

Spring 2019

# From Wanderer to Warrior: Martin's Journey to Sainthood in Brian Jacques's Redwall Series

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FROM WANDERER TO WARRIOR: MARTIN'S JOURNEY TO SAINTHOOD IN BRIAN  
JACQUES'S *REDWALL* SERIES

by

MARIE BLIEMEISTER

(Under the direction of Richard Flynn)

ABSTRACT

Children's fantasy series have been set in the Medieval Era, a way to explore contemporary themes. This use of the Medieval Era is known as medievalism, where authors can explore contemporary issues by comparing them to the past (Bradford 3). Brian Jacques, the author of the popular children's series *Redwall*, uses many aspects of the Medieval Era such as prophecies, glory, and battle, and visions or dreams to effectively spin a good yarn while commenting on the religious development of England in the late twentieth century. English moral was down due to the devastation of World War Two and religious ideals were facing rebuke by the rising notions of secularism. To present this in his series, Jacques's use of Medieval religion is superficial because his characters do not recognize the Christian God. Instead, the Redwallers follow the call of Martin the Warrior, Redwall Abbey's, patron and founder. In addition, Jacques makes use of Arthurian legend to set Martin apart from the other warriors and woodlanders in the texts *Martin the Warrior* and *Mossflower*. By the end of *Luke the Warrior*, Martin has become the spiritual center of the texts, and his spirit returns to guide the Redwallers in times of danger. The Redwallers do not believe in a heaven or a hell (though an afterlife is mentioned in *Mossflower*) and Martin returns to secure earthly paradise and not to grant heavenly salvation.

INDEX WORDS: *Redwall*, Brian Jacques, Medievalism, Martin, Spirituality, Secular, Earthly paradise, Christianity

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JACQUES'S *REDWALL* SERIES

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B.A., Houghton College, 2014

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Georgia Southern University in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

STATESBORO, GEORGIA

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Electronic Version Approved:  
May 2019

## DEDICATION

To Mateo: the fluffiest cat ever. I will miss you greatly.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my director and committee: Dr. Richard Flynn, Dr. Caren Town and Dr. Robert Costomiris for standing by my project when major life issues presented themselves. Thank you for being patient with me and reading and editing my writing even when it was not always the best. I would not have finished without your edits and critiques.

I would also like to thank Dr. Dustin Anderson for being available to talk anytime I needed advice. Thank you for being patient with my last-minute changes. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to study at Georgia Southern University, I enjoyed my time working with the English department. I learned a lot from my time at Georgia Southern.

I would like to thank my friends Jess Dreiling, Sarah and James Delventhal, Dana Price, Aisling Brooker and Rachel Kralka for keeping me from giving up when my whole world turned upside down. Without you, this project would not be finished.

I would like to thank Roan Kirschbaum for talking with me about Ethics and helping me understand the philosophical concepts and sticking by me as well.

I would like to thank Matt Bannister, Garrett Shea, Chloe Hayes, Jeff Kihl and Brendan O'Connor for having faith in me and giving me that final push to finish this project.

Lastly, a special thanks go to Sean Brooker, for believing in me even when I couldn't believe in myself. I will always love you.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	3
CHAPTERS	
INTRODUCTION.....	5
1 ARTHURIAN ETHOS IN BRIAN JACQUES’S <i>MARTIN THE WARRIOR</i> .....	16
2 SPIRITUALITY IN BRIAN JACQUES’S <i>MOSSFLOWER</i> .....	37
3 SAINT’S CULTS IN BRIAN JACQUES’S <i>REDWALL</i> .....	53
CONCLUSION.....	73
ENDNOTES.....	81
WORKS CITED.....	87



## INTRODUCTION

During the late twentieth century, children's literature began to see a Second Golden Age focusing on fantasy and realistic fiction. The First Golden Age saw the reconfiguration of children's literature with the rise of Romanticism. The First Golden Age focused on innocence, play, and imagination. However, the Second Golden Age began after World War Two and portrayed the battle of good and evil as a worldly struggle. Ann Trousdale, in her article "Intersections of Spirituality, Religion and Gender in Children's Literature," states that with the rise of fantasy and secularism, religious didacticism began to make way for "multiculturalism and...topics formally considered taboo in books for children" (62-63). In other words, children's stories began to be used as a medium of discussion for complex ideas. At the same time, writers were still using a didactic form to present moral teachings to children. These writers made use of the imaginative worlds found in fantasy to present a lesson. Claudia Mills, in her book *Ethics in Children's Literature*, notes that "the most admired texts seek not to teach an identified lesson or preach a tidily packaged moral, but to make vivid more complex and complicated moral claims" (6). For example, the *Harry Potter* series is admired because Harry and his friends go against the traditional roles of listening to their elders in order to do the right thing. Readers, therefore, interpret that sometimes rules have to be broken because moral behavior is not black and white but is complicated, as Mills notes (6). Therefore, the story is rich in entertainment and the morals or lessons are clear but are not forced upon the reader.

However, the concept of using entertainment as a way of presenting moral truths was not new to the twentieth century. In 1693, John Locke saw the importance of entertainment in children's books to help teach them. Andrea Immel in her article "Children's Books and Constructions of Childhood" notes that Locke recommended, "that new readers start with

Aesop's fables, for a variety of reasons, not the least of which was the small child's fascination with animals" (30-31). The use of animals to entertain and tell stories was just as important as the message being conveyed to the children. With this shift, didactic writing is seen less frequently than writing for entertainment in the latter half of the twentieth century through the modern day. Nevertheless, the didactic form did not completely disappear.

According to Ann Swinfin, in her study *In Defense of Fantasy*, fantasy literature that was "published during [the twentieth century was] frequently imbued with a profound moral purpose, and even when set in a different historical period or, more interesting, in a complete otherworld, display[ed] a concern for contemporary problems and offer[ed] a critique of contemporary society" (2). In other words, writers of fantasy set out to present moral dilemmas and show how the contemporary and secular world overcomes them. One such writer, J.R.R. Tolkien, in his *Lord of the Rings* series, depicts the Christian battle of good vs. evil while critiquing the corruption of power in governments and the two World Wars he saw during his lifetime. Critics of Tolkien note that he is influenced by his Catholic faith and uses images of Christ and the devil throughout the series to depict the battle of good and evil.

For example, Susan Robbins in her article "The Biblical Symbol of Light in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Silmarillion* and *The Lord of the Rings*" explores Tolkien's use of light and comments that "both creation accounts [Biblical and Tolkien's] begin in darkness, both start with formlessness and chaos (although in Tolkien's story, the chaos is attributed to the fall of Melkor), and both involve the Holy Spirit" (175). Tolkien creates new origin stories but draws from the Biblical ideas of light and dark. In addition, Tolkien states that "*The Lord of the Rings* is, of course, a fundamentally religious and Catholic work, unconsciously so at first, but consciously in the revision" (qtd in Robbins 174). Though he did not set out at first to present

Christian truths, Tolkien's series does so by embracing religious symbolism. Even so, his religious symbolism does not take away from the reader's experience with Frodo's adventure.

Like Tolkien's *Lord of the Ring* series, the animal fantasies of the twentieth century remained partly didactic. According to Swinfin, "in its simplest form, the animal fable has been used for didactic and moralistic purposes, and the tales of Aesop and La Fontaine are only the best-known examples of the genre" (2). The tales of Aesop and La Fontaine personified human characteristics through different animal species. For instance, the fox is often clever and mischievous. But, by the twentieth century, animal fantasy stories had become more dynamic using both complex characters and plots while containing a clear moral purpose. For instance, C.S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia* incorporates a Christian message and uses Christian symbolism. Lewis portrays this message through allegory and direct exhortation, with Aslan representing God/Christ. Swinfin would say this is an example of a good animal fantasy because it operates on two levels: "the animals serve as mirrors for human behavior, but at the same time they are also true animals in their own right" (43). The animals allow readers to see complex human behaviors while also knowing that the animals maintain their natural tendencies.

In the latter half of the twentieth century, Brian Jacques, the author of the popular *Redwall* series, follows in the tradition of the animal fantasy. His characters are anthropomorphic, while still displaying animal tendencies. For example, creatures like voles and mice fear cats and owls naturally, but they are able to overcome that fear and make rational decisions. Cynthia Rostankowski, in "The Monastic Life and Warrior's Quest," notes that one reason the characters of *Redwall* act the way they do could be explained by Thomas Aquinas's Natural Law Theory. This theory states that a person should "seek the good and avoid evil, pursue knowledge and [an] orderly social life, engage in sexual love and create a family, and

pursue productive work and enjoy the fruits of the labor” (Rostankowski 89). Almost all of Jacques’s anthropomorphic animal characters are able to follow natural law. For example, the Redwallers have built an abbey that is rich with education, productive work, goodness (peace). The Redwallers are able to follow this Natural law because they are rational beings. According to Brian Boone, in his book *Ethics 101*, Aquinas says that Natural Law is imprinted on rational beings (127). Therefore, if one is able to pursue the Natural Law then one participates in the Eternal Law, which “is what keeps the universe in proper working order” (127). In other words, rational beings are able to participate in the natural world and to seek what is good.<sup>1</sup>

Rostankowski states that Jacques’s characters “know the basic Goods that constitute Natural Law, but they do not know that they know them, or they do not recognize Natural Law for what it is defined as in medieval philosophy, that is, a human understanding of divine law” (89).

However, rational beings do not have to recognize their part in the Divine Law in order to engage in the Natural Law. Rostankowski notes that Jacques’s characters do not recognize the Judeo-Christian God and that they do not have to believe in a divine figure to follow Aquinas’s Natural law (90).

In doing so, Jacques creates a “model of medieval society...with no reference to Christianity” (Rostankowski 90). Instead, Rostankowski notes that

like other contemporary instances of medievalism, [*Redwall*] emphasizes certain immediately appealing aspects of the Middle Ages: beauty and adventure; the appeal of what is thought to be have been a simpler time; the glories of nature; strong and enduring friendship and the kind of naïve spirituality without any particular source, grounding, or the complications of religion (92).

Jacques uses tropes of the Medieval Era to create his stories while leaving out the “complications” of religious thought. Instead, Jacques is interested in “spinning a good yarn” while encouraging children to be courageous. In an interview with Doreen Carvajal “No Wizards Matey,” Jacques says “My values are not based on violence. My values are based on courage, which you see time and time again in my books.” For example, during the airing of the TV series *Redwall*, Jacques says his character Matthias is “every child who ever read the book, or will read the book...Matthias is the little kid who wants to become a Warrior” (“When asked, ‘What makes a Hero?’”). Themes of friendship, loyalty, and courage become the foundation of the series, allowing the children readers to be encouraged and entertained without having a strict didactic purpose. For example, Jacques uses moments of Arthurian lore to advance the plot of his story, following Tolkien’s and Lewis’s examples. Writers will use the Arthurian Legend (originally a medieval narrative) to move the plot of their stories along, looking only at the most appealing aspects like the journey and the glory as Rostankowski notes above. Jane L. Curry in her article “Children’s Reading and the Arthurian Tales” states that twentieth-century adaptations of Arthur’s legend remove the sections of adultery and incest while leaving the adventures (154). By removing all of the morally ambiguous sections, the series focuses more on the adventures of the men, and when the Round Table fails it does so “not because of the flawed actions of good men, but because of hostility from without” (Curry 156). Readers see an idealized past where adventure is the norm, instead of the harsh realities of the Medieval Era. In addition, Rostankowski notes that Jacques use of the medieval past offers some insight, [but] he lacks “the understanding of the Medieval Ages that motivated the earlier works of Lewis and Tolkien” (93). While Jacques uses the Arthurian legend in his series, he seems to leave out religious thought throughout his series.

In addition, Clare Bradford, in her book *The Middle Ages in Children's Literature*, states that “medievalist texts have more to do with the valency of the medieval past in the present; the meaning and pleasure it affords; and what these allusions to the medieval tell us about relations between medieval and modern” (2). That is, authors are interested in using the Medieval past to talk about the modern world, while historians generally hoped to establish a more authentic view of the period. By focusing on courage and adventure and what seems to be a superficial spirituality, Jacques's series does not paint an accurate picture of the Medieval Era. Specifically, Rostankowski notes the lack of the Judeo-Christian God and the complications of religion in Jacques's series as compared to Tolkien's and Lewis's (89). Without the complexity of religion, Jacques's series seems to lack authenticity and moral grounding because the Redwallers live in a monastic society without seeking heavenly salvation and recognizing God. The Redwallers go through the ceremony of prayer at meals and live to promote the charity to those who enter the halls of Redwall Abbey, but they cannot grasp the concept of a Creator. The character Pollekin in *Martin the Warrior* is a seer, who “knows lots o'things...Places, faces, 'appenings an' all manner o'things run in an' out o' moi ole 'ead” (130). She does not know how she knows or where the information comes from, and Martin does not question her further, instead, he and his friends accept Pollekin's ability.

Nevertheless, the series is morally complex and is grounded in Medieval religious thought even though the characters are not consciously aware of religious doctrine. For example, Jacques uses the rhetoric of the Catholic Church to create an Edenlike paradise in Redwall Abbey. At the heart of this paradise is a spiritual leader: Martin the Warrior, who protects the abbey when outside forces threaten this earthly peace. In doing so, Jacques depicts the battle of

good versus evil throughout his series. According to Daria Sockey in the interview, “Redwall’s Mice, Morals and Imagination,” Jacques is quoted as saying, “A great example is his [Lewis’s] *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe*. At the core of these books is always the epic and eternal battle of good versus evil. And good *always* wins. Always! Not just in books but in real life.” Jacques adamantly states that what is good can conquer evil and darkness in both fictional and real life. So, the audience of *Redwall* should identify themselves as heroes of their own stories because they, like the fictional heroes, can accomplish any feat.

Despite the religious rhetoric, Redwall Abbey is not a perfect paradise. Bradford, in the chapter “Medievalist Animals and Their Humans,” comments on the social hierarchies within *Redwall*. She states that “the conservative politics of *Redwall* are manifested in the novel’s celebration of hierarchies and heroes” (152). The abbey dwellers know their place in society. For instance, at the end of *Redwall*, Abbot Mortimer gives Cornflower to Matthias as a prize for defeating Cluny the Scourge. Bradford notes that this is a sign of the community and its lineage (power) (153). Similarly, Holly Blackford, in her article “The Writing on the Wall of *Redwall*,” argues that the Redwall society is also secular despite the monastic society. She notes that Jacques’s series makes use of a medieval military order to replace a peaceful society. When the abbey is attacked by Cluny, the young mouse Matthias speaks against peace in favor of war to protect Redwall from the oncoming tyrant of Cluny the Scourge. The society of Redwall reestablishes the Warrior caste with Matthias’s decision to embark upon the quest to find Martin’s sword in order to become a military order (Blackford 98). Blackford’s reading of *Redwall* establishes that the Redwallers overthrow the rhetoric of peace for a military society backed by warriors. Both Bradford and Blackford show that the Redwall society is based on status and power, and the monastic society is a façade for that power and status. Though the

rhetoric of peace is overthrown by Matthias in *Redwall*, when Redwall has no need for war, the rhetoric of peace once again becomes central and balance is restored. Furthermore, in *Mattimeo*, the hierarchies that are established in *Redwall* are completely overthrown and are more balanced. Both male and female characters are given ample chances to succeed at the abbey and the community does become closer to an earthly paradise.

Furthermore, the Redwallers are not spirituality unaware despite their lack of religious understanding. Rostankowski compares the Redwallers' beliefs to the Medieval ethos of the church and finds that the Redwallers are naïve and superficial because they do not understand the goal for heavenly salvation and do not recognize God (Christain or otherwise). Nevertheless, the Redwallers' beliefs are grounded in preserving the earthly paradise they have created and they place their faith in Martin the Warrior who has sworn to protect Redwall for eternity. Therefore, throughout the two trilogies of the *Redwall* series, there is a shift in the spiritual perspective of the woodlanders. Jacques's character Martin the Warrior becomes a saintly figure to the woodlanders, and Redwall Abbey becomes a kind of Saint's Cult as well as a military order. Martin is at the heart of the Redwallers' unsophisticated spirituality. For instance, in *Redwall*, Martin the Warrior's spirit calls out to the young Matthias when the image of Martin is being stolen by Cluny the Scourge's henchman. Matthias knows something is wrong "Great Hall. Martin the Warrior. Something terrible was going on downstairs. He was needed urgently" (*Redwall* 73). Martin's spirit has awoken as the image of himself is taken from its sacred place in the Great Hall. Matthias answers Martin's call protect the tapestry of Redwall.

