John Gower
Cinkante Balades

edited and translated
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www.JohnGower.org
February 2021

The purpose and goals of this new edition and translation are described in the Introduction. Some of the difficulties and remaining puzzles are described in the notes. Placing this work on-line provides an opportunity to improve it and to make it more useful. The editor (nicholson@hawaii.rr.com) welcomes comments, corrections, additions, and suggestions for revision, and if incorporated, all will of course be fully acknowledged.

CONTENTS

21	Au solail, qe les herbes eslumine	To the sun, which shines brightly upon the meadows
22	J'ai bien sovent oï parler d'amour	Quite often have I heard talk of love
23	Pour un regard au primere acqueintance	Because of a look upon first meeting
24	Jeo quide qe ma dame de sa mein	I think that my lady with her hand
25	Ma dame, si ceo fuist a vo plesir	My lady, if it were to your pleasure
26	Salutz, honour, et toute reverence	Greetings, honor, and all reverence
27	Ma dame, qant jeo vi vostre oil vair et riant	My lady, when I saw your eyes, bright and laughing
28	Dame, u est ore celle naturesce	Lady, where is now that goodly nature
29	Par droite cause et par necessité	For a rightful cause and out of necessity
30	Si com la Nief qant le fort vent tempeste	Just as the ship when a strong wind blows
31	Ma belle dame, bone et graciouse	My beautiful lady, good and gracious
32	Cest aun novell Janus, q'ad double face	This new year, Janus, who has a double face
33	Au comencer del aun present novell	At the beginning of the present new year
34	Saint Valentin l'amour et la nature	Saint Valentine has under his governance
35	Saint Valentin, plus qe null Emperour	Saint Valentine, more than any emperor
36	Pour comparer ce Jolif temps de Maii	In comparing this joyful time of May
37	El Mois de Maii la plusjoiouse chose	In the month of May the most joyous thing
38	Sicom la fine piere D'aiamand	Just as the precious lodestone
39	En vous, ma doulce dame sovereine	In you, my sweet sovereign lady
40	Om dist, promesses ne sont pas estables	They say that promises are not reliable
41	Des fals amantz tantz sont au jour present	There are so many false lovers at the present time
42	Semblables sont la fortune et les dées	Fortune and dice are similar
43	Plustricherous qe Jason a Medée	More treacherous than Jason to Medea
44	Vailant, Courtois, gentil, et renomée	Valiant, courteous, noble, and renowned
45	Ma dame, jeo vous doi bien comparer	My lady, well ought I to compare you
46	En resemblance d'aigle, qui surmonte	Similar to an eagle, which surmounts
47	Li corps se tient par manger et par boire	The body is sustained by eating and drinking
48	Amour est une chose merveilouse	Love is a wonderful thing
49	As bons est bon et a les mals malvois	Good for the good and bad for the wicked
50	De vrai honour est amour tout le chief	Of true honor the whole source is love
[51]	Amour de soi est bon en toute guise	Love in itself is good in every guise

Introduction

Together with his own *Traitié pour essampler les amantz marietz*, Gower's *Cinkante Balades* contain the only surviving ballades in French by a medieval English poet. In adopting so distinctively French a form and in forming so coherent a collection, they constituted a bold assertion of Gower's own status as a poet as he prepared them for presentation to his new king. We have no evidence that he ever made that presentation, however, and even more unfortunately for Gower, he wrote them at just the time that the use of French in England was rapidly declining, and for all we can tell, they lay unread for nearly 400 years. Their fortunes among modern readers have been only slightly better. Out of the mainstream both geographically and linguistically, they have been largely overlooked by readers of French literature,[1] and among readers of English, they have gotten what little attention they have received only from those whose main interest is Gower.[2] They deserve to be better known, not just as a manifestation, if also something of a last gasp, of the international literary culture at the turn of the fifteenth century, but also because of Gower's contribution to the history of the ballade. While they are consciously steeped in the forms and diction of his continental predecessors, there are also very important ways in which the *Balades* are unlike Gower's French models, and while distinctively Gowerian in some respects, they are also innovative in ways that could not be guessed from his longer works.

Dating, Order, and Arrangement

The only certain date for the *Cinkante Balades* is provided by the single manuscript in which it survives, which gives us a *terminus ad quem* of somewhere between 1399 and 1401 for the

[1] The exceptions are short discussions in M. Dominica Legge, *Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 357-61, and William Calin, *The French Tradition and the Literature of Medieval England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 380-85, plus the important studies by Ardis Butterfield, cited below. All three authors, it must be noted, write in English.

[2] The leader here has been R.F. Yeager, who in addition to several important essays has also published an edition and translation of both collections: John Gower, *The French Balades*, TEAMS Middle English Texts Series (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute, 2011). The most important studies of the *Cinkante Balades*, including Yeager's, are cited below.

completion of the work as we now have it.[3] When Gower began to write it, how long he spent on it, and when it assumed its present form are all now impossible to determine. In what appears to be an autobiographical passage in the *Mirour de l'Omme*, Gower writes (with evident remorse) about having composed short poems in his youth:

> Jadis trestout m'abandonoie
> Au foldelit et veine joye,
> Dont ma vesture desguisay
> Et les fols ditz d'amours fesoie,
> Dont en chantant je carolloie.[4]
>
> [Formerly I would fully abandon myself to foolish delight and vain joy.
> I would dress extravagantly, and I would compose foolish poems about
> love which I would sing while dancing.]

Amans too claims to have composed many a "Rondeal, balade and virelai" in his confession of Vainglory in Book 1 of the *Confessio Amantis* (1.2726-34). But even if we can take Gower literally here and accept Amans' words as somehow autobiographical, there is simply no way of telling whether any of Gower's early compositions survive among the present *Balades*.[5] Whenever he began writing the poems that we now have, the round number "cinkante" suggests that at some

[3] The manuscript is treated in more detail below. Portions of the following discussion are drawn from my essay on "Writing the *Cinkante Balades*," in *John Gower: Others and the Self*, ed. Russell A. Peck and R.F. Yeager, Publications of the John Gower Society, XI (Woodbridge, Suffolk: D.S. Brewer, 2017), 306-27.

[4] *MO* 27338-41; John Gower, *Complete Works*, ed, G.C. Macaulay, 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899), 1:303. All quotations from Gower except from the *Cinkante Balades* are from this edition.

[5] One might have to wonder why, if Gower considered his youthful poems to be merely "fols ditz," he kept them lying around until so late in his life. If we accept that the reference to Florent in **43**.19 is an allusion to Gower's own tale in the *Confessio Amantis*, then that poem at least would have to be dated fairly late. That the existing *Balades* are in French is of no relevance to their dating. Though following the completion of the *Mirour de l'Omme*, Gower's two other major works are in Latin and English, we have the evidence of the two ballades for Henry IV that precede the *Cinkante Balades* in the Trentham manuscript and perhaps of the *Traitié* as well that Gower continued to compose poems in French until close to the end of his life. The date of the *Traitié* is itself a bit of a puzzle. Macaulay's suggestion that it was somehow associated with Gower's own marriage in 1398 (*Complete Works*, 1:lxxxiii-iv) does not stand up to scrutiny, as pointed out by R.F. Yeager, "John Gower's Audience: The Ballades," *Chaucer Review* 40 (2005): 87-88, 92-93; also R.F. Yeager, ed. *John Gower: The French Balades* (Kalamazoo MI: Medieval Institute, 2011), 9. However, Yeager's suggestion that the *Traitié* should be dated earlier because its ballades contain no envoys is not more helpful. Ballades with envoys appear only in the last quarter of the century, and while the inclusion of an envoy might thus provide a rough guide to dating, the absence does not: Deschamps, Granson, Christine and many other less well-known poets continued to write ballades without envoys during all of Gower's lifetime and beyond as well as ballades with envoy attached. The function of an envoy is normally to bring the poem to a close by addressing it to a particular audience, as in most of the *Cinkante Balades*. The ballades in the *Traitié*, however, are not addressed separately; they are part of a single continuous exposition, in this respect rather like the *Livre des cent balades*, which also lacks envoys. The *Traitié* might indeed have come first, but it lacks envoys not because of its earlier date but because it is a *traitié*, a "treatise."

point Gower may have had in mind as a model either the *Livre des cent balades*, which was completed around 1390,[6] or Christine de Pizan's first collection of *Cent balades*, from 1399,[7] or perhaps both, though he does not seem to have imitated either collection in any other way. Yeager argues from the evident popularity of the *Livre des cent balades* at the beginning of the decade, together with the difficulty of finding any reason why Gower might have offered Henry a collection of love poems at decade's end, that Gower most likely completed the work and first presented it to Henry in 1391-93,[8] but there is no concrete evidence that the *Cinkante Balades* was finished or existed in any form at so early a date. Henry, moreover, continued to show a real interest in French poetry after he became king, and we have the evidence of the career of Christine de Pizan that ballades had lost none of their appeal as the new century began. There are also small hints in the manuscript that the underlying exemplar was not yet in a finished state before being copied into the form in which we now have it. (See the discussion of the manuscript below.) Fisher takes a different approach: he detects a chronological sequence in the collection, seeing the first forty poems as "the expression of an idealistic, young poet" as opposed to the "tendency toward moralization" in some of the later ballades and in the *Traitié*, "although who is to say," he asks, "that a young man may not have his moments of disillusion and an old man his moments of sentimentality?"[9] Few nowadays would assume so direct a link between the poems and the poet's own experience. Even if one did, then the question of dating is probably more relevant to Gower's biography than to our understanding of the poems themselves, and the argument could go either way: might not the inclusion of the work in a manuscript that dates from the first years of Henry's reign indicate that Gower still had a little bit of that spark left even in old age?

If we can't date the collection as a whole, much less can we tell the date of any particular poem, and thus we can't, except by supposition, determine the order of their composition. The evidence that Gower gave some thought to their present arrangement, moreover, indicates that they do not necessarily appear in the order in which they were written, but it perhaps provides some small clues on how the collection evolved. The effort to impose some shape and order is particularly evident at the end. The last four poems (**48**-**51**) switch from personal address to more general reflections on the nature of love, the last three in the voice of the poet, and the last of these turns to a different sort of love entirely as the poet speaks of his affection for the Blessed

[6] As suggested by Yeager, *French Balades*, 53.

[7] As suggested by Linda Barney Burke, "`The Voice of One Crying': John Gower, Christine de Pizan, and the Tradition of Elijah the Prophet," *ES: Revista de Filología Inglesa* 33.1 (2012): 118. The chronology is a little tight. While copies of some of Christine's other works were known to be in England by the time of Henry's accession, including perhaps some of her ballades, J.C. Laidlaw, "Christine de Pizan, the Earl of Salisbury and Henry IV," *French Studies* 36 (1982): 137 expresses doubt that the *Cent balades* as a whole could have been among them.

[8] R.F. Yeager, "John Gower's Audience: The Ballades," 88-91; *French Balades*, 50-53.

[9] John H. Fisher, *John Gower, Moral Philosopher and Friend of Chaucer* (New York: New York University Press, 1964), 74.

Virgin in what was clearly intended as the conclusion. The links among these four poems—in particular the way in which **49**-**51** each respond in some way to **48**—suggest that they were conceived as a group. They are preceded by three other sequences, each defined in a different way. **32**-**37** consist of three pairs of ballades for three successive times of the year, arranged in order of the calendar: New Year's Day, Valentine's Day, and the month of May. Within each pair, however, each poem takes a very different tack, and there is nothing to suggest that they were composed as a unit. **40**-**43** are united by theme, as the only poems on a partner's infidelity. They are succeeded in **44**-**47** by four declarations of faithful love in the alternating voices of a woman and a man that could have been written in any order but that now prepare the way for the celebration of virtuous love with which the *Cinkante Balades* concludes. (Included in these two groups are the five ballades in the voice of a woman, **41**-**44** and **46**.)

The connections are somewhat looser in the first two-thirds of the *Balades*. In **1**-**3** and **6**-**9** we have a group of poems in which the lover alludes directly or indirectly to his separation from his beloved. In **6**, he evidently knows of her only by reputation, but otherwise this poem recapitulates much of the diction and imagery of **3** (as detailed in the notes below), including the image of sending forth his heart which recurs with variation in **7**, **8**, and **9**. In between, there are three poems (two of which bear the number "4" in the manuscript, and which are here numbered **4**[1] and **4**[2]) that interrupt this sequence, all three celebrating what is clearly a mutual love, and all three, in distinction not just to the adjacent ballades but to the entire tradition on which Gower drew, employing language typically associated with betrothal and marriage.

Ballade **9** introduces the lover's appeal for his beloved's "merci" that provides the transition to numbers **10**-**20**, all of which are concerned less with physical separation than with the emotional distance between the persona and the lady. There is a less dense web of inter-reference in this group than among the preceding ballades, but they are united by the persona's appeals for "merci" and "pitié" and by his protests against "durté" and "Danger," none of which is cited in **1**-**9** except for the reference to "merci" in **9**.35. There are also some formal links— between **13** and **17,** for instance, occur four ballades without refrain—and at least one thematic group, four poems on the difficulty of addressing the lady in **14** and **17**-**19**.[10] Ballades **21**-**31** are even more diverse: all are concerned with the vicissitudes of love and each is addressed in some way by the lover to his lady, but they contain a wide variety of situations and moods, and like **10**-**20**, they might have been composed in any order at any time before being assembled here.[11] Interspersed among these, however, is a group of five poems on the lady's virtue and its beneficent effect (**21**, **31**, **38**, **39**, and **45**) that not only stand apart from the other ballades thematically but also share a common diction (detailed in the notes to **21** below) that is either exclusive or all but exclusive to these poems, and that therefore gives all

[10] More details on the thematic links can be found in the commentary on the individual poems below.
[11] There also appears to be some deliberate grouping according to the form of the persona's address. In **1**-**12** (excepting only **5**), he speaks directly to the lady in both the stanzas and the envoy, but in **13**-**24** (excepting only **15**), the stanzas (and sometimes the envoy as well) refer to the lady only in the third person. **25** begins the final sequence of poems all addressed directly to the lady or by the lady to the man.

appearance of having originally been composed as a sequence, though not necessarily in the order in which they now appear. If this is so, then Gower chose finally to separate them. Only **38** and **39** remain together (where they stand just before the first of the poems on a partner's infidelity), and **45** is incorporated into the alternating professions of sincere love which are the last poems spoken by the lover or the lady before the voice of the poet takes over in the conclusion.

When the patterns are particularly dense, as in this group or in the four poems that make up the conclusion, one is tempted to believe that Gower composed them as a unit. Elsewhere, where the linkages are less dense—where the themes are similar but the language is not, or where the diction is similar but in different contexts—it is perhaps more likely that we have evidence of Gower's effort to place similar poems together, even long after they were composed. Connections from one poem to another of this sort are not unprecedented, for similar patterns can be found in other collections of lyrics such as Machaut's *Louange des dames*.[12] Itô suggests that we use "concatenation" rather than "consistency" in accounting for the way in which Gower has structured the *Cinkante Balades*.[13] The distinction is important, because while there are certainly patterns and connections to be found, there is a danger of seeing more continuity than really exists, and in particular, of reading the ballades as if they were all spoken by and about the same man and woman and of slipping into the assumption of a single continuous narrative. The unusual dramatic quality of Gower's ballades may encourage such a reading, as does their formal consistency (on which more below): in other collections, such as Machaut's or Deschamps', the constant change of stanza form helps sustain the perception that each poem is a new beginning in a different voice. Somewhat paradoxically, the narrative explanation is most commonly invoked at the point in the *Balades* at which the greatest apparent disruption occurs in the "plot," in **40**-**47**. As already noted, in the first four of these poems, first a man and then a woman accuses his or her partner of infidelity, and in the second four, a woman and a man alternate in celebration of a faithful love. Those who see this section as a dialogue between the same two individuals do not agree on whether it ends in reconciliation or in the woman's turning to another, more worthy man.[14] There is no way of knowing, and this

[12] See Daniel Poirion, *Le Poète et le prince: L'Évolution du lyrisme courtois de Guillaime de Machaut à Charles d'Orléans* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1965), 204; and Nigel Wilkins, ed., Guillaume de Machaut, *La Louange des dames* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1972), 15-16. Clotilde Dauphant, "Frontières d'un genre aux frontières d'une langue: ballades typiques et atypiques d'Eustache Deschamps, John Gower et Geoffrey Chaucer." In *Le Rayonnement de la cour des premiers Valois à époque d'Eustache Deschamps*, ed. Miren Lacassagne (Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2017), p. 85, notes the presence of "petites unités cohérentes" in the manuscript of the collected works of Eustache Deschamps, and observes more generally that "la ballade est caractérisée à la fois par son autonomie esthéthique et la recherche d'échos formels et thématiques dans des cycles construits."

[13] Masayoshi Itô, *John Gower, The Medieval Poet* (Tokyo: Shinozaki Shorin, 1976), 163.

