Cultural Stereotyping in Arthurian Films

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Table of Contents

Introduction

Arthurian legends have been known and enjoyed by many people around the globe, first as a literary genre and, from the beginning of the twentieth century onwards, as a film genre. The first Arthurian film was *Parsifal* (1904), which was directed by Edwin S. Porter (Harty. "Lights! Camelot! Action!" 6); since then many films involving Arthur and his knights have followed. The films made in the first six decades of Arthurian film adaptations were often based on Arthurian legends originally written down by Chrétien de Troyes, and Sir Thomas Malory. Malory's most important Arthurian work is his fifteenth century *Le Morte Darthur* (9), in which he introduces the incestuous relationship between Arthur and his sister (De Weever 55). De Troyes was the first to introduce the Grail into Arthurian legends in his unfinished *Le Conte du grail*, after which authors in the thirteenth century continued to develop that storyline (Harty "Lights! Camelot! Action!" 6). Although various adaptations followed a liberal approach to these stories, most Arthurian films from this early period have, despite some changes and modernised imagery, a similar, heavily romanticised theme: knights were chivalrous, they were courageous, and they had to prove themselves in quests or tournaments, when vying for the attentions and affection of a beautiful and virtuous lady. Examples of Arthurian films which display romanticised images include *Knights of the Round Table* (1953), directed by Richard Thorpe and *Prince Valiant* (1954), directed by Henry Hathaway. In this paper these films will serve as examples of positive stereotyping, alongside two films that demonstrate a change to negative stereotyping: *Lancelot du Lac* (1974), directed by Robert Bresson and *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975), directed by Terry Gilliam and Terry Jones. The four previously mentioned films will be compared to two films that demonstrate a change to reduced stereotyping: *The Mists of Avalon* (2001), directed by Uli Edel and *King Arthur* (2004), directed by Antoine Fuqua. This paper will aim to show that

cultural stereotyping of knights in Arthurian films has changed over the years and that it has ultimately changed into reduced stereotyping of Arthurian knights.

Although much research has been carried out on Arthurian topics, not much research has looked at the changes of cultural stereotyping in Arthurian films. Many researchers have looked into cultural stereotyping of women in Arthurian literature; Thelma Fenster has, for instance, collected numerous major essays on this subject in the book *Arthurian Women: A Casebook*. The romanticised images of Arthur and his knights have been another popular subject for research; an example is the book *The "Alliterative Morte Arthure": A Reassessment of the Poem* and in particular the chapter "Reality versus Romance: A Reassessment of the 'Alliterative Morte Arthure' " by Karl Heinz Göller, R. Gleiβner and M. Mennicken. This chapter compares common romanticised images in Arthurian literature with the Middle English poem "Alliterative Morte Arthure" and challenges the idea that this poem has romanticised elements as well (15-29). There have also been researchers who have tried to prove the existence of Arthur and to give the legends a historical context. An example is the book *From Scythia to Camelot: a Radical Reassessment of the Legends of King Arthur, the Knights of the Round Table, and the Holy Grail* by Scott Littleton and Linda Malcor. The latter also happens to be one of the consultants for the film *King Arthur* (2004). Littleton and Malcor claim that Arthurian legends are not solely Celtic in origin, but that they share their origins with Scythian lore. The present paper will not only explore the romanticised images in Arthurian film adaptations and the more realistic approach to Arthurian films as a result of historical claims, but it will also address negative stereotyping in Arthurian films. This paper thus focusses on the changes in cultural stereotyping and will be limited to film adaptations.

The research focusses on the analysis of three different periods, which will be addressed in three different chapters. After this introductory chapter, the second chapter will demonstrate that Arthurian knights were heavily romanticised in the first six decades of

Arthurian filmmaking; the two previously mentioned films from this time will be analysed to demonstrate this. The third chapter will examine two examples, one humorous and the other gruesome, that display a change to negative stereotyping in Arthurian films. The fourth chapter will indicate that Arthurian knights have come to be portrayed more realistically over the past decade; again, two examples will be given to demonstrate this. The concluding chapter will provide a summary of the findings of the research and a conclusion.

The films under discussion have been selected for various reasons. The first reason is that all films were live action films, i.e. primarily not animated. The selected films are also either easily accessible or easily obtainable, which has been especially an influential criterion for the older films. Furthermore, Kevin J Harty's article "Cinema Arthuriana: Translations of the Arthurian Legend to the Screen" has been used to select the first four films as representatives of their periods. For the first chapter two out of the three films listed under the 1950s proved to be easily accessible and where therefore chosen (100-101). Films before that time period proved to be more difficult to obtain (95-100). In the 1970s seven Arthurian films were made (104), so another criterion, that of quality and style, was added to choose two films for the third chapter. According to Harty *Lancelot de Lac* is: "One of the best examples of cinema Arthuriana" (105), which is why it was chosen even though it is a French film. Since only one French film has been analysed it is unclear whether nationality has a significant influence on the results. *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* was chosen since, as Hart explains, compared to Bresson's film: "cinema Arthuriana in the 1970s moved from the sublime to the ridiculous" (105). Meaning that it's "ridiculous" style seems to be the opposite of *Lancelot du Lac*'s "sublime" style . Lastly, the films in the fourth chapter were chosen without help of Harty's article, as he does not discuss films of a later period than the eighties. Both films have been selected since they were produced in the early 2000s and because they are not set in modern times, but refer to it. Moreover, *The Mists of Avalon* has been chosen as it has a

feminine perspective and *King Arthur* has been chosen because of its claim to historical authenticity (*King Arthur* 0:20-0:35). Since most selected films do not base themselves on the same Arthurian legends or works, the sources will be clarified. However, this paper will not offer a detailed analysis of these sources where it is not necessary.

Chapter 2 – Positive Stereotyping

During the first six decades of Arthurian filmmaking, which is from the 1900s until the 1960s, most films had a heavily romanticised theme, i.e. the film adaptations focus primarily on the romantic plotlines and thus omit negative plotlines, e.g. incestuous relationships, from the Arthurian legends. Knights had to be courageous and chivalrous and they had to prove themselves in quests or tournaments. The films which shall be examined in this chapter are the American: *Knights of the Round Table* (1953), directed by Richard Thorpe, and *Prince Valiant* (1954), directed by Henry Hathaway. These films shall mainly be examined by analysing the portrayal of the characters and their actions; however, elements of Arthurian legends which have been deleted in the films shall be taken into account as well. Moreover, the clothing and the design of the film posters shall be touched on and will aid to demonstrate the presence of positive stereotyping in these films.

2.1 *Knights of the Round Table* (1953)

According to Kevin J. Harty: "In making *Knights*, MGM claimed that its researchers in Hollywood and in England stuck 'close to the facts,' basing their script on Malory's 'studious work.' Despite these claims of fidelity to tradition, the film presents a curious jumble of Arthuriana" ("Cinema Arthuriana" 100). In the film, Arthur and Morgan both have a claim to the throne, which causes Morgan and her husband Modred to challenge Arthur in every way. After Lancelot angrily leaves a council, he frees a lady who turns out to be Guinevere and they fall in love. Lancelot, however, marries Elaine, who loves him deeply, to hide his true feelings.