In this way, Jacques's series is both secular and spiritual because the Redwallers live without heavenly salvation, but they do have a spiritual nature grounded in Martin the Warrior's presence throughout the abbey. Martin's spirit is felt by the Redwallers during times of trouble.



Barbara Newman explores how the secular relates to the sacred in her book *Reading the Secular Against the Sacred*. She notes that the secular has always been in dialogue with the sacred. For example, the stories of Arthur focus on secular courts and love but bring in the teachings of the church through the principles the knights are supposed to follow. However, Arthurian texts can border on allegory as well. For instance, Newman notes that Chretien's Lancelot is "a Christlike redeemer" who worships Guinevere like the church (257) thus making this Arthurian romance allegorical. Newman writes, "when sacred and secular meanings both present themselves in a text, yet cannot be harmoniously reconciled, it is not always necessary to choose between them" (7-8). Texts like Chretien's Arthurian romance also present a double reading: one secular and one religious.<sup>2</sup>

This is possible because the church and secular writers of the day used similar techniques to lift up their "heroes" so that the people would look towards these saints and heroes as guides to the Judeo-Christian God. Newman states, "though the chivalric hero and the monastic saint may have little in common, both are constructed from idealizing rhetoric that lifts them far above the ordinary, parallel lines may meet in infinity" (Newman 167). The writings of romance heroes and saint's lives use similar rhetoric to provide the people with an example to follow. Newman continues by saying, "translated or adapted from Latin vitae, vernacular saints' lives freely introduced romance elements, while romance heroes were made to teeter on the brink of sainthood" (37) thus allowing religion and secularism to be in dialogue with each other. Jacques's character Martin the Warrior is a romance hero and a saintly being throughout the series because he was a living creature with his own story (*Martin the Warrior*), but also returns from death in spirit form to guide the Redwallers. In this way, Martin's nature becomes dualistic:

he is a secular hero, who stands for courage and friendship, and he is a religious saint, who stands for paradise and righteousness.

As a secular fantasy series, Jacques's *Redwall* presents the reader with the unreligious and militaristic Redwallers encountering the religious and Catholic images of a monastic Saints cult. Therefore, Jacques has created two readings within his text: one where Redwall becomes a military order and uses the trappings of Christianity to help promote his themes of friendship and courage, and two where Redwall becomes a manifestation of an earthly paradise, in which Martin is the spiritual center of the society. To fulfill these readings, Jacques draws on medieval tropes such as the chivalric code of honor, the significance of the sword, the allure of monasticism, the feudal era, and the cardinal virtues, as well as, Christian imagery and rhetoric: saints' cults, allusions to Martin of Tours, Moses, and Hell, earthly paradise. Drawing on the familiarity of Christian doctrine and Arthurian ethos, Brian Jacques's *Redwall* series depicts the need and comfort of a spiritual center to maintain peace and to guide the masses in righteous behavior.

Chapter 1 will explore Martin the Warrior as an Arthurian hero in the novel *Martin the Warrior*. Martin exemplifies the cardinal virtues of prudence, fortitude, temperance, and justice and by embodying these virtues he becomes a true warrior. In addition, Jacques uses Felldoh as a foil to show readers that Martin is the hero to emulate. Jacques does all this to set Martin up to become the deliverer in *Mossflower*. Chapter 2 will explore how Jacques shifts the spiritual perspectives of his characters, introducing the monastic society and the afterlife in the novel *Mossflower*. Here he continues to show Martin as an Arthurian hero but begins to introduce elements that set Martin up to become a saintly figure in *Redwall*. Chapter 3 will explore Martin the Warrior as a saintly figure in the novel *Redwall* and *Mattimeo*. Martin begins to show signs

that he is a Saint (fashioned after saints of the Catholic Church) making Redwall Abbey a saint's cult.

## CHAPTER 1

ARTHURIAN ETHOS IN BRAIN JACQUES'S *MARTIN THE WARRIOR*

King Arthur's first appearance in literature was in the Welsh records *Historia Brittonum*, *The History of the Britain's* written allegedly by Nennius, a Welsh monk of the ninth century. According to Richard Barber, in his book *King Arthur: Hero and Legend*, the writer of the aforementioned Welsh records were "more concerned with the ideology of the past and its implications for the present. He portrays the Welsh as a race of noble descent, capable of heroic deeds, treacherously driven out of their rightful lands by the Saxons" (4). The purported author Nennius wanted to present an idealized Welsh identity. In the twelfth century, Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain* tells the history of Arthur as King of England. Chris Barber, in his book *King Arthur: The Mystery Unraveled*, states that Geoffrey "tells of Arthur's conquests, not only in his own country, against the Saxons, the Irish, the Scots, and the Picts, but over all western Europe" (27). Arthur's story was gaining popularity and by the fourteenth century had become a staple in English history and the English identity (Chris Barber 127).

Both the writer of the Welsh record and Geoffrey of Monmouth consider Arthur a historical figure even though historians today often doubt his authenticity. Richard Barber notes that "other societies than our own have taken a different view of history, while according it an equally respected place in their culture: the deeds of the past are seen either as an inspiration or as a warning to the men of the present, or as part of a vast divine scheme for man's spiritual salvation" (7). While accuracy is important, it was just as important for the people of the past to have a connection with their history beyond mere facts. Therefore, Arthur became the hero the Welsh and English needed him to be, while Arthur, the historical figure, became obscure and hard to trace.

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the story of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table has been reshaped for readers by authors who have long used this legend to animate their stories. One famous example is J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* where his character Aragorn reclaims his throne by recovering the sword of his ancestor. Tolkien bases Aragorn's character on the legend of King Arthur, for both claim swords of great significance marking them as kings. However, other writers like T.H. White, in his novel *The Once and Future King*, have rewritten the literary figure of Arthur and his reign for a modern audience. Whichever version of Arthur's story one prefers, the Arthurian legend is rooted in Medieval society and the characters go on quests, encounter fantastical elements, and uphold virtuous (knightly) behavior.<sup>3</sup>

Equivalently, Brian Jacques uses Arthurian tropes and ethos to inspire the text *Martin the Warrior*. His characters portray virtuous behavior based on the cardinal virtues, go on journeys, and encounter prophecies, all the while seeking earthly peace. Unlike in *Redwall*, *Martin the Warrior* has no religious connections, and the language of the text is secular. Despite this, *Martin the Warrior* portrays Martin as a romantic hero, who will become the deliverer of Mossflower Woods in *Mossflower* and the spiritual center in *Redwall*. He does this by having Martin exemplify the cardinal virtues through a code of honor while journeying to recover his father's sword and claim his identity as a warrior. Rostankowski notes Jacques's use of quests is significant because the "characters undertake it [the quest] in many of the same ways and for many of the same reasons it is significant in medieval literature...[Creatures] undergo transformation because of their quest and transform others by means of what they do" (86). This change allows the characters to discover who they are and to live happy lives while fulfilling their destinies. *Martin the Warrior's* quest is to recover and to restore his father's sword and

legacy. Throughout his journey, Martin is challenged by different societies and embodies the cardinal virtues of temperance, fortitude, justice, prudence, and chastity while displaying virtuous behavior for the other woodlanders. In this way, Martin becomes a leader and a symbol of hope for others because of his glorious deeds.

The first trope that Jacques uses from Arthurian legend is codes of honor, which were common during the Medieval Era. Knights and warriors were supposed to uphold certain behaviors that set them apart from the laypeople. King Arthur in, Sir Thomas Malory's Arthurian tale *Le Morte Darthur*,<sup>4</sup> gives his knights code of honor, the Pentecostal Oath, so they can live virtuously:

Than the kyng stablysshed all the knyghtes and gaff them rychess and londys— and charged them never to do outeraige nothir mourthir, and alwayes to fle treason, and to gyff mercy unto hym that askith mercy, upon payne of fortiture of their worship and lordship of Kyng *Arthur* for evermore; and alwayes to do ladyes, damesles, and jantilwomen and wydowes [succour], strengthe hem in hir ryghtes, and never to enforce them, upon payne of dethe. Also, that no man take no batayles in a wrongfull quarrel for no love ne for no worldis goodis (Malory, 77.26-34).

Arthur rewards his knights for their loyalty to him and has them promise to uphold these behaviors when on quests because the knights had failed to uphold one or many of these in their quests. According to Laura Bedwell in “The Failure of Justice, the Failure of Arthur” the Pentecostal Oath “forbids several types of behavior to knights, including outrage, treason, murder, denial of mercy, and crimes against women” (6). If a knight failed by committing one of these crimes, the knight would lose Arthur's love and be banished from court. However, Bedwell

notes that Arthur's Oath only points out the crimes that were forbidden without encouraging virtuous behavior, which the later Chivalric Code will do (6). In doing so, Arthur's Oath leads his men to fail later on in their quests because "the Oath makes each of its elements equal so that the knights have no guidelines for choosing which part of the Oath to obey if its provisions come into conflict with one another" (Bedwell 7). This weakness allows for Arthur's reign, to begin with, a shaky foundation, which in turn spells the downfall of Camelot, Arthur's kingdom.

Jacques shapes a similar code of honor for Martin the Warrior to follow in *Martin the Warrior*. With his father leaving to fight sea rats, a young Martin is given a code of honor that is to be his model for virtuous behavior and is given Luke the Warrior's sword. According to Marc Bloch in his book *Feudal Society*, the passing of the sword was a tradition for dubbing knights. He writes, "To the candidate, who as a rule was scarcely more than a boy, an older knight first of all handed over the arms symbolic of his future status, in particular, he girded on his sword" (312). The narrator of *Martin the Warrior* notes that Martin is "only two seasons out of infancy" (18), making him about the proper age to be dubbed a mouse warrior.

After passing the sword on to Martin, Luke shares his code of honor:

I can see it is for you to be a fighter Martin. The first thing warriors must learn is discipline... You will stay and defend our cave against all comers, protect those weaker than yourself and honor our code. Always use the sword to stand for good and right, never do a thing you would be ashamed of, but never let your heart rule your mind... And never ever let another creature take this sword from you as long as you live. When the time comes, pass it on to another, maybe your own son.

You will know instinctively if he is a warrior. If not, hide the sword where only a true warrior who is brave of heart, would dare to find it (*Martin the Warrior* 19).

The code of honor is supposed to encourage Martin's virtues and to outline behaviors unbecoming to a warrior. Nevertheless, Luke's language is morally ambiguous to a young Martin, for Luke does not explicitly state how to avoid using the sword for evil (being able to differentiate between what is right and what is not for their culture), how to not do something you are ashamed of, and knowing the consequences for letting your heart rule your mind.

Like Arthur's Oath, Luke's code of honor treats each element equally, making it unclear which part Martin should follow if they come into conflict with each other. For example, should Martin choose to exact mercy on an enemy who asks for it if doing so results in the death of a bystander? Martin would have to make a judgment call and his action, either way, will have consequences. However, unlike Arthur's knights, Martin is an impressionable young mouse who is just starting his journey as a warrior, whereas the Knights of the Round Table have had more experience in being knights. Even with this experience, Arthur's knights do fail at upholding the Pentecostal Oath, but they are not set up to fail from the start because they have gone through extensive training. They fail because they are human and flawed. On the other hand, Martin is set up for failure because his father is absent and cannot properly teach him the ways of the warrior. Instead, he gives him an oblique code of honor that does not outline consequences for not honoring or upholding the code. In fact, as soon as Luke leaves, Martin becomes prideful and envious, thereby breaking the rule to not to let one's heart lead one's mind.

Arthur's Oath and Luke's code are meant to uphold the ideals of knightly behavior, which are based in the cardinal virtues: temperance, justice, prudence, and fortitude. According to Istan P. Bejczy, in his book *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages*, the four virtues "count among the most celebrated philosophical concepts that the Latin Middle ages borrowed from the ancient world" (1). Many medieval philosophers began to shape the cardinal virtues to be used



by Christianity to help promote righteous behavior on earth, so the people could gain heavenly salvation.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, Luke's code of honor is to help Martin live a virtuous earthly life without the salvific significance. In fact, *Martin the Warrior* has no religious connections; the rhetoric is strictly secular. Therefore, Martin exemplifies the ancient (secular) definitions of the cardinal virtues. Whether the cardinal virtues are used to seek heavenly salvation or a virtuous earthly life, Bejczy notes that "consciousness of virtues means the end of virtue, as numerous medieval authors from Peter Abelard<sup>6</sup> to Francis Petrarch repeat after each other, while several religious writers claim that humility in a state of sin is better than taking pride in virtue" (235-36). According to the Catholic Church, if one is aware and boastful of their virtues then one is committing the ultimate sin, pride.

Luke's code of honor is left ambiguous, so Martin cannot be wholly conscious of his virtues. Instead, the code is interpreted and something to live up to, despite being easily broken. Young Martin fails to interpret the last rule by letting his feelings to go unchecked, leading him into jealousy and away from temperance.<sup>7</sup> By being jealous, Martin decides to wander far away from the cave, so he can "prove" to his friend that he is a warrior. Instead of tempering his feelings of jealousy and anger, Martin causes himself and his grandmother to be captured by Badrang, whereby he loses his father's sword, and he breaks another rule of the code. Throughout the novel, Martin must learn to control his passions in order to exemplify the virtue of temperance. For instance, Martin faces the challenge of tempering his anger when he battles the Gawtrybe squirrels. After Martin effectively pins the Chieftain down with his paw, he asks if the Chief has had enough: "Because if you haven't, we can carry on until the death!" (*Martin the Warrior* 235). Martin becomes blinded by his feelings of hatred for the Chieftain of the Gawtrybe, leading Martin to irrational anger (outrage). According to the *Oxford English*

*Dictionary*, the verb outrage is defined as “to behave immoderately, extravagantly, or without self-restraint; to commit excesses, run riot” (“Outrage” v1). Not having self-restraint and behaving irrationally takes one away from the virtues temperance and prudence because being intemperate, one cannot make wise decisions.

When Martin becomes outraged a veil “of red mist” (*Martin the Warrior* 235) covers his eyes as he is taken by the bloodlust of the fight. Driven by bloodlust, Martin wants to kill the Chieftain instead of showing him mercy. If he fails to show mercy to a defeated enemy who asks for it, Martin will be committing murder.<sup>8</sup> To avoid outrage and murder, a knight, or in this case a warrior, must have temperance. If not for the voice of reason, embodied in Martin’s friend Rose, Martin would have killed the Chieftain of the Gawtrybe. However, hearing her voice, Martin’s instinct to kill leaves him, and he exercises mercy. In this instance, Martin needs an outside force to call him back to what is just and honorable. Jacques allows Martin to struggle with this first virtue, to show the child reader a character who is not perfect and who has to be reminded, just like Arthur’s knights, of what is good and honorable.

One issue with the woodlanders seeking what is good and honorable is that the morality of the characters is not grounded in any religion, therefore obscuring “the motivation for seeking the good and avoiding evil as it would have been understood in the actual medieval context” (Rostankowski 90). In other words, the Medieval people’s motivation for seeking what is good and honorable was that their souls would find a resting place in a heavenly paradise. However, the woodlanders do not recognize an afterlife in *Martin the Warrior* and do not know the Judeo-Christian God. Nevertheless, the woodlanders’ morality is not without motivation. They seek earthly peace without war and tyrants. Therefore, to be good and honorable means of seeking peace. Therefore, the woodlanders are in the right and must seek justice to regain the lands from

Badrang. This aligns the woodlanders with the Old Testament morality seeking the promised land that Abraham made a covenant with God for in Genesis 12:2 “And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and magnify thy name, and thou shalt be blessed “(Douay-Rheims). Abraham is given great nations and is blessed by following the word of God. The woodlanders, like Abraham, will be made into a great nation and delivered to a paradise, which comes to fruition in *Redwall*. Before earthly paradise can become a reality, a deliverer must be called forth. In the *Redwall* series, this deliverer will be Martin the Warrior.

Throughout *Martin the Warrior*, Martin and his friends are shown an example of an earthly paradise in Noonvale, a hidden community of woodlanders living in peace. Urran Voh, Rose’s father, states, “Our creatures have never seen war, they are dedicated to our life of friendship and peace” (*Martin the Warrior* 298), and the creatures of Noonvale are determined to stay peaceful. Therefore, Urran Voh refuses to allow Noonvale to be involved with the war against Marshank because Urran Voh does not believe in war. But, Noonvale is only peaceful because it is hidden. The woodlanders are ignorant of war and the danger that is presented to them by Badrang. Furthermore, Martin is given a glimpse of what life could be like without war saving him from the destructive path of vengeance and outrage that most warriors take.