[14] Macaulay (1:lxxviii) implies that "the lady," whom he evidently regards as a single figure in all five poems, turns to a different man in **44**, but he doesn't express a position on who speaks in **45** and **47.** Itô, *John Gower*, 175-76 sees the lady turning to another man in **44** and **46**, who then replies in both **45** and **47**.

must therefore be the wrong question to ask. Gower is not at all the first poet to use a woman's voice to dramatize the risks of betrayal that women face in love, and in a fashion that is typical of the collection as a whole, the three poems in which he does so here approach the theme in different ways and they offer very different resolutions in the refrain. In the poems that follow, the woman who surrenders unreservedly to her noble friend in **44** hardly sounds like the one who declares that a woman can't be too careful in **41**, and the young woman of **46**, who blushes when she hears her lover praised and is too shy to speak about him, is not the same woman who denounces her unfaithful partner in some of the most graphic language in the entire courtly tradition in **43**.9-14.

In the rest of the collection too, there are as many inconsistencies and sudden shifts in both subject and tone as there are links, and these too are typical of other contemporary collections of lyrics. The first six poems (**1**-**5**, remembering that there are two **4**s) offer pledges of faith in what is clearly a mutually affectionate relationship, but in **6** the persona addresses a lady whom he has never seen and whom he knows only by reputation. Similarly, after nearly a dozen poems on the persona's continuing frustration, **22** and **23** are suddenly about the first effects of love, and the tongue-tied lover of **22**.9-12 is not the same man as the one who pours out his feelings to his lady, repeatedly and unsuccessfully, in **17**, **18**, and **19**. The poems that follow alternate among pleas, complaints, and promises, and sometimes the juxtapositions seem deliberately intended to highlight differences. The first of the two New Year's Day poems (**32**) is a joyless lament in the face of the lady's obduracy (which also offers a very different take on "grace" from the poem that immediately precedes), and the second (**33**) is a much more playful and hopeful claim upon the lady's good will. The first of the two Saint Valentine's Day poems (**34**) invites the lady (whom the persona calls his "belle oisel [beautiful bird]" [25]) to partake of the pleasures that the other birds share, while in the second (**35**), he bewails his and his lady's isolation from the joys of nature, comparing her to the Phoenix of Araby, which lives alone. Despite the similarity in imagery, these are not different stages in a single relationship but different casts and very different stories. What we lose when we subordinate these poems to a single narrative is not just the uniqueness of each—in tone, in mood, in choice of language—but

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Holly Barbaccia, "The Woman's Response in John Gower's *Cinkante Balades*," in *John Gower, Trilingual Poet: Language, Translation, and Tradition*, ed. Elisabeth Dutton, with John Hines and R. F. Yeager (Cambridge, UK: D. S. Brewer, 2010), 236-37 and 230 n. 2, assumes that it is the same partner throughout (including the persona of the last four ballades, **48**-**51**), whom the lady first rejects and then accepts. Yeager comes down on both sides. In "John Gower's French and his Readers," in *Language and Culture in Medieval Britain: The French in England c.1100-c.1500*, ed. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne (York: York Medieval Press, 2009), 147-48, the lady turns back to her original partner in **44** and **46** after denouncing some other false lover or lovers in **41**-**43**; in *French Balades*, 49, she turns to another lover in **44** and **46** (who replies in **45**) after denouncing her original partner in **41**-**43**; and in "Gower's Triple Tongue (2): Teaching the *Balades*," in *Approaches to Teaching the Poetry of John Gower*, ed. R.F. Yeager and Brian W. Gastle (New York: Modern Language Association, 2011), 102, she either takes her original lover back in **44** or "more likely" turns to someone else. The most difficult poem to fit into any coherent idea of the "plot" is **40**, in which a man denounces a woman's infidelity.

also the contrasts that emerge from these juxtapositions and the diversity of voices and the variety of situations that characterize the collection as a whole.

Forms and Themes

To create these voices, Gower had a long tradition of earlier courtly lyrics to draw upon. As the title of the work reveals, the *Cinkante Balades* are firmly situated in the dominant strand of the French courtly lyric of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, as it was defined and practiced by the major poets of the era—Machaut, Deschamps, Froissart—and as it was sustained by their many followers, including, among Gower's contemporaries, Oton de Granson, who spent much of his career in England; Christine de Pizan, who may have begun writing ballades at about the same time as Gower;[15] the aristocratic poets who contributed to the *Livre des cent balades*; and many other anonymous writers, such as those whose works appear alongside those of their better known peers in the Pennsylvania *chansonnier*, which was copied at just about the same time as the manuscript in which the *Cinkante Balades* appear.[16] There are few images, few situations, few motifs in the *Cinkante Balades* that do not have a reflex somewhere in this earlier poetry. Fisher sought to diminish the echoes of Gower's fourteenth-century predecessors, but the few passages that he cites actually provide instructive examples of the nature of Gower's borrowing.[17] Gower's "Si jeo de Rome fuisse l'emperesse [If I were the

[15] Though her *Cent balades* do not appear in their final form until 1399, Christine may have begun writing the first of them soon after her husband's death in 1390. The ninth appears to be dated 1394: see Maurice Roy, ed., *Oeuvres poétiques de Christine de Pisan* (Société des anciens textes français; Paris: Firmin Didot, 1886), 1:xxvi; also Charity Cannon Willard, *Christine de Pizan*: *Her Life and Works* (New York: Perseus, 1984), 43-44, who suggests that Christine began writing in 1393-94.

[16] Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, Van Pelt Library, MS Codex 902 (*olim* French 15). Excellent color photos are available at the library website: http://dla.library.upenn.edu/dla/medren/detail.html?id=MEDREN_9935591633503681. See the detailed study by James I. Wimsatt, *Chaucer and the Poems of "Ch"*, Revised Edition (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute, 2009), including a numbered catalog of its contents, pp. 91-146. The ballades of unknown authorship are edited by Charles R. Mudge, "The Pennsylvania *Chansonnier*: A Critical Edition of Ninety-Five Anonymous Ballades from the Fourteenth Century with Introduction, Notes and Glossary" (Diss., Indiana University, 1972). Wimsatt provides attributions for five of the 95 poems that Mudge counted as anonymous: Mudge numbers 5, 25, 26, 50, and 51, corresponding to Wimsatt nos. 38, 62, 63, 190, and 191. A sixth, escaping both their notice (Mudge no. 79, Wimsatt no. 279) is elsewhere attributed to Granson; see Oton de Granson, *Poems*, ed. and trans. Peter Nicholson and Joan Grenier-Winther (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute, 2015), no. 53**.** Portions of a sixth (Wimsatt no. 126, lines 1-9 and 19-22; a *virelai*, and therefore not included in Mudge) are identical to lines 4048-60 of Froissart's *Joli Buisson de Jonece*. There are no other poems of Froissart in the manuscript, however, and "Jonece" attributes the poem to an unidentified woman who wrote some twenty years earlier (lines 4035-39).

[17] Fisher, *John Gower*, 76. Fisher sought to demonstrate Gower's greater debt to the Provençal poets of an earlier century than to the French poets of his own (75-77), citing (without fully endorsing in each case) the parallels listed by Jean Audiau, *Les Troubadours et l'Angleterre: contribution à l'étude des poètes Anglais de l'amour au moyen âge (XIIIe et XIVe siècles)* ("Nouvelle édition," Paris: Vrin, 1927), 87-128. Fisher's

empress of Rome]" (**44**.5) surely has only accidental similarity to Deschamps' "Telle dame estre empereis de Romme [Such a lady to be empress of Rome],"[18] and it partakes instead of a common hyperbolic formula for expressing devotion, for instance in Gower's own "si Rois fuisse d'un Empire [if I were king of an empire]" (**26**.14) and '"De tout le monde si jeo fuisse Roi [if I were king of the whole world]" (**38**.11; cf. also **5**.21, **15**.15). His "C'est ma dolour, qe fuist ainçois ma joie [It is my sorrow that formerly was my joy]" (**43**.8) seems to bear a closer relation to Machaut's "C'est ma dolour et la fin de ma joie [It is my sorrow and the end of my joy],"[19] but it too may be only coincidental: the collocation of "dolour" and "joie" (or their synonyms) is another commonplace in the lyrics, as is the construction of the refrain around oppositions, as in Gower's "Quant dolour vait, les joies vienont pres [When sorrow leaves, joys come soon thereafter]" (**2**.8) and "Ma dolour monte et ma joie descresce [My sorrow rises and my joy decreases]" (**20**.8). The similarity in both these cases points to a broader fund of common formulae and diction that extends well beyond direct quotation. The others on Fisher's list likewise cannot be traced to a single poem. The refrain to **25**, "Car qui bien aime ses amours tard oblie [For he who loves well forgets his love slowly]," is, as Fisher notes, proverbial; not only does it appear in Machaut, Deschamps, and Chaucer, but Gower himself used it twice before, in slightly different form, in the *Mirour de l'Omme*.[20] Butterfield notes that Gower's reference to Jason and Medea in **43**.1 echoes not just the lines in Granson that Fisher cites but also a passage in Froissart.[21] She adds another parallel that counts as a commonplace: **45**.1, "Ma dame, jeo vous doi bien comparer [My lady, I ought well to compare you]" is nearly identical to the opening of two poems by Machaut and of two others by Froissart.[22] And she also notes the

comments had the unfortunate effect not just of diverting attention from what are now recognized as Gower's most immediate models but also of giving undue prominence to the few passages in the *Cinkante Balades* that he cited. For a response to Fisher, see Ardis Butterfield, "French Culture and the Ricardian Court," in *Essays on Ricardian Literature in Honour of J.A. Burrow*, ed. A.J. Minnis, Charlotte C. Morse, and Thorlac Turville-Petre (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 109-15.

[18] Deschamps, **417**.8. The standard editions of medieval French shorter poems assign a sequence number to each poem. In some cases (Deschamps, Granson), the numbering is continuous throughout; in some (Machaut, Froissart, Christine de Pizan), the numbering begins anew in each section, whether defined by genre or by separate work. Here and in the commentary on individual ballades below, citations from other poets will be by this sequence number (arabic numerals replacing the editors' roman, in boldface), preceded, when necessary, by the section heading, and followed, when appropriate, by line numbers. For the complete references for these and also for the longer poems cited here, see the list of abbreviations that follows this Introduction.

[19] Machaut, *Lou*. **34**.8. Cf. Ardis Butterfield, *The Familiar Enemy: Chaucer, Language, and Nation in the Hundred Years War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 256-57.

[20] *MO* 7357 and 27867. See the note to line **25**.8.

[21] *Familiar Enemy*, 256-61. Fisher cites Granson **18**.17-18 (*Poems*, 62). There is actually a closer parallel in the opening to Granson **20**.1-2 ("A Medee me puis bien comparer, / Qui a grant tort fu de Jason traie [I can compare myself to Medea, who was very wrongfully betrayed by Jason]"), which, like Gower's poem, is spoken by a woman. For other parallels see the note to **43**.1-6 below.

[22] *Familiar Enemy*, 255-56. Butterfield also draws attention to parallels in Chaucer's "To Rosemounde."

links to both Granson and Chaucer in Gower's two St Valentine's Day poems (**34** and **35**).[23] There are no doubt many more such passages still to be found (some of which are cited in the notes to the individual ballades below), and one must also add the many shorter phrases that Gower shared with these poets, such as "coer et corps [heart and body]" and "simple et coie [simple and reserved]," cited by Fisher. Butterfield observes, with reference to the longer examples that she cites, that the use and re-use of such quotations is itself one of the markers of the tradition in which Gower wrote, and that behind many if not most instances of "borrowing," one is likely to find a web of echoes and inter-reference rather than a direct link to a single particular text, in some cases extending outside of the lyric tradition itself.

Given the extensiveness of his debt, it would be impossible to catalog every instance of Gower's "borrowing" from this tradition. Some effort has been made to identify some of the more palpable recollections of earlier poets in the notes to the individual ballades below, but the references that are collected there are by no means exhaustive, nor with one possible exception (see the note to **21**) should they be taken as evidence of Gower's debt to any particular poem. It may in fact be easier to pick out the poems in which Gower departs from the inherited idiom than adequately to account for his debt. There aren't many: they include, among the first 48 poems (numbers **1**-**47**, remembering again the two number **4**s), the three poems in which he invokes the vocabulary of betrothal and marriage (**4**[1], **4**[2], and **5**), and the three in which a woman denounces her partner's infidelity (**41**-**43**), in which Gower turns to his own *Mirour de l'Omme* for the needed language. Together with the three ballades which bring the collection to a close, these are the most "Gowerian" in the sense that they seem the most familiar to those who have read Gower's longer works. We shouldn't, however, infer, either from these individual poems or in the way from which the entire last third of the collection seems to move towards an affirmation of virtuous love, an attempt by Gower the moralist to "reform" the tradition from which he drew. Such a reform was hardly necessary, first of all: though they did not ordinarily celebrate marriage, Gower's predecessors were no less in favor of mutually faithful monogamy than he, could it be achieved, and ballades such as the five that Gower wrote on the beneficent effects of the lady's virtue, cited above, derive from a long line of earlier lyrics in praise of the lady in which both "beauté et bonté [beauty and goodness]" and "belle et bonne [beautiful and good]" were common motifs. In the remainder of his ballades as well, Gower adopted the diction of his predecessors, together with many of their assumptions about the nature of love, just as deliberately as he did the ballade form. His originality and the principal uniqueness of his collection thus lie neither in his moral stance nor in his language, but elsewhere: in his introduction of the French ballade form into English literature, first of all; in the consistency of form that he chose for his ballades; and most importantly, in a very different understanding of the expressive function of the lyric, which finally allowed him to break free of some of the self-imposed emotional bonds of his predecessors and to create a

[23] *Familiar Enemy*, 250-52.

stance that was not precisely moralistic in nature but that was critical in other ways of the language from which he drew.

The ballade was by far the most popular type of French lyric during the fourteenth century, but not in England. Chaucer wrote several ballades in English, and he is given credit for being the first English poet to do so.[24] When someone named Quixley chose to translate the *Cinkante Balades* into English, he too did so ballade form.[25] But Dean and Boulton's catalog of the surviving literature in Anglo-Norman lists not a single ballade apart from Gower's.[26] French lyrics certainly circulated in England, and other poets in England may have written ballades in French that do not survive, but certainly none with the consistency or the seriousness of purpose of Gower in his two collections. In its basic form, the ballade consists of three stanzas, each in the same rhyme scheme and each normally ending in the same line or lines, which serve as a refrain; but within that general definition, there was room for enormous variety. The stanza could range from six to fourteen lines in length. Lines normally ranged from seven to ten syllables, though lines of four and five syllables are not unknown, and the form also allowed for one or more shorter lines, or *vers coupés*, somewhere in the stanza. There was also a great variety of rhyme schemes for each type of stanza.[27] Given the wide range of possibilities, Gower's ballades are most remarkable for their uniformity: he exhibits far less variety than any other known poet, and though he introduces one variation, he chose the forms that had become most common (though by no means universal) as the fourteenth century came to a close. His stanzas are all isometric (that is, he does not employ a *vers coupé*), and his lines are all decasyllabic. His 52 poems are evenly divided between 7-line and 8-line stanzas, and in all but a few of these he used the rhyme schemes that had proved most popular among his contemporaries: for the 7-line stanza, *ababbcc*, the model for the English "rime royal," and for the 8-line stanza, *ababbcbc*, the model for the Monk's Tale stanza. His one variation, appearing in five of the 7-line stanzas and seven of the 8-line stanzas, was to re-use the *a*-rhyme in place of

[24] See Laila Z. Gross, "The Short Poems," in *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd ed., ed. Larry D. Benson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), 632. (Gross' account of Chaucer's variations on "the classic ballade" is rather oversimplified.) Alceste refers to Chaucer's composition of many "balades, roundels, virelayes" in the *Legend of Good Women*, F422-23, but all of Chaucer's surviving lyrics are in English. James I. Wimsatt, in *Chaucer and the Poems of 'Ch'* (note 16 above), makes an energetic effort to link Chaucer with fifteen poems marked "Ch" in a later hand in the in Pennsylvania manuscript. His attempts to associate the manuscript with English sources (though none of its contents betrays any indication of English origin, either linguistic or metrical) and with Oton de Granson, who was dead when the manuscript was written, are speculative at best. It is difficult to understand, moreover, how anyone in France would have known which poems were Chaucer's, or why anyone would have cared.

[25] Henry Noble MacCracken, "Quixley's Ballades Royal (? 1402)," *Yorkshire Archæological Journal* 20 (1909): 125-50; rpt. by Yeager, *French Balades*, 163-73. For the identity of the author see Yeager, ibid., 157-63.

[26] Ruth J. Dean and Maureen B.M. Boulton, *Anglo-Norman Literature: A Guide to Texts and Manuscripts* (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1999). See also the chapter on "The Lyric and its Background" in Legge, *Anglo-Norman Literature*, 332-61.