The protagonists of *Knights of the Round Table*, Lancelot, Guinevere, Arthur and Elaine, as well as the antagonists Modred and Morgan, are romanticised. Lancelot is represented as a courageous and brave knight, similarly to only the sixth book (151-79) of Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*. For example, when two soldiers are trying to desert, Lancelot says: "I love this horse like a brother; I would kill it with my own hands and you could eat his flesh if it would give you half the courage of the men you're deserting" (*Knights* 23:47-23:58). He is not only courageous; he expects others to be the same. Furthermore, Lancelot does not want to break his vows to Arthur and only does this once by kissing Guinevere, after which he brings her to safety and returns to court to accept his punishment courageously (1:33:07). Even after he is banished, he still cares for Arthur and comes to his aid when Arthur needs him most (1:40:54). However, Lancelot's behaviour is portrayed as far less honourable in books eighteen through to twenty of *Le Morte Darthur* (Malory 675-781), which indicates that this film's version of Lancelot is romanticised. Arthur, on the other hand, is the perfect example of a chivalrous and noble king. For instance, even though he and Morgan are enemies, he is still chivalrous and stops to let her follow Merlin first to Excalibur (*Knights* 2:53-2:59). This is something he did not have to do. Another example is that he

spared the lives of Guinevere and Lancelot; even though they had hurt him personally, he still showed mercy (1:35:17-1:36:00). However, what has not been adapted from Mallory's work, is that Arthur wages war against Lancelot in book twenty (Malory 774-781) and is thus not only noble and forgiving. Guinevere is the embodiment of the beautiful and supportive lady; although she does succumb to her love for Lancelot, she esteems and cares for Arthur as well. This becomes clear when she tells him: "My Lord, I honour you above all men … and I long to serve you better, with far more love and far more understanding than I possess" (*Knights* 1:10:37-1:10:52). The real stereotypical embodiment of virtue and innocence is, however, Elaine, who will become Lancelot's wife in the film. Her view of knights and the world is heavily romanticised. For example, she believes that Lancelot is the knight she wished for to come and take her away (9:48-10:11). The character of Morgan seems to be purely evil and plots to destroy Arthur's happiness and rule. However, Morgan's husband, Modred, is the one who actively fights Arthur's rule: he tries to remove the sword Excalibur from the stone and Morgan does not (3:20-4:53), although she does have a claim to the throne (2:30-2:47). Modred is here depicted as the stereotypical antagonist who wears dark clothing and has a fiery temper.

The lack of a truly adulterous relationship between Lancelot and Guinevere and the lack of an incestuous relationship between Arthur and Morgan, his half-sister, are in accordance with the positive stereotyping of Arthurian characters which the film portrays. Since the love of Lancelot and Guinevere is not consummated, Lancelot can still be portrayed as loyal to Arthur and his deceased wife Elaine. Moreover, Arthur could not have been represented as a noble king who has been wronged by his best friend and wife if he had had an incestuous relationship with his half-sister; he would have been no better. Furthermore, section two of the Hays Code explicitly forbids representation of adulterous and incestuous relationships in films: "The sanctity of the institution of marriage and the home shall be

upheld. Pictures shall not infer that low forms of sex relationship are the accepted or common thing" (qtd. in Kelly 273). This section continues by listing various rules, two of which are especially interesting. Rule one: "Adultery, sometimes necessary plot material, must not be explicitly treated, or justified, or presented attractively" (273), and rule four: "Sex perversion or any inference to it is forbidden" (273). These rules under section two make it clear that adulterous and incestuous relations could not be represented or referred to in *Knights of the Round Table*.

Two elements which further indicate a romanticised image of Arthurian lore in the film are clothing and the film posters. The clothing in the film is very colourful and bright; even the horses wear bright coloured robes to match their riders' outfits (Appendix 1). This indicates positive stereotyping as the characters look noble and rich. Moreover, clothing is used to portray the character's virtue; for example, two very stereotypical characters do not wear bright colours. Elaine, for instance, wears flowing, light coloured dresses (*Knights* 10:26), which refer to her innocence and purity. The dark colours which are reserved for Modred (2:08) refer to the stereotypical portrayal of his character as evil and dark. In addition to clothing, three original film posters have been chosen for examination. Film posters may convey the underlying tone, message or aim of a film; so they may also show romanticised stereotyping. The first poster (Appendix 2), illustrates Lancelot as a knight on a white horse with Guinevere seated in front of him while she embraces him passionately. The portrayal of passion on posters was a loophole in the Hays Code, as the Code only applied to films and not the posters (Kelly 279). The text at the top of the poster reads: "Thrill to the glory and splendor of king Arthur's court" (Appendix 2), which stresses the positive stereotyping of Arthurian elements. The second poster adds Arthur in the right corner at the bottom; moreover, it features a bigger image of Lancelot holding a sword and Guinevere's heaving

bosom (Appendix 3). The fourth poster shows Lancelot and Guinevere with a drawing of a

battle and the same image of poster one beneath them (Appendix 4).

2.2 *Prince Valiant* (1954)

The film *Prince Valiant* is based on the comic strip by Hal Foster of the same name, about "a Viking prince driven into exile" (Harty, "Cinema Arthuriana" 101) . Both the original comic strip and the film feature various elements from Arthurian lore and combine it with Viking elements. The protagonist, Valiant, does not stem from Arthurian legends but is also an addition. He goes to Arthur's court to become a knight and "fights his former countrymen under the leadership of the traitorous Sir Brack [another addition] both to regain his [father's] throne [from Sligon] and to help Arthur secure his" (101). Another character who is introduced is Aleta, a British princess who falls in love with Valiant. In fact, all characters are additions from the comic strip except for Arthur and Gawain.

The main characters of the film, Prince Valiant, Sir Gawain, Princess Aleta and Sir Brack, are portrayed in a stereotypical romanticised way. Arthur only has a minor role in this film and shall not be further analysed. Prince Valiant's name is the first sign of his portrayal as brave and courageous. Valiant, however, does not become a knight until the very end of the film (Hathaway 99:25). The embodiment of a true and chivalrous knight is therefore Sir Gawain; he wins the jousting tournament and thus proves himself to be a worthy husband for Aleta, Valiant's secret girlfriend (53:35-53:59). Valiant has to prove himself as a knight in the film, which is depicted by him not using a sword to fight his enemies until the moment he takes his father's sword back from Sligon, the Viking invader (91:09). Before that fighting scene with Sligon, Valiant had not been worthy of being a knight yet and thus he escaped danger by outwitting the enemy and not by using a sword. Aleta is the embodiment of virtue and Christianity; for instance, when Valiant is wounded and sees Aleta for the first time she seems holy: she is wearing white, is holding a cross and the chandelier forms a halo around her head (31:30). Sir Brack, a character similar to the Mordred of the Arthurian lore, is similar to the antagonists from *Knights of the Round Table* as he covets the throne and devises

intricate plans to get it. He creates an alter ego, the stereotypical Black Knight, so he can undermine Arthur without exposing himself.

The omission of the characters of Mordred and Morgan further amplifies the romanticised image of *Prince Valiant*. Even though Mordred is not named in the film, it can be argued that Brack plays his role as Brack tries to undermine Arthur's rule. However, the character of Mordred as a bastard son, sprung from an incestuous relationship between Arthur and Morgan, is not present. A reason for this omission may be that by adapting Mordred into the character of Brack, the producers found an easy solution so that Arthur could remain the embodiment of a noble and untainted king. Another reason may be that the writers had the Hays Code in mind, which forbids the mention of incest (qtd in Kelly 273). This may explain why the character of Morgan has been omitted as well. *Knights of the Round Table* solved this issue by making Mordred and Morgan husband and wife. It may be that this solution has not been applied here, as Valiant is the protagonist instead of Arthur. This indicates that the antagonist Brack has to have a connection to the protagonist Valiant and not to Arthur. The connection in the film between Valiant and Brack is that they both vie for Aleta, which would not be possible if Brack already had a wife. Aleta's position as the coveted virtuous lady is thus more established as well.

