. It is the source of the edition used for this study.

> Birgitta, and many more manuscripts of English versions of *Revelations* were owned by aristocratic women. (175)

Birgitta was therefore an influential and well-known religious figure in the late Middle Ages.

Despite her remoteness –a noble wife from Uppland in Sweden, she was a wife and mother, aspects of family life that people could recognise and relate to. Her family, as Morris explains "had a reputation for piety, strict devotion and generous endowments to the Church" (32). This demonstration of lay piety is maintained by Birgitta herself. She is unable to avoid the expectation of marriage associated with a woman of her class and is married to Ulf Gudmarsson in 1316 at the age of thirteen.

The concept that marriage was the least desirable condition for a woman in comparison to the virgin state and widowhood was, as Morris observes, experiencing "a gradual erosion in the later middle ages" (41) with the appearance of a number of exceptions:

> Marriage, which involved sexual activity, was regarded by the Church as incompatible with a woman's aspirations to live a godly life of the highest kind. But where a girl was married, she could be a candidate for sainthood on certain conditions: if her marriage was not consummated, or if she lived with her husband in continence, or indeed, if she was forced into marriage and sexual activity against her will. (Morris, 41)

These exceptions and the presence of a greater leniency regarding the states of womanhood meant that the lay piety such as that experienced by Birgitta integrated with familial and social matters.

Shared religious experiences can be observed between Birgitta and Ulf as, in 1341, they go on pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela together, giving Birgitta "a

first-hand glimpse of religious life in continental Europe" (Sahlin, 15). The pilgrimage to Compostela was a well-established practice for Birgitta's own family with her father having previously undertaken the journey. In the narratives of previous chapters, we have seen examples of false couples, such as the Pardoner and common woman in *Piers Plowman*, or couples who lack true intention like the wife who leaves her husband to drown on pilgrimage in chapter one. The pilgrimage of Ulf and Birgitta, however, demonstrates true devotion and intent, like Margery and John Kempe. This spousal pilgrimage gives Birgitta her first experience of European devotional practices in one of the largest, well-known shrines on the continent.

On the return leg, Birgitta also experiences a defining moment in her own religious life. Ulf becomes sick in Arras in Flanders and while they are forced to remain there, Birgitta receives a vision of Saint Denis who instructs her that she has been chosen by God:

> Than come Saint Dines vnto Bride, that was full desolate for hir husband sekenes, and comforted hir saiand vnto hir this manere, 'I ame Dines, that come fro Rome to this cuntre to preche Goddes worde, and, for thou hase lufid me, I sall helpe the: and this the token, that thi husband sall noght die of this sekenes'. (13-17)

She also receives another vision describing her future pilgrimages to Rome, Jerusalem and ultimately her death: "And in that cite sho saw mani meruails: howe that sho suld wende to Rome and Jerusalem, and how that sho suld passe oute of this werld" (17-19). The pilgrimage of Birgitta and Ulf – a journey of pious spouses – in this case establishes Birgitta's role as a married mystic and also effects an extended itinerary for her future as a pious traveller in prophecy she receives.

This visionary excursion amplifies the mundane act of travel on Birgitta's pilgrimage, pushing it beyond the worldly into the distinctly spiritual, and aligns it with the experience of Margery's pilgrimage with her husband. Both women are bound by earthly bonds of matrimony at this point in their lives and are subject to its expectations. Both, however, use their experiences on pilgrimage to attempt to negotiate new terms with their spouses regarding chaste living while remaining married.

Following Ulf's recovery, both he and Birgitta journey home and vow "bitwene thaime chastite, and for to entire religiouse lifinge terme of thaire liue" (20-22). There is no bargaining with her husband to live in a chaste marriage or for to enter the religious life as there is for Margery. By achieving chastity in marriage, Birgitta has created a religious state for herself before becoming a widow. Morris questions these actions that could explain this uncomplicated shift from family woman to religious figure:

> The suggestion that with renewed spiritual devotion they took a vow of chastity and resolved to enter holy orders raises many questions as to their plans, the extent of Ulf's resolve, and the type of order they planned to enter. How far was it a joint ambition shared by them both? Was Ulf already mortally ill and in need of a place where he could be cared for and eventually buried? (60)

Morris attributes this increased interest in the spiritual life to the pilgrimage that they embarked on together. Following Ulf's death after this pilgrimage, Birgitta is free from the bonds of marriage and enters into widowhood, affording her further opportunities to "channel her philanthropic, pastoral piety into a purer form of asceticism" (Morris, 63). This "purer form of asceticism" is achieved in a number of

ways. She divides her worldly goods among her family and the poor. She wears simple clothes and refuses to sleep in a comfortable bed.

Her devotional practices during prayer also possess an important role in Birgitta's asceticism. The narrator describes how "she knelede so oft and waked so mikill that it was woundit that euir so tendir a bodi might suffir so grete a penance and bodeli disese" (3). All of these behaviours fit the mystic's development, but they also reflect a gendered perspective of Birgitta's evolution as the narrator emphasises her change in clothing and her body's reaction to extreme devotional practices in particular. Caroline Walker Bynum highlights these gendered differences in how mystics detach from the world:

> Women, of course, sought to leave the world, as did men; and they marked themselves off from their worldly sister by renouncing such things as jewels, cosmetics, soft beds, gaiety, food, husbands, lovers, children and parents. But they spoke of their union with Christ in images that continued ordinary female roles (bride, child, mother) and stereotypical female behaviour (vulnerability, illness, bleeding). Thus, women reached God not by reversing what they were but by sinking more fully into it. ("...And Woman His Humanity , 274)

Birgitta's detachment and her revelations, however, maintain references to familial relationships and ties. Even in a mystical state, she is reminded of the balance between the mundane and the divine. Birgitta's "replication of Christ's pilgrim status elevates her" (Morris, 120) but her interactions with Heavenly figures refer to familial connections.

In Book 4, chapter 70, Christ reveals, using the example of Birgitta's daughter, how the states of virginity and married life are different yet acceptable once true intent is demonstrated:

> Thi doghtir, whethir scho schall be wyfe or maiden still, sho pleses me yf hir willand desir be to me. It is better that the body be wythoute and the saule within than the body closed and the saule wauerynge abowte. (316)

This applies not only to Birgitta's daughter but also to the struggles experienced by Birgitta herself when attempting to maintain chastity in marriage. Christ provides Birgitta and her audience with attainable structures for maintaining true devotion.

Family continues to inform Birgitta's revelations as the theme of parents instructing their children is observed. In Book 6, chapter 32, a man who has been taught to love the world by his mother and who "does mikill disese to othir that are byside him, for fro som he takes thaire gudes, and fro some their liue" (423) is compared to a "neddir" (snake). He lacks compassion and is both morally and spiritually redundant as "he spare noght hali kirke and hase no minde of mi [Christ's] passion" (423). Christ, in this revelation, warns that for this transgression of not teaching her son to focus on a spiritual path and ignore earthly rewards, this mother and her son "sall haue prosperite in this worlde, bot sho sall die in sorowe, and all his kin sall be forgetin" (423). These two revelations mirror some of the aspects already seen in *Piers Plowman* and show that the active life can still yield a spiritual reward but must be completed. True devotion and earthly distractions can be rejected through the aid of parental advice.