However, the community is also used to call into question the motivations of the warrior caste because it is in their hands that these peaceful societies can exist. For instance, Urran Voh shares his opinion on warriors saying, “This Martin, he is a warrior, and death walks alongside such creatures. You must never let yourself grow too close to him” (*Martin the Warrior* 299). This time, it is Rose who rejects the stigma her father has placed on warriors saying “Father, you’re not a warrior, you’re a worrier. Martin is my best friend in the whole world, he would never hurt me or let me be hurt. I’ll change him, you’ll see. One day he will be the most peaceful

creature in Noonvale!” (*Martin the Warrior* 299). Rose believes that Martin’s warrior way of life can be changed, but her father believes that the warrior life is not so easily changed. He is especially concerned because Rose is his daughter and has not known Martin long. Throughout the series, the life of a warrior is shown to be full of challenges that are not taken lightly. Peaceful creatures may see warriors as unpredictable even though they are good, while tyrants like Badrang, see warriors as usurpers.

Furthermore, Martin and his friends are allowed to challenge their understanding of what it means to be a warrior when they encounter the Warden of Marshwood Hill, a heron, as they travel through the swamps. The Warden believes that it is best to kill all lawbreakers and tells Martin so: “Next time kill first, then they will never break the law again” (*Martin the Warrior* 215). For the Warden, this is what it means to be a warrior, but Martin rejects this by throwing the snakes and lizards that have attacked them into the swamp, showing again his mercy. Martin’s upholding of his code of honor proves to his friends that virtuous behavior does not mean destroying lives needlessly and that ultimately, he believes in a peaceful existence. But, Martin recognizes the necessity of the Warden’s rules by saying: “the bird is a necessary evil, believe me” (*Martin the Warrior* 199) to Rose. Though Martin does not agree with the Warden’s methods, he knows that their (Martin’s) party would have been killed by the lizards without the Warden’s help.

Martin’s code of honor helps him to successfully interpret different situations when traveling with Rose and friends to Noonvale. He is able to show mercy within the different communities and learns from his mistakes with the Gawtrybe squirrels, where he nearly fails to uphold his set of ethics. Even with the Gawtrybe squirrels, Martin ultimately triumphs over his temperament to become a stronger warrior. Throughout *Martin the Warrior*, Jacques’s use of a

code of honor begins to set Martin apart from the other warrior in the text, Felldoh, who is as strong and determined as Martin. After escaping Marshank, Felldoh, and Brome, Rose's brother team up with The Rambling Rosehip Players, a group of traveling actors, to besiege Marshank and free the slaves. This is possible due to Badrang's preoccupation with an old enemy, Clogg and the sea rats, allowing the newly dubbed Freedom Fighters to plan a way to stop Badrang's conquests. The woodlanders believe that if they leave now, then Badrang will defeat the corsairs, and once more reach out and take other peaceful creatures as slaves, thus motivating them to stand up against him.

During the altercations with Badrang, Felldoh becomes more outraged and hardhearted. Rostankowski comments on Felldoh's inability to return to normality after being freed from slavery. She makes the point that Felldoh's actions could be misinterpreted by young readers because he seeks revenge. She compares Felldoh's determination for the destruction of Badrang's fortress Marshank to the "solution a contemporary gang member might seek against another rival gang" (Rostankowski 92). Her point is that readers may interpret the message of the books as "'right action is identical with the position held by myself and my friends,' or worse that 'right action is the slaughter of one's enemies'" (Rostankowski 92) because the woodlanders seem to not have justification for their motives. This message can be potentially harmful to children because the characters can become reckless in serious situations without thinking of the consequences.

However, the woodlanders' actions against Marshank are grounded in the fear that Badrang will not stop until he conquers the surrounding woodlands. For the woodlanders, this means that they will never be able to live in peace. Therefore, the woodlanders are motivated to go to war. Badrang wants to have land and resources, while the woodlanders want peace and

unity. During the Medieval Era, the war was common among the European nations for similar advantages. According to Deborah J. Shepherd in her book *Daily Life in Arthurian Britain*, peasants during the fourth century may have had an uprising against the upper class. Though there is no clear evidence that the rebellion happened, the consequences of even a slight revolt would have been felt (186). Shepherd states “with the peasants standing together in their refusal to cooperate, the landowning class, without the army present to back it up, would be helpless” (186). Although Felldoh’s response to the revolt against Marshank is contemporary, it also has its grounding in the Medieval Era because uprisings and revolts did occur in the Late Middle Ages. If Felldoh’s actions are compared to contemporary responses, Rostankowski is correct in saying that Jacques is sending the wrong message to children. However, Felldoh’s response is grounded first in freeing the rest of the slaves from Badrang and establishing peace to the land. In fact, Felldoh and his Freedom Fighter’s choose the right time to stage an uprising because, in the midst of defending his fortress from Clogg’s army, Badrang’s focus would be distracted by the imminent threat of corsairs and would underestimate the power of the peasants (woodlanders).

Nevertheless, Felldoh’s rage allows him to become intemperate, making him a dangerous ally because, unlike Martin, Felldoh has no code of ethics to follow, and he cannot convert to a nonviolent way of life. So, for Felldoh, killing is no longer about justice and righteousness; instead, it becomes a cruel “game” linking Felldoh to the Gawtrybe squirrels’ barbarism. Adult readers may not feel comfortable with Felldoh’s behavior when they learn that because Jacques is quoted as saying that “the children who read my books are generally at an age where they need to have things spelled out in ‘black and white’ without ambiguity” (Sockey). He goes on to say that his good characters are good, while his bad characters are bad with no in-betweens (Sockey).

However, his characters morally *are* ambiguous at times. Felldoh becomes morally complicated because even though he is “good” his actions are questionable halfway through the siege of Marshank.

For example, while leading some of Badrang’s horde away from the Freedom Fighters camp, Felldoh comments to Brome, who is with him, “I’d slaughter every one of Badrang’s horde if I had my way. Then I’d be sure that every honest creature was safe from the threat of slavery, bending to the will and whim of a tyrant, cold in winter, hungry in summer, watching old friends dying around you from hardship” (*Martin the Warrior* 256). At first glance, Felldoh’s vision is noble and honorable but coupled with his language of wanting to kill every last horde beast, Felldoh’s noble vision is one of vengeance linking him to gang violence as Rostankowski notes above. Felldoh refuses to show mercy to the horde beasts he has led astray. Instead of creating the false trail and then doubling back to camp, Felldoh hides behind some bushes with Brome and waits for Badrang’s scouts. Once Felldoh has them in sight, he decides to surprise and kill them.

Within the context of the Medieval society, killing someone, in battle or a fair fight, was not the same as murdering someone. In Malory’s text, a murderer was someone who “kill[ed] through trickery, who endure[d] that their victims are at a disadvantage or who take others by surprise” (Bedwell 8). Felldoh decides to take the enemy by surprise, using his knowledge of the terrain to his advantage thus the fight is no longer fair. For a knight during Arthur’s day, this would be considered murder despite Badrang’s guards being corrupt creatures. The guards were no threat to Felldoh or the camp, but Felldoh has vowed to kill all of Badrang’s horde at the grave of an old friend. Brome is distraught over Felldoh’s actions and asks, “How many more must die before you’re satisfied” (*Martin the Warrior* 292). Brome, an impressionable young

mouse, begins to question Felldoh's actions and motivations. No longer does he believe that Felldoh follows a just path.

Brome's questioning of Felldoh's actions is an example of Jacques allowing other creatures to question what it means to be a warrior. In addition, when Brome's friend Kastern, a freed slave from Marshank, says Felldoh's behavior is normal and "the way of warriors, just like the mouse Martin you are always talking about" (*Martin the Warrior* 292). It is understood that warriors are vengeful and foolhardy creatures, who will not stop until either they or their enemies are dead. They may be the reason the woodlanders can live in peace, but they do not care about life and death making them easily swayed from honorable behavior. Urran Voh makes a similar statement to Rose about how death always follows a warrior. For Felldoh, this is true; in a last act of desperation, Felldoh attacks Marshank alone. Clouded by anger, Felldoh misses the warning signs of a trap, leaves himself vulnerable, and dies. He allows pride and arrogance to dictate his decisions, leading him away from the cardinal virtue of justice toward vice revenge.

Martin, on the other hand, does not follow the same path as Felldoh because Martin is able to gain wisdom and perspective from having his code of honor challenged. In other words, Martin's goal does not become twisted by revenge. Both Martin and Felldoh are reduced to the lowest state of servitude, slavery, and are forced to build Badrang's fortress Marshank because Badrang wants to become a feudal lord. Badrang believes that the woodlanders should show him fealty because he is in charge. According to Bloch "the structure of society in which [Medieval people] lived did not possess clear-cut contours" (255). The woodlanders should be free, but because there are no written laws, Badrang takes it upon himself to determine who is allowed to be free and has decided that the slaves are not allowed to own anything, especially weapons. It is under Badrang's rule that Martin and Felldoh are stripped of their identities as free creatures.



However, Felldoh does not remember a time outside of the compound and his sense of self is based on what his father has told him about freedom. Martin does remember being free, and when he is captured, he is stripped of his identity as a warrior and is punished for his rashness by seeing his father's sword in the hands of Badrang. The narrator states, "Badrang drew his sword and pressed the point against the young one's heaving chest" (*Martin the Warrior* 13), indicating the shift in ownership of the sword from Martin to Badrang. So, when they are free, Martin's goal and the quest are to regain his father's sword and his identity, and Felldoh wants to free the others and live freely. Martin's quest for his father's sword will place him in the role of hero and deliverer throughout the rest of the series.

To regain his identity as a warrior, Martin must first repent for his failure to uphold his father's code of honor when he was a young mouse. Since there is no higher power to ask forgiveness from, Martin must seek justice for all the captured woodlanders and reclaim his father's sword. According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, justice<sup>9</sup> "Justice towards men disposes of one to respect the rights of each and to establish in human relationships the harmony that promotes equity with regard to persons and to the common good" (496.1807).<sup>10</sup> People should respect each other and create harmonious relationships with all. Martin the Warrior will seek justice for the oppressed woodlanders by overthrowing Badrang and reclaiming his identity. The closest the characters come to the "virtue of religion" is to seek peace instead of war, but because he is not concerned with his heavenly salvation, the peace Martin seeks is earthly. This is significant because the earthly peace Martin seeks will save him from the death and guilt of the warrior's path.

To seek justice for the horrible fate of his grandmother and the slaves, Martin must first survive his punishment for attacking one of Badrang's guards, where he allows anger to once

more rule his actions. While left to die, he vows: “I am a warrior! Martin, son of Luke! I will live, I will not give in and die up here. Do you hear me Badrang? I will live to take back my father’s sword and slay you one day” (*Martin the Warrior* 22). At first, Martin’s vow of vengeance places him in the same position of Felldoh because they both seek to bring down Badrang’s rule. The ancient world believed the cardinal virtue of justice to include revenge and to protect private property, but Medieval philosophers mostly rejected this idea, beginning with Ambrose of Milan (Bejczy 16). Nevertheless, within Arthurian legend, knights were often seeking revenge, which helped lead Arthur’s kingdom to fail. In addition, Augustine broadly developed the idea that “virtues turn into vices without a charitable intent, under the cloak of the cardinal and other virtues, selfish desires may find refuge, shrewdness may disguise itself as prudence, stinginess as temperance, revenge as justice, rashness as fortitude” (Bejczy 26). In other words, it is one’s motives that determine whether one is virtuous or not. For Felldoh, he begins with a just cause, freeing the slaves, but once he accomplishes his task, he is not satisfied and begins to seek revenge, a vice.

On the other hand, Martin is able to stand strong in his vow for justice because of his previous experiences of failure to uphold his code of ethics. For example, Martin exemplifies the virtue of justice when in the presence of Queen Amballa and her kingdom of pigmy shrews. The pigmy shrews are small self-entitled mole-like creatures who capture passing beasts to take care of the shrew’s children. Despite their apparent intelligence, the shrews are easily manipulated, especially the children. For instance, the hedgehog slave Pallum persuades Queen Amballa to not kill Martin and his friends by suggesting she kill them. He says, “O Ballamum, nogive these sillybeasts mouthfood or gluggadrink. Theynot get obblewood an’ caretake Squidjees. Ballamum kilemdead!” (*Martin the Warrior* 98). Pallum, to put it differently, wants Queen Amballa to kill

Martin, Rose, and Grumm because they were not smart enough to avoid being captured by the shrews. Instead, Queen Amballa keeps Martin and his friends as domestic slaves to watch after the children of the tribe. Pallum uses reverse psychology in this instance, being sincere in helping Martin and his friends.

To keep the children under control, Martin and his friends call them names and endorse violence while smiling happily, knowing the children will do the opposite of what they are told. Their mocking of the pygmy shrews is uncomfortable to read because Martin is the hero of the novel. Rostankowski notes that this behavior could send the wrong impression to the young readers of the series. She states that “one sort of misunderstanding might be that a child presumes an action is right because lots of people/beasts say it is” (91). However, Jacques shows again that Martin and his friends are not perfect creatures; they have prejudices and make mistakes and must grow throughout the series. Children of Queen Amballa’s tribe are regarded highly and are uncontrollable because the caretakers, Pallum, Martin, Rose, and Grumm, are not allowed to correct the children’s poor behavior. Nonetheless, Martin and his friends have to make a judgment call based on the pygmy shrew’s prideful behavior. In so doing, Martin allows the cardinal virtue of prudence<sup>11</sup> to come forth. To gain what is good (freedom and the continuing of their quest to Noonvale), Martin and his friends choose the lesser of two evils in the situation. However, Martin and his friends have to be careful not to cross over into shrewdness.<sup>12</sup> His actions with the young shrews could be seen as malicious and evil-intentioned, especially by young children.

In addition, this scene recalls the issue of Luke’s code of honor—treating all the elements equally. Martin must choose to either do something he could be ashamed of (making fun of the shrews) or fighting for freedom. However, when the opportunity presents itself, Martin chooses

to help the shrews instead of allowing one of their lives to be taken. Here Martin makes the selfless act to save a young shrew's life. While on the beach below Queen Amballa's home, Martin and his friends witness the idiocy of Dinjer, a young pigmy shrew. Deciding to climb the rocks by the shore, Dinjer is captured by a mother gannet trying to feed her nestlings. At this moment, Queen Amballa transforms from queen to mother. Sliding to the ground, Amballa grieves for the loss of her son. Instead of helplessly standing by, Martin takes Amballa's paws and says, "Notdead, Ballamum, Dinjer notdead. Biggamouse savehim!" (*Martin the Warrior* 112). Risking his life for the community that has enslaved him, Martin obeys his father's code of honor to help those weaker than himself. Furthermore, Martin recognizes that the bird of prey is not inherently evil and does not wish to harm her. The narrator states, "The net would not hold the big seabird for long, and he [Martin] did not wish to kill it" (*Martin the Warrior* 116). The gannet instinctively has picked up Dinjer as the meal for her nestlings and once subdued by the net; the gannet is no longer a threat to Martin or Dinjer. If Martin had killed the gannet at this moment, he would have committed the crime of murder. By staying his hand, Martin grants mercy to a creature that has been defeated because justice has prevailed: Dinjer is safe and Martin and his friends are free.

Jacques allows both Martin and Felldoh a chance to become strong and honorable warriors, but throughout the text, Felldoh becomes a foil for Martin. Jacques does this to show that Martin's path is not meant to end in a violent, brutal death. Instead, by allowing Martin to view earthly peace, Jacques sets in motion for Martin a path of heroism that will lead to Martin's role as a deliverer in *Mossflower* and his ascension as a spiritual center in *Redwall* and *Mattimeo*. By the end of *Martin the Warrior*, Martin has returned to reclaim his father's sword from Badrang. It is here that Martin must use his newly-gained wisdom on warriorhood to overcome

his need for vengeance against Badrang. Throughout his journey, Martin has allowed his father's code of honor to help him become a virtuous mouse who stands for goodness. Through it all, Martin's vow to defeat Badrang becomes more complex because it is no longer about defeating his enemy and reclaiming his identity. Martin learns that he has never lost his identity with Rose, saying "I know you're a warrior because you protect others" (*Martin the Warrior* 148). Martin refuses to believe her, but in every situation, Martin has sought the good and was able to stand strong, sometimes with a little help from his friends, and he is able to pursue the cardinal virtue of fortitude. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines fortitude as "the moral virtue that ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good. It strengthens the resolve to resist temptations and to overcome obstacles in the moral life. The virtue of fortitude enables one to conquer fear, even fear of death, and to face trials and persecutions" (496-97 1808). In addition, the classical definition of fortitude is strength in war (Bejczy 17). This virtue is what makes the warriors seem unpredictable but at the same time admirable. To exemplify fortitude, Martin must resist the temptations around him, especially the temptation of outrage, and conquer his fears.