[27] On the distribution of stanza forms and rhyme schemes see Poirion, *Poète et prince*, 385-87, though it does not appear to me that his figures are always exact.

the *c*-rhyme, producing the schemes *ababbaa* and *ababbaba*.[28] There is some precedent for Gower's 8-line stanza, in one poem by Machaut and in four of the anonymous ballades in the Pennsylvania manuscript.[29] For the 7-line stanza, I know of only two earlier examples, both by Machaut.[30]

Metrically, as Macaulay pointed out, Gower's line shows a blend of the English and the French, more specifically of combining the accentual meter typical of English poetry with the syllabic meter of the French.[31] French meter was governed by the number of syllables: the decasyllable consisted of ten, with the possibility of an eleventh unstressed syllable at the end of the line (creating a "feminine rhyme") or (much more rarely) after the fourth syllable. Word stress most often fell on even-numbered syllables, but not at all necessarily; and the line required a caesura—a break or a pause at the end of a word that also marked the end of a grammatical unit—normally after the fourth syllable. In the *Cinkante Balades*, Gower adopts the ten-syllable line, just as he did in his English decasyllables in Amans' complaint in *Confessio Amantis* 8.2217-2300 and in "In Praise of Peace."[32] But also as in the English poems, the accent falls regularly only on even numbered syllables, creating the rising unstressed-stressed pattern characteristic of iambic pentameter, and the requirement of a regular caesura is set aside. Billy and Duffell suggest that spoken Anglo-Norman, like Middle English, probably placed greater stress upon the accented syllables than continental French.[33] If that is so, then Gower and his audience would simply have been more conscious of the position of the stressed syllables than a French audience was, even if their expectations were not formed by the sound of English poetry. Gower's combination of the syllabic with the accentual was as exceptional, however, as his choice to use the ballade form. Anglo-Norman versification had become increasingly irregular, especially in syllable count. Gower's adoption of the strict decasyllable of continental French verse imposed a discipline and order lacking among his Anglo-Norman predecessors,

[28] **13**, **14**, **18**, **36**, and **45** (7-line); and **9**, **17**, **19**, **22**, **24**, **39**, and **42** (8-line).

[29] Machaut, *Lou*. **17**; Mudge **1**, **20**, **21**, and **27**. Note that Wimsatt, *Poems of "Ch"*, 105-6, lists the rhyme schemes of the latter three incorrectly (his nos. 57, 58, and 65). Machaut uses different two-rhyme schemes in *Lou*. **121**, **213**, and **250**. Poirion, *Poète et prince*, 385 also counts two poems by Christine de Pizan and two by Charles d'Orléans with the same scheme as Gower (all later), and two poems by Froissart and three by Charles d'Orléans with different two-rhyme schemes.

[30] *Lou.* **38** and **193** . Machaut uses a different two-rhyme scheme (*ababbab*) in *Lou* **16**. Gower's scheme is not listed by Poirion, but he counts 4 examples of the latter.

[31] *Works*, 1:lxxiv-lxxv. Macaulay's judgment is confirmed by the more detailed analysis by Dominique Billy and Martin J. Duffell, "Le Décasyllabe de John Gower et le dernier mètre Anglo-Normand," *Revue de linguistique romane* 69 (2005): 75-95. Also valuable for definitions of terms is the same authors' "From Decasyllable to Pentameter: Gower's Contribution to English Metrics," *Chaucer Review* 38 (2004): 383-400.

[32] With, of course, the possible eleventh unstressed syllable at the end. There are only five examples of an extra unstressed syllable after the fourth syllable in the *Balades*. Billy and Duffell, "Décasyllabe," 76 suggest that it was probably not pronounced in these instances.

[33] "From Decasyllable to Pentameter," 395.

while his adoption of a regular accentual meter served to make French verse sound more natural to English ears.

Gower's ballades are uniform in one other respect, and that is that all but two conclude with an envoy, an additional shorter stanza (in the hands of other poets, of no prescribed length) using the same rhymes and ending with the refrain, in which the poet or speaker typically turns to address his or her listeners directly with a closing peroration.[34] Deschamps is given credit for popularizing the inclusion of the envoy,[35] but even he employs it on only about two-thirds of his ballades,[36] and in smaller proportion, by my count closer to half, on those concerned with love. The significance of Gower's use of the envoy was first noted by Fisher, who also suggested that Gower may also deserve credit for "the technique of integrating the envoy into the poem, of making it a capstone for the whole like the concluding quatrain or couplet of a sonnet, rather than a formal salutation."[37] He may actually have exaggerated Gower's uniqueness in that regard. In all of the ballades of Gower's predecessors in which the addressee of the envoy is the same as the addressee of the main stanzas, the envoy might well be considered a "capstone" to the poem, and especially in the ballades of Deschamps that consist of a dialogue, the envoy is inseparable from the rest of the ballade. There are also two ballades in the Pennsylvania manuscript in which the envoy does not contain an address at all but instead constitutes a genuine fourth stanza.[38] Gower's envoys vary greatly in their degree of integration with the rest of the poem. Some contain significant content; others function as little more than a "sincerely yours," bringing the message contained in the poem to an end. In the first 48 poems their primary ostensible function, however, is to reinforce that this is a communication, a direct address, either real or imagined, from one person to another.

To put it another way, all of the first 48 poems are dramatic in conception: they are addressed by someone to someone. In 34 of the 48, the direct address begins in the first stanza, usually within the first two lines, and it continues into the envoy. In another 10, after speaking of her in the third person, the persona turns to address his lady only in the envoy,[39] and in four

[34] The final ballade has no envoy of its own, but it is followed (after two blank lines) by a 7-line stanza in different rhymes addressed to "gentile Engleterre," which serves, as Macaulay notes (1:lxxiii), as an envoy to the collection as a whole. The other ballade without an envoy is **32.** All of Gower's envoys are in four lines, rhyming *bcbc*, or in the twelve ballades listed in note 28, *baba*.

[35] Wimsatt, *Chaucer and the Poems of "Ch"*, 79 n. 49, 80, 86. Cf. Butterfield, *Familiar Enemy*, 191-95.

[36] See James Laidlaw, "L'Innovation métrique chez Deschamps," in *Autour d'Eustache Deschamps: Actes du Colloque du Centre d'Études Médiévales de l'Université de Picardie-Jules Verne, Amiens, 5-8 Novembre 1998*, ed. Danielle Buschinger (Amiens: Centre d'Études Médiévales, 1999), 130, 134. Granson uses envoys on 12 of his 56 ballades. There are only eleven ballades in the entire Pennsylvania manuscript with envoys; Wimsatt, *Poems of "Ch"*, 86 (the reference to twelve in the note to poem no. 20 on p. 98 is incorrect). One of these (Wimsatt's no. 20) is by Granson (no. **56**); the rest are anonymous.

[37] *John Gower*, 82.

[38] Mudge **73**, **94**.

[39] **13**, **14**, **16**, **19**, **21**, **22**, **23**, **24**, **35**, and **41**. **14** is counted here though the speaker actually turns to address the lady in the last line of the third stanza.

more (**5**, **17**, **18**, and **36**), he speaks in the envoy of sending the ballade to his lady, though without any reference to her either in the vocative or in the second person (a form of the envoy without any precedent that I can find). This very consistency makes Gower's collection unique, for like the stanza forms that he chose, the address to a particular person, while by no means unusual, was certainly not the rule. Only about 40% of Machaut's ballades are addressed by a lover to his lady or *vice versa*. In the rest, the audience is unspecified, and the poems are about the lady (or her lover), or about the speaker's experience in love, or about love more generally (in addition to a very small number that are not about love at all). Closer to Gower's time, the range of topics broadens. Deschamps in particular composed ballades on a huge variety of subjects, but among those concerned with love, fewer than half are in the form of direct address. The same is true of Froissart, of Granson, and of the anonymous poets in the Pennsylvania manuscript. In more than 80% of the poems in which Deschamps employs an envoy, moreover, the addressee is a "prince" or "princes," a convention that he inherited from the earlier *chanson courtoise* and that appears to derive from the address to the judge in the song competitions of the *Puy*.[40] The rest of his envoys are highly varied: some addressing particular individuals,[41] some a plural audience, some a divinity, Christian or other. Some contain no direct address at all but instead continue a dialogue begun in the main stanzas. But fewer than two dozen of Deschamps' ballades in his entire vast corpus are addressed in the envoy to the lady.[42] Precisely none of Gower's ballades, by contrast, is addressed to a prince. All are addressed to either lady or lover, either in the second person or in the third, and except in the very few cases in which the message cannot be delivered directly, all are presented as part of an on-going exchange.

What is perhaps most unique about that communication is that in 35 of these 48 poems, it takes place explicitly in writing. The reference to writing takes various forms: the poem may be described as "escrit [written]" (**1**.25, **2**.27, *et al*.), as a "lettre" (**2**.25, **3**.23, *et al*.), as being sent (**8**.22, **9**.42 *et al*.), or as travelling to its addressee (**33**.23, **47**.23). There is only a single reference, however, to the ballade as a song (**35**.24).[43] Dragonetti cites similar references to writing in the envoys to thirteenth-century poems, but they are very rare among the *formes fixes*.[44] In being

[40] See Roger Dragonetti, *La technique poétique des trouvères dans la chanson courtoise* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1979), 371-78.

[41] E.g. Chaucer in **285** and Christine de Pizan in **1242**.

[42] In Granson the proportions are higher: eight of the twelve ballades with envoys are addressed to the lady, who is usually referred to as "princesse." One is addressed to "princesse d'Amours," one to "Prince," one to "Prince amoureux," and one to "gens et gentes [ladies and gentlemen]." See Granson, *Poems*, 23.

[43] The Latin colophon to the collection also refers to "carmina [songs]." In **40**.22, and **43**.7, the persona refers to singing, but not with reference to the poem itself.

[44] Dragonetti, *Technique Poétique*, 307-8; see also Butterfield, *Familiar Enemy*, 191-95. I know of no explicit references to writing in Machaut's lyrics, though there are countless references to song. In the envoy to his ballade to Chaucer (**285**), Deschamps asks Chaucer to write back ("rescripre," line 36). Other references to writing occur in very different contexts in Deschamps, e.g. **468**.23, **497**.20, **536**.8, **947**.18, **1433**.1, **1441**.1-2. In one of Froissart's *virelais*, the persona asks his lady to write back (Vir. **8**.27); in

presented as written texts, Gower's ballades represent the culmination of the movement from song to writing that Huot traces in her study of the late thirteenth- and fourteenth-century lyric, with everything that that implies about the nature of his poems and about the relation among poet, text, "audience," and reader.[45] In a poem meant to be sung, Huot notes, "the experiences of loving, of making a song, and of singing it are indistinguishable, just as the figures of protagonist, author, and performer are united in the lyric 'I'." "The song has only the eternal present of the repeated performances," she writes elsewhere, and "The lyric voice can never reach beyond itself to make contact with the object of its desire. Within the strict confines of the lyric monologue, dialogue is by definition impossible."[46] Huot traces the many different ways in which the poets and scribes negotiated the constantly shifting relationship between performance and writing, between sound and sight, between timelessness and temporality, and between monologue and drama. One path toward a more "writerly" poetic lay in the compilation of anthologies in which the authorial presence becomes increasingly marked. Another lay in the incorporation of lyric poems into narratives, which themselves become more and more concerned with how the poems came to be composed. A model with which Gower was almost certainly familiar lay in the *dits amoureux*, which often describe lovers communicating by exchanging poems. Some are enclosed in letters, some delivered with an oral message, and some are sent alone, but the poems that are exchanged normally preserve the form, at least, of songs, even when written down. To reduce a complex history to its simplest terms, works such as Machaut's *Livre dou voir dit* incorporate such lyrics into a narrative that describes the acts of writing and sending them. In the *Cinkante Balades*, Gower incorporates the acts of writing and sending into the lyric itself.[47]

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another, he refers to sending his poem in writing (*Buisson* 2763). In his "Livre Messire Ode," Granson refers twice to "sending" his ballades, but in the stanzas, not in the envoy (**78.**892, 2128). In the first case the persona in the first-person narrative doesn't actually send it, and in the second we do not know if he does or not because the narrative is incomplete. Chaucer refers to sending his poem in the envoys to "The Complaint of Chaucer to his Purse" and "Lenvoy de Chaucer a Bukton," the latter referring also to his "writ" (*Riverside Chaucer*, 656).

[45] Sylvia Huot, *From Song to Book: The Poetics of Writing in Old French Lyric and Lyrical Narrative Poetry* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987). See also Ardis Butterfield, *Poetry and Music in Medieval France from Jean Renart to Guillaume de Machaut* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), who focuses on the earlier part of this period and on the incorporation of song within narrative rather than on lyric itself; and Jacqueline Cerquiglini, "Le nouveau lyrisme (XIVe-XVe siècle)," in *Précis de littérature française du moyen âge*, ed. Daniel Poirion (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1983), 283-92.

[46] Huot, *From Song to Book*, 48, 122, 90.

[47] Ardis Butterfield suggests that Gower's exploitation of the "metaformal potential of the envoy" might have been suggested to him by his reading of the *Voir dit*; "Afterwords: Forms of Death," *Exemplaria* 27 (2015), 178. More broadly, the emphasis on writing is consistent with what Huot would describe as the "writerly" production of the Trentham manuscript as a whole, as a collection of generically diverse works that are united by the fact that they are by a single author (see her chapter on "The Vernacular Poet as Compiler," 211-41). Gower underlines his own role by repeatedly offering his works in writing. In addressing Henry in the first of the two ballades that precede the *Cinkante Balades*, he refers to "ce que je

The written letter, much more strongly than a song, emphasizes the unique dramatic moment of each poem: it creates the expectation of a response and thus an implicit dialogue. Gower points to the difference between a song and a letter in the envoy to ballade **3**:

> A vous, ma dame, ensi come faire doie,
> En lieu de moi, ceo lettre vous apporte
> Q'en vous amer moun coer dist toute voie.
>
> [To you, my lady, just as it ought to do, in place of myself this letter brings to you what my heart says constantly in loving you.]

In so many of the ballades that precede Gower's, even when the lady is invoked, we seem to be overhearing only the persona's private thoughts, "what my heart says," rather than an actual address: what he wishes he could say rather than what he does. Even in the *dits amoureux*, the inclusion of a song addressed to the lady does not necessarily mean that it is delivered to her. One of the ballades in Machaut's *Remede de Fortune* (3013-36) is a song in which the narrator joyously tells his lady of how his love for her has affected him, which he composes and sings out loud to himself when no one else is around. The narrator in Granson's *Livre Messire Ode* writes a number of songs addressed to his lady, but he copies them into his book without sending them. When he writes to her, he does so in the form of a verse letter instead.[48] On the other hand, there is a telling moment in Froissart's *Espinette Amoureuse* in which the narrator, wanting to address his lady but without others knowing, decides to convey his message in the form of a ballade which he places inside a book that he knows that she will see. If anyone else found it, he reasons, no one would suspect anything, because it is just a song.[49] None of Gower's ballades is just a song, and except in the very few cases in which the inability to communicate is itself part of the dramatic context, none is just a private musing; the addressee is known, the message is sent, and it is both direct and personal.

The persona's direct address to that other person helps explain some of the most distinctive qualities of Gower's ballades. In reading Machaut, we can be seduced by the play of sound, by the purity and single-mindedness of feeling, by the poet's verbal dexterity and by his skill in extracting sense from the refrain, but we also often feel trapped in a solipsistic world of male emotion in which the woman is present only as an object of admiration or as the cause of the persona's suffering. All of the most common tropes—the persona's subjection to Love; his claim upon Love's aid or upon a reward for his service; the appeals to the woman for "merci," "pitié," relief, or healing; the attribution of the woman's rejection to her "durte," "cruauté," or "orgueil" (firmness, cruelty, or pride)—all of these deny the woman any real agency or choice and presume that she should love the man who makes his appeal merely because he persists in

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vous escris [what I write for you]" (line 22). The heading to the *Cinkante Balades* begins, "Si apres sont escrites [Here following are written]," and the concluding stanza to the collection begins, "O gentile Engleterre, a toi j'escrits [O noble England, to you I write]."

[48] Granson **78**.452-519 . Compare the ballades and other poems in lines 101-44, 216-326, 570-79, 583-603, 701-833, and 873-906, all of which are addressed to the lady but are not actually sent to her.

[49] Froissart, *Esp.Am.* 900-02.

loving her. Few of Machaut's successors rise to his level as poets, but they generally remain bound within the same conventions. In Gower too, there are many poems that utilize the same *topoi* and in which the persona remains just as self-absorbed as in the most conventional earlier lyrics, but even in these, the knowledge that the poem will actually be sent can subtly shape its message. We find fewer invocations, for instance, of the allegorical pantheon from the *Roman de la rose* than we do among earlier lyricists. We hear of the "mesdisantz [slanderers]" (**25**.25), but not of *Malebouche*, and "danger" and "merci," when they occur, are usually not personified.[50] With few exceptions, we find fewer of the excesses of sentiment—particularly of the imminence of the persona's death for love (only in **14**.14, 19; **16**.23; and **30**.6)—that characterize earlier ballades. The implied presence of a real addressee and the hope—however small—of moving her keeps the persona's claims about the effects of his affection as well as his claim on hers on a more modest and realistic level. On the other hand, alongside the ballades in which the lover's pleas are apparently rejected, there are others in which there is no hint that his service is in any way begrudging or that the promises that he makes are unwelcome, and when he makes an oath (**1**, **4**, **8**) or offers a reassurance (**2**) or announces his expectation of a union (**3**) in a poem that we know will be delivered directly to the lady, there is an implication of reciprocity—that it will not be rejected, that it is not his wish alone—in the very explicitness of the message.