The use of certain clothing and the film posters corroborate the romanticised portrayal of the characters. Similar to *Knights of the Round Table*, the clothing is very colourful and bright in *Prince Valiant*. Another similarity is that the horses have similarly coloured robes as well (Appendix 5). The character of Aleta only appears in white gowns as she is the embodiment of purity in this film (Hathaway 31:30). Brack's alter ego, the Black Knight, dresses in black armour and rides a black horse, which is similar to the main antagonist from the other film. Clothing is thus used to mirror the characters' personalities. An example is the scene where Valiant arrives back at court after his fight with Sligon and he wears armour for

the first time in the film (92:48). This shows that he is ready to be a knight. On the first film poster Aleta is again portrayed in a white dress, while Valiant is fighting another knight (Appendix 6), showing him to be courageous and protective of his lady. The second poster does not feature Aleta; instead it focusses on Valiant and a battle (Appendix 7). The use of a red, fiery background and black details in combination with the determined pose of Valiant (Appendix 7) accentuates him as a brave and fearless man. The third film poster is a combination of the first one and stills from the film itself (Appendix 8). The images on the poster may have been chosen to portray the prominent characters and events in the film. This is interesting as the stills portray life at court, knights in armour and an embrace between Aleta and Valiant (Appendix 8).

2.3 Context and Conclusions

Although there may be numerous reasons for producers of films to deviate from the popular legends, one reason could be derived from the Hays Code. In the 1950s, the American film industry had to follow strict rules concerning plot and characters which highly influenced the films' contents:

> The degree to which the Hays Code (named for Will Hays, who first formulated the Code as a set of guidelines in 1930) and the Catholic Legion of Decency (founded in 1933) influenced film content for almost forty years cannot be underestimated. A studio could not get anything filmed without prior approval from the Director of the Production Code Administration (PCA). In the climate created by the PCA, any script attempting to represent the story of Arthur, Lancelot, and Guinevere as Malory and Tennyson told it would have been rejected forthwith. (Kelly 273)

This code was very strict concerning references to sexual acts and unchristian behaviour, which may have aided in the creation of an environment in which the romanticised cultural stereotyping of the Arthurian characters was favoured. It is, however, unclear if the same effects applied to foreign films as no French or British Arthurian films were created in the 1950s (Harty "Cinema Arthuriana" 100-101; Rider, Hull, and Smith 150). Furthermore, religious elements are often used in a romanticised way as well, often in combination with the representation of virtue. These examples of romanticised stereotyping gloss over negative elements in the Arthurian legends and can thus be classifies as positive stereotyping. Although the Viking elements in *Prince Valiant* might indicate that this film displays a less stereotypical version of the Arthurian parts, this does not necessarily mean that there are no romanticised elements in the film; the Hays Code (Kelly 273) again proves effective in eliminating the more negative or realistic images related to the Viking theme from the film.

Chapter 3 – Negative Stereotyping

In the 1970s, Arthurian films showed a change from positive cultural stereotyping to negative cultural stereotyping. In this period, Arthurian films can be divided in two different groups: the first group showed a change to gruesome and dark portrayals of Arthurian legends and the second group depicted a change to humorous interpretations which parodied the Arthurian legends. Both groups shall be examined.

The films which will be examined in this chapter are the French film *Lancelot du Lac* (1974), directed by Robert Bresson and the British film *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975), directed by Terry Gilliam and Terry Jones. The films shall be analysed by focussing on three aspects: the portrayal of the characters, the theme of existentialism, and the use of imagery. These three aspects shall aid to demonstrate the use of negative stereotyping in these films.

3.1 *Lancelot du Lac* (1974)

Robert Bresson's film draws heavily on the last part of the French Vulgate Cycle, the *Mort Artu*, a work from the thirteenth century about the downfall of Arthur and his knights (Harty 105). Compared to *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* and *Knights of the Round Table* which (briefly) discuss the Grail, *Lancelot du Lac* is unique as in this film the quest for the Grail iself is already over when the film begins. The film focusses on how the failed quest for the Grail unravels the characters. After their return, Lancelot is distraught and tries to avoid Guinevere in order to devote himself to God. She does not accept this and wins him back, after which Mordred conspires to expose them. In one of the battles that ensue, Lancelot accidentally kills Gawain's brother. Gawain, who had no purpose after the failed quest, now had one in avenging his brother. Lancelot, however, kills Gawain as well and later dies in battle himself.

The protagonists of *Lancelot du Lac* do not seem to be able to restrain themselves from acts of violence or sins, which leads to them experience forms of existential crises. According to Sartre, existentialism "declares with greater consistency that if God does not exist there is at least one being [man] whose existence comes before its essence [. . .]. What do we mean by saying that existence precedes essence? We mean that man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world — and defines himself afterwards" (Sartre 3). Existentialism is thus the ideology that focusses on man. An existentialist crisis is the despair which follows if a person fails to accept a Godless world and his or her place in it. The film's protagonists are Lancelot, Guinevere and Gauvain. When Lancelot returns from his quest he is portrayed as someone who repents his sinful acts of war and wants to change. He tells Guinevere: "I can no longer be your lover, Guinevere. I swore to God with my sword drawn" (11:20-11:31). However, little persuasion of Guinevere is necessary for him to decide that he wants her more than that he wants to change when she tells him: "Take this heart, take this soul. They belong to you" and he answers: "It is your body I want (31:00-31:05). Near the end of the film, he

even considers killing Arthur so that he can have Guinevere (1:10:45-1:10:58). Guinevere is negatively portrayed as she wants Lancelot to sin for her, yet she decides not to leave Arthur as without him she is nothing (1:11:22-1:12:12). Gauvain in the end resorts to violence to avenge his brother, Gaheriet, who was also a knight of the round table; however, this causes his own downfall as he is mortally wounded by Lancelot (1:06:39-1:08:58). Gauvain thus fails his mission. These representations of failed knights and a sinful lady are opposites of the romanticised images of the previous chapter.

The failed quest for the Holy Grail and the purposelessness that follows indicate causes a sense of existentialist despair among the knights. The character of Lancelot is a good example of this existentialist despair. As Harty points out: "[Lancelot's] failure to learn from the quest the value of the spiritual over the secular sets into motion a pattern of events that detail in gory bleakness the downfall of Camelot" (105). Lancelot's attempts to become a worthier person and his acceptance of not being able to change is not the only example of existentialism. Arthur begins to doubt that God still believes them to be worthy enough to find the Grail: "Have we provoked God? Are these terrible deaths a punishment, a decree of his justice? Is this silent, empty castle not a sign that God has turned away from us, that God has forsaken us?" (*Lancelot du Lac* 14:23-14:35). His uncertainty of God's plans for him and his knights shows his fear of purposelessness. Gauvain, on the other hand, tries to make Arthur give him a purpose, which Arthur fails to do: "Uncle. You must do something. Give us a purpose. (17:37-17:44), to which Arthur answers: "I gave you a purpose. Pray, Gauvain. You must pray." (17:45-17:48). Gauvain then shakes his head in disbelief as he says "Pray" (17:52-17:54). This indicates that he does not agree with Arthur and wants to resume the quest for the Grail instead of waiting for a sign.