Rashness can be mistaken as fortitude because foolhardiness is associated with being brave, especially by the warrior caste in Jacques's series. Felldoh fails in this virtue, especially in his last stand. Instead of thinking through his plan, he rushes to do battle. Martin, began his journey like Felldoh ended his, rushing into certain situations like attacking the guard or running off to prove himself. But, with his journey to Noonvale and a little help from his friends, Martin is able to resist falling into vice and stands firm for what is good and honorable. The last battle begins when Jacques describes Martin as an avenging spirit. The narrator says, "There illuminated in the light from the burning gates stood a warrior on the battlements...The mouse

warrior fought like ten beasts...Badrang whimpered and ran for his life before he was seen and identified by the fearless avenger” (*Martin the Warrior* 362). For the first time, Badrang feels fear as he watches Martin dash to and fro as though possessed. Martin’s figure for a moment is illuminated to show his power and righteousness. The spirit of the battle has taken Martin and he fights to avenge all the wrongs that Badrang has done. In doing so, Martin stands strong because he relies on his friends for support, whereas Felldoh pushes his friends away. Similarly, In *Le Morte Darthur*, Malory uses a similar tactic to show that Arthur was in the right. He does not illuminate King Arthur, but Arthur’s sword was bright in the eyes of his enemies (Malory 14). Both Arthur and Martin win their respective battles.

Martin’s journey to heroism does not end in his own death, but the death of Rose, his “love<sup>13</sup>” interest. In a moment of rage, Badrang lifts her and flings “her savagely from him. Rose’s head struck the wall heavily, and she slid down like a broken doll” (*Martin the Warrior* 264). Badrang’s actions against an unarmed lady mouse are the unforgivable act that Martin cannot except because without Rose, Martin could have followed in Felldoh’s footsteps by being consumed by vengeance and hate. However, Martin’s code of ethics is challenged for the last time when he overcomes Badrang in seconds. Badrang, knowing he is going to lose, asks for mercy, and Martin is faced with the dilemma of which part of Luke’s code to follow because Badrang has asked for mercy but has also murdered someone. Is it right for Martin to slay Badrang or should he grant mercy? Martin’s decision to take Badrang’s life ultimately saves the woodlanders from Badrang’s cruelty and the land is able to have a chance to return to being peaceful. Martin’s decision also allows justice to be served and the balance between good and evil to be restored.

Although the woodlanders don't have religious affiliations in *Martin the Warrior*, their morality is not without motivation. Within the text, the woodlanders are shown to question the moral motivations of warriors and to define for themselves what is right and wrong. For instance, Urran Voh believes that only death can follow Martin because he is on the path of vengeance, which most warriors seemed to be. However, the warriors themselves are allowed a chance to be challenged in their own moral codes by different communities and either fail or succeed. For example, Felldoh fails to be honorable and good because he is clouded by hate and does not grow as a warrior or leader. On the other hand, Martin, with the help of Rose, is able to find another reason for fighting other than vengeance: peace. By coming to the peaceful and utopian Noonvale, Martin is given a chance to know happiness without fear. In doing so, Martin gains wisdom that Felldoh does not receive effectively making Felldoh the foil for Martin.

By creating this foil, Jacques complicates the moral message of his text. His characters are morally ambiguous because the "good" characters can fall into vices as easily as the "bad" characters, who can display virtues. Therefore, Jacques gives his audience a chance to decide along with his characters which warriors should be emulated, and which should be rejected. To do this, Jacques uses Arthurian ethos (the cardinal virtues) to distinguish his hero characters. Martin's journey is therefore two-fold because he is both searching for a way to regain his identity by taking back his father's sword while displaying to the other characters and the readers that he is a true warrior. In other words, Martin's motivations are based on seeking peace even though he still follows the warrior's path, wandering from place to place. Even so, this wandering does not last his whole life, and Martin is able to find inner peace for the trauma he experiences with Rose's death. Nevertheless, Martin's understanding of his father's code of honor alongside his exemplification of the cardinal virtues allows him to take on a new role in

the text *Mossflower*. Jacques sets Martin on the path to becoming the deliverer of the woodland creatures and the catalyst that brings about the earthly paradise of Redwall Abbey.



## CHAPTER 2

SPIRITUALITY IN BRIAN JACQUES'S *MOSSFLOWER*

The Medieval Era saw a change in political direction with the rise of feudalism and the subsequent unity of England under the monarchy by the late tenth century. Diarmaid MacCulloch, in his book *Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years*, notes that England became united under one king with the rise of the English monarchy (364). Alongside the rise of this new system, philosophers and theologians began to redefine ancient ideas and texts, like the cardinal virtues, to support the rise of Christianity and the ushering in of a golden era for monastic society. However, Bloch notes, “the laity...remained in many respects the active element in secular society” (82). If they did believe, Bloch says, it was no doubt “a superficial acquaintance with the features most apt to strike the imagination in Christian representations of the past, the present, and the future world” (82). The people were aware of Christian doctrines but still held onto many of their superstitions, which influenced their religious life. For example, stormy weather could be the work of witches or hold phantom armies as well as a sign of a wrathful God.

Nevertheless, people did slowly convert to Christianity. According to MacCulloch, most people did not talk about conversion in the same way as people do in the twenty-first century. People of the twenty-first century see conversion as “accepting Christ as [one’s] personal Saviour in a great individual spiritual turnaround” (MacCulloch 342). Instead, the people simply adopted Christianity as their own because they were already Christian, emphasizing the community. MacCulloch states:

At the time, those who describe the experience normally used more passive and more collective language than the word ‘conversion’: a people or a community

‘accepted’ or ‘submitted to’ the Christian God and his representatives on earth...Once they had obeyed, the religion which they met was as much a matter of conforming to a new set of forms of worship in their community as of embracing a new set of personal beliefs” (342-343).

In doing so, the people simply went about their everyday lives, replacing the god they worshiped before with the Judeo-Christian God’s name. Furthermore, Ronald Hutton in his article, “How Pagan Were Medieval English Peasants?” notes that the “great historian of monasticism Geoffrey Coulton believed that the laity prayed to Mary by day, but by night would go back to the old gods” (236).<sup>14</sup> The view that peasants were paganists was taken up by scholars in the twelfth century (Hutton 237). However, “formal conversion to Christianity” happened in the late seventh century (Hutton 239).

It is not surprising then, that the texts of the Medieval Era drew on both secular and religious sources. Most texts during this time were concerned with heavenly salvation and shunning earthly desires. According to Newman, medieval secular texts “promote charity and condemn cupidity, striving with all the means at their disposal-direct exhortation, allegory, irony-to turn human affections away from carnal desires towards the love of God” (2). For example, by the Late Middle Ages, morality plays were being produced in England to personify the vices that can lead a righteous person into sin. In addition, Cycle plays were concerned with the soul and used humor to help bring the message of the church to the laity.<sup>15</sup> Alongside these plays, the Church adopted the code for its own use. Instead of calling knights for earthly glory as many Arthurian romances did, the Church called knights to fight for heavenly salvation to please God in the infamous Crusades during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Similarly, Brian Jacques draws upon both secular (Arthurian) and Christian (Biblical and Catholic) sources to bring his *Redwall* series to life. However, unlike Medieval writers, Jacques's emphasis is not on bringing his readers to recognize their earthly sins and to seek eternal salvation. Instead, Patricia Lee Gauch notes, in her article "Brian Jacques- Spinner of Yarns," that Jacques's series "celebrates fairness, honesty and morality" and that the "children have the power of Martin the Warrior" (403). Jacques wants his children, readers, to feel empowered to stand up and be brave in times of danger, especially when they are the underdog. In his first interview on the TV series, Jacques says, "Matthias is the little kid who wants to become a Warrior" ("What Makes a Hero"). According to Jacques, children have the power to become warriors in their own way. To fulfill this goal, Jacques creates the character of Martin the Warrior to guide all future warriors. However, Martin has to be more than a "good" warrior; he has to possess firm beliefs in peace and exert his leadership and influence on the woodlanders.

Jacques shows Martin's strength in character by once more having Martin go on a quest for his sword in the sequel *Mossflower*. However, unlike in *Martin the Warrior*, the sword is not stolen, but this time it is broken. When captured by Verdauga's guards, Martin is sentenced to a term in prison, and his sword is once again taken from him; Tsarmina, Verdauga's daughter, snaps the sword so only the hilt remains. At this moment, Jacques recalls Pollekin's prophecy in *Martin the Warrior*. She states, "You'm got a logways t' go afore yon sword cooms back to 'ee. Doant maken you'm less'n a wurrier tho'. Oi seen gurt brave wurriers in moi long seasons, but none like you'm Marthen" (*Martin the Warrior* 130)., Martin's journey for peace and his father's sword does not stop when he retrieves it from Badrang. He once again has to overcome obstacles to restore the blade of the sword. But unlike in *Martin the Warrior*, Martin does not lose his identity as a warrior when the sword is taken from him.

Furthermore, the snapping of Martin's blade is influenced by Arthurian legend. Malory writes King Arthur's sword is broken in combat against a fellow knight: "So at laste they smote togyders, that bothe hir swerdis mette evyn togyders. But Kynge *Arthur's* swerde brake in two pecis, wherefore he was hevvy" (Malory 36:19-20). Like King Arthur's sword, Martin's sword is broken and is no longer useful. Both Arthur and Martin will gain new unbreakable swords that will become part of their legends. Rostankowski connects Martin's sword to King Arthur's sword Excalibur: "the continual reliance on the sword, or upon creature's memory of it, through many of the novels recalls the symbolic role of other legendary swords, such as Excalibur of King Arthur" (85). The sword will become important to all the woodlanders, being passed down from warrior to warrior in times of need.

When Martin reaches Salamandastron, Boar the Fighter confirms that he "must give it [Martin's sword hilt] a blade that will not be broken again by anything" (*Mossflower* 305) because it is his [Boar's] destiny to do so. When the sword is forged, it is described as:

Double-edged, keener than a razor, it lay glittering and twinkling, a myriad of steely light. Its tip was pointed like a mountain peak in midwinter; the deadly blade a three-quarter blood channel. It was perfectly balanced against the hilt, which had been restrapped with hard black leather and finished with a ruby-red pommel stone and curving scrolled crosspiece where it joined the marvelous blade (*Mossflower* 316).<sup>16</sup>

Filled with awe, Martin practices military maneuvers with his new sword, admiring its strength and beauty. Along with the new sword, Martin is given a warning from Boar about true power: "You have the heart—I can see it in you. But when I make this sword anew, you must always remember that it is not the weapon but the creature that wields it. A sword is a force for good

only in the paws of an honest warrior” (*Mossflower* 305) To stop Martin from only seeing value in the weapon, Boar reminds him that the power comes from the warrior’s actions to do good, not from the sword. Here, Jacques recalls Luke’s code of honor, which tells Martin to always do what is good. Arthur receives a similar reminder about power from Merlin: “Ye ar the more unwyse, for the scawberde ys worth ten of the swerde; for whyles ye have the scawberde upon you, ye shall lose no blood, be ye never so sore wounded” (Malory 38: 21-24). The scabbard is the more important item given to Arthur when he gains Excalibur because it protects him from loss of blood, but Arthur only sees value in the sword because it is beautiful. Martin’s scabbard does not offer such power, but his intentions and beliefs are the most important item he has. Both swords are an extension of the warrior’s power and are not the most powerful item given to them.

In addition to quests and the cardinal virtues, Jacques uses prophecies to set Martin apart from other warriors, and his actions prove to the reader that he is different than the other warriors. While at Salamandastron, Martin learns of a prophecy involving himself. In Boar the Fighter’s chamber there is a secret room where painted on the walls are the warriors of old. Martin looks closely at one particular scene depicting the activities of four creatures: “Three were intentionally small, but the fourth was unmistakably Martin, even to the broken sword about his neck” (*Mossflower* 314). The prophets of old have foreseen Martin’s journey to Salamandastron and Boar’s instruction to forge a new sword. The forging of his father’s sword and the prophecies place Martin on a hero’s path. However, the reward Martin and the rest of the woodlanders seek is peace for Mossflower from the evil that holds claim over the land. Within Mossflower, there is a shift in political power from the Badger lords (Boar) to a conqueror like Badrang. With the coming of Martin, the woodlanders want to gain back their land from a feudal

Queen. At the beginning of *Mossflower*, Martin's new friend Gonff says "Woodlanders hoped that Verdauga [the ruling lord] would pass the reins to him [Gingivere, Verdauga's son]" (41). The woodlanders had sworn fealty to Lord Verdauga and would have accepted the rule of his son Gingivere. Regime change from one lord to another was common during the Medieval Era, and the commoners would have had to accept the new ruler typically.

However, Verdauga's kingdom Kotir is dying due to his sudden illness and the harsh winters. The woodlanders, who resemble Medieval serfs, are beginning to disappear from Kotir because Verdauga's children are preoccupied with the illness that suddenly befell their father. According to Bloch, "the conception of serfdom had been extended to the point where the majority of peasants were branded with this stigma" (331). Verdauga sees the woodlanders as exploitable but treats them fairly by giving them land to live on. However, Verdauga's daughter Tsarina sees the woodlanders the way Badrang did: as slaves. Like Cluny the Scourge in *Redwall*, she recognizes that Mossflower is a place of financial privilege because of its location and resources. But she can only gain these privileges if she can break the woodlanders' fighting spirit. Instead of running away, the remaining woodlanders want to take back Kotir and build a utopian paradise. To create this earthly paradise, the woodlanders have to declare war against Tsarina.

In addition, the relations within the woodlander community do not favor a good outcome in this war. Bella says, "Martin, I feel that we are living on a knife's edge here. Ben Stickle, [a hedgehog,] wants peace, Skipper [of Otters] wants war, the Abbess [Germaine of Loamhedge] wants peace, Lady Amber [squirrel queen] wants war" (*Mossflower* 122). Disquiet and conflicts of interest begin to disrupt the woodlanders' trust in each other despite the overall aim of peace. Skipper of Otters and Lady Amber, like Felldoh, are on the warpath. Similarly, the Skipper's and

Lady Amber's behavior does not fit with the uncomplicated goodness that Jacques wants his characters to possess. Instead, these two characters are complicated, motivated by the hatred they feel for Tsarina. Bella recognizes the hatred and therefore asks Martin to bring Boar the Fighter, the rightful ruler of Mossflower back. By bringing Boar to Mossflower, the war against Tsarina would result in less tragedy, and peace could be established sooner rather than later.

Furthermore, Martin reprimands both Skipper and his friend Gonff towards the end of the novel. During the penultimate battle, Martin shows the enemy mercy. He tells Gonff and the Skipper of Otters, "To show them we are not evil. We only want what is ours, and now I think they know we're strong enough to get it. Could you not see, the fight is going out for those soldiers? They are beginning to look as if they need food. Their larders must be just about empty, and only the fear of their cruel Queen keeps them going" (*Mossflower* 391). Martin recognizes that the soldiers are too weak to defend themselves, so he grants them mercy. Skipper and Gonff want to attack the fleeing horde because they cannot defend themselves. As in *Martin the Warrior*, Martin stays his hand, exemplifying mercy and keeping him along the path of the cardinal virtues. Martin displays his leadership skills and the woodlanders defer to him, strengthening his position as a military leader.

Perry Nodelman, in his book *The Hidden Adult-Defining Children's Literature*, states that simple texts imply "an unspoken and much more complex repertoire that amounts to a second hidden text-what I will call the shadow text" (8). In other words, simple texts on the surface offer the children readers exactly what they are looking for: the formula of good winning over bad, easily discoverable themes of love and friendship, and adventure or journey. Jacques wants to present "black and white" morals and give hope to his children readers (Sockey). However, Nodelman goes on to say that "the simpler it is [the text], the more obviously will it

say less than it hints at, demanding an implied reader who knows more and therefore, the more likely it will be that the child reader who can make sense of it will understand more than is actually said” (9). Children’s texts often say more than what is written on the page. Under the surface, there is another text implied, one that is complex and requires the advanced child or adult reader to have more knowledge than the text contains.