In being part of such an exchange, many of Gower's ballades thus do not merely describe a relationship, they enact it. In some, that relationship can be defined by the smallest touch of language: in the implied intimacy of the address to "Mon tresdouls coer [my sweetheart]" with which **10** begins, for instance, or more playfully, in the address to the lady as "Ma belle oisel [my beautiful bird]" in the envoy to **34**, the very liberty of which suggests that the dream of pleasure embodied in the description of the birds in the preceding stanza is again fully shared. At the other extreme, all of the extravagant diction of **30**—in which the persona suffers greater danger than Ulysses when the lady is accompanied by Danger—is something quite different when the lady is actually going to see it. It suggests a relationship in which such hyperbole can be recognized exactly for what it is. In poems like these, the consciousness of an on-going relationship can thus have the added effect of drawing attention to, and thus undercutting, both the formality and the conventionality of the inherited poetic language. In **16** and **33**, a subtle shift to a more familiar register in the envoy contributes to the same effect: the persona declares that he sends his poem to his lady in order to entertain her, and that desire to please both reduces the rest of the poem to a mere trope and suggests a shared consciousness of both its literariness and its artificiality. It's an artful compliment, but we need not take it literally.

In another group of poems, Gower stays within the terms of the inherited language but achieves other effects not possible with mere song. These are the poems in which the persona's wish to address his lady is also part of the subject. In **22**, a man describes his conventional

[50] Where to draw the line isn't always clear, but many of Gower's personifications occur in poems in which the figurative nature of the language is deliberately heightened for particular effect. See the notes on the individual poems. Amour is frequently personified (e.g. in **3**.6, **10**.15, **13**.13). In **27**.8 Amour appears to be another name for Cupid (**27**.2). Cupid also appears in **40**.27, Venus only in **36**.6.

speechlessness in his lady's presence, but in contrast to many earlier poems on the same theme, the ballade itself, since he transmits it to her in the envoy, becomes the vehicle for the words that he cannot express directly. "Ceo lettre envoie: agardetz l'escripture [I send this letter; behold the writing]," he urges her (**22**.27), and his speechlessness, paradoxically, thus becomes part of the message. **14**, **17**, **18**, and **19** also take up a conventional motif—not the lover's speechlessness, but the ineffectiveness of his speech—and through the use of the envoy, they don't just describe it, they re-enact it. In **14** and **19** the persona turns to address the lady directly, and in **17** and **18** he speaks only of sending his ballade to her, still in the third person, but in all four, the gesture merely exposes the futility of yet another attempt to reach her. He expresses his dilemma particularly succinctly in the refrain to **18**: "Com plus la prie et meinz m'ad entendu [as the more I entreat her and the less she has heeded me]." Yet he persists in sending her another message in this poem. Surely it will have only the same result. In the central stanza of **18,** he aptly compares his pleas (whic must include this poem) to the loud and clamorous cries of a sparrowhawk. The lady, however, remains unmoved, as firm as a rock, he tells us, but he claims not to know how he has offended her. It is certainly not unclear to us, and our understanding of the woman's perspective on his pleading introduces a powerful corrective to the male-centered rhetoric upon which his expectations are based.[51] Her real presence as the recipient of the poem forces a confrontation between rhetoric and reality, and all four of these ballades, each in a somewhat different way, demonstrate the ineffectiveness not just of the persona's plea but of its own language.

That distinction between poetic artifice and the reality of actual human relations becomes the subject in ballade **37**, one of the few poems in the collection that is not explicitly delivered to the addressee. In it, the persona complains of his own subjection to love while the woman that he addresses remains free, but as he bases his claims on the rules of *fin amour* rather than on his own merit and as he invokes every well-known cliché to account for his state, it becomes clear by the final lines that his refrain—"Vous estes franche et jeo sui fort lié [you are free and I am tightly bound]"—refers not just to their different emotional states but to his captivity to the language that he has inherited and her freedom to seek pleasure on her own terms, and it suggests a critique of the entire poetic idiom around which the persona's complaints are shaped, particularly of its hollowness for anyone who takes its claims too literally. This is an effect not achieved by Machaut, and along with the ballades that re-enact their own rejection and the more light-hearted examples in which the woman shares in the joke, it reveals a self-critical awareness of language that is matched among Machaut's successors only by Deschamps.[52]

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[51] Cf. Butterfield, *Familiar Enemy*, 254, writing with reference, however, to Gower's introduction of the woman's voice in **41**-**44** and **46**: "Love language—a figure for poetic language—has a central need to undercut itself, and . . . to introduce the radically other perspective of the usually silent woman is a key means of achieving this."

[52] Gower's expresses his awareness of the limits of amatory rhetoric more mockingly in his portrait of "Foldelit [Foolish Delight]" in *MO* 9421-32.

In the only other two poems in which delivery is not specified, the non-delivery of the message is again very much part of the subject. In **40**, a man reproaches his lady for her infidelity, but if she is listening, she of course makes no reply, and more in the manner of a more typical lyric, it really seems that he is talking to himself, trying to make sense of his betrayal. The envoy begins "A dieu, ma joie, a dieu, ma triste peine [goodbye, my joy; goodbye, my sad pain]" (25). Atypically for Gower, there is no other reference to his sending the ballade or even to his lady, and his final words are thus less a farewell to the woman than a farewell to love itself. And in **46**, a woman must conceal her pleasure, unable to speak about the man she loves when she hears others praise him. Again, as in so many earlier poems, though addressed to her lover, we seem to be overhearing her private thoughts, but in this case the poem is also about her very need to conceal them, and at the end there is again no reference to her sending her ballade. Where a poem like **22**, on the lover's speechlessness, gives expression to that which cannot be spoken, **46** is a poem about its own silence.

In all these ways, the dramatic context—or its lack—adds another perspective to the persona's words; it forces us to look beyond their immediate literal sense to the circumstances in which these words are framed and to consider how they will be received. Not every poem supports such an extended reading: it is to Gower's credit that one never knows what is coming next, and there are certainly many poems in the *Cinkante Balades* that are only barely distinguishable from the most conventional of their predecessors and, especially at the beginning and the end, many in which the expression of love is both sincere and unproblematic. There are also some that remain enigmatic to modern readers because we cannot recapture the precise implications of Gower's language. But when either the presence or the absence of the intended hearer is invoked, Gower is often able to suggest a relationship that is either deeper, or more complicated, or more paradoxical than can be described in a song. The effect is not merely to add drama to what was formerly monologue. Gower's most interesting achievement in the *Cinkante Balades* is not his moral stance; it is the adoption of a lyric vocabulary that was essentially self-absorbed to the purpose of the lover's communication with the lady. Out of that paradox, by introducing, even in her silence, the woman's point of view, he is able to explore not only the persona's but also his own rather complex relationship to the language that they inherited, and finally to offer a distanced, surprisingly critical perspective on the entire poetics of *fin amour*.

Language

The language of Gower's *Mirour de l'Omme*, his *Traitié pour essampler les amantz marietz*, and the *Cinkanke Balades* has its roots in the distinctive dialect of French that arose in England after the Norman conquest that we refer to as Anglo-Norman.[53] By the end of the fourteenth

[53] For a summary of the linguistic history of this period, see Ian Short, *Manual of Anglo-Norman*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 2013), 17-42.

century, the number of French speakers in England was in decline, and most if not all—including Henry IV—could also speak English. Many of those who did speak French in England were aware that their dialect differed from that of France—one thinks of Chaucer's comment on the Prioress, for whom "Frenssh of Parys was to hire unknowe"[54]—and thought of the French of the continent as the purer form. Gower was among those who make apology for his French, at the conclusion of the *Traitié* (**18**.24-27):

> Et si jeo n'ai de François la faconde,
> Pardonetz moi qe jeo de ceo forsvoie.
> Jeo sui Englois; si quier par tiele voie
> Estre excusé.
>
> [And if I lack eloquence in French, forgive me that I fall short in this regard.
> I'm English, and I ask therefore to be excused.][55]

But Gower was also, of course, deeply versed in the poetry of his continental peers, and recent studies of his language have emphasized both the adjustments he made to bring his language closer to that of the "Frenssh of Parys"[56] and his perhaps unconscious retention of phonetic features and grammatical forms distinctive of Anglo-Norman.[57]

The details are of greater interest to philologists than they are to readers, but they help explain some anomalies that will be evident even to those with only basic modern French.[58] Like Chaucer's English, Gower's French allowed some variation in spelling. *I* can be replaced by *y*, for instance, just as in Middle English; and final *-s* can appear as *-z* or *-tz*, as in the rhyme words to **1**, **11**, **16**, and **39**. In the latter case, the different spellings originally represented differences in pronunciation that by Gower's time had fallen together to be pronounced like *-s*.[59] There are other instances too in which an older or a continental spelling was retained though the pronunciation in Anglo-Norman had changed, with the result that there are many pairs of rhyme words in the *Balades* that simply don't look the same. In words like "pleigne," for

[54] General Prologue, *CT* I.125-26.

[55] Gower may be echoing here passages in which both Froissart and Machaut modestly describe the quality that their own verse lacks, Froissart in comparison to Vergil and Plato, Machaut in comparison to Ulysses. See *DMF* s.v. "faconde" for these and other similar citations.

[56] Brian Merrilees and Heather Pagan, "John Barton, John Gower and Others; Variation in Late Anglo-French," in *Language and Culture in Medieval Britain: The French of England c. 1100-c.1500*, ed. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne (York: York Medieval Press, 2009), 123-34, esp. 126; R.F. Yeager, "John Gower's French" (note 14 above), 143.

[57] Richard Ingham, "John Gower, poète Anglo-Normand: Perspectives linguistiques sur *Le Myrour de l'Omme*," in *Anglo-Français: Philologie et linguistique*, ed. Oreste Floquet and Gabriele Giannini (Paris: Garnier, 2015), 91-100; Richard Ingham and Michael Ingham, "'Pardonetz moi qe jeo de ceo forsvoie': Gower's Anglo-Norman Identity," *Neophilologus* 99 (2015): 667-84.

[58] Systematic treatments of the most salient features of Gower's language (though be no means a complete grammar) are provided by Macaulay, 1:xvi-xxxiv, and Brian Merilees, "Appendix 2: A note on Gower's French," in John Gower, *The French Balades*, ed. R.F. Yeager, 175-78.

[59] Macaulay, 1:xxxi; Short, *Manual*, § 25.1.

instance, the *-gn-* was pronounced as a simple *n* in England, and thus in **14** and **40**, "pleigne" rhymes with words such as "pleine" and "Heleine." Since the *g* was effectively "silent," it also shows up where it never appeared historically, as in "peigne" (**3**.1) and "loigns" (**19**.17).[60] Similarly, the diphthong represented by *ie* was reduced to simple *e* in many contexts in Anglo-Norman, but the spelling remains in words such as "matiere," rhyming with "derere" in **37**.9 and 12. There are similar rhyming pairs in **49**; and the *ie* spelling was extended to words that have always had simple *e* in pronunciation, such as "miere" (**49**.25) and "nief" (**30**.1).[61] And as one last example, unstressed final *-e* was often absorbed into the preceding vowel in pronunciation, but it still sometimes appears in spelling, and thus in **29** and **43**, we find words ending in *-ée* rhyming with those ending in *-é*.[62]

In ballades **6** and **7**, one of the rhymes is spelled *-ée* throughout, raising an issue of a different sort, for *-ée* is normally a marker of a feminine noun or adjective, and at least half of the 17 rhyme words in question should be masculine in form, ending in *-é*, instead. The scribe, at least, evidently put greater emphasis on consistency of appearance than on grammatical regularity, but in this instance, no difference in pronunciation was involved. Other irregularities of gender abound, however, among articles, adjectives, and past participle forms where the pronunciation is very much in question, and in many, Gower himself seems to have taken advantage of the flexibility offered by a changing language in order to meet the needs of his meter and his rhyme.[63] Most involve the use of a shorter masculine form with a feminine noun: for instance "chose humein" (**24**.22; compare "joiouse chose," correctly feminine, in **37**.1), or "ce lettre" (**2**.25; cf. "ceste lettre," **15**.26). We also find examples such as "celle appetit" (a feminine form with what is normally a masculine noun), and also "ma belle oisel" (**34**.25), where, however, the feminine forms "ma" and "belle" may be due to the substitution of natural gender (of the woman addressed) for the masculine grammatical gender of "oisel." The decline of the two-case system offered the same kind of alternatives. In older continental French, an *-s* ending on a noun or an adjective marked either nominative singular or objective plural, and the unmarked form was used for objective singular and nominative plural. The objective forms eventually prevailed in both singular and plural when the case distinction was lost, but Gower and other Anglo-Norman writers often added *-s* or not according to the needs of meter and rhyme rather than the requirements of grammar.[64] Thus, among many possible examples, we find "ami" in **23**.7 (and "anemi" in **23**.10) in order to suit the rhyme in contexts in which elsewhere Gower uses "amis" instead; and perhaps a bit more surprisingly, we find the survival of old nominative singular forms of the possessive pronouns such as "mes" (**1**.27) and "tes" (**4²**.17).

[60] Macaulay, 1:xxxii; Short, *Manual*, § 20.4.
[61] Macaulay, 1:xx-xxii; Short, *Manual*, §§ 2.2-9, 9.1-4.
[62] Macaulay, 1:xix-xx.
[63] Macaulay, 1:xvi-xvii; Merrilees, "Appendix," 176; Short, *Manual*, § 31.2.
[64] Macaulay, 1:xvii-xviii; Merrilees, "Appendix," 175; Short, *Manual*, § 31.1.

Other orthographic features of the *Balades* that are typical of Anglo-Norman include the common use of "jeo" for "je" (more than 200 examples) and the use of *aun* and *oun* as alternatives to *an* and *on* (see the rhyme words in **4**[1], **24**, and **35**).[65] Grammatically, all three of the features that Ingham and Ingham identify as characteristic of Anglo-Norman are also strongly present in the *Balades*: the use of "que," "qe," or "q'" as a subject pronoun, instead of "qui,"[66] the use of "quel(l)" as a relative pronoun where continental French would have "lequel,"[67] and the use of "null" as a negative without the accompanying "ne";[68] but in all three cases, as indicated in the notes below, we find examples of the continental forms as well.

Lexically too, Gower's language appears to be something of a hybrid. Merrillees and Pagan's study of Gower's French vocabulary, using the first five letters of the alphabet in the *Anglo-Norman Dictionary* as their starting point, identify more than three times as many words that are recorded elsewhere only in continental sources as words that appear only in insular sources. The latter are also outnumbered by words that appear nowhere else and that may thus be Gower's own invention.[69] These figures are interesting, but they may be misleading, simply because the lexicon of continental French, with a greater number of speakers and a greater number of surviving texts, was likely to be much larger and insular French to have fewer unique words. Even the best of dictionaries, moreover (and we now have some very good resources for this period), can give only an incomplete picture of the actual language, especially as it was spoken or understood. While translating the *Balades*, I found myself making as much use of the *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français* as I did of the *Anglo-Norman Dictionary*, but more than once I also turned to the *Middle English Dictionary* for examples closer to Gower's use. Anglo-Norman did contain a small number of borrowings from English (see, for example, the "nai" in **30**.19 and **36**.R), and it would not be surprising if Gower (or any of his countrymen) might sometimes have been influenced in his use of French in other more subtle ways by what we still suppose to be his first language. The overall impression that one has of Gower's French is of a language in flux, insular in ways that would have made it appear somewhat strange and indeed provincial to readers on the continent (orthographically, phonetically, grammatically, and lexically), but in drawing upon the greater resources of continental French for both flexibility and enrichment, set apart from the spoken language of his French-speaking English peers in ways that would have appeared consciously literary, like the ballade form itself.

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[65] Macaulay, 1:xxvii-xxix; Merrilees, "Appendix," 177; Short, *Manual*, §§ 1.6-7,

[66] As in **5**.17, "La destinée qe nous ad fait unir [The destiny that made us unite]"; but cf. **5**.20, **7**.7 *et al*. for use of "qui." Ingham and Ingham "'Pardonetz moi'" (note 57 above), 674-77; Short, *Manual*, § 32.2.

[67] Ingham and Ingham "'Pardonetz moi'," 672-74; curiously, they state that there are no examples in the *Balades* (673), but there are, in the Heading, in **16**.18, and in **51**.20, alongside a larger number of examples of "lequel," in **2**.11, **12**.2, **39**.18, **45**.10, and **46**.6.