Bresson's dark and gruesome imagery emphasises the negative portrayal of the characters and their failure to improve. The film opens with death and focusses on bloodshed,

and the sounds of weapons and armour. In the first few minutes, for example, a knight is beheaded (*Lancelot du Lac* 0:43-00:50), another knight is stabbed in the stomach (0:55-1:02), and the last one receives a deadly blow to the head (1:03-1:11). These three instances of violence are filmed without any additional sounds or music; there is only the sound of fighting and groaning. Moreover, the camera does not show much else except for the blood which comes from the wounds (Appendix 9). This is linked to the failure of the characters to improve their behaviour, as the film ends with similar imagery. After their battle against Mordred, most of the knights are either dead or their final moments are bloodily depicted: the knight Carmaduc is shown on his hands and knees with blood streaming down his face and out of his mouth (*Lancelot du Lac* 1:17:11-1:17:18), and another knight stands wounded against a tree with blood streaming from his stomach and down his leg (1:17:29-1:17:31). The repetition of these images indicate a cycle of violence and bloodshed as the characters failed to successfully self-improve.

3.2 *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975)

Monty Python and the Holy Grail does not mock Arthurian legends as is often believed; however, it mocks the film adaptations of these legends (Harty 105). The film focusses on the quest for the Holy Grail and three sub-plots. While searching for the Grail, the knights each go their own way: King Arthur encounters his subjects, Lancelot rescues a bridegroom and kills the wedding guests, Gawain is lured away and tempted by the sexual advances of a group of women, and "Sir Robin, the not-quite-so-brave-as-Sir-Lancelot" (*Monty Python* 20:43-20:45), runs away from all potential foes. In the end they reunite but fail their quest any way.

The protagonists are depicted as parodies of the romanticised Hollywood knights. King Arthur seems to be a noble king; however, he is not respected as one. Two examples are the taunting of the Frenchman (25:36-30:40), who does not respect him as the ruler of Britain, and the lecture on power by Dennis (9:09-11:00), who questions his authority as a ruler since he has not been chosen by the people. Furthermore, Arthur and his knights ride imaginary horses, which further ridicules the idea of a knight on horseback. Instead, their squires use coconuts to simulate the sound of hooves (3:40-4:04). Lancelot is depicted as a knight whose addiction is violence. An example is the scene where he kills almost all the wedding guests (52:41-53:37) and explains that he could not stop himself: "Sorry, sorry. See what I mean? I get carried away" (55:28-55:32). Gawain is usually portrayed as chaste, although here he almost gives in to sexual advances of women and is only stopped just in time by Lancelot (35:05-41:17). Sir Robin is portrayed as a coward and the complete opposite of a true knight. An example is the song his minstrels write about him after he has fled from a fight: "When danger reared its ugly head / He bravely turned his tail and fled / Yes, brave Sir Robin turned about / And gallantly he chickened out" (33:50-33:59). This is a clear parody of a song about the deeds and virtues of a knight.

In *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* the supporting characters are the conveyors of a sense of meaninglessness and existentialism. In *Lancelot du Lac* the emphasis is placed on the protagonists' experiences of existentialism instead of the supporting characters. A good example of existentialism in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* is the scene in which Arthur is lectured on the distribution of power (9:09-11:00). In this scene, a supporting character named Dennis tells Arthur: "Listen, strange women lying in ponds, distributing swords, is no basis for a system of government. Supreme executive power derives from a mandate from the masses. Not from some farcical aquatic ceremony" (10:48-11:00). Dennis expresses with this speech that man is important, not mystical of religious elements. The protagonist's claim to be the rightful ruler of Britain is thus undermined by a minor character. Although Arthur is annoyed, he does not seem to particularly care about the comments. However, it may be that his later resolve to find the Grail derives from the need to prove his supremacy as a result of Dennis's comments. Another supporting character who amplifies the theme of meaninglessness is the French knight who thwarts Arthur twice on his quest. The first time he throws cattle at Arthur (25:36-30:40), and the second time he already is at the castle where the Grail is before Arthur can reach it (1:21:01-1:21:24). These encounters indicate that the quest was meaningless: even though Arthur and his knights had to encounter numerous things to get to the castle, it does not matter as they still do not get the Grail.

The use of cartoonlike images amplifies the absurdness and meaninglessness of the quest. After God appears in the sky and charges Arthur and his knights with the quest to find the Holy Grail (*Monty Python* 22:54-23:46), drawn figures with cartoonlike qualities fill the screen (23:53). These images are quite crude (Appendix 10) and the timing seems to be indicating that the quest is as absurd as the images. To clarify, a quest from God to find a sacred item is followed by naked cartoon characters who are holding trumpets to their bottoms (Appendix 10), thus indicating disrespectfulness and that the quest should not be

taken serious. Another example which seems to indicate the same is a cartoon monster (Appendix 11) that is suddenly introduced into the storyline (*Monty Python* 1:13:56). The monster tries to eat Arthur and his knights; however, it disappears and the narrator explains in a moment of post-modern self-reference that: "Suddenly, the animator suffered a fatal heart attack. The cartoon peril was no more" (1:14:32-1:14:38). This subplot and its conclusion indicates absurdness and a sense of meaninglessness. Things are thrown onto the path to the Holy Grail which have no meaning and are as easily erased as they are added.

3.3 Context and Conclusions

The reason for the transitions to negative stereotyping may be related to the historical context. In the Hollywood film industry, the Hayes Code was created in 1934; however, the Code was revoked in 1967 (Kelly 273) and its influence decreased. This indicates that filmmakers are no longer refrained from addressing negative issues. Although it is unclear if this was influential for British or French Arthurian films. During the 1960s and 1970s, social reform in Britain may have played a part in the transition to negative stereotyping. According to Sian Barber, "The massive social changes of the 1960s became manifest in the 1970s and particularly within the visual culture of this decade. Not only does cultural change lag behind social change, but the effects of such change also take time before becoming evident in methods of working" (2). A reason for the satirical style of *Monty Python an the Holy Grail* may be the that, as Barber points out: "While films of the 1970s rarely dealt with contemporaneous issues, the decade did shake loose definitions of class, gender and national identity, which had all been actively challenged in the 1960s" (2). Since the British society was being redefined, this could have opened possibilities for new themes in the film industry. As *Lancelot du Lac* is a French production, it is relevant to look at the historical context of France as well. In France there was not a specific movement which clearly offers an explanation for the changes in cultural stereotyping; however, since the Second World War, avant garde films made their return to France (Pulver), which possibly enabled the portrayal of different views and interpretations by the use of new cinematographic styles. Bresson uses a minimalist style to depict the existentialist theme in his film. Minimalism is known for its preference to images, context and the focus on the body: "A primary goal of minimalism was to draw attention to the body as a nonvirtuosic movement source – to show that any movement is worth looking at" (Siegel 418); which is the case in *Lancelot du Lac*. The failure of the knights' quest to find

the Grail and its absence from the film emphasise that "the film is an apocalyptic meditation

on the downfall of the Middle Ages because of the era's loss of a sense of the spiritual" (105).