On the surface, Jacques’s series offers what he describes in his interviews: an adventure story that presents themes of friendship (Gauch 403). However, the Arthurian influences in the story do require the adult reader to have more knowledge than the text gives. In addition to the Arthurian influences, there is a spiritual reading that requires the adult reader to be aware of Christian (Catholic) sources: Martin the Warrior is not just a hero; he is the spiritual center for the Redwallers. Jacques creates this character to show that secular communities have a spiritual foundation, something or someone to bring them guidance and peace. To present this reading, Jacques introduces a shift in spiritual perspectives of the woodlanders in *Mossflower*. For instance, all the characters believe firmly in the afterlife even though they do not believe in a Creator. The afterlife<sup>17</sup> is first mentioned when Bella of Brookhall welcomes Abbess Germaine to Mossflower. Bella says, “My mother was long ago gone to the gates of Dark Forest” (*Mossflower* 66). In addition, when Martin reaches Salamandastron with his new friends, Gonff, Prince of Mousethieves, Dinny, a young mole, and Log-a-Log, the leader of the river shrews, Boar the Fighter, Bella’s father, makes mention of the Dark Forest several times. During the brief battle at Salamandastron between Boar the Fighter and the sea rats, Boar says “Let Boar take you and your vermin crew to the gates of Dark Forest this night” (*Mossflower* 338). Both the good and bad characters go to the Dark Forest after they die, but Jacques does not mention what happens once they pass through the gates.<sup>18</sup>



Jacques's use of an afterlife is significant because his novels are generally secular.<sup>19</sup> For instance, in *Martin the Warrior*, an afterlife is mentioned once by Felldoh's father: "my son has gone to the silent forest where he'll always be free" (*Martin the Warrior* 329), but the other characters take it as a sign of a grieving father and no one mentions a "silent forest" again. Even Martin the Warrior, who has fewer religious affiliations than the woodlanders living in Mossflower Woods, begins to believe in the "Dark Forest" (*Mossflower* 347). After leaving Salamandastron, Martin encounters an old friend named Timballisto, proclaiming, "I thought you'd gone to the gates of Dark Forest long ago, fighting enemies off outside our caves in the northlands" (*Mossflower* 347). Like the Medieval people, Martin accepts the knowledge of an afterlife, "converting" to the woodlanders' way of thinking. However, Martin's "conversion" is much simpler than that of the Medieval people. He is not forced to believe it is a necessity; he simply chooses to acknowledge an afterlife even though he has no proof.

Furthermore, the woodlanders do not seem at all shocked when Martin begins to communicate with Boar the Fighter as he lies dying on the battlefield. Martin calls out to Boar: "Carry on the sweep of the blade. Up and across, eh, Boar, you old battle beast. Who will wield our swords for us now, warrior?" (*Mossflower* 417). Bella tells the woodlanders that Martin, who is still on the brink of death, is speaking with her father, who died in the battle at Salamandastron, at the gates of Dark Forest. Communication with the dead has not happened in the novels until this moment, but from Bella's reaction, it does not seem to be uncommon. During the Medieval era, near-death experiences and visions held significance for the people. Gwenfair Walters Adams, in her book *Visions in Late Medieval England*, notes that "most [people] never saw below the contours of the mundane, but believed that the more important life was the hidden, mysterious, and eternal one that lurked behind their material, tangible,

perceptible world” (2). Medieval people believed that supernatural occurrences were signs of the mysterious world. For instance, spirits would come from beyond the grave to either “ask for help or to disrupt or warn the living” (Walter Adams 20). These spirits wanted to either warn someone that their eternal soul was in danger or the spirit wanted help to save their own [the spirit’s] eternal soul.

Unlike the Medieval people, the woodlanders do not place any salvific significance on their afterlife and are not seeking heavenly salvation. Instead, they are seeking to regain the land from the tyrant Tsarmina. However, like the Medieval people, the woodlanders do believe in the mysterious and the importance of visions and prophecies. Martin’s near-death experience signifies that he is linked to a world beyond the woodlanders’ own. It is Martin’s experience coupled with the new goal of Abbess Germaine that sways Martin to give up his sword and become a peaceful mouse. He finally obtains peace as Polliken predicts at the end of *Martin the Warrior*. In this way, Martin’s “soul” has been saved from guilt and his past, and his wanderlust has come to an end.

Abbess Germaine’s goal is to bring about an earthly paradise where all can come to find rest and peace. This paradise will be headed up by an order that resembles her own monastic society from Loamhedge. The Abbess and her order have fled the Southern realm because the abbey was struck by “the great sickness” (*Mossflower* 65). During the Medieval Era, the plague was a real concern for larger communities and Germaine says, “Everything it [the plague] touched withered and died” (*Mossflower* 65). Abbess Germaine moves her order to Mossflower, and with the end of the war on Kotir, she brings the woodlanders together in a new mission: bringing peace to the earth which is backed by a warrior caste. According to *Medieval England: An Encyclopedia*, “communities of religious women had not been unknown, often being

organized as double houses for women and men, under the overall control of an abbess” (“Monasticism and the Benedictine Order” 521-522). Germaine’s order mimics this particular monastic society because it is run by an Abbess and has both brothers and sisters within the community. Eventually, Redwall Abbey will have both Abbots and Abbesses but at the beginning, it is run by Abbess Germaine.

However, unlike the Medieval orders, Germaine does not have any interest in heavenly salvation. Instead, like the other woodlanders, she is interested in bringing peace to the land. In *Martin the Warrior*, the woodlanders simply went on their way, leaving behind a symbol of death and destruction after the battle of Marshank. But Germaine wants to build a symbol of hope—an abbey where all can live in peace. She tells Columbine, “The building I am planning will be a real Abbey for all our woodland friends who wish to live there, a peaceful place where all would exist in happiness” (*Mossflower* 407). Germaine is looking for an earthly paradise where everyone will have rest, food, and be free of disease and warfare. But in the interest of the abbey, Germaine calls Martin forth to take on the role of protector in times of need. He is not a member of the Redwall Order but a warrior (knight).

Here, Martin the Warrior’s character begins to resemble the Catholic Saint Martin of Tours (Rostankowski 85). According to MacCulloch, Martin of Tours was “one of the most important saints in Western Latin devotion. An ex-soldier...he abandoned his military career in Gaul (France) to live a life apart from the world. Around him, probably in the year 361, there gathered the West’s first known monastic community at what seems to have been an ancient local cultic site in a marshy valley, now called Ligugé” (312). Martin of Tours gives up his military career to lead the newly-founded community. He becomes the bishop of Gaul and is said to perform several miracles in his lifetime. Like St. Martin of Tours, Martin follows a similar

path as Rostankowski states that “Martin is in some ways similar...[to] St. Martin of Tours, a saint whose burial place became the locus of medieval pilgrimage, who was first a warrior and later entered a monastery” (85). Both Martin of Tours and Martin the Warrior give up their status as warriors and live in monastic societies. Once established at Redwall, Martin becomes the heart of the first monastic society in Mossflower Woods as Tours did in Ligugé. Furthermore, MacCulloch notes that “Ninian or one of his early successors dedicated this church [called White House, *Candida Casa*] in honour of Martin the Gaulish bishop” (314). Martin the Warrior does not have a church named after him, but Jacques does place within the series a St. Ninian Church where Martin’s friend Gonff lives the rest of his life and Cluny the Scourge inhabits later in the series (*Mossflower* 428, *Redwall* 32).

In *Mossflower*, Jacques shifts the workings of the story, moving his characters closer to an established religious organization, but without the understanding of certain religious ideals. Blackford notes that “the monastic community models the formation of a celestial city on earth, with historical roots in the Benedictine order” (92). Germaine’s Abbey will be the perfect example of a celestial city because it will resemble paradise. However, as Rostankowski notes, “Jacques is interested in the trappings of Christianity, but without any religious message” (96). In other words, he uses the trappings of religion but does not seem to delve into the complexities of Christian doctrine because the characters do not recognize God. Therefore, the story upholds secular ideals: wanting earthly peace instead of seeking heavenly salvation, serving one’s community without any ties to a deity or higher power, and offering themes of friendship and having courage in difficult times. But, Martin is more than a secular hero because he becomes the deliverer of the woodlanders; leading them from slavery and war to a paradise. In this way,

Jacques uses Moses's story to lift Martin up to saintly status. Even the secular woodlanders need a spiritual leader to guide them to peace.

In this way, *Mossflower* can be seen as a transitional text between a world with no spiritual affiliations (*Martin the Warrior*) and a world with a superficial connection to the Christian religion (*Redwall*). The world in which the woodlanders are living is slowly changing with the introduction of the monastic society. At the end of *Martin the Warrior*, the woodlanders decide to leave the remnants of Marshank standing as a warning, but in *Mossflower*, the falling of Kotir paves the way for a new society. And at its heart is Martin the Warrior, whose actions and the prophecies about him show that he is meant to be a great influence over the woodlanders. In the sequel to *Mossflower*, *Luke the Warrior*, Martin discovers an old tapestry of his grandfather, which Germaine will have hung in the Great Hall of Redwall Abbey: "Columbine [Gonff's wife] has had a lovely idea: she thinks that the picture might form a centerpiece for a big tapestry" (373). The woodlanders display Martin's likeness to show that he is an important figure to them and the new community of Redwall Abbey because he is a protector of the earthly paradise of Redwall Abbey and has delivered them from the hands of Tsarmina establishing dominance over Mossflower Woods. But Martin becomes not only a symbol of military power but also the focal point of the woodlanders' spirituality with his near-death experience and his vow in *Luke the Warrior* to always protect the abbey after death.

Furthermore, Jacques connects the shifting from dark (Tsarmina's tyranny) to light (Redwall Abbey) with the Biblical story of Moses. He shows this shift through the taking back of the land and converting it to a land flowing with literal milk and honey. In *Mossflower*, Germaine's vision of Redwall will become an earthly paradise connecting the abbey to the promise that is given to Moses from God in the book of Exodus: "And knowing their sorrow, I

am come down to deliver them out of the hands of the Egyptians, and to bring them out of that land into a good and spacious land, into a land that floweth with milk and honey” (*Douay-Rheims* Exodus 3:8). Mossflower Woods is a spacious land where the woodlanders will be delivered from the tyranny of Tsarmina by Martin the Warrior and Abbess Germaine’s order will find a new life far from the desert. In *Redwall*, the character named Cornflower serves the members of the Council and Cluny the Scourge “a bowl of honeyed milk” (52). Blackford states that when Cornflower serves the milk and honey, the utopian paradise becomes overt and “represents not only the rewards of nature but of God, who walks in his garden with Adam just as Father Abbot walks in the abbey orchard with Constance” (94). Blackford shows that Father Abbot in *Redwall* can be seen as a Godlike character, for he surveys the gardens of Redwall with pleasure.

There is no God to deliver the woodlanders from their sorrows because the woodlanders do not recognize any gods. Instead, Jacques places Martin the Warrior in the role of the deliverer, setting him apart from other warriors. For instance, Martin is meant to go and bring back Boar the Fighter. However, Boar is destined to die in battle:

The second night of summer,  
 The second visit since spring  
 The rat from the seas  
 Meets the Lord of the rock,  
 To settle everything (*Mossflower* 328)

This prophecy proclaims that Boar will die in battle with the sea rats and cannot return to deliver the woodlanders from Tsarmina’s tyranny. Instead, it is Martin with his new sword, who will go back to deliver the woodlanders. It is this decision that allows Martin to take on the role of the

deliverer of the woodlanders from the hands of Tsarmina, placing him in a similar role to Moses's deliverance of the Israelites.

Although there is no explicitly Christian message to the story, *Mossflower* is a transitional story between the purely secular *Martin the Warrior* and the superficial religious organization of *Redwall*. Within this text, Jacques presents a shift in the spiritual perspective that brings the woodlanders closer to an established community. He does this by introducing a monastic society that shapes the future of Mossflower Woods. For example, instead of leaving Kotir as a warning for other tyrants, the Abbess Germaine creates a symbol of hope through the ages in her new abbey Redwall. In addition, Jacques's woodland characters have a deeper understanding than the characters in *Martin the Warrior*. For instance, the woodlanders of Mossflower Woods believe in an afterlife called The Dark Forest where the dead can come back to communicate if they want (Martin's near-death experience).

Peter Abelard, a medieval philosopher, created a principle called *Sic et Non* (Yea or Nay). This principle was used mostly to look at scriptural and religious writings to discuss different theological opinions without choosing which is right. Newman uses this principle to show that within Medieval texts, both a secular and religious reading can exist. Though Jacques's goal is not to offer his readers an explicitly religious message, he does use religious rhetoric to help deepen the world of Mossflower. For example, Martin the Warrior's life and journey remains secular and Arthurian with his quest to restore his father's broken sword and his code of honor leading him on the path of the cardinal virtues. However, Martin's deliverance of the woodlanders from the tyrant of Tsarmina aligns him with the story of Moses leading the people to the promised land: Redwall. From this defeat, earthly paradise is gained by the

woodlanders. For these reasons, Martin becomes the symbol of hope and power for the Redwallers, effectively becoming the epicenter of Redwall's spiritual life.



## CHAPTER 3

SAINTS' CULTS IN BRIAN JACQUES'S *REDWALL*

By the early Middle Ages, the Catholic Church had become the epicenter of the Christian religion in Western Europe, holding power, status, influence, land, and money. However, it took the church several centuries to establish itself. MacCulloch notes that “the eighth and ninth centuries were a period in which the papacy was intent on asserting its dignity and special place in God’s purpose,” especially since the church’s position was fragile, situated as it was amid secular powers in Italy (344). In its effort to establish itself, the Catholic Church looked to the past. MacCulloch notes that the Church traced its authority to the Apostles Peter and Paul and one church leader, Clement, protested that a congregation in Corinth (part of the Eastern Orthodox Church) was “endangering a God-given line of authority from the Apostles, who first preached the Gospel which they received directly from Jesus, himself ‘sent from God’” (MacCulloch 132). Clement believed that the overthrow of the Church leaders was a threat against God’s authority, and therefore the Church’s traditions and identity were threatened. The leaders of the Church were worried about their reputation, and if their authority was threatened then it would show local ministries that the Church was not as influential as it appeared to be (MacCulloch 132).

MacCulloch goes on to say that “the ninth to eleventh centuries were a golden age for monasteries of the [Benedictine] rule; the survival of European civilization would have been inconceivable without monasteries and nunneries” (358). The life presented to the public in a monastery was structured and seemed “like the City of God: an image of Heaven” (MacCulloch 359) whereas the political atmosphere of Western Europe was rife with uncertainties with the death of Charlemagne. The structure of the monasteries allowed the laypeople to believe that

those living in a monastery were closer to God. However, the laypeople believed that it was harder to gain salvation in the ordinary world due to this development (MacCulloch 359). While monasteries gained popularity and influence, so too the notion that saints could intervene on behalf of the people. MacCulloch notes that the Church needed “to recognize a myriad of courtiers who would intercede with their imperial Saviour for ordinary humans seeking salvation or help in their everyday lives” because images of Christ resembled a monarch and the Church created a hierarchy with the saints and angels which resembled the Court of Constantinople during the fourth century (309). Up until the fourth century, saints were only those martyred during the persecution times, but the “people needed patrons in this world to get things done or merely to survive, and it was natural for them to assume that they would need them in the next world too” (MacCulloch 309). It was natural then for the laypeople who could not enter monasteries to begin worshipping saints and making pilgrimages to designated shrines and/or places of worship thus creating saints’ cults. Eventually, monasteries began to capitalize on the popularity of saints by commissioning their churches as holders of relics and/or places that a specific saint has visited after death to perform miracles.