[68] As in **20**.4 *et al*.; but cf. **15**.4-5: "par nulle voie / Ne puiss aler." Ingham and Ingham, "'Pardonetz moi'," 677-79.

[69] Their study embraced the much longer *Mirour de l'Omme*, and only a few of the words that they identify appear in the *Cinkante Balades*: "bountevous" (**31**.11), England only; "causal" (**50**.10), "creance," a leash (**15**.1), "esbaubis" (**9**.23); and "eschangement" (**1**.20), continental; and "conspir" (**25**.3), neologism.

One final note, relevant to the translation, concerns Gower's use of verb forms. With the verb "to be," at least, Gower had different forms for the future and the conditional; e.g. "serrai" (**4**[2].11), "serra" (**12**.4) alongside "serroie" (**9**.32), "serroit" (**11**.9). We also find conditional forms such as "changeroie" (**5**.R) and "songeroie" (**9**.24). One of the most common uses of the conditional (as in both Modern French and Modern English) is following a "si [if]" clause, as in **4**[1].18-19: "si le mond fuist tout en ma puissance, / Jeo ne querroie avoir autre alliance [if the world were entirely in my power, I wouldn't seek to have any other alliance]." Very commonly, however, the form that Gower uses for the conditional, in this and other contexts, is identical to the future tense form, as in **6**.8-11 and **44**.5-6. He is not consistent in his choices of tenses and moods, moreover. As Macaulay points out (in his notes to **1**.17, **9**.24, and *MO* 25), Gower often uses a conditional in the "si" clause, as in **1**.17, "Si dieus voldroit fin mettre a ma pleasance [if God wished to put an end to my happiness]." Such conditionals also show up in other contexts in which we would expect a subjunctive, and when they do, as in the "si" clauses as well, the form may be indistinguishable from a future, as in **10**.5, "Maisqu'il vous pleust qe jeo vous amerai [were it to please you that I should love you]." There are some other inconsistencies in choice of form as well, some of which are pointed out in the notes. I have not tried to imitate Gower's verb forms but instead to provide the appropriate English equivalent. One should be prepared, therefore, at every least, to find what looks like a future tense translated as either a conditional or as a subjunctive.

The Manuscript

The *Cinkante Balades* comes down to us in a single copy, British Library Add. MS 59495, commonly known as the Trentham manuscript after the Staffordshire home of the Duke of Sutherland, who owned it when Macaulay examined it for his edition.[70] It is a small book, about 23 cm. by 15.5 cm., containing 41 leaves numbered in a modern hand.[71] The very first line of the manuscript addresses Henry IV, who became king in September of 1399. In the final poem (which may have been added later), Gower describes his loss of sight, and he refers in the past tense to the first year of Henry's reign, placing the composition of that poem at least sometime in late 1400 or after. Attempts to provide a more precise date for the main body of the manuscript have depended upon inferences about the historical circumstances lying behind "In

[70] For Macaulay's description of the manuscript see *Works* 1:lxxix-lxxxiii. Clear, if somewhat dusty, black-and-white photos of the entire manuscript provided by the British Library are available at the website of the John Gower Society, https://www.wcu.edu/johngower/Trentham/Index.html.

[71] The pages have been trimmed. Folio 39 is approximately 1.5 cm. longer than the other leaves: the bottom was folded up before trimming in order to preserve some former owners' notes on f. 39[v], and it shows how much has been cut from the other leaves. The last few letters of some seventeenth-century owners' notes on f. 5 and of the marginal glosses to the *Traitié pour essampler les amantz marietz* on the rectos of ff. 34-38 have also been trimmed away. (On f. 35, a later hand makes three additions to the left of the column of gloss text to supply what was lost on the right.) The photographs of the manuscript at the John Gower Society website correctly display what survives of each page.

Praise of Peace," and they suggest a date perhaps as late as early 1401 (see below). In its present form, four leaves at the beginning and two at the end were all originally blank and some now contain notes by former owners. The text portion of the manuscript occupies ff. 5-39, and it consists of a single leaf (f. 5), a quire of 6 (ff. 4-11), two quires of 8 (ff. 12-19 and 20-27), a quire of 8 lacking its seventh leaf (ff. 28-34), another single leaf (f. 35), and a quire of 4 (ff. 36-39), ruled throughout for 35 lines in a single column. It contains several poems that appear in other manuscripts of Gower's works and others that appear uniquely here, and they are in a mixture of English, Latin, and French, with the consequence that they are now dispersed among three of the four volumes of Macaulay's edition. In the order in which they appear in the manuscript, they are:

1. "Electus Cristi," 7 lines of Latin verse; f. 5. *Works* 3:481, printed as a prologue to "In Praise of Peace," which follows. Unique medieval copy. Another copy appears *following* "In Praise of Peace" in Thynne's 1532 edition of Chaucer.
2. "In Praise of Peace," 385 lines of English verse; ff. 5-10v. *Works* 3:481-92. Unique medieval copy. Another version appears in Thynne's 1532 edition of Chaucer.[72]
3. "Explicit carmen de pacis commendacione . . . Et nunc sequitur epistola . . ."; f. 10v. *Works* 3:492. Five lines of Latin prose linking the preceding work to the next, unique to this manuscript.
4. "Rex celi deus," 56 lines of Latin verse; ff. 10v-11 (ending on the last line of the page). *Works* 3:492-94, 4.343-44. There are five other copies, four in manuscripts containing Gower's *Vox Clamantis* and other Latin poems in which it immediately follows the *Cronica Tripertita* (Macaulay's S, C, G, and H; see *Works* 4:lx-lxv) and one in a Latin miscellany containing Gower's *Cronica Tripertita* and two other Latin poems (Macaulay's H3; *Works* 4:lxx-lxxi). Neither the date of this manuscript nor the date of the composition of the *Cronica Tripertita* can be fixed precisely, but it is not impossible that this is the earliest surviving copy.
5. "Pite prouesse humblesse honour roial," 25 lines of French verse (a three-stanza ballade with refrain and envoy); f. 11v. *Works* 1:335-36, printed with the next four items as the "Dedication" to the *Cinkante Balades*. Unique copy.
6. "O Recolende," 8 lines of Latin verse; f. 11v (ending on the last line of the page). *Works* 1:336, 4:345. Five other copies, in the same manuscripts as item 4 above, but in each case containing 20 additional lines, as printed in *Works* 4:345. In *Works* 1:336, Macaulay prints

[72] According to Macaulay, "Thynne followed a manuscript which gave a fair text, but one much inferior to that of the Trentham copy, both in material correctness and in spelling" (3:551). Fisher, *John Gower*, 132, and Kathleen Forni, ed., *The Chaucerian Apocrypha: A Selection* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2005), 122, also believe Thynne had access to a different manuscript. He certainly may have, but though it differs in many particulars, there is nothing about Thynne's version that excludes the possibility that he based his text on Trentham, and the inclusion of the verses "Henrici Quarti" as they appear in Trentham (item 16 below) suggests that if he did not use Trentham itself, that his copy was directly derived from it.

these lines from Trentham together with the next two items as a single continuous work, part of the "Dedication" to the *Cinkante Balades*.

7. "H. aquile pullus," 4 lines of Latin verse; f. 12. *Works* 1:336 (from this manuscript except where it is defective, printed as part of the same work as item 6); 4:344 (from MS S, with variants). Five other copies, as in items 4 and 6. The beginnings of each line are lost because of a tear on the page, but we can reconstruct the text from the other copies.

8. Two quotations from the Psalter, Psalms 89.23 and 41.2 (Psalms 88 and 40 in the Vulgate); 4 lines of Latin prose. *Works* 1:336, printed as part of the "Dedication" to the *Cinkante Balades*.

9. "A vous mon liege Seignour natural," 36 lines of French verse (four 8-line ballade stanzas without a refrain but with an envoy, and thus halfway between a conventional ballade and a *chanson royale*); ff. 12-12^{v}. *Works* 1:336-37, printed as part of the "Dedication" to the *Cinkante Balades*. Unique copy. Only the beginnings (and in many cases only a single letter) of lines 4-19 are preserved because of a second large tear on the page.

10. "Si apres sont escrites en francois Cinkante balades . . .", 3 lines in French, but only the last few words of lines 2 and 3 are preserved because of the tear on the page; f. 12^{v}. *Works* 1:338. Unique copy.

11. *Cinkante Balades*, 52 ballades in French, all but two with envoys, followed by one 7-line ballade stanza with different rhymes from the final ballade; ff. 12^{v}-33. *Works* 1:338-78. Unique copy.

12. "Expliciunt carmina Johannis Gower que Gallice composita Balades dicuntur," 2 lines of Latin prose followed by a blank space equal to 6 lines; f. 33. *Works* 1:378. Unique copy.

13. "Ecce patet tensus," 36 lines of Latin verse in a different hand from all of the rest of the manuscript except item 16 below; f. 33^{v}. *Works* 4:358-59. Unique copy.

14. *Traitié pour essampler les amantz marietz*, 18 ballades without envoys with an additional stanza in the same rhymes as the final ballade (385 lines), in French, missing the heading, the first ballade, and the first eight lines of the second (30 lines altogether), ff. 34-39. *Works* 1:379-91. Eleven other copies, nine in manuscripts of the *Confessio Amantis*, two in manuscripts of the *Vox Clamantis*, plus another fragment,[73] which allow us to reconstruct the missing lines.

15. "Quia sit vel qualis sacer ordo connubialis" followed immediately (with no blank line to separate them) by "Lex docet auctorum," 17 lines of Latin verse, ff. 39-39^{v}. *Works* 1:391-92. Both poems are included in other complete copies of the *Traitié* but they are separated by 19 lines beginning "Est amor in glosa pax bellica" (*Works* 1:392).

16. "Henrici quarti primus Regni fuit annus," 12 lines of Latin verse in the same hand as item 13; f. 39^{v}. *Works* 4:365-66. Unique medieval copy. Another copy appears in Thynne's 1532 edition of Chaucer following item 1, above. Similar leave-takings, employing some

[73] See the list in Derek Pearsall, "The Manuscripts and Illustrations of Gower's Works," in *A Companion to Gower*, ed. Siân Echard (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2004), 78-79.

identical lines, appear in four manuscripts of the *Vox Clamantis* (*Works* 4:365-66), three of which, however, refer to Henry's second year. The fourth has no reference to a date.

Gower's hand in the choice and the arrangement of the contents of this manuscript has long been acknowledged, and the book is clearly intended for a specific audience. Six of the seven poems with which it begins, including "In Praise of Peace," are directly addressed to Henry IV; only the four lines beginning "H. aquile pullus" on f. 12 refer to him in the third person instead. Henry is named no less than eleven times in the manuscript,[74] and his name may well also have appeared in the now fragmentary heading to the *Cinkante Balades* (item 10). In addition, Gower's name is included six separate times[75] and almost certainly appeared in the heading to the *Cinkante Balades* as well. The only question seems to have been whether Trentham was intended to be the actual presentation copy for the king or merely the exemplar from which the presentation copy would be made.[76] It is certainly not as ornate as we would expect a manuscript intended for the king to be, but it is clearly very carefully prepared. The scribe who wrote all but two brief passages (items 13 and 16, on which more below) was a trained professional, identified as "Scribe 5" by Malcolm Parkes, who finds his hand in the revised passages in three other of the earliest Gower manuscripts, one of the *Confessio Amantis* and two of the *Vox Clamantis*.[77] The decoration of the manuscript, moreover, with its carefully planned hierarchy of initials, alternating blue and gold instead of the more common and much less costly blue and red, indicates that it was not simply intended for a copyist's use or to sit on Gower's shelf. But if it was intended to be presented to the king, Sebastian Sobecki has demonstrated persuasively that it remained at St Mary Overey, Gower's last known residence and the site (now Southwark Cathedral) of his tomb, until the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539.[78] Whatever Gower's original plan, Henry evidently never saw it.

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[74] "Electus Cristi," 1; "In Praise of Peace," 1, 272, 358; ""Explicit" (item 3); "O Recolende," 1; "H. aquile pullus," 1, 3; "A vous mon liege Seignour natural," 2, 25; *Cinkante Balades* **51**.27.

[75] "In Praise of Peace," 374; "Explicit" (item 3), twice; "Pité prousesse humblesse honour roial," 16; "Expliciunt" (item 12); *Traitié* 18.23.

[76] Macaulay states that "it is more likely that this was not the actual presentation copy" (1:lxxxi), citing both the lack of ornamentation and evidence that Gower continued to work on it after it was first composed, a judgment echoed by R.F. Yeager, "John Gower's French," in Echard, *Companion to Gower* (note 73 above), 145; while Fisher, *John Gower*, 72, declines to dismiss the possibility that it was intended for presentation, noting that "both the script and the initials appeal to be up to the standard of the best Gower manuscripts."

[77] Malcolm Parkes, "Patterns of scribal activity and revisions of the text in early copies of works by John Gower," in *New Science out of Old Books: Studies in Manuscripts and Early Printed Books in Honour of A.I. Doyle,* ed. Richard Beadle and A.J. Piper (London: Aldershot, 1995), 91. Ralph Hanna, *London Literature, 1300-1380* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 227, notes how the scribe varies his hand according to the language that he is copying.

[78] Sebastian Sobecki, "*Ecce patet tensus*: The Trentham Manuscript, *In Praise of Peace*, and John Gower's Autograph Hand," *Speculum* 90 (2015): 925-59, esp. 925-32.

Two leaves are now missing from the manuscript. The first, unnoticed by Macaulay, is lost between the present ff. 11 and 12. It was very likely the conjugate of the extant single leaf f. 5, and the first gathering probably thus originally consisted of eight leaves, precisely like the three gatherings that follow.[79] The evidence for the missing leaf consists of the unusual foliation, with a single leaf at the beginning of the book, and the abrupt transition from the present f. 11^{v} to f. 12. As noted above, f. 11^{v} ends with the first eight lines of "O Recolende," a poem that in its five other appearances contains 28 lines. The beginnings of the first six lines of f. 12^{r} are lost because of a portion of the page has been torn away (one of two tears on that page), but we can recognize the first four lines as another poem that appears in the same five manuscripts, "H. aquile pullus," followed in the next two lines by verse 23 of Psalm 89. Macaulay noted that the last line on f. 11^{v} is grammatically incomplete, but he speculated that only the following line had been lost (*Works* 1:461), and he printed the eight lines of "O Recolende" and the four lines of "H. aquile pullus" as a single continuous poem (*Works* 1:336). "O Recolende" addresses Henry in the second person, however, and "H. aquile pullus" speaks of him in the third, and the two parts simply do not go together, even if we insert the ninth line of "O Recolende" as it appears in the other copies. The decoration is also inconsistent with viewing these as two parts of the same poem. The last line on f. 11^{v} begins with a decorated initial that extends below the last ruled line of the page. If we insert the missing text into the space left by the tear on f. 12^{r}, it is evident that both the first and third lines of "H. aquile pullus" and the first line of the verse from Psalm 89 (like the verse from Psalm 41 that immediately follows) also began with decorated initials. The initial on the first line of "H. aquile pullus" appears to have been unusually ornate, moreover (which might explain why it is now missing): still visible just below the tear in the left margin is a small three-lobed leaf decorated with gold of a sort that appears nowhere else in the manuscript and that must have formed part of the initial at the top of the page. The initial in the last line of f. 11^{v} indicates that more of that poem was to follow, but the (now lost) initial at the top of f. 12 indicates a new beginning, not just at the top of a page but at the start of a new gathering, and not the continuation of what immediately precedes. In between, something more than a single line has been lost.

We can well suppose that the missing leaf contained the remaining 20 lines of "O Recolende," but we can only speculate on what else there might have been. On the two sides of the leaf there was room for 70 lines altogether. It is not necessary to believe that every line was filled: on f. 33, at the conclusion of the *Cinkante Balades*, the scribe leaves six blank lines so that

[79] The loss of this leaf was first suggested by Candace Barrington, "The Trentham Manuscript as Broken Prosthesis: Wholeness and Disability in Lancastrian England," *Accessus: A Journal of Premodern Literature and New Media,* 1 (2013): Article 4 {http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/ accessus/}, 2, note 2. See also my essay on "Writing the *Cinkante Balades*" (note 3 above), 326-27. (Parkes, "Patterns," 104, n. 77, suggests instead that f. 5 is the second leaf of a bifolium from which the first leaf has been removed.) There is another singleton at the end of the manuscript (f. 35), followed by a quire of four. It was probably the first leaf of a quire of six, and since its conjugate was not needed for the text and therefore blank, it was at some point removed. See Parkes, *loc. cit.*

the work that follows (on which more below) can begin at the top of the next page. Of Gower's surviving Latin compositions that are not already included in Trentham, some are too long to fit in the available space, and the shorter ones (*Works* 4:365-68) are both inappropriate in theme and in all likelihood composed after the manuscript was written (see Macaulay's notes in *Works* 4:419-20). One candidate is the 19-line poem "Est amor in glosa pax bellica" that appears in all other manuscripts of the *Traitié* (*Works*, 1:392). Trentham is the only surviving copy of the *Traitié* that omits these verses between the nine lines beginning "Quis sit vel qualis sacer ordo connubialis" and the seven lines beginning "Lex docet auctorum" (both of which it does include, ff. 39-39^{v}; item 15 above). "Est amor" might in fact be appropriate preceding the *Cinkante Balades*, though it would interrupt the sequence of poems addressed to Henry IV. It would also fill up only a portion of the available space. Without "Est amor," there are 50 lines to fill; with it, assuming one or two blank lines between poems and allowing that "Est amor" might or might not have had the two-line heading that appears in other copies, there were 25-29 lines to fill. Whatever has been lost was evidently composed for this manuscript, like the two French ballades on ff. 11^{v} and 12 that survive in no other copies. With a seven-line stanza and envoy, another ballade would have taken up 25 lines; with an eight-line stanza and envoy, 28. But these are just numbers, and they bring us no closer to knowing precisely what is gone.