The metaphor of marriage is used in the following chapter (33) of Book 6 to convey how Christ is like a husband who is married to a new wife, representing the souls of men, but many of them "loue the world more than [him]" (423). Similarly, within Chaucer's *Clerk's Tale*, we read Griselda's role as one where the sufferings of this mother and wife reflect the tribulations that the soul must experience to achieve a heavenly reward in the next life (1149-59). The suffering of this obedient wife mirrors

the suffering of the obedient soul. Mentions of family, both metaphorical and real, cannot be avoided. Allegories of the family denote the spiritual – the most familiar and 'kyndely' image possible.

Birgitta cannot avoid her worldly ties as Christ himself is reminding her of them. Her commitments are part of her own journey through life. This journey consists of countless experiences, distractions and suffering that she must overcome and transcend on her own spiritual pilgrimage. In a later revelation, following the death of her son Charles, she is granted a vision of him and the progress of his soul. She hears an angel defend Charles and state that "Als sonn as his modir saw that he was enclined to sin, sho stirred him to werkes of merci, and praied God full herli that he suld haue merci on him an lat im neuir be loste" (478). Margery observes a debate between an angel and a demon on the subject of her son's soul. In response to the demon's claim of knowing Charles's "veniall sinnes" (478), the angel responds with a description of how Birgitta's son left all that he knew to go on pilgrimage for the salvation of his soul:

> He wente oute of his cuntre to pilgramage, and haues fulfilled thame, and left his frendis and put him to grete trauils. And so he gat indulgens and pardon in visiting of holi places, and he was besi to make amendes to God for his sin. An that he gat thrught praiere of his modir, that trauailed and praied full mekill for him. (478)

Familial influence, pilgrimage and prayer are the very worldly exercises and influences that save this soul from damnation. His testimonial of what his mother, Birgitta, has done for him exists alongside the necessity of his own pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Salvation in this case comes about through both his own spiritual accomplishments and also through his mother's influence who has "asked and praide for him with mani one terer that God suld geue him grace to seue him trewli" (479). This episode in Birgitta's revelations resembles Margery's desire to help her son who has become preoccupied with earthly distractions. Parental responsibilities and influences on their children's spiritual destiny lead both Birgitta and Margery to maintain a constant positive bond with their earthly ties. These female pilgrims inspire their children follow a more spiritual life and to pursue their own pilgrimages to religious destinations.

The interface of the potential of acts of pilgrimage and the power of familial love in both of these women's writings yields significant implications. Margery and Birgitta identify themselves as mothers and wives in the earthly sense. Their desire to go on physical pilgrimages to Rome and the Holy Land is tied to these familial roles as they are opportunities to connect with the divine and are a response to their mundane identities. Their travels stimulate their spiritual careers. Both women make arrangements while on pilgrimage with their husbands to live a chaste life once they return home, utilising the bonds of matrimony to further enhance their devotion and mystical experience and making their spiritual careers an active dialogue with their earthly identities.

Pilgrimage offers these women a space, outside of their expected social roles, where such deals can be made and legitimised and where social roles can be rewritten to suit their spiritual advancement. Their status as mothers also influence aspects of their children's salvation. Pilgrimage as a penitential practice is carried out by both of their sons, inspired by the piety of mothers and statuses as pilgrims. Pilgrimage is therefore both influenced by and influences the families of these mystics,

demonstrating a type of learned, even inherited practice which sustains familial bonds even as it promotes the spiritual.

These worldly roles, however, are overshadowed by these women's greater desire to renounce and transcend earthly ties through visions and revelations. Both Margery and Birgitta undertake their respective physical pilgrimages in their desire to demonstrate obedience towards God who commands them to this course. Pilgrimage, therefore, influences their familial roles on another level entirely – with their spiritual fathers and spouses. Both women replace their earthly relationships as wives and mothers with relationships to the Holy Family with Birgitta referring to herself as "the spouse". Within these visions, often occurring while on pilgrimage, they become wife and daughter to Christ or daughter to the Virgin Mary. By being exposed to the physical sites of Christ's life in the Holy Land, their spiritual journey is heightened through a familial bond with divine figures. They experience familial relationships within the context of the Holy Family. Such extreme forms of affective piety occurring at pilgrimage sites brings the mystics closer to the familial aspects of Christ's own life including the Nativity and the Passion. It is a way in which both women can achieve a higher level of spirituality while still remaining on this earth.

The role of mother, both spiritual and real, is realised during Birgitta's pilgrimage to the Holy Land. It is an important pilgrimage, already predicted during her pilgrimage with Ulf. She does not recount her journeys and pilgrimages in the same detail as Margery but often explains them within the context of her visions. While in Bethlehem, Birgitta witnesses the birth of Christ in vivid detail. This revelation in Book 7, chapter 22, is heavily influenced by a divine feminine theme as Birgitta observes a number of actions carried out by Mary that could reflect a mother's experience of birth. She prepares cloth to wrap her newborn in. She displays her

devotion where “she kneldie downe with grete reuerens and praied” (10-11). Her interactions with her newborn son, however, reveal a familiar maternal experience: “Than his modir tuke him in his armes, and streined him to hir breste, and with his cheke and her breste scho warmed him with grete ioy and lykynge” (27-29). She is both the model and the mirror for motherhood and the ideal of womanly actions.

Mary appears to Birgitta following her vision of the birth of Christ. The following chapters reveal a dialogue between Mary and Birgitta – bearing the features of one mother talking to another, an imparting of female and medicinal lore in an apparently mundane and not merely spiritual mode. Birgitta acknowledges that Mary displays “no seknes no febilnes of her strengthe, and hir wombe was als smale as it was before sho had consaiued” (486) while Mary explains that she delivered her baby “withouten helpe of ertheli creature” (487). Both features of Christ’s birth indicate his divine and salvific nature, leaving his mother free of the agonies of childbirth which, to medieval Christians, are the heritage of women in the postlapsarian world, as ordained in Genesis. Absolving his mother of the pain is the first gesture of a Christ who will assume the price of man’s original sin.

This focus on mothering and mother and child relationships also occurs in Birgitta’s vision of the Passion, which focuses intently on the relationship between Christ and Mary and engages with the traditional maternal language of Mary before the cross. In Book 7, chapter 16, Christ shows the manner of his death to Birgitta. In this vision, she witnesses the pain exhibited by Mary who is lying on the ground trembling. She also observes the final interaction between mother and son before the death of Christ:

> And when that sorowefulle modirr, allmoste dede, luked upon hir son, the swerde of sorowe wan throw hir.And when hir son sawe hir and his other

> frendes make sorowe and wepe so sore, with one wepinge voice he bitaght his modir to Jon, that men wele knaw bi his voice that his hert was full of sorowe. (24-28)

The suffering experienced by both mother and son is conveyed to Birgitta in great detail over the course of her vision but also heightens this idealised paradigm of the family and the relationship between mother and son.

As the physical pilgrimage through the Holy Land brings Birgitta further away from her own family and familiar environment, she moves closer to her spiritual family of Jesus and his mother through intimate visions between mother and son during the joyful and sorrowful times. Her detachment from the worldly relationships are necessary so that she can develop her ties with her spiritual family further.

Her worldly ties, however, are not forgotten on this pilgrimage as Birgitta receives a vision (Book 7, chapter 15) from Christ detailing that "all that commen with gude deuocion vnto this place Jerusalem, with will to ament thame and noght to turn againe to sinne, all thaire sinnes are forgifen thame, and thai sall hafe grace of wele doinge" (479). He explains that "for youre trauaile and your deucuin, som saules of your frendes that ware in purgatory are deleuerd and went to blis" (479). This again serves as a reminder that Birgitta cannot completely detach from her earthly ties, even while she is on pilgrimage, but she can influence them through her spiritual actions. The loss of earthly ties are of little consequence when the benefits of spiritual exercise yield eternal benefits for family and friends.