In addition to holding relics, Susan J. Ridyard, in her book *Royal Saints of Anglo-Saxon England*, notes that “the success of the shrine was dependent upon continuing effective publicity, and the dependence generated a specialized literature whose function was to document the earthly career of the individual and to demonstrate the authenticity and efficacy of the relics there venerated” (8). The literature of the saints’ lives allowed the cult of saints to thrive and spread their message to others.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, Hutton notes that the cult of saints “represented the most active centers of devotion for many, if not most, ordinary people. Just as the pagan deities of the Graeco-Roman world (and perhaps of the entire ancient world) had done, the saints of medieval

England commonly functioned as patrons and protectors of particular human activities and aspects of the natural environment” (242). Catholic saints were similar to the pagan deities because they offered a connection to the supernatural world and were more accessible to the people than God. Saints’ cults became popular throughout Western Europe. Lastly, Bloch notes that “From the patron saints, whose aid they [community leaders] went to invoke, they expected for their subjects, as well as for themselves, not only the promise of rewards in heaven but the riches of the earth as well” (84). The patron saints were meant to offer pleas on behalf of the sinner and to help aid in their worldly needs as well.

When exploring Brian Jacques’s *Redwall* series, critics Rostankowski, Bradford, and Blackford note that Jacques’s Redwall community is modeled after a Medieval monastic society, with the “Redwall mice [symbolizing] peace as a cultural value” (Blackford 89), “travelers are welcomed and fed, clothed if need be, attended to in the infirmary if they are injured or ill, and permitted to stay as long as they wish” (Rostankowski 86), and where “the sandstone house, with its cloisters, bell tower, Great Hall and infirmary, houses a utopian community whose members vow to ‘heal the sick,’” (Bradford 151). Despite the monastic terms, formal religion is not seen in the text. Rostankowski states in a note that “Jacques is interested in the trappings of Christianity, but without the religious message” (96). The Redwallers pray for the seasons and at meals, but the Redwallers “have no awareness of the God their activities were formulated to venerate, at least as formulated among humans” (Rostankowski 89). Due to this, the Redwallers can be seen as superficial and naïve because they do not believe in heavenly salvation nor do they recognize any religion or god. However, the Redwallers believe in Martin the Warrior, patron, and founder of Redwall Abbey and, in return for their belief, Martin protects the abbey and the Redwallers are rewarded with an earthly paradise.

Martin has become the Patron Saint throughout *Redwall* and *Mattimeo* who guides the Redwallers in their earthly needs. As Martin takes on this new role, Jacques employs religious rhetoric, shifting the fictional world to make it more spiritually aware than in the other novels. For instance, throughout the novels *Martin the Warrior*, *Mossflower*, and *Luke the Warrior*, Jacques has positioned Martin the Warrior in the role as protector of those who is weaker and in danger. In *Martin the Warrior*, Martin exemplifies the cardinal virtues, setting him apart from other warriors like Felldoh. In addition, the prophecies of Boar the Fighter and Pollekin mark Martin as destined for greatness. But, Pollekin's prophecy mostly goes unnoticed because the characters are only somewhat aware of its significance. In *Mossflower*, there is a shift in the spiritual perspective, and Martin and friends become more aware of a spiritual world with the belief in an afterlife. But in *Redwall* and *Mattimeo*, the Redwallers are aware of Martin's presence and experience "miracles" where Martin's spirit awakens.

Upon giving up the way of the warrior, Martin vows that if Redwall is ever in need of a warrior, one will be called forth to follow in Martin's footsteps: "But Redwall in its hour of need, /Will bring forth one to follow me, /To that one, valiant in deed, I leave a Warrior's legacy" (*Luke the Warrior* 374). Martin will not allow the newly built Redwall Abbey to fall into the hands of tyrants. His vow becomes part of the Redwall history, and travelers begin to make pilgrimages to partake in the splendor of the abbey and to see the tapestry that hangs in the Great Hall of Redwall Abbey. In this way, Redwall begins to not only model a monastic society but one that has been converted into a saints' cult. For example, at the beginning of *Martin the Warrior*, Brome's daughter Aubretia says, "Today as we walked through your beautiful Abbey we saw a tapestry...I immediately recognized the mouse pictured there, Martin the Warrior. As I understand it he is the guiding spirit of this place and one of his founders" (6). Aubrietia has

heard the legends of the abbey and word has spread that Martin's spirit has come back to guide the Redwallers. Abbot Saxtus confirms this by saying, "Martin has always been here to guide us in times of trouble. His presence was felt when two of our young ones, Dandin and Mariel, were here" (*Martin the Warrior* 6). Dandin and Mariel are called by Martin to protect the abbey from an outside threat, which awakens within them Martin's spirit and boosts the abbey's reputation as a stronghold for military power and earthly paradise. In addition, Abbot Saxtus' words show that Martin is a revered mouse who grants guidance for the Redwallers way of life, which makes him worthy of their worship.

The Redwallers do not give Martin physical gifts in return for his interference in their lives. Instead, they worship him by praying to him, believing in him, and by doing acts in his name. For instance, in the novel, *Mattimeo*, Matthias's son Matty speaks freely to Martin's likeness in the Great Hall. He says, "I could feel you watching me, Martin... I can't explain things properly to him [Matthias]. You're different Martin. You understand how I feel" (*Mattimeo* 32). Matty believes that Martin is listening to his concerns and tells Martin that he will be a better mouse (*Mattimeo* 32). Matty's speaking to the image of Martin is a form of prayer. In this way, Matty recognizes that Martin is not gone. The narrator notes that Martin listens: "The smile upon the face of the tapestry warrior seemed to be gentler as the immobile eyes watched the small habit-clad figure" (*Mattimeo* 33). Martin's image becomes animated as it watches Matty make his way out of Great Hall.

According to Gwenfair Walter Adams, in her book *Visions in Late Medieval England*, "visions in which saints' images were animated gave added weight to the idea that the saints' presence resided in a special way near their shrines, relics, or images" (Walter Adams 76). To have a vision of a saint becoming animated strengthened the peoples' faith in the saints. Matty

may not see Martin's image become animated in this scene, but he feels empowered speaking to Martin and is ready to do penance for fighting. Furthermore, Martin becomes animated in the visions of Matthias. For example, in *Mattimeo*, Matthias and his friends are trapped in a cave after pursuing Slagar the Cruel, who has captured the young of Redwall. Matthias dreams that he is in the Great Hall: "He knew where he was going: to see Martin the Warrior. Yes, there he was, the great Founder Warrior and Champion of Redwall, standing proudly in the center of his tapestry. Matthias was not at all surprised when Martin stepped out of the woven cloth and confronted him... 'A warrior who sleeps in time of danger is no warrior but a coward!'" (*Mattimeo* 178-179). In this vision, Martin comes to warn Matthias (the warrior) that if he does not act soon, he will die in the cave. It is also interesting to note that, again, the image of Martin has become animated. Matthias's belief that Martin is with him is reinforced when Martin steps out of the tapestry.

In addition, saints can become animated when action is taken against them (Walter Adams 78). For instance, in *Redwall*, Matthias hears Martin calling him in a dream. In the dream, Matthias sees "a figure leaning out from the wall. It was a mouse in armor" (*Redwall* 73). Martin's spirit is forced to appear when Cluny the Scourge sends a rat named Shadow to steal the image of Martin the Warrior. Once again, the faith that Martin is with the abbey is strengthened because he is calling out for help to Matthias. Martin also comes to other woodlanders (i.e. Cornflower, Abbot Alf) and their enemies in dreams (visions). Jacques does use visions in *Martin the Warrior*, with Pollekin's prophecies, but she does not know where they come from. However, in *Redwall* and *Mattimeo*, the Redwallers know that the visions come from Martin the Warrior. He actively comes to his followers in times of need, leading them to important clues or pushing them into action.

According to Walter Adams, “visions were events that were believed to involve direct encounters with or communications from the supernatural world” (2). Visions mostly involved religious communications about heaven, hell, and purgatory from spirits from beyond the grave. However, when “saints returned to the world after their deaths, they did so as part of a relationship that they maintained with their supplicants” (63-64). In other words, saints appeared to those who were devoted and humble and could give aid or intercede with God on behalf of the devotee. Martin returns to aid the Redwallers in times of need and to protect the earthly paradise by calling forth a warrior. He intercedes on their behalf strengthening their belief that he is with them.

Furthermore, Martin does not limit his interactions to his followers. In *Redwall*, Martin comes to the dreams of Cluny the Scourge as a warning:

Again, the mouse warrior armed with his ancient sword returned to haunt Cluny’s fevered dreams. Once more he was falling from the plank on the Abbey wall, falling, falling... He tried to twist away from them as he fell, but however much he swerved and tried to change direction, Cluny had only to look down and see the fierce-eyed warrior mouse—waiting, always waiting, the sword held point upwards for him to be impaled upon (*Redwall* 125).

Martin’s spirit haunts Cluny with predictions of his downfall, which drives Cluny to madness. In addition, Martin also visits the magpie seer Mangiz in *Mattimeo*. Martin does not predict Mangiz’s death but blocks Mangiz’s visions. When asked about his visions, Mangiz says, “No, the strange thing is that my vision is clouded. The eye within my mind has been blurred since we came here today. Whatever I try to see becomes difficult. It is an earthcrawler, a mouse dressed strangely; he carries a sword and seems to bar my visions” (*Mattimeo* 207). Martin intervenes to

help the Redwallers stop their enemies from gaining control of the abbey. Martin the Warrior is the heart of the abbey; he is a protector, patron, and founder of the earthly paradise that is Redwall. It is not surprising then that some of the young ones want to be like Martin the Warrior. He is the hero, who has freed Mossflower Woods from Queen Tsarmina and protects the abbey still. As seen above, Matty wants to be a warrior like him, and, even as a young mouse, Matthias wanted to be Martin the Warrior.

However, visions and dreams of Martin were rare occurrences since the time of Mariel and Dandin. Nevertheless, the tapestry that hangs in the Great Hall is a “symbol for Redwall’s authority” because it “glorifies the rise of Redwall as a warring power” (Blackford 89).<sup>21</sup> Despite their peaceful outlook, Redwall’s power is backed by a Warrior’s caste that will rise to defend what the abbey claims as its own. Blackford states that Jacques criticizes “his ‘mice of peace’ by suggesting that they embody a feudal Order comprised of land ownership, resources, lineage, military fervor, and weaponry, all of which allow the Redwall mice to imagine themselves the ‘right’ species that can dictate the states of lesser species and classes” (Blackford 91). The Order of Redwall does have power over Mossflower Woods because they have a connection to Martin the Warrior. Abbot Mortimer tells Matthias that the abbey was founded when Martin “forsook the way of the warrior and hung up his sword. That was when our Order found its true vocation. All the mice took a solemn vow never to harm another living creature unless it was an enemy that sought to harm our Order by violence” (*Redwall* 15-16). The Order has based its rule over Mossflower on the vow to offer peace and healing.

The abbey’s rise in military power suggests a secular outlook despite the religious rhetoric surrounding Martin the Warrior. Jacques even comments that “Redwall is actually a secular institution, whose leader, the Abbot or Abbess is a figure of experience and wisdom sort



of the heart and historical repository of a *community* and very much a kind and loving father or mother to all the people in his or her care” (Sockey). The Abbot and/ or Abbess oversees the community, which suggests that Jacques uses the religious trappings for outward appearances. A community that has spiritual beliefs, but is, in fact, a warring power, connects Redwall Abbey to the fighting monks of the twelfth century. During the crusades in the High Middle Ages, two groups of fighting monks were founded: The Knights Templar and the Order of the Hospital. According to Malcolm Barber in his book *The Trail of the Temple*, “the potency of this ideal of ‘fighting monks’ in the twelfth century is illustrated by the addition of military functions to the Order of the Hospital” (7). In addition, the Templars “were given ecclesiastical and jurisdiction privileges by the secular monarchies of the Holy Lands” (Barber i). In other words, the two groups were supposed to help give aid to those fighting in the Crusades and to protect the main roads.

Like the Templars, Jacques’s Redwall Abbey holds land and spiritual power over the surrounding areas. But according to Rostankowski, “the struggle to overcome evil has no salvific significance beyond the mundane and the practical” (89). The Redwallers are not fighting for heavenly salvation and to reclaim lands in the name of a god. Instead, they are fighting to protect their own utopian paradise, and Martin appears before the Redwallers to intercede for this paradise. Without the salvific significance, the overall story remains secular; however, the use of religious rhetoric (specifically Christian) is used to describe the utopian paradise. Blackford points out for instance that Cornflower was serving “milk and honey” to the Redwall council when they meet Cluny the Scourge. The use of “milk and honey” invokes the language of Eden and the promise that is given to Moses by God in Exodus. Redwall has become an earthly paradise, while war, famine, and disease have become obsolete for Redwall and Martin’s

presence lays dormant unneeded. In this time, Redwall has not only worshipped Martin but uses his history to “convert” their message as a peaceful and Edenic society because Martin is held with esteem.

The religious rhetoric continues with the images of heaven and hell and the invoking of “I am” from Exodus. Cluny the Scourge exclaims, “Did you not see the faces of those mice today? The mere mention of Martin the Warrior sends them into ecstasies. Don’t you see, he is their symbol. His name is the same to those mice as mine does to the horde... Martin is some sort of angel” (*Redwall* 64). Cluny believes that if he takes the likeness of Martin, the Redwallers will lose all faith in Martin and be helpless because Martin is an “omen” of goodness (*Redwall* 64). Furthermore, Cluny recognizes that Redwall is, in fact, a cult when he says that Martin’s name sends the mice into a frenzy. The Redwallers feel connected to Martin as a symbol of hope, and Cluny realizes that he can use it to his advantage. In effect, with Martin’s presence gone, the spirit of the abbey is shaken: “Yet, when I saw the late rose this morning, I could not help but notice that its leaves are all shriveled; the tiny rosebuds have died” (*Redwall* 77). Abbot Mortimer’s words confirm that the land is shriveling and dying without the warmth of Martin the Warrior’s spirit showing that Martin is the heart of the abbey. Without him, the Redwallers feel empty and alone and the land reflects that emptiness.

Within *Redwall*, Jacques has created a dialogue between the religious rhetoric and the secular community. Redwall is not a religious institution because the Redwallers do not believe in the Judeo-Christian God despite being based around the Medieval Christian way of life. Instead, the Redwallers are spiritual beings. According to the Dalai Lama in his work *Ethics for the New Millennium*, spirituality is “concerned with those qualities of the human spirit—such as love and compassion, patience, tolerance, forgiveness, happiness both to self and others. While

the ritual and prayer, along with the question of *nirvana* and salvation, are directly connected to religion and faith, these inner qualities need not be, however” (22). In other words, one can be spiritual believing in the virtues and being a good person without the rituals of religion. The Redwallers do believe in these universal truths despite not having religious connections. In this way, their spirituality is secular for they do not follow religious doctrine. However, the Redwallers do have a connection to the supernatural world through the spirit of Martin the Warrior.<sup>22</sup>

Martin as Patron Saint is the symbol of Redwall’s power and hope for an earthly paradise. Blackford notes that alongside the language of Eden, Redwall also shares a connection to the abbey of Cluny that was “beholden to its patron saint rather than an earthly ruler” and that “Cluny amassed property and held its own during a time of instability” (92). In addition, Cluny forces the surrounding people to help support their military order, which “seems to invoke the dangerously thin line between utopia and feudal, military power over the woodlands” (Blackford 92). Redwall, like Cluny Abbey, blurs the line between peaceful utopia and feudal military power. In addition, Redwall is not beholden to an earthly ruler but to its Patron Saint. Martin’s spirit is active within the community of Redwall, and each time he appears to an enemy or his followers, it is a tactful advantage for the Redwallers to gain military control.

For example, it is because of Martin’s visions to Mangiz, that the Redwallers have a chance to come up with a plan to scare the birds trying to take over the abbey. By dressing in the armor of Martin the Warrior, Cornflower is able to create fear in the birds because Mangiz’s visions are haunted by the “mouse from the big cloth!” (*Mattimeo* 322). Those who believe in Martin feel empowered by his presence, and like the Medieval people, the Redwallers are given proof of their beliefs, which makes their faith in Martin stronger. Not only does Martin lead their

spiritual life, but Blackford notes that “the voice of the warrior undermines the words and authority of Father Abbot talking back to the Father of Peace” (90). Blackford calls Abbot Mortimer the “Father of Peace,” which “signifies peace and a pastoral sensibility, a wise experienced ruler. On the other hand, he symbolizes the link between status and the greedy pleasure of enjoying status” (95). In other words, Abbot Mortimer stands for Redwall’s identity as a peaceful but privileged nation, but, Martin, who is the founder of the abbey, undermines Abbot Mortimer’s authority, shattering the utopian paradise and replacing it with a military order.<sup>23</sup> However, military control is not the Redwallers’ goal in their struggle against their enemies. The goal is to return to earthly paradise and in fact, each enemy brings the community closer together; breaking down hierarchies and strengthening friendships despite the reestablishment of the warrior caste.