Recognizing that something has been lost, however, is important to our understanding the relation between the *Cinkante Balades* and what precedes. Macaulay printed the two independent French poems (items 5 and 9), together with "O Recolende," "H. aquile pullus," and the two verses from the psalms, at the head of the *Cinkante Balades*, and he labeled them the "Dedication to King Henry the Fourth" (*Works* 1:335-37). Only the second of the two poems, however, in its unusual fourth stanza, appears to allude to the work that follows; in line 19 of the first, "ore en balade" may well refer only to the ballade in which the line appears, especially since whatever was contained on the missing leaf placed this poem at much further remove from the beginning of the *Cinkante Balades* than it appears in Macaulay's edition. The main burden of both French poems, as of the surviving Latin verses with which they alternate and indeed of the whole first portion of the manuscript as it now survives, is praise and flattery of the new king, and both are best viewed as part of that sequence rather than being specifically attached to the *Cinkante Balades*.

The leaf that is missing between ff. 33 and 34, containing the beginning of the *Traitié*, poses some puzzles of a similar sort, and it also leads us deeper into the complicated history of this manuscript. Folio 33^{r} contains the conclusion to the *Cinkante Balades*, followed by six blank lines, evidently left so that the next work could begin at the top of a page. Folio 33^{v} contains "Ecce patet tensus" (*Works* 4:358-59), a poem that survives in no other copy, written in a different hand from the main body of the manuscript. This second scribe also added the verses "Henrici quarti" on f. 39^{v}, the last item in the manuscript, which also do not survive in the same form in any other copy (*Works* 4:365-66). Folio 34 begins with the thirtieth line of the *Traitié* (the ninth of the second ballade). All other copies of the *Traitié* begin with a heading; most of these link the work to the *Confessio Amantis*, which precedes, but that in the Glasgow manuscript (the

only copy of the *Vox Clamantis* containing the *Traitié* in which the opening of the *Traitié* is still preserved) gives a better idea of what might have been included in Trentham (*Works* 1:379). It would have taken up about three and a half lines in the Trentham scribe's hand, and counting a blank line before each of the first two ballades, the beginning of the *Traitié* would have filled up exactly the 35 lines (29 plus 4 plus 2) on the verso of the missing leaf, and the heading would thus have appeared at the very top of the page.

But what was lost on the recto of the missing leaf? It might have contained another poem, now lost to us, and if so, we cannot exclude that it might have been in the first scribe's hand. The fact that "Ecce patet tensus" on f. 33^{v} consists of 36 lines instead of the 35 for which every other page in the manuscript is ruled might suggest an effort to fit that poem into the available space. But "Ecce patet tensus" may also have continued onto the missing leaf,[80] presumably in the second scribe's hand. Perhaps it contained 72 lines instead of 70, or it might have been followed by another poem which made the crowding necessary. Or the thirty-sixth line might simply be the second scribe's mistake. His hand is much less polished and professional than the first scribe's, and the bigger question is why his hand appears at this point in the manuscript at all. It is difficult to see why the manuscript would be passed from one scribe to another during the course of copying in the middle of a gathering, and only for one or two pages, before being returned to the original scribe. We have to suppose instead that the second scribe made his insertion after the first scribe had finished his work. Was the first scribe instructed to leave space for a work or works that were not yet available, to be inserted later? That might seem a bit unusual in a manuscript that was otherwise so carefully planned,

[80] So Macaulay believed (4:418), as did Fisher (*John Gower*, 130) and A.G. Rigg, *A History of Anglo-Latin Literature 1066-1422* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 290. As it stands, the last four lines of the poem (33-36) read "Qui vult ergo sue carnis compescere flamman, / Arcum prouideat vnde sagitta volat. / Nullus ab innato valet hoc euadere morbo, / Sit nisi quod sola gracia curet eum" (*Works*, 4:358-59); trans. R.F. Yeager, ed. *John Gower: The Minor Latin Works* (Kalamazoo MI: Medieval Institute, 2005), 41: "Therefore, whoever wishes to hold in check the fire of his flesh / Let him look out for the bow from which the arrow flies. / No one is strong enough to evade this inborn malady / Unless grace provides a cure." Rigg (loc.cit.) suggests that the "account of the powers of Cupid was probably followed by a prayer for grace to avoid sin"; on the other hand, the passage from the *Vox Clamantis* (5.195-96) from which the last two lines were taken leads instead to an exhortation to flee love altogether (*VC* 5.215-16). At the end of the *Confessio Amantis*, Venus makes a claim similar to that in the final couplet, but with regard to Nature, that she is "Maistresse of every lives kinde, / Bot if so be that sche mai finde / Som holy man that wol withdrawe / His kindly lust ayein hir lawe" (8.2331-34). But "fewe men ther ben of tho," she goes on to say (8.2336), as she turns to those who actually engage her attention, who fall into vice. Our judgment of whether "Ecce patet tensus" is complete as it stands may depend upon whether we view its present final line merely as a concession to orthodoxy, as in Venus' speech in the *Confessio Amantis*, or as the introduction of a new subject, as Rigg implies. If we can understand it merely as the former, then lines 33-34, with the reintroduction of the image of the bow, recapitulate the first half of the poem; the "innatus morbus" (Yeager: "innate malady") of line 35 refers to the weaknesses of human nature of the second half; and the last four lines tie together the two parts of the poem into a kind of conclusion, offering a warning but not any specific advice on conduct.

especially since the 36 lines on f. 33v suggest a possible miscalculation. Is it possible, then, that as the first scribe finished the *Cinkante Balades* on f. 33 and went to begin the *Traitié* at the top of a new page, he turned over two leaves instead of one, accidentally leaving the two blank pages? If that is what happened, then the second scribe actually had two alternatives. He could have removed the now missing leaf himself and rewritten the opening of the *Traitié* that appeared on its verso on f. 33v. Instead, he chose to fill the gap, beginning with the 36 lines of "Ecce patet tensus" on f. 33v, and whatever else appeared on the recto of the leaf that is now missing.[81]

The surviving portion of "Ecce patet tensus" is actually not completely new: approximately half its lines are lifted directly from Book 5 of the *Vox Clamantis*,[82] which suggests that it might well have been composed *ad hoc*, for the very purpose of filling up an inadvertent blank space in the manuscript. ("Rex Celi Deus," item 4 in this manuscript, which may also have been prepared originally for this manuscript, also borrows nearly half its lines from the *Vox Clamantis*, Book 6.[83]) There is evidence in early manuscripts of the *Confessio Amantis* that Gower thought about the arrangement of the text on the page and that he supplied short passages not just to replace cancelled text but also to fill in blank spaces and to assure that new sections of the text begin at the top of a column.[84] The hand of the scribe who made the insertion (Parkes' "Scribe 10"[85]) has been found in only two places, in each case making additions at the end of the manuscript, after the principal scribes had finished: here in Trentham, f. 39v, and in British Library, Cotton Tiberius A.IV (*Vox Clamantis*), f. 177. Sobecki suggests that this second scribe in Trentham is in fact Gower himself, who thus not only chose and arranged the contents of the manuscript but also participated directly in its preparation.[86] Sobecki argues that the unevenness of the scribe's hand and the atypical way in which he

[81] Parkes suggests that the recto of the missing leaf might have contained an illumination ("Patterns," 104 n. 77). The first line of the poem, "Ecce patet tensus ceci Cupidinis arcus" could be read as a kind of caption: "Behold, here appears the taut bow of blind Cupid"; and the illustration, if there was one, might have been based upon the same pattern as the image of Gower the archer shooting at the world that appears in three manuscripts of the *Vox Clamantis* (reproduced by Macaulay from British Library Cotton Tiberius A.IV, f. 9v as a frontispiece to *Works*, vol. 4). It would be quite unusual to place a large illumination in so inconspicuous a place in the manuscript, however, and one has to wonder even more strongly if such an illustration would have been part of Gower's original plan or a way of filling up an accidental gap. For a different consideration of the relation between "Ecce patet tensus" and the *Vox* (and another reproduction of the image from the Cotton MS) see Sobecki, "*Ecce patet tensus*," 949-50.

[82] For a list of the correspondences see David R. Carlson, "A Rhyme Distribution Chronology of John Gower's Latin Poetry," *Studies in Philology* 104 (2007), 39 n. 30. Carlson suggests (38-39) that the poem is an early work, based on its form (unrhymed elegiac distichs), but as Yeager points out (*Minor Latin Works*, 72), there was nothing to prevent Gower from reviving an earlier composition for a specific later occasion.

[83] Macaulay, 3:554.

[84] See my essay, "Gower's Manuscript of the *Confessio Amantis*," in *The Medieval Python: The Purposive and Provocative Work of Terry Jones*, ed. R.F. Yeager and Toshiyuki Takamiya (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 75-86.

[85] "Patterns," 95.

[86] "*Ecce patet tensus*," 951-59.

adheres to the base line can be attributed to Gower's failing sight. (The thirty-sixth line on f. 33v might also be due to the same cause.) His suggestion is consistent with the contents of the two poems, both evidently written specifically for this manuscript, one possibly to fill in a space, the other a meditation on the poet's incipient blindness. It is also consistent with the order in which the different components of the manuscript were added, for it appears that the second scribe's two additions to Trentham were not necessarily done at the same time. The decorated E with which "Ecce patet tensus" begins on ff. 33v is not different in style from the other decorated initials in the book (compare the E with which the forty-sixth ballade begins on f. 30v), though it is the only three-line initial in the book. (The only other initial of more than two lines is the four-line initial at the beginning of "In Praise of Peace" on the first written page of the manuscript, f. 5.) The H at the beginning of "Henrici Quarti" on f. 39v is in a very different style, however, bearing a crown on top and outlined in black either before or after the application of the gold leaf, and it gives every appearance of having been added later, presumably when these final verses referring to Gower's impending blindness were added. The second scribe's first insertion, on f. 33v, might well have occurred between the time that the first scribe finished and the decoration of the initials on all but the last page of the book. His second insertion seems to have occurred after the initial stage of decoration was done, suggesting that the manuscript remained in Gower's possession during the several stages of its composition.

If Gower was involved so directly in the production of the manuscript, he may well have participated in its correction as well, which brings us back to the *Cinkante Balades*. The erasures and corrections in the manuscript are concentrated in two places, in the first third of "In Praise of Peace" and in the *Balades*. They are not always easy to detect because of normal variations in the color of the ink and because of the presence of other abrasions and stains; and since an erasure alters the texture of the parchment, it is not always easy to identify a particular scribe's hand in the correction. Macaulay judged that the "corrector" was neither of the two main scribes (*Works* 1:lxxxiii). Parkes, on the other hand, makes no mention of a third scribe; instead, he identifies the hand of the first scribe (his "Scribe 5") in at least one correction, on f. 11 ("Patterns," p. 91), and that of the second scribe (his "Scribe 10") in "some minor corrections over erasure" that he does not list (p. 95).[87] Many of the corrections could have been done by the first scribe, on the fly, as it were, including some in the *Cinkante Balades*. But it appears that the *Balades* were also given a more thorough review after the scribe was done, for at twelve places, the need for a correction has been marked by a cross drawn in the margin, and there are two additional crosses on f. 12v where the text has been lost because of the tear.[88] Several of the

[87] A third, modern, hand, imitating that of the manuscript, appears in the additions to the glosses on f. 35, which must have been added after the modern trimming (see note 71 above). The same hand may may be responsible for the "laudis" written in the margin of f. 33v, clarifying the messy correction of the second word in "Ecce patet tensus," 22.

[88] Ff. 12v (*50B* **1**.3, **1**.10), 13r (**2**.5, **2**.8), 13v (**3**.13), 17v (**12**.10), 19v (**17**.1), 20r (**19**.6), 23v (**27**.5),24r (**28**.2), 25r (**31**.12), 28r (**38**.16) , 29v (**43**.5), 32v (**50**.3) Many of the crosses are only faintly visible in the photographs, some not at all. There are also two crosses without any obvious correction on ff. 15 (**7**.1) and 16 (**8**.22). There is another cross on f. 38v (at *Traitié* **18**.9), where "qau" is also written in the margin.

corrections in these instances appear to be, as Parkes seems to suggest, in the hand of the second scribe (with some, it is admittedly difficult to be certain), and if Sobecki is correct in his identification of the scribe, then it was Gower himself who may have made the needed erasures and corrections. It makes sense to think that Gower might have been the proofreader; if he was the one who also made the corrections, then his role as proofreader too would be virtually certain.

Whatever the case, the *Cinkante Balades* clearly received greater attention than the other works in the manuscript, whether from Gower himself or from a proofreader and the scribes that he employed. The greater need for correction in this one work, together with the misnumbering of the poems (the inclusion of two number **4**s) may indicate that the underlying exemplar was in a rougher form than the exemplars of the manuscript's other contents and perhaps even on loose sheets. And despite the evident wish to get it right, the text of the *Cinkante Balades* is not perfect. Most of the emendations, both in Macaulay's edition and in this one, correct some of the first scribe's inconsistencies in spacing or involve only a single letter, whether a dittography, a transposition, or a defect in the meter, which evidently didn't attract the proofreader's attention. There are also at least four places in the text that beg for a larger correction and that the proofreader evidently missed,[89] plus a number of other places in which one is entitled to speculate, at least, on a different reading, [90]and one is compelled to think again of Gower's failing sight.

The *Cinkante Balades* is the longest work in the manuscript, occupying some 60% of the book, and it is placed at the center, originally preceded by 17 pages and followed by 13 or 15 more (depending on whether the page occupied by "Ecce patet tensus" and the now missing page that followed were part of the original plan). The *Cinkante Balades* certainly deserves to be viewed in the company of the other works that accompany it, especially when our interest is the history of this particular book, but the manuscript does not reveal anything at all about the origin of the work, and when we ask why the *Cinkante Balades* was preserved here, and only here, the manuscript tells us little more than that they were intended for presentation to Henry. Three recent studies set the construction of the manuscript in the context of the events surrounding Henry's accession. Arthur Bahr views the multilingualism of the manuscript not just as a compliment to the new king but as a suggestion of Gower's hope that Henry would reunite his divided kingdom.[91] Bahr also explores how the resonances among the different works that it contains suggest meanings that are not evident if each is viewed in isolation, and in doing so, he is able to include not just the *Cinkante Balades* but also "Ecce patet tensus" and the *Traitié* in what he describes as the manuscript's "artfully constructed meditation on the

[89] See the notes to **21**.15, **27**.1, **30**.5, and **43**.19. There is also an interesting instance in which the rubricator (who may have worked after the proofreading and correction of the text) has evidently ignored instructions and inserted the wrong initial, at **12**.1.

[90] See the notes to **4**[1].24, **9**.5, **12**.8, **14**.17, **15**.11, **20**.1, **26**.5, **28**.25, **30**.19, **37**.9, **45**.13, and **46**.24.

[91] Arthur W. Bahr, "Reading Codicological Form in John Gower's Trentham Manuscript," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 33 (2011), 220.

multiple natures and implications of kingship";[92] but he carefully steps away from asserting that any part of this design was conscious on Gower's part (see especially 221-24). Sobecki, on the other hand, argues for a very deliberate intent. He suggests that the book was prepared immediately after Henry's accession in December of 1399 in order to encourage the king to renew the truce with France that had been initiated (with his betrothal to Isabella, the daughter of Charles VI of France) by his predecessor, a purpose that Gower carries out both explicitly, in "In Praise of Peace," and more subtly, by the demonstration in the manuscript's multi-lingual contents of the many cultural ties that link England and France.[93] The *Cinkante Balades* in particular, in its imitation of the most fashionable French verse, "showcases the very latest cultural exchanges afforded by cross-channel contact" (947). Such a purpose became moot, however, in May of 1400, when Henry fulfilled Gower's wish and confirmed the peace. David Watt also focuses on "In Praise of Peace," but he finds allusions to the efforts of the Greek emperor to secure Henry's aid against the Ottoman Turks, which might place the completion of the poem as late as early 1401.[94] In the *Cinkante Balades*, he argues, Gower subtly supports his appeal to the king's "pité." Both Sobecki and Watt illuminate the circumstances that may have inspired "In Praise of Peace." As an account of the history of the manuscript Sobecki's is especially appealing since it accounts not just for the contents of the book but also for why it remained in Gower's possession instead of being presented to the king. There are, however, many other reasons why Gower may not have had the chance to present his book to Henry, and it is also a little hard to read Gower's mind as he assembled the various contents at this distance in time. What Gower himself says, in his address to the king, as he turns to begin the *Cinkante Balades* on f. 12^{v}, is that "Por desporter vo noble Court roial / Jeo frai balade, et s'il a vous plerroit, / Entre toutz autres joie m'en serroit [In order to entertain your noble royal court, I will write a ballade, and if it pleases you, it will be a joy to me amongst all others]" (*Works*, 1.337), a claim that he appears to repeat in the now fragmentary heading to the *Cinkante Balades* (in which the object of "desporter [to entertain]" has been lost). Henry should not have needed any reminders of the attractions of French culture: he seems already to have had an appreciation for French verse, as Gower must have known when he chose to present these poems to him, for shortly after his coronation, Henry attempted unsuccessfully to lure Christine de Pizan, the best-known living French poet at the time, to join his court in England.[95] However much Gower

[92] Ibid., 261.