Both Birgitta and Margery negotiate the problems and distractions that accompany them on their physical pilgrimages while attempting to embark on a spiritual journey to achieve a closeness to God. This balance is acknowledged by Hussey in terms of what she refers to as Margery's "direct access to Christ" as it

"becomes her way of transcending the world while still remaining in it" (118). Hussey emphasises that, in comparison to Julian of Norwich who observes and meditates, Margery wants to participate in the visions she receives and the same can be said of Birgitta's approach.

Spiritual pilgrimage for both of these women, who have already lived through familial commitments, cannot be limited to interactions with divine figures but must also address their worldly ties, both family and friends, and acknowledge the benefits for all of their displacement. The lines between spiritual and physical familial relationships become blurred and rather than one replacing the other, they must learn to coexist in the lives of these women. The texts constantly remind the reader of the familial obligations of Margery and Birgitta as wives and mothers, but also remind the reader of their evolving relationships with a spiritual family. For example, Margery chooses her confessor to accompany her to heaven instead of a family member (Book 1, chapter 8, lines 467-469). Sara Beckwith explains this attempt to consolidate the worldly with the spiritual:

> the model of substitution is […] explicitly rejected: heaven will not be preferred to earth but rather included in it; there will be no transcendence or supersession of familial roles, but there will be a decisive transformation of them. (80)

It is Christ who makes this decision for Margery therefore demonstrating that in the case of these women who are wives and mothers, they are not expected to renounce their earthly commitments completely.

Pilgrimage provides a respite from some, but not all obligations. The journeys and their destinations often mark the transition between their earthly family duties and their spiritual familial devotion. Unlike the pilgrimage of the soul in the previous

chapter, these journeys are connected to both the earthly and spiritual planes. They are not permanent and both Birgitta and Margery remain in the world. Their narratives demonstrate that they must rely on a physical journey to the Holy Land to bring about visions of Christ's life and develop their affective piety while also remaining in the world.

The Shewings of Julian of Norwich diverges from the bustling experience of travel and family offered by Margery and Birgitta. This work, from the later fourteenth century, offers a portrait of a medieval mystic who is committed to a life of contemplation. She is an anchorite detached from the world. This work is written before Birgitta's and Margery's narratives and it continued to be read in subsequent years. Like *The Book of Margery Kempe*, it is written in prose with Robert Stone identifying both Margery's and Julian's influence in the homiletic and devotional tradition to keeping "English prose alive" after the Norman conquest (12).[65]

Julian does not encounter the same problems of balancing family and domestic obligations with a spiritual life that Birgitta and Margery experience, nor does she go on physical pilgrimages and journeys to encounter the sacred. Margery and Birgitta incorporate physical pilgrimages into their lives where earthly responsibilities and commitments must also coexist with a life of contemplation and dedication to the divine. Julian's revelations recount her spiritual pilgrimage to and connection with the Heavenly Jerusalem and the Holy Trinity. Victor and Edith Turner explain the concepts of physical pilgrimage and the mystical pilgrimage:

[65]Two first-hand accounts of the revelations experienced by Julian exist; a short one comprised of twenty five chapters, written following a recovery from the sickness which brought on her visions in 1373. One fifteenth-century manuscript is extant – London, British Library Additional 37790. Three complete manuscripts of the longer version, comprised eighty six chapters and written during the following twenty years, are extant: - Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS fonds anglais 40, London, British Library MS Sloane 2499 and London, British Library MS Sloane 3705. Two other manuscripts exist containing excerpts from Julian's revelations. For the edition of *The Shewings of Julian of Norwich* referred to here, its editor ,Crampton uses MS Sloane 2499 (because it is closer to the fourteenth century vocabulary) alongside MS fonds anglais 40 to create a complete edition of the revelations.

> Pilgrimage may be thought of as extroverted mysticism, just as mysticism is introverted pilgrimage. The pilgrimage physically traverses a mystical way; the mystic sets forth on an interior spiritual pilgrimage. For the former, concreteness and historicity dominate; for the latter, a phased interior process leads to a goal beyond conceptualization. (33-34)

Julian partakes in the "introverted pilgrimage" described here. The physical pilgrimage offers a tangible goal with mystical experience, reflecting Margery and Birgitta's journeys, while the mystical journey offers elements of a pilgrimage with a less perceptible end point.

The allegorical texts of *The Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode, Everyman* and *The Castle of Perseverance* all bear similarities to Julian's *Shewings* as they concentrate on the progress and the experience of an individual soul. The solitary experience of Julian can be seen throughout the text, including chapter 15, as she:

> was fulfillid of the everlasting sekirnes migtily sustteinid withoute any peynful drede. This felyng was so glad and so gostly that I was in a peace and in reste, that there was nothing erth that should a gravid me. (562-565)

This is a personal and internal experience for Julian as she refers to it as a "soveren gostly lekyng in my soule" (562). However, when this vision ends, she:

> was turnyd and left to myselfe in hevynes and werines of my life and irkenes of myselfe that onethis I coude have patience to leve. There was no comfort nor none ease to me, but feith, hope and charite. (566-68)

Julian's solitary existence is demonstrated here as is the detachment she feels returning to an earthly life after an interior encounter with the divine. The mystical sight and inner journeys she experiences must be carried out alone. The purpose of chapter 15, depicting Julian's feelings of isolation from a divine connection, is to clarify that sin is

not always the cause of this detachment: "And for profit of manys soule, a man is sumtyme left to himselfe, althowe synne is not ever the cause" (580-581). This isolation is therefore not a punishment but an opportunity to develop an individual's solitary contemplation.

Both Margery and Birgitta make references to family members and worldly experiences in their works while Julian makes just one remark in the short version of her *Shewings* regarding her earthly mother's presence at her sick bed. References to earthly ties and familial connections are instead replaced with the concept of the Holy Family. Her spiritual journey must be carried out alone and, in Julian's case, within the confinement of an anchorite's cell. It is the pilgrimage of an individual's soul carried with the aid of the Heavenly family.

The depiction of Christ as a maternal figure has been examined extensively in recent years. According to Walker Bynum, "this new enthusiasm for 'the mother Jesus' of medieval religious writers has usually concentrated on thirteenth- and fourteenth-century uses of the image, especially on the sophisticated theology developed around it by the anchoress Julian of Norwich" (*Jesus as Mother*, 111). Within Julian's *Shewings*, we observe the pattern noted above – a new celestial family displaces any earthly affinity. As she is attempting to detach herself from worldly ties, she must envision Christ within an earthly role as a mother figure enacting what Walker Bynum identifies as the core of the medieval affective piety: the connection between the divinity of God and the humanity of Christ (130). This can be seen in chapter 60 where Julian describes Christ as an ideal mother. She firstly compares the role of earthly mothers with that of the Jesus-mother figure, explaining that "we wetyn that all our Moders beryng is us to peyne and to deyeng. And what is that but our very

Moder Jesus? He, al love, beryth us to joye and endless lyving" (2491-2493). She then later uses the comparison to explain that:

> the moder may leyn the child tenderly to her brest, but our tender Moder Jesus, He may homely leden us into His blissid brest by His swete open syde and shewyn therin party of the Godhede and the joys of Hevyn with gostly sekirnes of endless bliss. (2508-2511)