Although there is a shift from utopia to the military order, Martin remains central. Mortimer had once used Martin’s history to keep Matthias in line, but now it is Martin who takes the lead, calling forth Matthias to stand and fight against the outsiders. Blackford notes that Matthias does this by going after Martin the Warrior’s sword: “Thus his [Matthias’s] maturity is equated with the quest for the most powerful weapon that will symbolize ‘the warrior’s way’ the ability to threaten those with fewer resources” (97). Matthias’s quest for Martin’s sword helps establish the shift from peaceful utopia to a military order. Martin is used to fight for paradise, but unlike in Christian doctrine, the paradise is earthly. By finding the sword, Matthias will take his rightful place in the Warrior’s caste. However, Matthias cannot make this journey alone because he is not a seasoned warrior like Martin. Despite his innate ability to lead (Blackford 96), Matthias has no training in fighting others and needs to be guided by Martin in the way of the warrior because Matthias has been chosen by Martin to free Redwall from Cluny’s influence.

With this shift in outlook, religious rhetoric continues with the introduction of the Exodus' "I am." Jacques uses the "I am" as a connection between Martin and Matthias, which is left on the Great Hall wall:

Who says that I am dead  
 Knows nought at all  
 I-am that is,  
 Two mice within Redwall  
 The Warrior Sleeps  
 'Twixt Hall and Cavern Hole  
 I-am that is,  
 Take on my mighty role.  
 Look for the sword  
 In moonlight streaming forth,  
 At night, when day's first hour  
 Reflects the North  
 From o'er the threshold  
 Seek and you will see;  
 I-am that is,  
 My sword will wield for me (*Redwall* 128).

As Blackford notes, this prophecy shows that Martin is going to protect the abbey from all forms of harm. In addition, she also points out that this prophecy invokes the voice of God in Exodus with the use of "I am" (Blackford 98). In Exodus, God identifies himself as I am to Moses. Similarly, Martin identifies himself as "I- am that is." This anagram of "am that is" spells

Matthias's name. Therefore, the line reads "I- Matthias." The use of "I am" aligns Martin with the righteousness of the Judeo-Christian God.

Jacques employs the religious rhetoric of the cosmic battle of good against evil in *Mattimeo* as well. The villain Malkariss has set up his kingdom in the underground remains of Loamhedge. His follower Nadaz uses religious language to describe both himself and Malkariss. He says:

Malkariss, Ruler of the pit,  
 Lord of the deep and dark,  
 I am Nadaz, the Voice of the Host,  
 To which your servants hark.  
 Hear me, O Ruler of eternal night,  
 Whose eyes see all we do,  
 King of the void beneath the earth,  
 We bring our pleas to you" (*Mattimeo* 53).

Phrases like "eternal night" and "Ruler of the pit" associate Malkariss and his kingdom with Hell, and "the Voice of the Host" is a perversion of a Catholic priest. A Catholic priest is in charge of the host (Eucharist) during the time of Communion and oversees the spirituality of his congregation. Nadaz functions in a similar way: he looks after Malkariss's community of followers and prays to Malkariss. Malkariss's identity as "Ruler of the Pit" is the direct opposite of Martin's "I am," just as is Cluny's identity as the "God of War." Once again, Matthias must enter the darkness, a form of hell. However, unlike in *Redwall*, Matthias brings forth the children into the light and to paradise. In both cases, Martin's "I am" triumphs over the pagan Cluny and the devil Malkariss. Since Martin is dead, he sends forth Matthias, his champion to fight against

these evils once again aligning Redwall Abbey with the righteousness of the Judeo-Christian God. If the abbey is associated with this righteousness, then Martin becomes a Catholic authority. He then guides the Redwallers to victory over enemies who would bring eternal darkness and destroy the earthly paradise of Redwall Abbey.

In addition, Matthias experiences a “religious” transformation in *Redwall* when he lifts the sword from the tree roots of Asmodeus’s lair. The narrator states that,

Matthias lifted the ancient sword down. Reverently he placed both paws around the handle. Tighter and tighter he gripped it until the point lifted from the floor and the bright blade stood out level in front of him. He sensed how Martin must have felt each time he had held this beautiful weapon. The young mouse knew that he had been born for this moment, his grip causing the tremor of the steel to run through his entire body” (*Redwall* 309).

Matthias feels the power of the blade coursing through him as he becomes one with Martin, embracing the call “I am.” (Blackford 98).<sup>24</sup> Matthias accepts the weight of his destiny at this moment, knowing that he was chosen to be more than a monk (brother) in the Order of Redwall. In addition, by claiming the sword as his own, Matthias fulfills his quest and can now return home, transformed and renewed echoing Martin’s grasping of the blade in *Mossflower*. This moment reflects Arthurian legend because having and gaining the sword sets Matthias apart as a warrior. However, over the centuries, warriorhood has become associated with threatening others and their possessions. For example, Matthias believes that it is fair to threaten the weaker sparra (Jacques’s word for sparrow) Warbeak. Like Felldoh or Skipper of Otters in *Martin the Warrior* and *Mossflower*, Matthias’s actions are not heroic. Instead, he exerts his might and shows a “shift from governance with wise words to leadership with weapons as growing up, suggesting that

growing up means leaving behind the childhood innocence of the pastoral and embracing military manhood” (Blackford 96). Redwall is supposed to stand for peace and community, but Matthias threatens someone who is in his way showing that Redwall will do what it must in order to defeat its enemies, recalling the conflict in *Martin the Warrior*.

However, Matthias is young and impressionable and must learn what it is to be a true warrior. He has been called to a destiny based on an obsolete code of honor, which Martin had throughout his journey, but Matthias does not. Therefore, Matthias’s quest to gain Martin’s sword (power), must be about him finding his own code of honor. Matthias’s behavior does not exemplify the cardinal virtues, and though he is a natural leader, Matthias does not have any experience in the art of war because he has grown up in a loving and peaceful place. It is not until Matthias is an adult mouse with a family in *Mattimeo* that he masters being a true warrior. During the interview for episode thirteen of the show *Redwall*, Brian Jacques states, “Martin the Warrior is a warrior born. Matthias was the little mouse who had to learn to be a warrior” (“Character Spotlight on Mattimeo”). Matthias has to learn to be a warrior by following the example of Martin, who as seen in Chapter 1 exemplifies the cardinal virtues.

It is not surprising then when the time comes for Matthias to stand against the adder Asmodeus that his own strength deserts him and is replaced by fear as he stares into the eyes of Asmodeus. In the Bible, the devil goes by many names, one of which is Asmodeus. Jacques comments that “I was looking in the Bible... it had the names of Satan... all the names of Satan. It had..eh...Lucifer, Beelzebub, Lord of the Flies, Prince of Darkness. And then it had ‘Asmodeus’” (“How Do You Come Up with the Character’s Strange Names?”). In addition, the *Catholic Encyclopedia* notes that Asmodeus means “‘to destroy’: so that the being would correspond to the demon called Abaddon, the Destroyer in the Apocalypse 9:11”



(“Asmodeus”).<sup>25</sup> Marian Copeland in her article “Crossover Animal Fantasy Series: Crossing Cultural and Species as Well as Age Boundaries” notes that “careful readers will find Asmodeus also defined as one of nature’s ‘efficient undertakers’” (292). Matthias has entered the lair of a devil and to return to the light, he must retrieve Martin’s sword. At this moment, the spirit of Martin comes to Matthias and says, “I am that is! Matthias, why do you sleep! There is a warrior’s work to be done here! Pick up your sword, Matthias!... Strike out for me now, my brave young champion!” (*Redwall* 320). Martin comes to break Matthias from the power of Asmodeus and to bring him up from the darkness. Martin becomes Christlike and rescues Matthias from the pit of Asmodeus. Asmodeus traps Matthias with his persuasive ways, and Martin must pull Matthias out of his trance into the light to be transformed by Martin.

The warrior must be ready to battle those who are considered a threat to the earthly paradise of Redwall Abbey. Blackford notes that “Matthias’s rebirth into a larger-than-life status once he has fought the adder suggests his participation in a cosmic, archetypal battle of good against evil, aligning his triumph with the triumph of God over the adder, who the narrator describes as a pathway to eternity, and the pagan Cluny, ‘God of War’ (*Redwall* 8)” (98). In other words, Matthias’s victory over Asmodeus is, in fact, a victory over the devil. Therefore, his defeat of the devil aligns him with God’s righteousness. In addition, Blackford remarks that because Jacques describes Matthias as “larger than life” and “suddenly reborn” that Matthias has in effect “become a divine being, reborn from his travel into the underground (hell) of the adder’s den, suggesting not a wise regard of the sword but an appreciation of *his own* power to penetrate the very earth with the sharp point of his weapon” (98). Indeed, Matthias does relish his own power, forgetting that the power comes from Martin the Warrior. However, Matthias is not divine, only divinely inspired by Martin, though at this moment, Matthias may believe he is a

divine being. As noted before, it is not until Matthias is an adult mouse that he becomes wise in regard to the sword.

Nevertheless, Matthias receives a warning similar to Martin's when he obtains the sword. Squire Julian Gingivere, the descendant of Gingivere Greeneyes from *Mossflower*, tells Matthias:

It contains no secret spell, nor holds within its blade any magical power. This sword is made for only one purpose, to kill. It will only be as good or evil as the one who wields it. I know that you intend to use it only for the good of your Abbey, Matthias; do so, but never allow yourself to be tempted into using it in a careless or idle way. It would inevitably cost you your life, or that of your dear ones. Martin the Warrior uses the sword only for right and good. This is why it has become a symbol of power to Redwall. Knowledge is gained through wisdom, my friend. Use the sword wisely. (*Redwall* 322)

Matthias must learn that true power comes from the warrior and not the weapon, linking him more closely with Martin. However, unlike Martin, Matthias relishes his own power, conveniently forgetting what Julian has just said. But the lesson is not lost on him forever, for when Matthias's son, Matty, begins to delight in his father's strength, Matthias sets him straight. He says, the sword "does not make you a warrior merely because you carry it. Weapons may be carried by creatures who are evil, dishonest, violent or lazy. The true Warrior is good, gentle and honest. His bravery comes from within himself; he learns to conquer his own fears and misdeeds" (*Mattimeo* 30). Matthias echoes Julian here, showing that he has learned what Martin knew from experience: that the weapon is only an extension of oneself. It does make one a

warrior because anyone can carry a weapon. The warrior follows a code and has to learn to live with his deeds, good and bad, but the warrior should strive to do right by all creatures.

All in all, Martin the Warrior is the spiritual center of the Redwallers, taking on the role of Patron Saint to Redwall Abbey and granting power to the reborn Warrior caste. He is the only divine entity in the series because he comes back from the dead to guide and protect Redwall. He also becomes one with Matthias at the end of *Redwall* and like Christ, calls forth followers to become champions for him. However, Christ calls forth his followers to be champions of Christianity by spreading the good news, believing in Christ, and heavenly salvation. With no God and no reference to heavenly salvation, Jacques uses religious rhetoric to establish an earthly paradise. Martin's champions fight for earthly justice and utopian peace for Redwall Abbey and the surrounding areas. In this way, Martin becomes Christlike and displays more saintly behavior.

For instance, Martin fills Matthias with strength in the lair Asmodeus, and in the final battle, Jacques blurs the lines between Matthias and Martin. Cluny, who has gone mad, believes he is seeing a phantom (Martin). Matthias responds, "I am that is! Martin, Matthias, call me what you will" (*Redwall* 342). Here Martin becomes one with Matthias for the second time. Blackford notes that Jacques could be suggesting that Martin is reincarnated in Matthias to "exemplify a new kind of fatherhood, in which fathers command by innate rather than experienced skill" (96). Martin being reincarnated in Matthias is the ultimate overthrow of Abbot Mortimer's authority, ushering in new leadership, the inexperienced Matthias. On the other hand, Martin enters Matthias, like the Holy Ghost is said to enter a follower of Jesus, filling him/her with the power of the Judeo-Christian God. Therefore, when Cluny faces Matthias, he comes face to face with the power of Martin. In addition, the TV show *Redwall* interprets this moment as Martin and

Matthias speaking as one but remaining separate entities echoing the Trinity. Martin is not reincarnated physically but spiritually by entering Martin.

Therefore, Redwall becomes the epicenter for spiritual activity surrounding the reawakening of Martin the Warrior's spirit despite the secular nature of the Redwallers. While Redwall sheds its utopian nature to become a military order, Martin's spirit works within the Redwallers to help them fight in the battle of good and evil. However, the Redwallers do not recognize an afterlife nor do they see the significance in the battles, despite worshiping Martin and creating a "saints' cult" around his image in the Great Hall. In the view of Christianity, the Redwallers' spirituality remains secular. Nevertheless, Martin's "I am" is triumphantly propelling the Redwallers to victory and aligning them with the Judeo-Christian God, even as their quests and overall way of living is secular (earthly). Thus, in *Redwall* and *Mattimeo*. as in *Mossflower*, Jacques employs religious rhetoric about the cosmic battle of good versus evil that is supplemented by the Redwallers' spirituality and its decidedly secular world.

## CONCLUSION

Modern writers often use the Middle Ages in their stories to comment on contemporary issues and ideas. Clare Bradford notes that writers explore “concepts of nationhood affiliation, gender identity, [and] religious identity” (9) by setting their stories in past eras. In addition, Bradford notes that writers use “medievalist fantasy narratives” (9) as their medium of choice because “medieval settings and narratives often provide a distancing perspective which enables the treatment of contemporary values and practices” (8). In doing so, writers create a distance between the past and the present allowing contemporary issues to be addressed and critiqued, especially in children’s literature. Authors such as J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis used aspects of Medieval society to create their famous tales while addressing themes of religious and national identity.

Likewise, throughout his *Redwall* series, Brian Jacques uses Medieval tropes and ethos to spin a good yarn. For example, Jacques uses quests to allow his characters to grow and/or find their identities. However, throughout *Martin the Warrior*, Martin’s quest for his father’s sword allows him the chance to master the cardinal virtues: prudence, temperance, justice, and fortitude. He does this by following his father’s code of honor, which Jacques models after Arthur’s Pentecostal Oath, and by experiencing new communities with different ethical backgrounds. For instance, Martin and his friends meet the Warden, who could easily eat them as rescue them from the lizards. Martin finds the Warden’s ways unsettling but recognizes that the Warden is a necessary ally in finding their way out of the swampland. In addition, Jacques creates a foil for Martin: Felldoh, who is a strong warrior. But, where Martin excels at displaying his honorable ethics, Felldoh fails to uphold honorable intentions. Jacques uses Felldoh to show that characters who are “good” are not always morally right. In other words, Felldoh’s character

is not black and white. He begins with good intentions: to free the slaves from Marshank, but he becomes so consumed rage and hatred for Badrang that he becomes morally compromised.

Rostankowski believes that Jacques's series is morally problematic because the characters have no recognition of religious motivation, like seeking heavenly salvation, for their good deeds (90). However, Jacques's series does have the spiritual motivation and is not morally problematic. Jacques has created a "divine" character, Martin the Warrior, to lead the Redwallers and to protect the earthly paradise of Redwall. Jacques uses the trappings of Christianity to create his *Redwall* series, but the story remains secular. But, *Martin the Warrior* is the only text that remains secular. There is no religious rhetoric mentioned, instead, Jacques uses Arthurian rhetoric (codes of honor and the cardinal virtues) to ground his characters. Nevertheless, the characters in *Martin the Warrior* are not without motivation for their ethics. Instead of seeking salvation from the Christian God, they seek the promise of earthly paradise, which fuels their desire to stop Badrang. However, the woodlanders in *Martin the Warrior* do not establish paradise when they conquer Marshank because the land has been tainted by death and destruction.

Instead, Jacques uses this text to establish a code of conduct that will be passed down to the warriors following in Martin's footsteps, as well as setting up Martin as the deliverer of the woodlanders in *Mossflower*. Martin is able to become the deliverer of Mossflower Woods because he embodies the cardinal virtues and is swayed from the path of death by Rose. In other words, Martin chooses to fight for peace because he is given a chance to experience true happiness and paradise in the utopian society Noonvale. So, when he comes to Mossflower Woods, Martin chooses to fight once again to free the woodlanders from the tyrant Tsarina. However, in *Mossflower*, Jacques begins to shift the spiritual perspectives of the woodlanders.