[93] "*Ecce patet tensus*," 947-51.

[94] David Watt, "'Mescreantz,' Schism, and the Plight of Constantinople: Evidence for Dating and Reading London, British Library, Additional MS 59495," in *John Gower in Manuscripts and Early Printed Books*, ed. Martha Driver, Derek Pearsall, and R.F. Yeager, Publications of the John Gower Society, XIV (Cambridge: Brewer, 2020), pp. 131-51.

[95] See Willard, *Christine de Pizan*, 165; J.C. Laidlaw, "Christine de Pizan, the Earl of Salisbury and Henry IV," *French Studies* (36 (1982): 129-43; and Joel Fredell, "The Gower Manuscripts: Some Inconvenient Truths," *Viator* 41 (2010), 246-47. Burke, "'The Voice of One Crying'" (note 7 above) suggests that "It is just possible that Gower presented his *Cinkante Balades* to the new king in competition with [Christine], or as a consolation prize once she had declined to serve as an ornament to Henry's court" (118). Fredell,

may have wished to guide Henry with "In Praise of Peace" and whatever other purposes Gower may have had in mind, either consciously or unconsciously, as he prepared the book for the king, it is also true that the Trentham manuscript is primarily a collection of poems, if not about love precisely, then about the relations between men and women. The *Cinkante Balades*, "Ecce patet tensus," and the *Traitié* make up a full 80% of its contents, and in these three works, it offers for consideration at least three very different perspectives on love, the morally sternest of which, in "Ecce patet tensus," is written, as one might expect, in Latin. The *Cinkante Balades* adopts the pose of the French verse that, as Sobecki suggests, Henry probably already admired, and like the collections of ballades by other contemporary poets, both named and anonymous, by itself it presents a kaleidoscopic view of the many different aspects of the experience with which it is concerned. To appreciate these poems as Gower must have hoped that Henry would see them requires first of all setting them in their literary context, and thus looking at them primarily in relation to the tradition of French poetry from which they derive.

The Edition and Translation

The following edition is based on a new transcription of ff. 12^{v}-33^{r} of the Trentham manuscript, British Library MS Add. 59495. In most respects it is identical to Macaulay's, but there are some differences:

- Like Macaulay, I have distinguished *i* and *j*, *u* and *v* according to modern conventions.
- All punctuation is modern. So too are the accent used to distinguish stressed final *é* from unstressed *e*, the apostrophe that marks elision, the cedilla (*ç*), the occasional diaerisis (e.g. "oï," **2**.27), and the hyphen in the short passages of prose. One will find, however, that Macaulay and I have very different ideas about the use of periods, colons, semi-colons, and commas. Where punctuation can affect the sense, I have made a comment in the notes that follow the commentary to each poem.
- I have retained capitalization as it appears in the manuscript except for the single upper-case letter that sometimes follows the large initial with which each poem begins, with the caveats that with certain letters (particularly *H, L,* and *V*) the distinction between upper-case and lower-case is not always easy to make, and that there are occasional intermediate forms, such as the *m* in "mue" in **8**.1. Macaulay retained the capitalization in the manuscript only "for the most part" (1:lxxxiii). I have attempted to regularize the capitalization (with personal names, for instance, and in identifying personifications) only in the translation.
- I have retained the word-division in the manuscript (with another caveat, that the spacing is irregular and the word-division is not always unambiguous), except where it

loc.cit., proposes that the first twenty ballades in Christine's collection may have circulated separately and that they may have served as one model for Gower's *Traitié.*

might be misleading or cause confusion. Like Macaulay, I have treated "en" as a separate word when it is prefixed to a verb, but I have not separated "tres-" or "plus-" from the adjectives or adverbs to which they are regularly attached. (Macaulay left "tres-" in its place but separated "plus-.") All departures from the manuscript, including those that I share with Macaulay, are listed in the textual notes.

- I have expanded all abbreviations, and I have marked the expansion with italics (as Macaulay does in the *Mirour de l'Omme* but not in the *Traitié* or in the *Cinkante Balades*). Here too some choices must be made.
  - I have followed Macaulay's practice (see 1:lxxi) of expanding *ōn* to *oun*, following the example of *bounté*, fully spelled out in **4**[1].11, and of *noun* in **21**.25 and 27, and of expanding *ān* to *aun* (cf. "auns," spelled out in **23**.15), though the words on which the abbreviation stroke appears can also appear without it (e.g. "reso*u*n," **21**.4, and "reson," **11**.20).
  - In instances in which an abbreviation might be expanded in more than a single way, I have been guided, like Macaulay, by the scribe's most common spelling when the same word occurs without abbreviation either in *Cinkante Balades* or in other of Gower's French works.
  - But of course nothing is ever quite that simple. For example, the scribe uses two different abbreviation strokes with *q*. The first, consisting only of a arched horizontal line above the *q*, appears only in the first of the two French poems that precede the *Cinkante Balades*, in the first three ballades, and in **13**.2. In **1**.14, the same stroke appears above the *q* in "qom," which, under the assumption that an abbreviation stroke must stand for something, must therefore be transcribed, as "q*u*'om." In all other instances, however, the *q* with the abbreviation stroke stands for the word that everywhere else in the manuscript is spelled "qe," and I have thus transcribed it, contrary to the usual practice, without the *u*, as "q*e*" rather than "q*ue*." Not using italics, Macaulay transcribes it as "que," but he notes in his introduction that this spelling always stands for the abbreviated form (1:lxxxiii).
  - The other abbreviation is the 3-shaped stroke following the *q* that appears only at the end of words such as "tanqȝ" or "maisqȝ." There are no instances in which this final syllable is spelled out as "-que" in any of the French texts in the manuscript, and in the only two in which it appears as "qe" ("u qe," **5**.26, and "mais qe," **23**.10), the "qe" is preceded by a space and in effect treated as a separate word. Among elided forms, "qu" and "q" appear almost equally frequently (e.g. "tanqu'il," **7**.4, and "tanq'il," **13**.25). The scribe may well have thought of the abbreviation stroke not as a substitute for either "-que" or "-qe" but simply as a third way in which the words in question were customarily written. Forced again to choose, I have, like Macaulay, gone with the more familiar "-q*ue*," which will also serve to inform the reader which abbreviation the scribe has used.

  - A slightly different problem is posed by the Middle French ancestor of Modern French "quand [when]," which, abbreviated, can appear either as "qnt" or (3 times, in ballades **2** and **3**) as "qunt," in both cases with a superscript open-topped *a* above the center of the word. Spelled out (12 times, e.g. at **10**.23), it appears only as "qant." Macaulay rendered all the abbreviated forms as "quant." I have kept the *u* only where it does appear, and I have thus distinguished between "q*a*nt" and "qu*a*nt."
- Macaulay and I have both made a number of small emendations for meter, rhyme, or agreement where it appears that a scribe may have been inattentive or careless. We have also corrected what appear to be misspellings. All are listed in the textual notes, and additions to the manuscript text are enclosed in brackets. I have made three additional emendations (at **12**.1, **21**.15, and **30**.5, the first and last of which Macaulay also noted as possibilities) which I explain more fully in the notes that accompany the commentary, and I have also made some suggestions on other possible corrections elsewhere in the notes.
- I also found some three dozen errors of transcription in Macaulay's edition, which I have noted. Most are quite insignificant, but there are three that affect the sense, at **12**.14, **16**.19, and **43**.6.

In the textual notes, readings from the manuscript are identified by *MS*, readings from Macaulay by *Mac*. I have noted all significant departures from each, though I have made no attempt to record differences in Macaulay's handling of capitalization, word division, abbreviations, or punctuation. (I have noted where he evidently overlooked an abbreviation stroke.) If Macaulay is not also cited next to a manuscript reading in the notes, one may infer that his text is identical to mine. If no manuscript reading is provided where Macaulay is cited, one may assume that I am following the manuscript. The textual notes also record other features of the manuscript, including erasures and corrections. Additional explanation is sometimes provided in the notes following the commentary.

In the translation I have tried to render in clear Modern English the meaning of Gower's French, adhering to the line divisions of the original in all but a couple of cases in which the word order of the French doesn't work in English. Prose is not a substitute for poetry, of course, and no translation can give transparent access to the underlying original, as I was constantly aware. The range of connotations and of possible double meanings is rarely if ever identical in words from different languages that "mean" the same. At the same time, in translating, we are free of the difficulty that the poet faced in finding the best word to suit both meter and rhyme as well as sense, and our wider range of choices can tempt us to supply what we think that the poem ought to say rather than what it does. But while a translation is by its very nature imperfect, it is also true that the act of translating forces a close confrontation with aspects of the language of which we might otherwise remain unaware. These include possible ambiguities and double meanings; they also include, in Gower's case, differences between poetic language and ordinary usage, differences between insular and continental French, and

some evidently idiosyncratic usages for which the precise translation remains uncertain. In the notes, I have described some of the choices that must be faced, some of the problems in finding equivalents, and some of the effects present in the original that cannot be captured in an English paraphrase. In all cases, my intention has been to lead the reader back to the original, in all its complexity, rather than to replace it.

For the translation, I depended very heavily on two key resources, the on-line *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français (1330-1500)* hosted by Le Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and the Université de Lorraine, and the *Anglo-Norman Dictionary*, hosted by the Universities of Aberystwyth and Swansea, supplemented on occasion by Godefroy, and also on the University of Michigan *Middle English Dictionary* for the occasional word or idiom that appears to be closer to English than to anything recorded in any of the French sources.[96] I also made constant use of the *Concordance to the French Poetry and Prose of John Gower*.[97] I consulted, of course, R.F. Yeager's edition and translation, and I have borrowed (and noted) some of his best choices. Where our translations differ, it is sometimes merely a matter of style and sometimes because I had access to more tools than he.

In the commentary and notes, in addition to discussing issues that arise in translation, I discuss some editorial issues, such as choices in punctuation and the justification for certain emendations. I also note internal links among the ballades, which are relevant to the way in with the poems are now ordered, and passages from the works of other poets that illustrate the sources of Gower's diction. These are drawn mainly from the lyrics of Machaut, Deschamps, Froissart, and Granson, the poets whose shorter poems are most likely to have been available to Gower. Other citations are drawn from Machaut's and Froissart's longer *dits*, from the works of Chaucer, from Christine de Pizan, and from some others. As I have already mentioned, these citations are by no means exhaustive, and their purpose is most often not to identify Gower's specific source but instead to demonstrate the pervasiveness in Gower's work of a vocabulary and a set of motifs shared by his contemporaries, including those, like Chaucer, who wrote in English but who were equally steeped in the lyric poetry of France. In the commentary, finally, I have tried to draw attention to what I consider the most important effects of each ballade, particularly in its self-defined dramatic setting. These vary considerably from ballade to ballade, but the uniqueness of each poem is as much a part of the experience of reading the *Cinkante Balades* as is the familiarity and conventionality of so much of its diction.

Most importantly, in addressing a certain number of questions, I certainly do not presume to have addressed all, nor on any to have had the final word, and I hope to have opened up the *Cinkante Balades* to further study rather than to have closed it off. There is much more to say about these poems, both individually and collectively, and I will feel that I have accomplished my purpose if others take up the discussion where I have necessarily left it off.

[96] For the full citations see the list of Abbreviations that follows this Introduction.

[97] Ed. R.F. Yeager, Mark West, and Robin L Hinson (East Lansing, MI; Michigan State University Press, 1997).

Honolulu
January 2021

Abbreviations

50B	John Gower, *Cinkante Balades*, as edited here
100B	Jean le Seneschal. *Les cent ballades: Poème du XIV^e^ siècle*. Ed. Gaston Raynaud. Société des anciens textes français, no. 53. Paris: Firmin Didot, 1905. Rpt. New York: Johnson, 1968.
AND	*Anglo-Norman Dictionary.* {http://www.anglo-norman.net/gate/}.
BD	Chaucer, *Book of the Duchess*. *Riverside Chaucer*, 329-46.
Benoit, *Roman de Troie*	Benoit de Sainte Maure. *Le Roman de Troie*. 6 vols. Société des anciens textes français. Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1904-12. Rpt. New York, Johnson, 1968.
Butterfield, *Familiar Enemy*	Ardis Butterfield. *The Familiar Enemy: Chaucer, Language, and Nation in the Hundred Years War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
Butterfield, "Forms of Death"	Ardis Butterfield. "Afterwords: Forms of Death." *Exemplaria* 27 (2015),
Butterfield, "French Culture"	Ardis Butterfield. "French Culture and the Ricardian Court." In *Essays on Ricardian Literature in Honour of J.A. Burrow.* Ed. A.J. Minnis, Charlotte C. Morse, and Thorlac Turville-Petre. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997. Pp. 82-120.
CA	John Gower, *Confessio Amantis*. Macaulay, vols. 2-3.
Christine de Pisan, *Oeuvres*	Christine de Pisan. *Oeuvres Poétiques.* Ed. Maurice Roy. 3 vols. Société des anciens textes français. Paris: Firmin Didot, 1886-96. Rpt. New York: Johnson, 1965.
Christine de Pizan, *100B*	*Cent balades*. Christine de Pisan, *Oeuvres*, 1:1-100.
Christine de Pizan, *100BD*	*Cent balades d'amant et de dame*. Christine de Pisan, *Oeuvres*, 3:209-317.
Christine de Pizan, "Autres"	"Autres Balades." Christine de Pisan, *Oeuvres*, 1:207-69.
"Complaint of Venus"	Chaucer,"The Complaint of Venus." *Riverside Chaucer*, 648-49.
CT	Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales. Riverside Chaucer*, 23-328. (Abbreviations for the tales are as listed on p. 779.)
Dauphant	Clotilde Dauphant. "Frontières d'un genre aux frontières d'une langue: ballades typiques et atypiques d'Eustache Deschamps, John Gower et Geoffrey Chaucer." In *Le Rayonnement de la cour des premiers Valois à époque d'Eustache Deschamps*. Ed. Miren Lacassagne. Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2017. Pp. 81-94.
Dean and Boulton	Ruth J. Dean and Maureen B.M. Boulton. *Anglo-Norman Literature: A Guide to Texts and Manuscripts.* London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1999.
Deschamps	Eustache Deschamps. *Oeuvres complètes.* Ed. Queux de Saint-Hilaire and Gaston Raynaud. 11 vols. Société des anciens textes français. Paris: Firmin Didot, 1878-1903.