Within this morbid, graphic scene of Christ's crucifixion, Julian provides her audience with a comparison between the earthly femininity of motherhood and the spiritual femininity of salvation: the earthly mother will lay her child on her breast but Jesus, through the wounds inflicted by mankind during his crucifixion, will take His children into his breast. These comparisons of earthly and spiritual maternal characteristics and relationships further demonstrate Julian's need to consolidate the worldly with the divine within a feminine context thus providing:

> a growing sense of God as loving and accessible, a general tendency toward fulsome language and a more accepting reaction to all natural things including the human body. (Walker Bynum, 129-30)

This affective piety relies on earthly familial imagery to interpret a relationship with the divine. In Julian's case, she is aware of her limitations of being earthbound and understands that she cannot know fulfilment until she is fully joined with God beyond this life:

> For till I am substantially onyd to Him I may never have full rest ne very blisse; that is to sey, that I be sofestined to Him, that there is right nowte that is made betwix my God and me for till I am substantially onyd to Him, that there is right nowte that is made betwixt my God and me. (157-9)

Julian lists the various models of familial figures that God assumes in a vision she recounts in chapter 52. These are identities that God is pleased to assume:

> And thus I saw that God enjoyeth that He is our fader, God enjoyeth that he is our moder, and God enjoyeth that He is our very spouse, and our soule is His lovid wife. And Criste enjoyeth that He is our broder and Jesus enjoyeth that He is out Saviour. (2074-2077)

This also appears later in chapter 58, where Julian repeats this description of the Trinity:

> And thus in our makeyng God almighty is our kindely father, and God alwisdam is our kindly Moder, with the love and the goodness of the Holy Gost, which is al one God, on Lord. And in the knitting and in the onyng He is our very trewe spouse, and we His lovid wif and His fair maiden with which wif He is never displesid. (2391-2395)

With somewhat incestuous connotations, God becomes not only a mothering figure but also a spouse and brother. These terms of kinship offer a complex description of the devotional experience. Julian as "suster" can be read as both a sister but also as a lover. These temporal descriptions of relationships demonstrate the development of "the image of Christ/God as the lover of humanity" (Jay Ruud, 185). The image of marriage, along with references to ties of kinship allows Julian to experience earthly bonds within a religious and spiritual context, influencing her inward journey. According to Sandra McEntire, "Julian's theology of likeness sees God conforming to humanity as well as the more usually reversed view" (19). Her mysticism cannot be detached from worldly depictions of earthly relationships.

The Trinity also replaces the notion of the temporal family for Julian. McEntire explains how, in recasting the Trinity:

> from traditional father, son, and holy spirit into father, mother and lord, Julian metaphorizes God precisely in terms of human relationships. The relationship between the Trinitarian persons and between the Trinitarian persons and humanity is substantially, that is, spiritually, the same. (19)

Julian, despite her desire to remain detached from the world and its distractions, must envision her spiritual encounters within familial contexts, exchanging her own family for both the Trinitarian model of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit and the model of the Holy Family based on her interactions with Mary. The Trinitarian model of kinship is also seen at the beginning of Part 3 in chapter 54 where Julian states that:

> For the almyty truth of the Trinite is our fader, for He made us and kepith us in Him. And the depe wisdam of the Trinite is our moder in whom we arn al beclosid. The hey goodnes of the Trinite is our lord and in Him we are beclosid, and He in us, and the Son is beclosid in us, and the Holy Gost is beclosid in us. (2223-2229)

Here we see another example of the portrayal of the Trinity in terms of familial and earthly metaphors and how Julian utilises this to demonstrate humanity's interconnection with the divine. This may be read as both Julian's inability to avoid familial metaphors and also as a sign of her comprehension of humanity's essential, natural connection with God.

Denise Baker explains that "by locating the image of God in the sensuality, the nexus between the spiritual and the corporeal, Julian indicates that she considers the human person as a union of body and soul" (45). The journey of an individual's soul therefore uses familial terminology to gain a more profound and intimate connection with God and the Trinity. Julian describes a cyclical process where:

> it is ridier for us to cum to the knowing of God than to knowen our owne soule, for our soule is so deepe grounded in God and so endlessly tresurid that we may not cum to knowing theof till we have first knowing of God which is the maker to whom it is onyd. (2287-90)

This cyclical journey of the soul is different to many other journeys, both imagined and real that have a definite destination, be it the temporal or Heavenly Jerusalem. The pilgrimage of the soul, for Julian, relies on a complete union with God rather than knowledge of one's own soul thus highlighting the individualistic nature of this inner pilgrimage. Pilgrimage becomes more of a spiritual wandering in this case rather than a journey with an endpoint.

The impulses of affective piety, such as the type seen in the writings of Margery Kempe, also urge lurid visions of Christ's Passion. Both Margery and Birgitta travel to the Holy Land to experience first-hand the places where Jesus lived and died. Their visions at these sites link them imaginatively as well as topographically to a perpetually recreated historical moment, bringing them as close as physically possible to the life and death of Christ on this earth. Their pilgrimages bring them further away from their own families but closer to the intimacies of Christ's Holy Family. Julian, by contrast, must journey inward to experience such a sight. As Dyas explains:

> those who desired to enter into the events of Christ's Passion, whether through the use of their spiritual imaginations or by standing in the very spot where the Saviour has suffered, were seeking an immediacy of experience which would enrich and inspire their spiritual journeys. (240)

The physical sight of a crucifix, which hangs in front of Julian during the revelation that occurs during her sickness, allows her to imagine the bloodied face of Christ on

the cross. She sees "halfe the face, begyning at the ere, overrede with drie blode til it beclosid to the mid-face" (349-50). This inward vision of the Passion is not only triggered by the physical crucifix, but also by the imagined veil of Veronica later in her revelation. She states that:

> it made me thinke of the holy vernicle of Rome which He hath portrayed with His owne blissid face whan He was in His herd passion wilfully going to His deth and often chongying of colour. (375-377)

Julian, though directing her focus inward, returns to a worldly and remote relic associated with the death of Christ and housed at one of the most popular pilgrimage centres in Europe. The face of Christ during the historical moment of the Passion is not only available to her through visionary experience but also to those who can be physically close to see its imprint in the veil of Veronica: "And there seith of the vernicle of Rome, it mevyth be dyvers chongyng of colour and chere, sometye more comfortably and lively and sometime more rewfill and dedly" (398-400).

Julian's central focus in this chapter relates to how the soul's constant searching for God pleases Him (and the soul), and is not a penance, as the physical trials of journeying are: "the sekyng with feith, hope and charite plesyth our Lord, and the finding plesyth the souleand fulfillith with joy" (404-406). This searching can be pursued through the visionary experience but Julian has also highlights that a pilgrimage to the see the veil in Rome could also produce a similar experience for the soul in its search for God. Julian here attempts to reconcile her position of stability and confinement with the freedom of others, possibly her lay readership, who could travel on pilgrimage. It might also be read as her attempt to embark on a type of mental pilgrimage to Rome to see the veil. Megan H. Foster Campbell explains the role of this

pilgrimage destination within the context of the popularity of pilgrim badges and their influence on mental and spiritual pilgrimages:

> Pilgrims who travelled to see this relic in Rome would purchase a small, cloth parchment, or metal badge depicting the Holy Face. Similar to other metal pilgrims' souvenirs, Vera Icon badges were pasted in several manuscripts. Meditating on the Vera Icon badge while reciting the Salve Sancta Facies, the Prayer to the Holy Face, would shave several thousand years off time to be served in Purgatory. The Holy Face soon appeared as a popular painted badge in manuscript margins. As Jeffrey Hamburger observes, this exceptionally close relationship between the Holy Face relic, its pilgrimage site, its pilgrim souvenir, and its indulgence was often manifested in devotional manuscripts and could provide the owner an opportunity to perform a mental, or "proxy" pilgrimage. (234)

It is quite possible that Julian came across such a text and was influenced to undertake a mental pilgrimage to Rome to further develop her own vision of the Passion and her affective devotion. Both the crucifix and her reference to the veil of Veronica ground Julian in the earthly realm but also allow her to expand her spiritual pilgrimage and demonstrate her affective piety through visualising the face of Christ during the Passion.