Chapter 4 – Reduced Stereotyping

Over the past two decades there has been a change to reduced stereotyping: Arthur and his knights, and especially their interactions and relationships with each other and with women, have increasingly been portrayed in a more realistic way. The term realistic can be applied in multiple ways, so it is necessary to distinguish which ones will be used in this chapter. The term shall be used to refer to either the historical context the film displays or the historical context in which it was filmed. Reduced stereotyping may be connected to the ever existing desire to give the legends a historically accurate context and to prove the existence of Arthur, which many have tried. An example is the book *King Arthur: Myth-Making and History* by N. J. Higham in which some of the theories about Arthur's possible existence are collected.

The films which shall be examined in this chapter are two American films: *The Mists of Avalon* (2001), directed by Uli Edel and *King Arthur* (2004), directed by Antoine Fuqua. The films shall be analysed by focussing on the portrayal of the characters, the connections between the Arthurian and the modern world, and by lightly touching on clothing, manners and the narrator. These three aspects shall aid to demonstrate that the stereotyping of characters has been reduced in these films compared to the those discussed in the two previous chapters.

4.1 *The Mists of Avalon* (2001)

The film *The Mists of Avalon* (2001) is based on the book *Mists of Avalon* by the American author Marion Zimmer Bradley, published in 1982. According to Christopher A. Snyder:

> Her ground-breaking shift of the narrative to female figures such as Morgan (Morgaine) and Guinevere (Gwenhwyfar) is built on the premise that ancient Britons were devoted to the worship of the Mother Goddess, a religion that came under attack from intolerant Christians. Though such matriarchal paganism finds its way into many Arthurian retellings, suffice it to say there is no evidence of this in either the historical or archaeological record of Britain. (118)

Even though the religious aspects of the story in both the book and the film are historically inaccurate, they may have given definition to the characters. In both book and film, Morgaine loves her brother and does not wish him ill. They are, however, deceived by their aunt Vivian, the Lady of the Lake, and Merlin. Both Arthur and Morgaine participate in the same fertility rite and unbeknownst to both, have sex with each other. This act was orchestrated by Vivian in order to create the ultimate hero, born of two powerful believers of the Pagan faith of the Mother Goddess. Even though Mordred is born as a result of this incestuous act, he is the only heir as Guinevere does not seem to be able to conceive. This causes her to seek comfort with Lancelot. Mordred is raised by Morgause, Vivian's sister, to hate Arthur and Vivian so Mordred relies on her instead. With Morgause's instructions, Mordred thus joins the Saxon army against his farther, even though he is his father's only heir. Morgaine tries to fix everything, but is too late in the end.

In *The Mists of Avalon*, there is no clear distinction between protagonists and antagonists; the changing nature of the characters' motivations portray their humanity. All characters are shown as well rounded and are led by their actions. This means that they make mistakes as well and can change their minds about what is right or wrong. The story is told

through Morgaine, Arthur's half-sister and priestess of Avalon, who narrates throughout the film in voice-overs. She is not portrayed as the stereotypical evil sorceress, nor is she portrayed as a lady in distress: she is powerful, loyal, and like most of the other characters subjected to the plans of Viviane and Merlin. Morgaine is presented as a vulnerable human being. For example, when she finds out that she has slept with Arthur, she is devastated (*The Mists* 1:06:57-1:07:05). Morgause is one of the antagonists; she plots for power and manipulates Mordred into achieving it. The difference between Morgause's portrayal in *The Mists of Avalon* and the portrayal of Arthurian antagonists before, is that Morgause's motivations are explained thoroughly (1:24:49-1:26:03). Furthermore, she seems to have her own, female, voice in the story, rather than being an stock-character. This is exceptional within the Arthurian genre since she is a woman, just as it is exceptional that the other pivotal characters are women. Viviane is the person who is most actively involved in all the plotting. She is portrayed as a powerful, yet ultimately vulnerable, Lady of the Lake. For instance in the scene where Merlin dies, she is crying and it is shown that she cared for him (1:53:08-1:56:36). Her involvement to save the kingdom is, however, what destroys it in the end, which portrays her as a protagonist with antagonist qualities. The character of Guinevere still shows signs of positive stereotyping: she is portrayed as a virtuous Christian princess who is loyal to Arthur. That is with exception of her feelings for Lancelot, which leads them all three to sleep together in order to impregnate Guinevere, with either Lancelot's child or Arthur's so there can be an heir (1:38:30-1:43:03). Guinevere is also shown in a less favourable light when she screams at Arthur: "I despise you, Arthur Pendragon" (1:47:26-1:47:28) because she believes that his tolerance of paganism is the reason why God does not allow her to conceive.

The change to a feminine perspective on the Arthurian world prepares the way for the portrayal of (female) sexuality. Unlike the other films which have been discussed thus far, *The Mists of Avalon* addresses the issue of Morgaine and Arthur's incest. Not only does the

film show the act as something Morgaine enjoyed (51:48-53:20), it also puts it into context as an act orchestrated by Viviane and Merlin to protect the Pagan faith of the Mother Goddess (1:16:49-1:21:09). The incest is thus shown as unwittingly committed. Another example is the fact that Morgause curses Guinevere's womb to be barren (1:07:06-1:07:40), which is not only a political move, but also an attack on her femininity. The threesome of Lancelot, Arthur and Guinevere (1:42:07-1:43:03) is another example of the portrayal of sexuality, especially when Guinevere undresses herself for the men as this scene focusses on her body (1:41:14-1:41:35).

The narrator, clothing and mystical air in *The Mists of Avalon* are elements which emphasise the humanity of the characters and their realistic portrayal. The previous four films did not have a narrator, which emphasises the importance of this film having one. Since the narrator of the film is Morgaine, her perspective on the story is what the viewers experience. By making Morgaine the narrator, viewers may empathise more easily with her and what happens to her. The clothing of the characters appear quite simple, especially the armour (Appendix 12). This shows that the characters themselves are more important and it emphasises them instead of courtly life. It is body art, i.e. the painting of the body, that is used more frequently instead, something that also occurs in *King Arthur*. Moreover, the mystical air and aspects in the film seem to create a sense of fantasy and are not realistic. However, these aspects are used as motivation for Merlin and Viviane's actions (1:17:12-1:17:26) and to portray friction between two religions, which is a very contemporary issue.

4.2 *King Arthur* (2004)

The increased historical interest in Arthurian legends has resulted in many theories on the subject. *King Arthur* is based on the theory in Malcor's book that Arthurian legends share their origins with Scythian lore. In the film, Arthur is a devoted Roman who leads a legion of enslaved Sarmatian knights south of the Hadrian Wall in Britain. In order to return to Rome and for his knights to regain their freedom, they are charged with one last mission. They have to save a Christian family north of the Wall, where the Woads rule. The Woads are native Britons, led by Merlin, who want to be free of Roman rule in all Britain. During their mission, Arthur saves the Woad Guinevere from her captors while the Saxon invaders are closing in. Guinevere fights with Arthur and his knights, yet turns out to be the daughter of Merlin. They then broker a truce to fight the Saxons together. In the end Guinevere and Arthur marry to unite Britain and Arthur becomes king.