For instance, the woodlanders of Mossflower Woods believe in an afterlife known as the Dark Forest where it is possible to communicate with the dead. This is significant because Martin the Warrior has a near-death experience where he goes to the gates of Dark Forest, confirming that it exists, and speaks to Boar the Fighter. In addition, Jacques introduces the monastic society lead by Abbess Germaine, who in the wake of Kotir's desolation, founds a community based on monastic rhetoric. Nevertheless, *Mossflower* tries to remain strictly secular, with its continuation of the Arthurian ethos and the quest for Martin's sword. Martin travels to Salamandastron to bring back Boar the Fighter, who forges a new sword for Martin, who returns to Mossflower in place of Boar. Martin gaining a new sword places him an Arthurian role because he becomes the hero of the story keeping the story secular.

Overall, Jacques's characters remain secular throughout the series because they do not recognize any established religion and its gods, nor do they seek eternal salvation. Even Jacques states that his series is meant to be secular, but Jacques fails in his writing to be secular. The use of religious rhetoric and Martin becoming a Saint is used to comment on the religious and political standings of his native England. According to Rob Freathy and Stephen G. Parker, in their article "Secularists, Humanists and Religious Education: Religious Crisis and Curriculum change in England 1963-1975", states that

the Second World War was frequently portrayed by British clerics and politicians as a spiritual and moral crisis threatening the Christian foundations of civilization, freedom, and democracy. Such rhetoric was repeatedly coupled with an assertion that Britain's social and political traditions and values could only endure the threat of idolatrous totalitarianism abroad and pre-war Christian identity was reinforced and reinvigorated (223).

With the rise of secularism and the Second World War, the church and political figures felt that Christian values were under attack by outsiders and in response, Christian identity was enforced in the late twentieth century. The rhetoric of Christian unity and identity swept the nation, but secular ideals were a strong contender to the church's discourse. In addition, Jacques says, "When I was a boy, morality was taught in school and in church, but I think that it is no longer here to the extent it used to be. I try to create very clear moral signposts of what is right and what is wrong" (Sockey). Therefore, Jacques is aware of a shift within his native England in terms of morality and religious thought. By using a familiar overview of Christianity in his series, Jacques is able to comment that the society of England, especially following World War Two, is in need of a divine figure. Furthermore, England was trying to establish itself as a Christian society, but like Redwall Abbey, England was not a religious society following World War Two. In response, Jacques tries to have no ambiguity in the morality of the characters so that his audience would know which characters to emulate and which to avoid. Therefore, Felldoh's and Matthias's behaviors show that morality cannot be black and white. Jacques's characters are flawed and must learn to be honorable and to seek the good. But, they cannot follow the path of the warrior alone. They must be guided to being true warriors either with a code of honor or by a saintly figure. In this way, Martin the Warrior stands out from the other woodlanders, especially the warriors because he is able to learn from his mistakes and to seek peace. He demonstrates this by giving up the warrior's path in *Luke the Warrior* and returning as a spirit in *Redwall* and *Mattimeo*.

In addition, Bradford notes that Jacques's series promotes "humanist ideas concerning an essential human nature which transcends social and cultural formation" (151). In other words, Jacques's series is in favor of civilized nations with the expunging of barbaric traits leaving only



rationalism and a conservative social structure. For example, Bradford notes that “Cluny is an outsider implacably opposed to Redwall Abbey, and what it signifies—that is a medieval British culture defined by values such as honour, chivalry, and principles of justice” (152). Redwall Abbey stands for British culture that is based on the values of honor, chivalry, and justice (civilization) with the Redwallers being humanized, but Cluny represents animalistic traits (barbarism). Furthermore, Jacques comments on England’s political climate during the twentieth century. Bradford states that “Published in the year before Margaret Thatcher’s third election victory for the Conservative Party, *Redwall* depicts a community comprising orders and classes of animals who know their place in society. The aristocratic figures of Basil Stag Hare and the marmalade cat Squire Julian Gingivere are at once revered for their noble lineage and treated as remnants of an outmoded system” (153). The woodlanders know where they stand in the hierarchy of society and do not question the abbey’s leadership. In this way, *Redwall* is a “highly conservative model of Britishness and nationhood” with its utopian lifestyle “governed by a benevolent but firm leadership” (Bradford 153). Redwall abbey may seem like a perfect paradise, but within the community, a hierarchy has been established and characters do not break their social roles.

Holly Blackford would agree with this when she comments on the feast the Redwallers have at the beginning of *Redwall*. She states, that the Redwallers “silently await his [Father Abbot’s] reaction before they taste the food, and the imagery of his chewing emphasizes his pleasure in appetite and connects that appetite with his status, since he is the first to eat and his reaction defines the quality of the food for all” (94). The Redwallers defer to Father Abbot since he is the appointed leader. Redwall Abbey “is governed by a bourgeois class of industrious mice, backed by a warrior caste exemplified by Matthias” (Bradford 153). The Redwallers have

a social structure that places the mice as the ruling authority. However, Blackford points out that this hierarchy is threatened when Matthias is initiated into the Warrior caste by Martin the Warrior. Martin breaks away from his role as “brother” to follow the path of the warrior based on the word of Martin the Warrior. The Redwallers listen to Martin’s decision because, in the hierarchy of the society, Martin is the all-powerful being that protects the abbey from harm. Even Abbot Mortimer defers to Martin’s decisions (through Matthias) after Martin’s image is stolen by Cluny. In this way, Blackford deviates from Blackford’s hierarchy ideas because Martin breaks down the hierarchies. For example, in *Mattimeo*, Cornflower takes the lead when the abbey is threatened, and in *Mariel of Redwall*, Mariel, who is a female, is called by Martin. Martin will also call a manner of species, squirrels, otters, and badgers as warriors. Jacques will even have a novel *Outcast of Redwall*, explore the induction of a vermin character into the Redwall society. No matter what species is called to stand for Redwall, Martin is the central character leading the way.

Redwall Abbey, despite being based on monastic society tries to remain secular and succeed in that the Redwallers do not pursue heavenly salvation. However, Jacques language is not secular. He employs Christian rhetoric throughout *Redwall* and *Mattimeo* to show that the Redwallers spirituality revolves around Martin the Warrior. For example, Jacques uses the terminology “I am” from Exodus to describe Martin’s role. In using this phrase, Jacques aligns Redwall with the righteousness of God. Furthermore, in each situation throughout *Redwall* and *Mattimeo*, i.e., Matthias descent into Asmodeus’s lair, Matthias’s battle against Cluny, Matthias near-death experience in the cave, etc....., Martin’s “I am” triumphs over the darkness and evil of both Satanic and pagan societies. In addition, Matthias’s embrace of the “I am” fills him with awe and wonder aligning Martin with the Holy Spirit from Christian Trinity. Furthermore, the

Redwallers worship Martin as a guiding spirit, using the language of “feel his presence” and even speaking about the land dying when Martin’s spirit is stolen from the abbey. Even Cluny recognizes Martin’s spiritual nature when he says Martin is some kind of “angel” (*Redwall* 64).

Although Jacques says that his series is not meant to hold any religious connotations, it is apparent through the Christian rhetoric that Martin is meant to be a “Christlike figure” who guides the Redwallers in moral behavior and military tactics. In this way, Jacques follows in the tradition of medieval writers in presenting a double reading one secular and one religious (spiritual). The secular reading is Martin is an Arthurian hero and Jacques commenting on the political positions of England and the ideas that everyone has their own place in society. Having specific roles in society is useful in creating a peaceful place until war is threatened. It is in times of war when hierarchies are broken down. At the end of *Redwall*, the hierarchies are reinstated but do not last throughout *Mattimeo*, when once again the women of Redwall take a stand against the birds and are honored for their bravery. The spiritual reading of the series is that Martin is a Catholic Saint and is the leader of the Redwallers’ spirituality. Jacques does this to comment on the religious state of England and to show that the righteousness of the Judeo-Christian God always wins. As he states in the interview with Sockey, good always wins over evil. But, Jacques is also showing that both religious and secular societies need a higher power to call upon, especially in times of turmoil. Martin fulfills both needs, by being a warrior, as well as a spiritual guide. While these two readings cannot be “harmoniously reconciled” because they clash with each other, the reader does not have to choose between the two. Martin’s nature as both a secular and spiritual figure presents readers with a similar message to be brave, virtuous, and to seek what is good and peaceful, but when unavoidable stand and defend what is both honorable and good. In this way, Martin’s character is allowed to be flawed at the beginning of

his story so that his journey sets him apart from other warriors, Felldoh and Boar, and sets him up to be the spiritual center for the utopian Redwall.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup>The word “good” is relative. For the Redwallers seeking the good is to seek peace (explained in greater detail in chapter One).

<sup>2</sup> Drawing on Peter Abelard’s notion of *Sic et Non* (Yea or Nay) or “both/and” (7) According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, *Sic et Non* “consisted in placing before the student the reasons *pro* and *contra*, on the principle that truth is to be attained only by a dialectical discussion of apparently contradictory arguments and authorities” (Williams). To find what is true, one must grapple with contradictory arguments about difficult topics.

<sup>3</sup> According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “virtuous” means “of a person: distinguished by strength and fortitude; full of courage; valiant, valorous” (“Virtuous” 1.a).

<sup>4</sup> This can also be spelled *Le Morte D’Arthur*

<sup>5</sup> Many medieval philosophers began to shape the cardinal virtues for use for the Catholic Church, thereby opening a dialogue between the secular nature of the virtues and the religious authority the virtues would hold. Some of the philosophers embraced the Greek definitions, which are based on Platonic and Stoic sources, of the four virtues while others rejected the definitions for a more religious ideal. The Greek definitions of the cardinal virtues are justice is service to the community and private interests such as revenge and protection of private property, prudence is wise judgement, fortitude is strength in war, and temperance is moderating ones passions (Bejczy 16-17). Bejczy notes that Engelbart of Admont in accordance with Aristotle, “conceives of the virtues as habits for which humans have a natural aptitude and which they realize through assiduous practice; he never mentions grace or charity. The virtues appear as instruments which enable man to lead a civilized life in earthly society, not as a preparation for the hereafter, but as an end in itself” (208). Instead, it is the theological virtues that “govern the

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heavenly destination of man and his religious needs” while “the cardinal virtues relate to man’s existence on earth, notably his social and political activity. The theological virtues determine our relationship with God and the salvation of individual souls; the cardinal virtues determine our relations with others and the wellbeing of the civil community” (Bejczy 182-83). This allows the cardinal virtues to be attainable by all, while the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity lead the righteous man to salvation.

In addition, Abelard’s biographer Hilbert of Lavardin believed that “moral thought centres around the idea of man’s natural goodness, in disregard of the evangelical precepts which on the basis of their natural goodness in order to realize the ideal of human life, that is, happiness on earth” (Bejczy 78). Within Jacques’s series, seeking of the virtues for earthly paradise is what motivates them.

<sup>6</sup> Peter Abelard believed that “the ancients practiced the virtues in a laudable way, so that Christians could learn a lot from their religious fervour as well as from their public morality” (Bejczy 87).

<sup>7</sup> According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, temperance is “the moral virtue that moderates the attraction of pleasures and provides balance in the use of created goods. It ensures the will’s mastery over instincts and keeps desires within the limits of what is honorable” (497.1809). Therefore, one who is temperate will be able to restrain their passions (i.e. sexual desire, anger).

In addition, Jacques does not mention the Catechism in the novel, but he was raised Irish Catholic. Jacques says in the interview with Sockey: “While I grew up in an Irish Catholic background, my experience was limited to my parish in Liverpool, and the parish school — St. John’s School for the Totally Bewildered as I call it. My family was one unit, my parish was another,

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my larger Irish community was an extension of the previous two.” Therefore, he would have known about the cardinal virtues. In addition, the Catechism offers both definitions: secular and religious. I am using the definitions that I believe Jacques would have known.

<sup>8</sup> War and death were everyday occurrences in Malory’s day, and killing and murder did not fall under the same categorization (Bedwell 8). Murder was associated with the feeling of outrage, especially with knight’s characters. Also, the knights Sir Gawain and Sir Pellinore fail to uphold the principles of knightly conduct on their joint quest. Sir Gawain and Sir Pellinore fail to act in a knightly manner even though their quest was successful (Bedwell 5). Gawain and Pellinore dismiss the cries of mercy and distress from defeated knights and helpless women and commit the crime of murder. Because of these plunders, Arthur creates the Pentecostal Oath.

<sup>9</sup> Justice is also “the moral virtue that consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbor” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*). Martin cannot give his due to God because he does not recognize him, but he does give his due to his fellow woodlanders.

<sup>10</sup> Peter Abelard believed that the role of justice is the “moral virtue par excellence, which has prudence as its informant and fortitude and temperance as its auxiliaries” (Bejczy 73).

<sup>11</sup> According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, prudence is defined as “the virtue that disposes of practical reason to discern our true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it...The prudent man determines and directs his conduct in accordance with his judgment” (496.1806).

<sup>12</sup> According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* shrewdness means “wickedness, depravity; evil disposition, ill nature; malignity, maliciousness” (“Shrewdness” 1a). Although this definition is now obsolete, it would have been common in the Late Middle Ages. Since, Chapter One

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discusses Arthurian ethos, I am using this definition. Today the word shrewdness is seen in a favorable way and has been replaced with the word shrewishness.

<sup>13</sup> The use of quotations around love is because the relationship is never fully developed in the text, only hinted at in specific moments.

<sup>14</sup> However, Hutton goes on to say that there is no evidence that paganism survived past the eleventh century due to texts in the eighth century that “forbid the worship of other deities and indeed the only part that forbid non-Christian practices- the Canons of Egbert, Archbishop of York, from around 740, and the rulings of the Church Synod of 786-7-are concerned with what would be called superstitions or operative magic rather than an active continuation of the former religion” (239).

<sup>15</sup> Along with morality plays, Biblical plays began in the tenth century. Furthermore, cycle plays were performed on Corpus Christi Day and were based on Biblical ideas. The plays were important because they spread the Church’s message about heavenly salvation and living a life repenting from sins to the illiterate laity.

<sup>16</sup> This description calls forth an image of the sword Excalibur. If one looks at the representation of Excalibur and one of Martin’s sword side by side, the swords are almost identical.

<sup>17</sup> According to the *Redwall Wiki* page, the “Dark Forest is the place that many creatures go after death” but throughout the series “the phrase ‘Dark Forest’ appear[s] less as a reference to the afterlife...Phrases such as ‘sunny slopes and quiet streams’ have seemingly replaced it” (“Dark Forest”).

<sup>18</sup> Jacques was inspired by Homer’s *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. According to the article “Brain Jacques,” he loved reading Homer’s stories and as a child went out and bought a copy of them with his allowance.



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<sup>19</sup> According to the *Redwall Wiki*, Brian Jacques said that he “tried not to have any religious connotations at all” throughout his series. And in an several interviews Jacques notes that Redwall is a secular institution. Yet, nevertheless, the use of an afterlife allows for religious connotations.

<sup>20</sup> Ridyard goes on to talk about the issues with this genre of writing and to “propose a working model for the constructive use of the legends of the saints” (8).

<sup>21</sup> Blackford goes on to say that the tapestry is a paradox within the utopian space of Redwall Abbey. Her article shows how Redwall Abbey’s peaceful nature is undermined by its history and its actions against Cluny (89).

<sup>22</sup> Secular spirituality means that one does not believe in a divine figure like Jesus or Buddha. However, the Redwallers do believe in a divine figure Martin.

<sup>23</sup> Blackford goes on to say that Cluny also rejects Mortimer’s authority, laying “bare the reality of the power dynamics within Redwall, viewing ownership of the abbey as a means of gaining power over the land and the creatures within.” (99). In doing so, he reveals that there are inherent flaws within the Redwall Order.

<sup>24</sup> Blackford also notes that this moment is when Matthias becomes an adult. She says, “On the one hand, the weapon is a means of sexual thrill for Matthias, when he finally recovers it from the adder. Feeling complete identification with Martin by holding the sword, he achieves oneness with warriorhood, weaponry, and sexual potential” (Blackford 97). Matthias now has power to threaten others and take from those who are weaker than him.

<sup>25</sup> The *Catholic Encyclopedia* states that Asmodeus is a demon from the Book of Tobias in which the demon Abaddon is said to have killed Sara’s seven husbands before the marriage could be

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consummated. It is based on the Greek text of Tobias and the is also set down in Persian myth (Breen).

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