Julian's connection with the Holy Family is developed in a further reference to the Passion where Christ wishes for her to "se my blissid moder" (888) in chapter 15. Unlike Birgitta and Margery who visualise, encounter and interact with Mary during their visits to the Holy Land, Julian does not want to see:

> hirr bodyly presence while I am here but the vertues of hir blissid soule, her truth, her wisdam, hir charite, wherby I may leryn to know myselfe and reverently drede my God. (899-901)

She does receive a "gostly syte of hir" from Jesus but it is Mary's spiritual, not bodily her qualities, that appeal to Julian. She does not need to travel to the Holy Land to feel this connection with Mary and to imagine herself in places where she lived. Outward contact with the world means that "our passand lif that we have here in our sensualite knowith not what ourself is" (1599-1600). Existing in this life signifies that "we may never full know ourselfe in to the laste poynte, in which poynte this passend life and manner of peyne and wo shall have an end" (1605-1606). The individual soul must continue through death to experience a full knowing of firstly God and then itself, an ambiguity also seen in *Piers Plowman* where "Will cannot find his ultimate goal, the Tower of Truth, until he has undertaken the last pilgrimage, the journey through Death" (Dyas, 161).

In chapter 81, we observe a merging of both the familial and pilgrimage aspects of Julian's *Revelations* as she receives a vision of God and Christ "in divers manners, both in Hevyn, in erth" (3290). When explaining His presence on earth she uses the image of Christ's "blissid passion" (3292) and states that "He shewid Him in erth thus as it were in pilegrimage, that is to sey, He is here with us, ledand us, and shul been till whan He hath browte us all to His bliss in Hevyn" (3293-3295). Julian sees God and Christ in terms of familial bonds but she also sees Christ as a pilgrim here on earth. Christ as brother, husband, father and mother is also a pilgrim and stranger in this world and ultimately its saviour. The New Testament often paints Christ as stranger in this world where He:

> entered this world of exile in order to bring about reconciliation between mankind and God. He is therefore a pilgrim-stranger, a fact underlined by the peripatetic nature of his ministry. (Dyas, 21)

Margery and Birgitta replicate Christ's exile through their pilgrimages. For Julian, however, her spiritual, familial bonds with Christ mean that as a pilgrim he will lead her on the path from the transient world to salvation, "His worshipfull cyte, out of which worshipfull see He shall never risen nor removen without end" (3297-98), fulfilling her desire for a complete union of her soul with the divine.

The works of Margery Kempe, Birgitta of Sweden and Julian of Norwich demonstrate the differences in how the idea of pilgrimage, whether it is a physical or spiritual journey, interacts with patterns of conduct and affinity seen in depictions of the family. The works of the mystic, Walter Hilton, provide a picture of the spiritual pilgrimage devoid of familial bonds. He does not visualise the spiritual, Trinitarian family of God in the same way as Julian. For Hilton, the spiritual journey is one that is undertaken alone. *The Scale of Perfection*, a Middle English prose work divided into two books comprising of 40000 words each, was written for a female anchorite in the late fourteenth century. It focuses on the correct procedure for the contemplative life while the shorter *On the Mixed Life* offers advice to a layman on how to live a life of devotion and contemplation while also pursuing the active life.[66]

According to Barry Windeatt, the two books that comprise *The Scale of Perfection* "taken as a whole may be seen as the earliest work in English to address the entire spiritual life, meeting the needs both of beginners and of advanced

[66] The text used here, edited by Thomas Bestul, is taken from the London, Lambeth Palace MS 472. Hilton was a member of the Augustinian Canons and died at the Augustinian Priory of Thurgarton in Nottinghamshire in 1396. *The Scale of Perfection* exists in over forty manuscripts and a number of early print editions. Book 1 comprises of ninety two chapters while Book 2, though longer, comprises of forty six, maybe confirming that Hilton wrote the books at different times in his life. Its presence in this number of manuscripts and printed editions demonstrate that its readership went beyond that of the anchoress and was popular among both the religious and lay community.

contemplatives" (109). Within the first book, Hilton provides clear definitions of both the active and contemplative lives in its introduction. The active life emphasises good work in daily life and following the ten commandments for all people. The active life:

> longeth to alle worldeli men whiche han richesse and plenté of worldli goodes, and also to alle othere whiche eithir han staat, office, or cure over other men and han goodis for to spende, leryd or lewyd, temporal or spiritual; and generali alle worldli men. (27-28)

The contemplative life is described in individualistic terms. It:

> longeth speciali to hem whiche forsaken for the love of God al worldli richesse and worchipes and outeward besynesse and oonly given hem body and soule, up her might and here kunnynge, to the service of God bi goostlie occupacioun. (44-49)

The world offers only distractions from the true path of the individual's soul to the Heavenly Jerusalem, especially for those who wish to pursue the life of contemplation. Worldly love, for example, cannot be compared with a love for the divine. Love in a spiritual sense cannot be truly experienced in the earthly realm (670-671). This is further expanded upon in chapter 42 where Hilton states that:

> this travaile that a man bihooveth drawe out his herte from the fleischli love of alle eertheli affeccion. And yif he doo thus, thanne in as mykil as the soule mai not fynde redili his goostli reste in the love and in the hoomli presence and in the sight of Jhesu, it schal nedynge fele peyne. (1122-1127)

This "fleischli love of alle eertheli affeccion", familial or physical, is a diversion as all love for Hilton must be directed towards more spiritual matters. The soul can only be truly at peace on reaching the Heavenly Jerusalem. Focus is directed towards Christ as man during the Passion and as Christ as a Heavenly figure; both offering alternatives

to worldly delights and distractions. As a contemplative, one should thus "dispice in his herte alle the blisse, the likynge, and the fairnesse of al this world as stynk of carioun" (1309-1311) and turn all attention to God.

Family and love are not the only worldly activities that Hilton disparages in Book 1. He also explains that the act of a physical pilgrimage is an unnecessary one. Hilton states that "it nedeth not to renne to Rome ne to Jerusalem for to seke Hym there, but turne this thought into thyn owen soule, where He is hid" (1429-1431). This is repeated in chapter 65 where Hilton claims:

> It is no maistrie for to wake and faste til thyn heed wirke and thi bodi waike, ne for to goo to Rome and to Jerusalem upon thi bare feet, ne for to stirte aboute and preche as thou woldest turne alle men bi thi prechynge, ne is it noo maistrie for to make chirches and chapeles, for to feede pore men and make hospitales. (1858-1861)

The physical journey, like family and worldly love, is a distraction and, is in fact an unnecessary practice for the salvation of the soul. However, if these practices are to be followed, they must be done so with the correct intention: "A good man for the love of God he fasteth, he waketh, goth on pilgrimage, and forsaketh the likynge of the world soothfasteli in his herte withoutin feynynge" (1877-1878). Focus must be directed inward to an individual's own soul. Hilton's concept of solitary introspection bears similarities to that undertaken by Julian of Norwich. Julian's journey, however, contains visionary excursions – dialogues with Christ and other figures. For Hilton, this interaction is not fully realised as he claims that "Jhesu is a tresoure hid in thi soule" (1437) thus further cementing this idea of a solitary journey. Thomas H. Bestul explains that Hilton:

> Warns of impediments, stressing that visions or revelations have nothing to do with sensory feelings, and underlining the importance of distinguishing between good and evil bodily sensations. True contemplation is initiated by humility, certain faith, and a whole intention toward God, followed by reading of the bible, meditation, and prayer. (95)

Despite this emphasis on the solitary obligation of the maintenance of spiritual health, Hilton includes imagery alluding to ideas of the family and of pilgrimage– in ways strikingly similar to other mystical treatises. In Book 2 of *The Scale of Perfection*, Hilton uses familial imagery to describe the role of the church in the lives of Christians. He explains that Christians "knowen Hooli Chirche as her moder and wolen ben buxum to hir biddinge" (307-308) – a familiar image of Holy Mother Church, which can be traced to a number of scriptural references including Isaiah 1:8,21,27; 49:14-26; Jeremiah lamentations 1:1,5; Ezekiel 16:20 Rev 17:5, 19:7, 21:9; Galatians 4:21-31; Romans 7:2-4; Ephesians 5:23-33. In these examples, Zion, or the New Jerusalem is depicted in female terms as a bride of Christ or as mother to mankind. In chapter 10, Hilton refers to the Church as mother again stating that Christians "aren brought forth in the bosom of Holi Chirche and norischid with the sacrament as children aren fed with mylk (443-444). Family, in Hilton's description, does not apply to spiritual figures as in Julian's writings but is utilised in allegorical descriptions. While Julian and Margery speak of interactions with and visions of their Heavenly Mother for example, Hilton speaks of the allegorical mother-figure of the Church, demonstrating a gendered distinction between the mystics and their use of familial depictions. Though each deal with familial connections and references in differing ways, the female mystics integrate family and familial imagery into their

experiences rather than relegate them to abstract and allegorical territory as Hilton does.

Family can still be a distraction from the spiritual journey, but for the women discussed in this chapter, it is often an unavoidable, or in the case of Julian, an appropriate way to demonstrate the loving nature of the divine in understandable and accessible terms. Motherhood is a real experience for Margery and Birgitta. Their personal experiences are reflected in their spiritual encounters: Margery and the Christ doll and Birgitta's discussion with Mary. They both focus on the earthly life and sufferings of Christ, while Hilton focuses on the biblical and abstract references.

Just as the family and familial imagery is employed in a different fashion so too is pilgrimage. Though the act of going on a pilgrimage to well-known shrines is deemed unnecessary by Hilton earlier in Book 1, he utilises the concept of the allegorical pilgrimage to illustrate the journey of the soul. He tells the story of a man seeking Jerusalem but who does not know the way. The man is told that there are "many sundry weies" (1106) but each is fraught with danger and distractions from the path which "drawe thee to myrthis and […] leve thi pilgrimage" (1123-1124). He is instructed by another man, however, on the best way to attempt this journey:

> Whatsoo thou herest or seest or feelist that schulde lette thee in thee in thi weie, abide not with it willfulli, tarie not for it restfully, biholde it not, like it not, drede it not; but au go forth in thi weie, and thenke that thou woldest not ellis but bee at Jerusalem. (1116-1119)

Hilton uses this analogy of the journey of the soul to highlight the dangers of what can lead a person away from the true path to the Heavenly Jerusalem and offers even greater details on how to avoid them as the chapter continues. The individual is a

"trewe pilgrim goynge to Jerusalem" (1167) who must leave behind all goods, land and, in a manner similar to Guy of Warwick, he must also reject his family:

> wif and childe, and maketh hemsilf pore and bare from al that he hath, that he myght goo lightli withoute lettynge, right so yif thou wolt ben a goostli pilgrim, thou schalt make thisilf nakid from al that thou haste, that are bothe gode dedes and bade, and casten alle bihynde thee. (1167-1171)

This ensures a life devoid of all distractions, where the whole person must commit himself/herself completely to seeking the Heavenly Jerusalem that is now amalgamated with the real Jerusalem:

> that thou be so pore in thyn owen feelynge that ther be nothing of thyn owen wirkynge that thou wolt lene upoun restandeli, but ai desirynge more grace of love and ai sekynge the goosteli precesence of Jhesu. And yif thou doo thus, thanne schalt thou sette in thin herte fully and hooly that thou woldest ben at Jerusalem, and at noon othir place but there. (1171-1175)

For both the "trewe pilgrim" and the "goostli pilgrim", they must forsake all that is familiar, including family and home and become an exile, like Guy and Alexius. This, like the journey of Everyman, must be an individual endeavour, free from familial and social ties and the ties of land and money.

Unlike Margery and Birgitta, Hilton does not attempt to reconcile the earthly ties with their effect on spiritual affairs. A contemplative must be wholly detached from society to follow the path to Jerusalem. This isolation is further emphasised by the self-annihilatory maxim "I am nought, I have nought, I coveite nought" (1140), which is repeated in chapter twenty two, where Hilton states that the answer to "unclean spirits" who distract from the path should be "I am nought, I have nought, I coveite nought, but oonli for to love Jhesu" (1234-1235). In chapter 27, Hilton

continues to promote this isolated form of living stating that one should "putte no manere truste in avere of etheli good, ne in helpe or favour of ony worldli frend, but principali and fulli in God, for yif he doo otherwise he byndeth hymsilf to the world" (1665-1667). The rewards for the aspiring contemplative, however, are also outlined in this chapter as Hilton explains that "every man that forsaketh for My love fadir or modir, suster or brother, or ony erthli good, he schal have an hondredfoold in the liyf and afterward the blisse of hevene" (1720-1722).

Hilton, however, does not just focus on providing instructions on a life of isolation for contemplatives. In his late fourteenth-century work, the *Epistle on the Mixed Life*, also written in prose and extant in over twenty manuscripts and printed editions, he offers instruction to a married layman on how to balance the active life with spiritual matters.[67] Nicole Rice explains that "Hilton proposes a more structured plan for achieving contemplative stillness and glimpses of "goostli thinges" while remaining in the world" (84). Windeatt explains how the lay reader should interpret *The Mixed Life* and apply its teachings to his/her own life. It is, according to Windeatt, a text that:

> aims to dissuade its recipient from attempting to imitate the contemplative life of a vowed religious. He should instead follow the path to holiness that is practical in his position, not representing the inevitable interruptions from his secular commitments, in which he may serve God by serving others, and accepting the boundaries to contemplative life in his circumstances. (109)

One of these "inevitable interruptions" is his commitment as a husband and father, echoing the quote above that mentions leaving behind fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, but not children. Hilton admonishes the reader:

[67] For this study, Barry Windeatt's edition based on London, Lambeth Palace MS 472 (L), offers a complete reading of the work.

> thou schalt not uttirli folwen thi desire to leven occupacioun and bisynesse of the world […] and yeve thee hooli to goostli occupaciouns of preirs and meditaciouns, as it were a frere, or a monk, or anothir man that were not bounden to the world bi children and sevauntes as thou art. (112)

Hilton provides this (every) layman with an alternative option to the spiritual life, a "thridde liyf, that us medelid" *mixed* (113), which combines aspects of both the active and contemplative lives. He can remain in the world and Hilton stresses that he must not forget his obligations to his children and servants because, if he does, "thou pleset him [Jesus] not and thou doost noo worschipe to him" (117). He explains that God has put him in the mixed life for a reason: "to traveile and serve othere men, that it is his wil that thou schuldest fullfille it on thi myght" (117) thus reducing opportunities for sloth and idleness to thrive.