The reduced stereotyping of the protagonists becomes apparent through the knights' and Guinevere's quest for freedom and Arthur's journey to become a better man. According to Fuqua: "[Arthur]'s very human. There's no magic powers in the man or in the sword. You don't just become a king by wielding a sword – you have to earn it. This is what the movie is about – him earning the right to be king" (qtd in Davidson 76). Fuqua's words make it clear that Arthur is portrayed in the film as a character who has to develop and better himself. Furthermore, he is also reflects a certain egalitarian belief according to Fuqua: "There's a king in all of us. You have to choose your destiny, choose your fate" (qtd in Davidson 76). The idea that people can choose their own destiny is in contrast with *The Mists of Avalon*, where the characters do not seem to have much influence over their own destinies. Arthur's knights want to choose their own destinies, and even though the film does not focus on the knights, their behaviour appears more realistic for the time in which the film is set. For example, Bors, a member of Arthur's knights, has a dozen bastard children (*King Arthur* 19:32) and the

language in the film is coarse: "Your master can plonk his holy arse wherever he chooses" (20:45-20:47). The portrayal of Guinevere in this film does not closely resemble the portrayals of Guinevere from the previous chapters: she speaks her mind, fights alongside the men and besides a friendly connection with Lancelot, does not seem to love him. An example of Guinevere's empowerment is the scene is which Guinevere tells Lancelot: "Don't worry, I won't let them [Saxon warriors] rape you" (1:15:47-1:15:49). The gender roles of men and women are here reversed. Lancelot is also slightly different compared to how he was portrayed in the other five films as he tells Guinevere "I would have left you and the boy there to die" (1:05:11-1:05:13), which is not very chivalrous or knightly.

The Arthurian world as portrayed in *King Arthur* has been made to conform to modern social issues and demands. The film advertises historical accuracy in a supertitle: "Historians agree that the classical 15th century tale of Arthur and his knights rose from a real hero who lived a thousand years earlier in a period often called the Dark Ages. Recently discovered archaeological evidence sheds light on his true identity" (0:20-0:35). However, this is a claim that may be easily disputed by other theories. What is, however, clear in this film is the way in which it reflects modern society. An example is the character of Guinevere. According to Virginia Blanton: "Guinevere's transformation rests on a contemporary desire for strong female characters, ones that are integral and active agents in the plot line" (92). So to make Guinevere more appealing to modern audiences, she has been transformed into a warrior. Another allusion to more contemporary issues is that there are parallels between this film and the war in Vietnam. In an interview the scriptwriter Franzoni stated that the story "became for me the American GI experience—strangers in a strange land, killing to stay alive and hating doing it" (qtd in Shippey 316). An example is the knights' reluctance to go into battle again and their desire to go home. (28:53-29:49). According to Tom Shippey: "If one follows this parallel through, then in *King Arthur* what happens, metaphorically, is that the surly and

disillusioned American GIs (the Sarmatians [who are Arthur's knights]), in Vietnam (Britain), free themselves from the imperial government that has turned its back on them (Rome, or Washington), make common cause with their former enemies (the Woads, the Vietcong), and defeat their real enemies" (316). A concrete example from the film is the scene in which Arthur, Guinevere and Merlin discuss what it means to be free and why they have a common enemy (1:08:30-1:09:08). The parallels between the film and the Vietnam war are striking and show that the Arthurian legend has been appropriated for more modern audiences to identify with.

The use of clothing, language and the narrator amplifies the realistic elements of the film. The armour worn by the knights is similar to the armour in *The Mists of Avalon*: dark and simple (Appendix 13). Arthur wears a black armour in the beginning of the film (Appendix 14), which indicates reduced stereotyping; chapter two showed that black armour was usually reserved for the antagonist. An exception is the battle outfit worn by Guinevere in *King Arthur* (Appendix 15), which is best described as: "leather underwear" (Shippey 314). The language in the film is mainly English, although there are a few scenes where a reconstructed form of Pictish is spoken by the Woads (Matthews 114). The use of this historical language makes the characters seem more realistic as natives of Britain and has not been done in the previously discussed films. The film is narrated in the beginning by Lancelot, who explains how the Sarmatian boys, including him, were taken from their homes to serve the Roman military for 15 years (*King Arthur* 0:42-4:13). This narration gives a look at their backstory and provides a realistic reason why the knights are so motivated to regain their freedom: the knights wish to return to their homelands from which they were taken.

4.3 Context and Conclusions

The term realistic applies to the characters as the result of reduced stereotyping: the characters are no longer stock characters, but well-rounded characters with multiple layers, which makes them more realistic. The female perspective in *The Mists of Avalon,* for instance, shows that women are not either the stereotypical Christian virgin or evil sorceress. They can be a mixture of both. Furthermore, British actors have been cast for the American production of *King Arthur*, whilst in *Knights of the Round Table* the protagonists were portrayed by American Actors. These changes may have derived from the growing globalisation. Nolwenn Mingant argues that globalisation in the 1990s and 2000s has led to market monopolisation by the American film industry: "Foreign films are hardly popular in the American market. [. . .] At the dawn of the twenty-first century, one cannot talk about a wave of foreign influence as the foreign market and its spectators have become a constitutive part of the Hollywood film industry" (148). Although this might be a somewhat negative illustration of the effects of globalisation, according to Andrew deWaard and R. Colin Tait globalisation has led to more innovations as well: "The changes taking place – both globally and cinematically – are not necessarily new, but what is new is the rapid rate at which they are occurring. From worldwide release patterns and digital technology to rampant piracy and the 'New International Division of Cultural Labour,' the effects of globalisation on Hollywood are ever-increasing" (147). It is unclear whether globalisation has a positive effect on the film industry or not; however, it is clear that it has changed the film industry, and will continue to do so. These changes do, however, not entirely justify why the characters are now portrayed more realistically.

Conclusion

The cultural stereotyping of knights in Arthurian films has changed over the years and it has ultimately changed into reduced stereotyping of Arthurian knights. The six films which have been discussed clearly show a change in the way the characters and themes are presented. Moreover, the three different periods in which the films are divided show distinctive differences as well.

The second chapter showed positive stereotyping in Arthurian films. The protagonists and antagonists of *Knights of the Round Table* and of *Prince Valiant* are portrayed as stereotypically romanticised. Furthermore, both films do not include the incestuous relationship of Arthur and Morgan, or an adulterous relationship between Lancelot and Guinevere. This supports the positive stereotyping of Arthurian characters by deleting negative elements. Moreover, the use of certain clothing and the film posters corroborate the romanticised portrayal of the characters in both films similarly.

The third chapter showed negative stereotyping in the adaptations. The protagonists of *Lancelot du Lac* do not seem to be able to restrain themselves from acts of violence or sins, which leads to them experiencing forms of existential crises. Furthermore, the failed quest for the Holy Grail and the purposelessness that follows adds to the sense of existentialist despair among the knights. Moreover, Bresson's dark and gruesome imagery emphasises the negative portrayal of the characters and their failure to improve. In *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, the protagonists are depicted as parodies of the romanticised Hollywood knights which have been discussed in chapter two. Furthermore, the speeches and actions of the supporting characters convey a sense of meaninglessness and existentialism. Another example of negative imagery is that the use of cartoonlike images amplifies the absurdness and meaninglessness of the quest.

The fourth chapter showed a change to reduced stereotyping of Arthurian film adaptations. In *The Mists of Avalon* the changing nature of the well-rounded characters' motivations portray their humanity. Furthermore, the change to a feminine perspective on the Arthurian world prepares the way for the portrayal of (female) sexuality and difficult themes such as incest. In *King Arthur*, the reduced stereotyping of the protagonists becomes apparent through the knights' and Guinevere's quest for freedom and Arthur's journey to become a better man. Moreover, the Arthurian world as portrayed in *King Arthur* has been made to conform to modern social issues and demands by alluding to the Vietnam war and empowering Guinevere as a warrior. Other elements which emphasise the humanity of the characters and their realistic portrayal in both films are sober use of clothing, the insights of the (female) narrator, the use of the Picitsh language in *King Arthur*, and the mystical air in *Mists of Avalon*.