The active life, as in *Piers Plowman,* is central to the spiritual journey and development of the soul. The distractions, which cannot be avoided, are part of this figure's spiritual pilgrimage to the Heavenly Jerusalem. This is at odds with Hilton's advice in *The Scale of Perfection*. In the *Mixed Life,* these distractions are to be embraced, and he counsels patience, in the manner of a contemporary time-management guru. If distracted from the path to salvation:

> reste in devocioun whan thou were levest be stille therateithir [bi] thi children or thi servauntes, or bi ony of thyn evene-Cristene for here profite or ese of heertes skilfullo asked – be not angri with hem, ne hevy, ne dredefulle, as yif God wolde bee wroth with thee that thou levest him for ony other thynge, for it is not sooth. (119)

Both in *The Scale of Perfection* and in the *Mixed Life*, Hilton addresses the practical impediments to the ideal of spiritual devotion. In the *Scale of Perfection* he concedes that:

> It is inpossible to ony man for to fulfille this biddynge [to love…] soo fulli as it is seid, lyvyng in erthe and yit neverthelees oure Lord bad us for to love soo. (830-832)

In a similar manner in the *Mixed Life,* he explains with succinctness the central failure and lack in earthly life: that "as long as we aren in this liyf, oure Lord is absent fro us, that we mai neither see him, ne here him, ne feele [him] as he is" (122). This incompleteness, imagined as a quest for the divine, sanctions itself in the language of pilgrimage, and validates the act of pilgrimage with it.

Hilton returns to the analogy of the pilgrim previously seen in the *Scale of Perfection*. He uses Saint Paul's explanation of man's detachment from the divine, stating that "as longe as we aren in this bodi, we aren pilgrims fro oure Lord. That is: we aren absent from hevene in this exile" (123). Yet rather than the finality of an exile, we are reassured of the fleeting nature of this separation through the use of pilgrimage allegory. All (successful) pilgrimages end in their desired destination – so too the allegorical pilgrimage with God. Similar to Langland's *Piers Plowman,* Hilton explains that for a pilgrim who follows the active life, this exile can be terminated through fulfilment of obligations and also "a clene thought of God" (124). Mundane distractions such as family and household tasks are instruments of discipline and curbs for idleness, both bodily and morally - they allow for the performance of charity and good works, which demonstrate true intentions on the spiritual journey.

Both of Hilton's texts offer distinct strategies for distinct audiences on the role of family amid the spiritual journey. For the aspiring contemplative for whom the

Scale of Perfection is written, family and commitments serve as a reminder of worldly distractions. As a pilgrim in search of the Heavenly Jerusalem, the family and familiar domestic comforts must be left behind. The journey must be carried out in isolation as is the case in *Everyman*. The *Mixed Life*, however, bears more similarities to Langland's ideas of the spiritual pilgrimage and its relationship to the active life. As Dyas explains:

> Just as some people sought to combine place pilgrimage and moral obedience, so others attempted to fuse the Active Life of moral pilgrimage with the inner journeying of the Contemplative Life. (206)

Family, rather than the distracting force for the contemplative, becomes a way in which the lay pilgrim can demonstrate true commitment and charity while on the pathway towards salvation. They become the necessary travelling companions and moral compasses to for the journey, not an impediment.

We have seen how the language of pilgrimage and the crisis of familial bonds are navigated in a range of texts for distinct audiences – men, women, imagined and biographical. Among the visionary experiences of these mystics, each text deals with the mundane nature of life and how it conflicts with the concept of man as exile on earth who is seeking the Heavenly Jerusalem. The female and male mystical experiences expose diverse readings of interpretations of pilgrimage. For Margery and Birgitta, their spiritual experiences are enhanced by their physical journeys, which offer new ways to experience spiritual visions, removed from their commitments as mothers and wives. They both experience family life in an earthly sense but are also enabled to cultivate sublimatory spiritual familial bonds through their enhanced mystical experiences at pilgrimage sites. For Julian, her stability – or mundane immobility allows her to focus on her individual inward journey where her revelations

enhance her connection with her heavenly family. Earthly familial connections are thus replaced by the spiritual family. Hilton's works provide divergent paths to salvation for their respective audiences. Within *The Scale of Perfection*, the contemplative must also shun worldly distractions, including pilgrimage and social ties, and ensure that focus is directed toward the Heavenly Jerusalem. *The Mixed Life* does not advocate the shunning of laymen's commitments and therefore we can read an implicit criticism of the human cost of devotion.

Duties of marriage and social bonds must be fulfilled, linking to the Wife of Bath's and Margery Kempe's experiences of the marriage debt. Hilton advises on the balancing of spiritual matters with unavoidable distractions. Margery and John Kempe achieve this through their agreement on having a chaste marriage. Pilgrimage and family in all of these texts are conflicting yet balancing themes implicit within the concept of the active life. These mundane activities and commitments exist as both diversions and as a means to fulfil certain spiritual aspects and help in the achievement of salvation. Though Margery and Birgitta cannot return to the virgin state, their roles as wives, mothers and pilgrims offer them an opportunity to experience and perform their devotion in a unique, even bespoke, way. Their familial ties not only offer them the opportunities for personal salvation but also salvation for their family members including husbands, sons and daughters. The presence of pilgrimage and its relationship to family is therefore not only present but also unavoidable in these mystical works.

Conclusion

And Jhesu, for his grace, wit me sende

To shewe yow the wey, in this viage,

Of thilke parfit glorious pilgrimage

That highte Jerusalem celestial (*The Parson's Prologue*, 48-51)

Chaucer's Parson's description of the "righte waye of Jerusalem celestial" (line 80) stimulates the debates that run throughout this thesis. Where do commitments lie? The worldly ventures of family and society or within the spiritual devotions of individual salvation? Can the "parfit glorius pilgrimage" be achieved with the family? This study has shown that there is always more than one answer to each of these questions. Each chapter has provided examples of how families and spouses accommodate or address pilgrimage and to what effect; temporal or religious implications. Pilgrimages affect families in ways that are both positive and negative in the mundane and spiritual spheres. Many of the pilgrimages depicted could not be read as "parfit" due in part to "false pilgrims" and "false intentions" such as the pilgrim Covetousness, the ignorant palmer, the entrepreneurial pardoner and his "sister", the Commune Wuman. Pilgrimage and its ambivalent effects are witnessed as a malleable and familiar device for medieval writers and their audiences in the range of representative texts and genres read across this study.

It became apparent that convenient patterns of interpretation seldom emerge from these highly volatile texts – demonstrating the variations and malleability of the trope of pilgrimage. Pilgrimage interacts with the narrated forms of the family on numerous levels and with different consequences in each genre and even within each text. Religious travel and family in exemplary and didactic instructional narratives lead to negative consequences for spiritual welfare. Pilgrimage is depicted as a refuge

for gossips and adulterers in *The Fyftene Joyes of Maryage* and *The Book of the Knight of La Tour Landry*. It is a temporal event, with worldly implications and is used as warning to ensure appropriate female behaviour, emphasising the old adage "a woman's place is in the home". Pilgrimage in the exempla can even permit incest, the ultimate device for the corruption and destruction of kinship. Physical pilgrimage in the allegorical texts is also a negative influence on spiritual wellbeing where false pilgrims, such as Langland's Covetousness and the pardoner, deceive their fellow travellers into either buying pardons or by stealing from them. It is replaced by correct conduct and the completion of earthly duties on the pilgrimage of life. Will and Piers in *Piers Plowman* fulfil their worldly obligations on their path through life in the hopes of achieving salvation and seeking Saint Truth for themselves and their families. Exile and banishment in romances, including *Emaré, Octavian, Sir Eglamour, The Man of Law's Tale* and *Apollonius of Tyre*, divides the family while variations of pilgrimage offers families opportunities to unite after periods of separation. Spiritual pilgrimages of the mystical authors in some instances contain physical pilgrimages but these serve to heighten their own personal, devotional experiences such as in the cases of Margery's and Birgitta's pilgrimages to various shrines in Europe and the Holy Land and their subsequent visions. This variety of perceptions of pilgrimage across these texts demonstrates its diverse treatment as both a literary device and medieval custom for both the religious and lay communities and their private and public acts of devotion.

The impact of pilgrimage, both real (in biographical narratives) and imagined, on the unities and relationships of the family reflects the medieval debate concerning the balance of worldly obligations with spiritual affairs. The Parson refusing to tell a mere 'fable' in his prologue (34-8) at the end of *The Canterbury Tales* and telling his

companions to focus on the Heavenly Jerusalem rather than their intended destination of Canterbury is representative of this debate between the earthly and the divine. Too much love for the world and equally one's family is often deemed a distraction from the true path to Heaven, reiterating Christ in Matthew 10:37: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me".

The family does, of course, survive its encounters with pilgrimage but these interactions have proved that where salvation is the primary concern of the individual, the family cannot be collectively saved. The family, for lay people unable to escape their families (if willing) and live the ascetic life offers the individual different moral opportunities. Caring for their family is a means to achieve personal salvation through good works and fulfilling obligations. For others, earthly families are often replaced with members of the Holy Family.

Most families in the texts examined here do not complete pilgrimages together. In the exempla, pilgrimages can be impeded by axe-wielding incestuous daughters or, in the case of Secundas, exploited to seduce his mother. Pilgrimages and exile signal and enforce both the division and reunification of the family in romance narratives. Place pilgrimages (and sometimes families) are deemed a distraction in the allegorical works, focussing on the individual's spiritual pilgrimage through life or death. Both mundane pilgrimages and spiritual visionary experiences take the mystical writers away from their families. While the physical pilgrimages allow for a greater physical connection with the divine through both sight and touch, the spiritual journey comprised of interior interactions secures a path toward salvation by allowing the individual to focus completely on the journey of the soul.

We have observed the permutation of pilgrimage by familial relationship, by parent and child, by wedded spouses, or by both combined. Saint Lucy engages in a familial pilgrimage with her mother. We have observed that this is a pilgrimage of the family, but also it is an idealised pilgrimage where they both fulfil expectations of appropriate female behaviour. Nevertheless, parent and child pilgrimage remains an unusual feature within the corpus of texts in this thesis. Spousal pilgrimage is seen in both Margery Kempe's and Birgitta of Sweden's narratives. Other exceptions of a pilgrim family, however, are not as positive. The spousal pilgrimage of the exemplary narratives in chapter 1 provide a humorous depiction of a hapless wife who leaves her husband to die while Langland's pilgrim families (both real and fake), with connotations of lechery and deceit, provide us with more negative views of the practice of pilgrimage and its impact on family life, views shared by critics of pilgrimage, including the Lollards.

We have also gauged the ways in which a range of audience expectations are disappointed in some of the recurring themes found throughout these texts. The consequences for those left behind by pilgrimage are seen in the narratives of Guy and Alexius, Valentine and the *Romans of Partenay*. These become narratives of frustrated desire. Families remain forever separated, with their menfolk seeking the ascetic life rather than fulfilling their worldly, dynastic obligations by returning to their lands and families.

These romances and the hagiographical narrative of Alexius are the epitome of the spiritual salvation of the individual, which can only be opposed to, and preclude, his domestic fulfilment. Unlike the pilgrimage of Lucy and her mother, these pilgrimages are grounded in the individual male pilgrim seeking the Heavenly Jerusalem through penitence and self-exile, sometimes meeting their families again,

disguised as a poor pilgrim. Spiritual fulfilment, through atonement and chivalric ideals are constantly at odds. By remaining as patriarch of the family or even attempting a familial pilgrimage, the threat of the temporal world is unavoidable. Asceticism offers the only true path towards penitence and redemption.

Unfulfilled pilgrimages as part of a family group are also seen. Sir Isumbras and his now homeless family attempt such a journey but are separated before they make any real progress. Exile for Isumbras is forced, not voluntary, and again we see earthly ideals at odds with spiritual demands. *Sir Isumbras*, *Paris and Vienne*, *Octavian*, *Sir Orfeo* and *Torrent of Portyngale* all narrate a form of pilgrimage or exile and exemplify patterns of displacement that affect their families and hold no surprises for the audience. They are narratives that do exactly what we expect them to do. They are consistent with the expectations of genre, and they end with the reunion of the family. This reunion comes with the restoration of secular power and wealth once a purgative trial, that demonstrates the transience of worldly goods and affinities, has been endured. These are works that offer a level of human achievability to their readership where spiritual responsibilities are no longer at odds with worldly commitments but can coexist. Isumbras, for example returns to his wealth and regains his family and status but has a deeper sense of spiritual dedication, fighting in crusading battles and not consumed by riches and frivolity.

This is an ideal if symbolic model to be admired by the lay readership who could not even conceive of undertaking the ascetic life of Guy or Alexius. It has been possible here to open up imaginative texts to historically-informed speculation by reading the ways in which pilgrimage brings crises to families: crises, which in their realistic contours (and occasionally very lurid ones), must have happened in real life. Reading family and pilgrimage in so many genres and texts provides perspectives on

the historical and contextual place of both in the medieval world. Pilgrimage, historically, offered family members religious hopes of and thanks for cures and miracles, like Chaucer's pilgrims who are visiting Thomas, "the hooly blisful martir" (17), for example. It also offered opportunities to escape the mundane existence of family commitments such as the case of the Wife of Bath, who uses pilgrimage to search for a new husband. Like the narratives here, the implication of pilgrimage – to fulfil spiritual and physical desires – were an acknowledged reality for the people of the Middle Ages.

This study has hopefully laid the groundwork to discover more about the role of pilgrimage in other contexts and how they are represented in literature. It has combined an examination of well-known text with lesser studied narratives addressing tropes, themes and contexts that might not have been used in a cross-generic examination previously. An examination of other romance narratives could uncover further patterns of familial pilgrimages. Further exploration of the hagiographies could provide further examples of the male saint's approach to pilgrimage while female saints might not always be the familial-focussed figures that we see in chapter 4. Narratives in other languages could shed further light the pilgrim-family and question if the experience and interpretation of the journey in a literary context differed thanks to geography and language.

Going beyond medieval narrative, this approach could be applied to renaissance narratives such as Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*. This study could be extended to include how family, travel and their literary interpretations interacted into the Reformation, an age of discovery. This study as it stands might address the interests of those investigating later travel literatures in colonial contexts, investigating patterns of medieval *curiositas* and travel writing on later works. This thesis did not

set out to explore the role of children but further research could uncover examples of the child-pilgrim or more detailed occurrences of children actively influencing a familial pilgrimage.

In the words of Chaucer's Parson: "Manye been the weyes espirituels that leden folk to oure Lord Jhesu Crist and to the regne of glorie" (77) and many are the depictions of kinship and pilgrimage that are left to be uncovered in English writing of the later Middle Ages.

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