In conclusion, the two films from the 1950s cannot portray negative elements of the Arthurian lore as they are limited by the Hays Code, which results in positive stereotyping of the characters. The films in the third chapter are from the 1970s, which means that *Lancelot du Lac* did not have much influence from that time as there were no significant cultural changes in France, except for the availability of filming techniques. *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* on the other hand could have been influenced by the social changes in Britain. In the films in the fourth chapter the directors' try to show either a female or an historic perspective on the legends. By trying to do so, the directors have to portray their characters as more well-rounded and less stereotypical than was necessary before to make their perspective seem realistic. This means that even though Bresson's bleakness can still be found in *The Mists of Avalon* and perhaps slightly in *King Arthur*, their characters are more developed and the stereotypical portrayal of women has almost entirely disappeared. It is, however, not entirely clear if the globalisation in the 2000s had a large influence on these developments.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Appendix 2

THRILL TO THE GLORY AND SPLENDOR OF KING ARTHUR'S COURT

M·G·M presents
IN COLOR AND CINEMASCOPE

Knights Of The Round Table

Starring
ROBERT TAYLOR · AVA GARDNER · MEL FERRER

with ANNE CRAWFORD · STANLEY BAKER · Screen Play by TALBOT JENNINGS, JAN LUSTIG and NOEL LANGLEY

Based On Sir Thomas Malory's "LE MORTE D'ARTHUR" · Directed by RICHARD THORPE · Produced by PANDRO S. BERMAN · A Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Picture

Appendix 3

Appendix 4

Appendix 5

Appendix 6

Appendix 7

Appendix 8

Appendix 9

Appendix 10

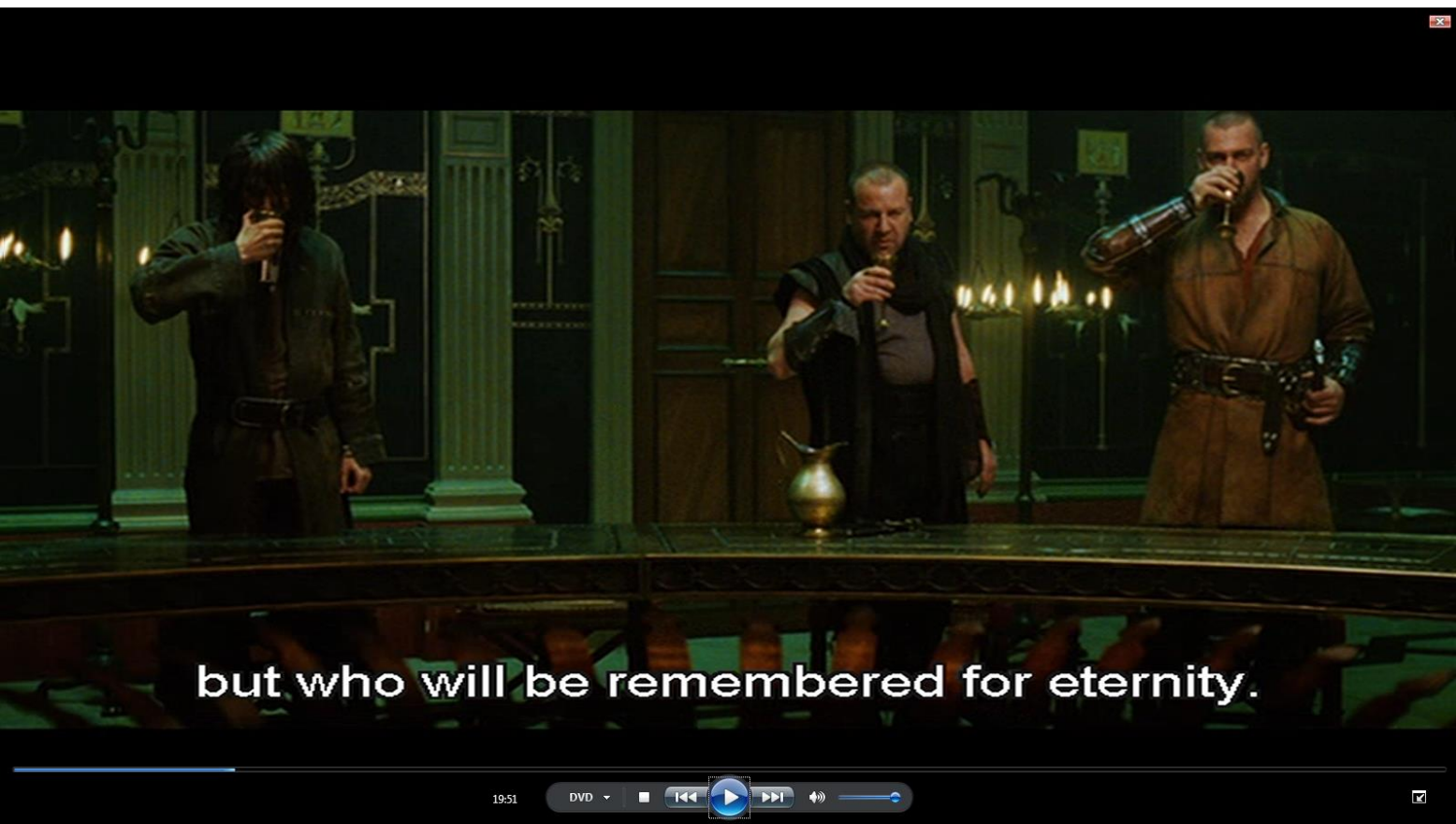Appendix 11

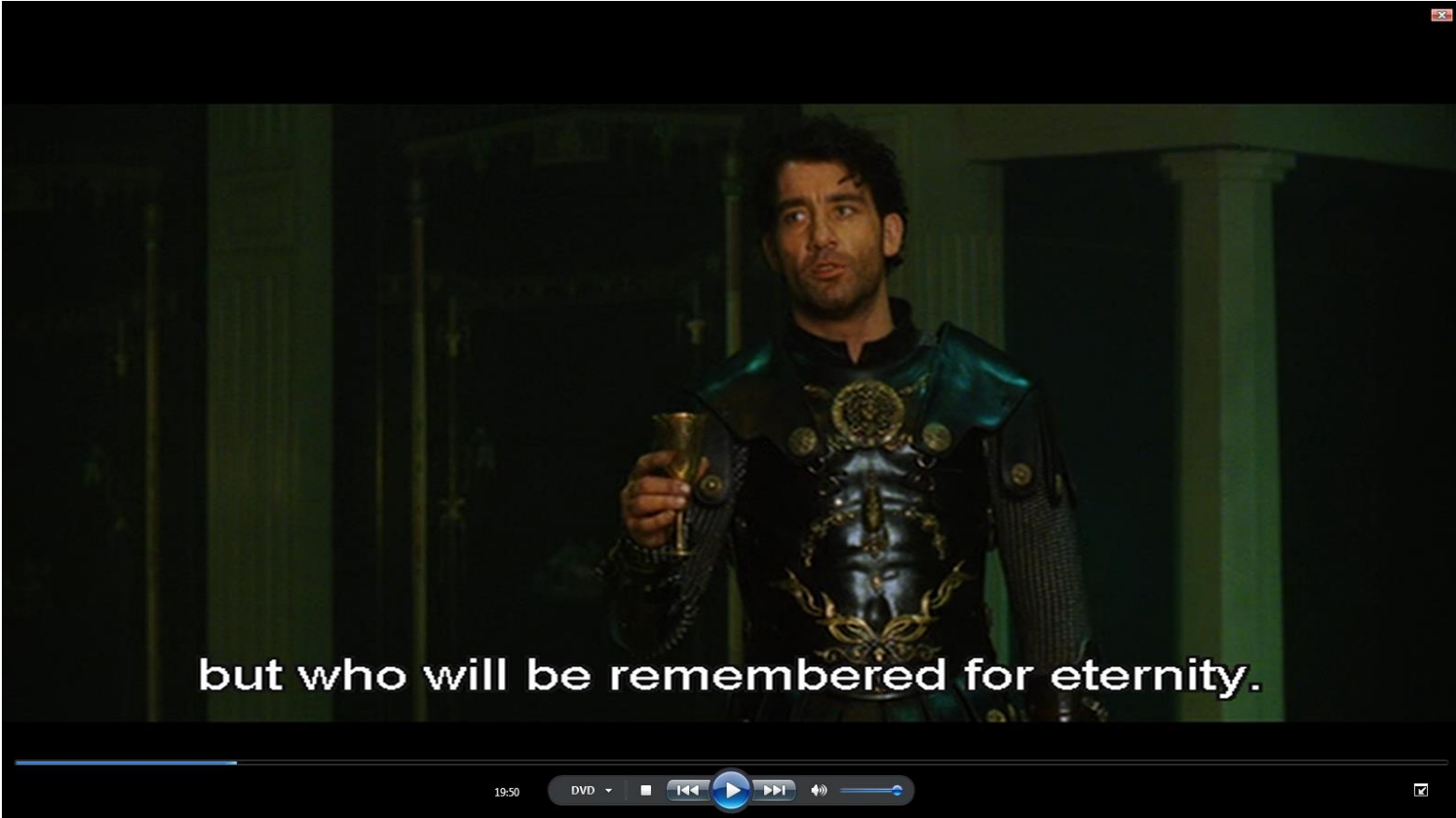Appendix 12

Appendix 13

but who will be remembered for eternity.

Appendix 14

but who will be remembered for eternity.

Appendix 15

VERKLARING KENNISNEMING REGELS M.B.T. PLAGIAAT

Fraude en plagiaat

Wetenschappelijke integriteit vormt de basis van het academisch bedrijf. De Universiteit Utrecht vat iedere vorm van wetenschappelijke misleiding daarom op als een zeer ernstig vergrijp. De Universiteit Utrecht verwacht dat elke student de normen en waarden inzake wetenschappelijke integriteit kent en in acht neemt.

De belangrijkste vormen van misleiding die deze integriteit aantasten zijn fraude en plagiaat. Plagiaat is het overnemen van andermans werk zonder behoorlijke verwijzing en is een vorm van fraude. Hieronder volgt nadere uitleg wat er onder fraude en plagiaat wordt verstaan en een aantal concrete voorbeelden daarvan. Let wel: dit is geen uitputtende lijst!

Bij constatering van fraude of plagiaat kan de examencommissie van de opleiding sancties opleggen. De sterkste sanctie die de examencommissie kan opleggen is het indienen van een verzoek aan het College van Bestuur om een student van de opleiding te laten verwijderen.

Plagiaat

Plagiaat is het overnemen van stukken, gedachten, redeneringen van anderen en deze laten doorgaan voor eigen werk. Je moet altijd nauwkeurig aangeven aan wie ideeën en inzichten zijn ontleend, en voortdurend bedacht zijn op het verschil tussen citeren, parafraseren en plagiëren. Niet alleen bij het gebruik van gedrukte bronnen, maar zeker ook bij het gebruik van informatie die van het internet wordt gehaald, dien je zorgvuldig te werk te gaan bij het vermelden van de informatiebronnen.

De volgende zaken worden in elk geval als plagiaat aangemerkt:
- het knippen en plakken van tekst van digitale bronnen zoals encyclopedieën of digitale tijdschriften zonder aanhalingstekens en verwijzing;
- het knippen en plakken van teksten van het internet zonder aanhalingstekens en verwijzing;
- het overnemen van gedrukt materiaal zoals boeken, tijdschriften of encyclopedieën zonder aanhalingstekens en verwijzing;
- het opnemen van een vertaling van bovengenoemde teksten zonder aanhalingstekens en verwijzing;
- het parafraseren van bovengenoemde teksten zonder (deugdelijke) verwijzing: parafrasen moeten als zodanig gemarkeerd zijn (door de tekst uitdrukkelijk te verbinden met de oorspronkelijke auteur in tekst of noot), zodat niet de indruk wordt gewekt dat het gaat om eigen gedachtengoed van de student;
- het overnemen van beeld-, geluids- of testmateriaal van anderen zonder verwijzing en zodoende laten doorgaan voor eigen werk;
- het zonder bronvermelding opnieuw inleveren van eerder door de student gemaakt eigen werk en dit laten doorgaan voor in het kader van de cursus vervaardigd oorspronkelijk werk, tenzij dit in de cursus of door de docent uitdrukkelijk is toegestaan;
- het overnemen van werk van andere studenten en dit laten doorgaan voor eigen werk. Indien dit gebeurt met toestemming van de andere student is de laatste medeplichtig aan plagiaat;
- ook wanneer in een gezamenlijk werkstuk door een van de auteurs plagiaat wordt gepleegd, zijn de andere auteurs medeplichtig aan plagiaat, indien zij hadden kunnen of moeten weten dat de ander plagiaat pleegde;
- het indienen van werkstukken die verworven zijn van een commerciële instelling (zoals een internetsite met uittreksels of papers) of die al dan niet tegen betaling door iemand anders zijn geschreven.

De plagiaatregels gelden ook voor concepten van papers of (hoofdstukken van) scripties die voor feedback aan een docent worden toegezonden, voorzover de mogelijkheid voor het insturen van concepten en het krijgen van feedback in de cursushandleiding of scriptieregeling is vermeld.

Universiteit Utrecht

In de Onderwijs- en Examenregeling (artikel 5.15) is vastgelegd wat de formele gang van zaken is als er een vermoeden van fraude/plagiaat is, en welke sancties er opgelegd kunnen worden.

Onwetendheid is geen excuus. Je bent verantwoordelijk voor je eigen gedrag. De Universiteit Utrecht gaat ervan uit dat je weet wat fraude en plagiaat zijn. Van haar kant zorgt de Universiteit Utrecht ervoor dat je zo vroeg mogelijk in je opleiding de principes van wetenschapsbeoefening bijgebracht krijgt en op de hoogte wordt gebracht van wat de instelling als fraude en plagiaat beschouwt, zodat je weet aan welke normen je je moeten houden.

Hierbij verklaar ik bovenstaande tekst gelezen en begrepen te hebben.

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Dit formulier lever je bij je begeleider in als je start met je bacheloreindwerkstuk of je master scriptie.

Het niet indienen of ondertekenen van het formulier betekent overigens niet dat er geen sancties kunnen worden genomen als blijkt dat er sprake is van plagiaat in het werkstuk.