DMF	*Dictionnaire du Moyen Français (1330-1500).* Version 2015. {www.atilf.fr/dmf/}.
DPN	Alanus de Insulis. *De Planctu Naturae*. Ed. Nikolaus M. Häring. *Studi Medievali*. 3rd ser. 19 (1978): 797-879.
"Ecce patet tensus"	Gower, "Ecce patet tensus." Macaulay, 4:358-59.
"Est Amor"	Gower, "Est amor." Macaulay, 4:359.
Fisher	John H. Fisher. *John Gower: Moral Philosopher and Friend of Chaucer.* New York: New York University Press, 1964.
Froissart, Bal.	"Balades amoureuses." Froissart, *Lyric Poems*, 205-36.
Froissart, *Buisson*	Jean Froissart. *Le joli buisson de jonece*. Ed. Anthime Fourrier. Textes Littéraires Français. Geneva: Droz: 1975.
Froissart, Can.Roy.	"Canchons royauls amoureuses." Froissart, *Lyric Poems*, pp. 194-204.
Froissart, *Esp.Am.*	Jean Froissart. *L'espinette anoureuse.* Ed. Anthime Fourrier. Paris: Klincksieck, 1963.
Froissart, Lay	"Lays amoureus." Froissart, *Lyric Poems*, 65-150.
Froissart, "Joli Mois de Mai"	"Le Joli Mois de Mai."Jean Froissart*"Dits" et "Débats*."Ed. Anthime Fourrier. Geneva: Droz, 1979. Pp. 129-46.
Froissart, *Lyric Poems*	*The Lyric Poems of Jehan Frossart: A Critical Edition*. Ed. Rob Roy McGregor, Jr. North Carolina Studies in the Romance Languages and Literatures, no. 143. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Department of Romance Languages, 1975.
Froissart, Past.	"Pastourielles." Froissart, *Lyric Poems*, 151-93.
Froissart, Rond.	"Rondelés amoureus." Froissart, *Lyric Poems*, 250-90.
Froissart, Vir.	"Vierlais amoureus." Froissart, *Lyric Poems*, 237-49.
Garencières, Bal.	"Les Ballades amoureuses." Jean de Garencières. *Les poésies complètes*. Ed. Young Abernathy Neal. Diss. Paris, 1952-53. Pp. 1-24.
Godefroy	Frédéric Godefroy. *Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française et de tous ses dialectes du IXe au XVe siècle*. 10 vols. Paris: Vieweg (1-5) and Paris: Bouillon (6-10), 1881- 1902.
Godefroy, *Lexique*	Frédéric Godefroy. *Lexique de l'ancien francais.* Ed. J. Bonnard and A. Salmon. Paris: Champion, 1971.
Granson	Oton de Granson. *Poems*. Ed. and trans. Peter Nicholson and Joan Grenier-Winther. TEAMS Middle English Series. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute. 2015.
Guido	Guido delle Colonne. *Historia Destructionis Troiae*. Trans. Mary Elizabeth Meek. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974.
Hassell	James Woodrow Hassell, Jr. *Middle French Proverbs, Sentences, and Proverbial Phrases*. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1982.
HF	Chaucer, *House of Fame*. *Riverside Chaucer*, 347-74.
Kelly, *Saint Valentine*	Henry Ansgar Kelly, *Chaucer and the Cult of Saint Valentine*. Davis Medieval Texts and Studies, no. 5. Leiden: Brill, 1986.
LGW	Chaucer, *Legend of Good Women. Riverside Chaucer*, 587-630.
Macaulay	G.C. Macaulay, ed. *The Complete Works of John Gower*. 4 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899-1902.

Machaut, Bal.Not.	"Les balades notées." Machaut, *Poésies Lyriques*,.537-65.
Machaut, *Behaingne*	*Le Jugement du Roy de Behaigne.* Guillaume de Machaut. *Le jugement du Roy de Bahaigne and Remede de Fortune*. Ed. James I Wimsatt and William W. Kibler. Chaucer Library. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1988. Pp. 60-165.
Machaut, Chans.Bal.	"Les chansons baladées" Machaut, *Poésies Lyriques*, 581-633.
Machaut, Comp.	"Les complaintes." Machaut, *Poésies Lyriques*, 241-69.
Machaut, *Font.Am.*	*La fonteinne amoureuse*, Machaut, *Oeuvres*,3:143-244.
Machaut, Lay	"Les lays" Machaut, *Poésies Lyriques*, 279-480.
Machaut, *Lou*.	*La louange des dames*. Machaut, *Poésies Lyriques*, 17-237.
Machaut, *Lyon*	*Le dit dou lyon.* Machaut, *Oeuvres*, 2:159-237.
Machaut, Motet	"Les motès." Machaut, *Poésies Lyriques*, 483-533.
Machaut, *Navarre*	"Le jugement dou Roy de Navarre." Machaut, *Oeuvres*, 1:137-282.
Machaut, *Oeuvres*	Guillaume de Machaut. *Oeuvres*. Ed. Ernest Hœpffner. 3 vols. Société des anciens textes français. Paris: Firmin Didot, 1907-21. Rpt. New York: Johnson, 1965.
Machaut, *Poésies Lyriques*	Guilllaume de Machaut. *Poésies Lyriques*. Ed. Vladimir Chichmaref. 2 vols. (numbered continuously). Paris, 1909. Rpt. Geneva: Slatkine, 2013.
Machaut, *Remede*	*Remede de Fortune*. Guillaume de Machaut. *Le Jugement du roy de Bahaigne and Remede de Fortune*. Ed. James I Wimsatt and William W. Kibler. Chaucer Library. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1988. Pp. 168-409.
Machaut, Rond.	"Li Rondeaulz." Machaut, *Poésies Lyriques*, 569-77.
Machaut, *Vergier*	*Le dit dou vergier*. Machaut, *Oeuvres*, 1:13-56.
Machaut, *Voir Dit*	Guillaume de Machaut. *Le Livre dou voir dit (The Book of the True Poem*. Ed. Daniel Leech-Wilkinson. Trans. R. Barton Palmer. New York: Garland, 1998.
MED	*Middle English Dictionary*. {https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary/dictionary}.
Merrilees	Brian Merrilees. "Appendix 2: A Note on Gower's French." In Yeager, pp. 175-78.
Merrilees and Pagan	Brian Merrilees and Heather Pagan. "John Barton, John Gower and Others: Variation in Late Anglo-French." In *Language and Culture in Medieval Britain: The French of England, c.1100-c.1500.* Ed. Ed. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne *et al.* York: York Medieval Press, 2009. Pp. 118-34.
MO	Gower, *Mirour de l'Omme.* Macaulay, 1:1-334.
Morawski	Joseph Morawski. *Proverbes Français antérieurs au XVe siècle*. Classiques Français du Moyen Âge, no. 47. Paris: Champion, 1925.
Mudge	Charles R. Mudge. "The Pennsylvania *Chansonnier*: A Critical Edition of Ninety-Five Anonymous Ballades from the Fourteenth Century with Introduction, Notes and Glossary." Diss., Indiana University, 1972.
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary.*
Oruch, "St. Valentine"	Jack B. Oruch. "St. Valentine, Chaucer, and Spring in February." *Speculum* 56 (1981): 534-65.

Patch, *Fortuna*	Howard R. Patch. *The Goddess Fortuna in Mediaeval Literature*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927.
Penn	The "Pennsylvania *Chansonnier*." Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, Van Pelt Library, MS Codex 902 (*olim* French 15). Unpublished poems are numbered as listed in Wimsatt, *Chaucer and the Poems of "Ch,"* 91-146.
PF	Chaucer, *The Parliament of Fowls*. *Riverside Chaucer*, 383-94.
Poirion, *Poète et Prince*	Daniel Poirion. *Le Poète et le prince: L'évolution du lyrisme courtois du Guillaume de Machaut à Charles d'Orléans.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1965.
Rey, *Dict.Hist.*	Alain Rey, ed. *Dictionanire historique de la langue française*. "Nouvelle édition." 2 vols. Paris: Robert, 1992.
Riverside Chaucer	*The Riverside Chaucer*. 3rd ed. Ed. Larry D. Benson. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987.
Romaunt	Chaucer, *The Romaunt of the Rose*. *Riverside Chaucer*, 685-767.
RR	Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun. *Le Roman de la Rose*. Ed. Félix Lecoy. 3 vols. Paris: Champion, 1965-70.
Short	Ian Short. *Manual of Anglo-Norman.* 2nd ed. Oxford: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 2013.
Stockton	Eric W. Stockton, trans. *The Major Latin Works of John Gower*: Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962.
T&C	Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde*. *Riverside Chaucer*, 471-586.
Tr	Gower, *Traitié pour essampler les amantz marietz*. Macaulay, 1:379-92.
VC	Gower, *Vox Clamantis.* Macaulay, 4:3-313.
Whiting	Bartlett Jere Whiting. *Proverbs, Sentences, and Proverbial Phrases from English Writings Mainly before 1500*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968.
Wimsatt, *Poems of 'Ch'*	James I. Wimsatt. *Chaucer and the Poems of "Ch"*. Revised Edition. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute, 2009.
Wimsatt, *French Contemporaries*	James I. Wimsatt. *Chaucer and His French Contemporaries: Natural Music in the Fourteenth Century*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991.
Yeager	R.F. Yeager, ed. and trans. *John Gower: The French Balades*. TEAMS Middle English Series. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute, 2011.

Cinkante Balades

Si ap*re*s sont escrites en françois Cinkante bala-
des quelles° . . . . . -d fait, dont les
. . . . . -ment desporter.°

Here afterwards are written in French fifty ballades
which . . . . . . made, of which the
. . . . . *-ment* to entertain.

The heading and the first two stanzas of the first ballade are fragmentary because of the large D-shaped tear on f. 12 of the manuscript (one of two tears on this leaf).

2 Only the upper portion of "des quelles" remains. Following "quelles" is the upper part of a letter that could be a *J*, followed after a space by the upper part of another letter with a horizontal abbreviation stroke through the looped ascender, very much like the *h* with abbreviation stroke in "Joh*ann*is Gower" in the explicit to *50B* on f. 33.

3 Macaulay writes: "The fragments of the latter part [of the heading] seem to indicate that the whole series of balades was expressly written by the author for the entertainment of the court of Henry IV," citing lines 27-28 of the ballade that immediately precedes *50B*, "Por desporter vo noble Court roia[l] / Jeo frai balade [In order to entertain your noble royal court, I will compose a ballade]." "The end of it perhaps ran thus, 'ad fait, dont les nobles de la Court se puissent duement desporter [composed, by which the nobles of the court might be duly entertained],' or something to that effect" (1:461).

1

. . . . . esperance°
. . . . . -attens°
. . . . . -ance°
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
[*Mou*n coer remaint toutditz en v*ost*re grace.]°

. . . . . .
. . . . . °
. . . . . .
. . . . . -gementz°
. . . . . -assetz° mo*u*n° purpens,
Car qoi q*u*'om dist d'amer en autre place,
Sanz un soul point muer de toutz mes sens,
Mo*u*n coer remaint toutditz en v*ost*re grace.

Si dieus voldroit fin mettre a ma plesance
Et terminer mes acomplissementz,
Solonc la foi et la continuance
Qe j'ai gardé sanz faire eschangementz,
Lors en av*er*ai° toutz mez esbatementz.
Mai*s* por le temps, quoiq*e* fortune enbrace,
Entre les° biens du siecle et lez tormentz,
Mon coer remaint toutdits en v*ost*re grace.

Par cest escrit, ma dame, a vous me rens.
Si remirer ne puiss vo bele face,
Tenetz ma foi, tenetz mes serementz:
Mon coer remaint toutditz en v*ost*re grace.

1-13 *Text is missing because of the large D-shaped tear on this page.*
2 *A portion of the letter that immediately precedes* attens, *perhaps* n *or* m, *remains.*
3 *Cross drawn in margin.*
8 *Supplied from line 16.*
10 *Cross drawn in margin.*
12 *Only the lower portion of the* g *in* gementz *remains.*
13 *Only the lower portion of* ass *and the bottom stroke of the immediately preceding letter remain.*
Mac mon
21 *MS* enav*er*ai. On the meter, see the note to this line in the commentary.
23 lez: *Mac* les

1

. . . . hope
. . . . *–attens*
. . . . *–ance*
. . . .
. . . .
. . . .
. . . .
[my heart remains always° in your grace.°]

. . . .
. . . .
. . . .
. . . . *gementz°*
. . . . . *–assetz°* my intention,
for whatever one says about loving somewhere else,°
without changing my mind a single bit,°
my heart remains always in your grace.

°If God wished to put an end to my happiness
and to conclude my achievements,°
in accordance with° the faith and constancy
°which I have maintained without any change,°
then I would have all my pleasure.°
But in the meantime, whatever fortune embraces,
between the blessings° of the world and the torments,
my heart remains always in your grace.

°By this writing, my lady, I surrender° to you.
If I cannot look upon your beautiful face,
°have here my pledge,° have here my oath:
my heart remains always in your grace.

It is unfortunate that the ballade with which Gower begins his collection is so fragmentary, especially if we think that he might have chosen one of his better efforts as an opening. From the first stanza we have only a single complete word, "esperance," and from the second little over three complete lines, expressing the persona's single-minded devotion to his lady. In what we have of stanza two, he draws a contrast between the depth of his commitment and inconstancy in love, and at the end of stanza three he draws a contrast to the vicissitudes of fortune. The refrain is a reminder to the lady of her power to grant or withhold her favor (see the note to line 8) that in this context can also be seen as an oblique request. How we

understand both his attitude and his approach to his lady, however, depends most upon the enigmatic sentence with which stanza three begins. The persona may be saying that whatever happens, he will have taken sufficient pleasure in having always been faithful. (This is evidently how Macaulay understood it; see his note to lines 17-21.) But he might also be saying that if nothing else, he expects to receive the reward for his constancy in heaven, juxtaposing the sureness of God's rewards with the uncertainty of the lady's in the following lines. Whichever the case, he uses a word for pleasure, "esbatementz" (line 20), found in earlier lyrics with reference to the joys of love and that derives from a verb that occurs as a euphemism for sexual intercourse (see the note to that line). If he is alluding to heavenly rewards, he chooses a bold way of contrasting God's grace to the "grace" of the lady that he invokes in the refrain. And in his allusion to the pleasures that he presently misses, do we have a sly complaint? Wry resignation? Or regret for the joys that he realizes lie beyond his reach?

The envoy introduces the inability or the desire to see the lady because of their separation that unites ballades **1**-**3** and **6**-**9**. It also establishes the formal model for the rest of the collection and the dramatic pattern for most of the ballades that follow, the consistency of which makes *50B* so unique. The persona addresses his lady directly; he reaches out to her in the envoy rather than to someone else; he sends his ballade in writing; and in implying the expectation either of acceptance or of a response, the poem gives a greater tangibility to their relationship than we find in most lyrics of Gower's predecessors, and it allows us to speculate on how the persona's words might be received.

This ballade is constructed around three closely related rhymes, *-ens*/*entz*, *-ance*, and *–ace*, preserving the distinction between *–en* and *–an* (here, in *Tr* **2**, and in other of the *50B* that consistently use either one or the other syllable for a rhyme) that is characteristic of Anglo-Norman and that is lost by this time in standard continental French (Short, §§ 1.4, 3.6).

8 *always*. "Toutditz," like "always," embraces both "constantly" and "forever."
in your grace. I.e., "at your mercy," "under your power to grant or withhold your favor." This is not a common meaning of "grace," and it must be distinguished from benevolence ("by the grace of God," a formula that also occurs in French), from the favorable regard that is granted by such benevolence (e.g. the Squire's "hope to stonden in his lady grace" [*CT* I.88]; see also *T&C* 3.472, Machaut, *Lou.* **186**.8, "s'en vo grace n'estoie [if I were not in your grace]"), and from the particular benefits that one might receive from such regard, including specific acts of mercy and both divine grace and amatory grace, the most common meaning of "grace" in the lyrics, including *50B* (cf. **16**.R, **19**.25, **24**.15, et al.). ("Grace" may also refer to the lady's graciousness or beauty, as in **10**.3, **31**.19, and **38**.23.) The persona is certainly not claiming here (or in **14**.24) that either he or his heart already receives or (even more presumptuously) expects such favor or such rewards. However, it is difficult to find any precedent in French for the usage that is reflected in this line. Neither *AND* nor *DMF* provides any good examples, but cf. *MED* s.v. "grace," 4.e, the passages cited in support of the definition "**putten in (to**) **~, yeven in ~,** cast (oneself) on (someone's) mercy," including *CA* 1.730-32: "if I have in my yowthe / Don otherwise in other place, / I put me therof in your grace." See also *CA* 891-92, "[sche] thoghte tho was time and space / To put hire in hir fader grace"; and *T&C* 3.1176, "Doth what yow list, I am al in youre grace." In his note to **1**.17, Macaulay offers, somewhat implausibly, "I remain true to thee always."

12 *-gementz.* The complete word might be "changementz." See the note to line 20.

13 *-assetz*. While "assetz [enough]" is certainly one possibility here, there is no space between the *a* and the surviving bit of the immediately preceding letter, and this could also be either the second person plural, present or imperative, or the past participle of a verb; cf. "quassetz," **42**.14, and in *MO*, "passez," 23344 and "amassez," 23345, both rhyming with "asses," 23341.

14 *loving somewhere else.* The use of "amer" (the infinitive) rather than "amour" (the noun) would seem to allow both "whatever one might say elsewhere about love" and "whatever one might say about loving someone else." In *CA*, Gower uses "in other place" both to mean simply "elsewhere" (e.g. 3.818, 7.2889) and in contexts involving love, to mean "to love another person" (e.g. 1.1314, 2.2249, 5.4652, *et al.*; cf. also 5.7775, "set thi love in sondri place"). In either case (or both), this line might be a conscious or semi-conscious allusion to *100B*, the second half of which is very much concerned with encouraging inconstancy.

15 This is a difficult line. "Sens" covers a wide range, including the five senses (as in **11**.1), the capacity to reason (**19**.27), and intelligence and good sense (as in **6**.2), in addition to "meaning" and "direction"; see *AND* s.v. "sen[1]," *DMF* s.v. "sens." (There is no basis for taking it to mean "feelings" in the sense of "emotions.") The translation I offer places "de toutz mes sens" after "un soul point," but I have found no similar expression elsewhere. The closest may be in **42**.19, where "tes sens" appears to refer to thoughts or mind very broadly. The alternative is to place a comma after "muer" and to attach "de toutz mes sens" to the following clause: "with all my thoughts or faculties . . . ." "Muer" can be used intransitively, often paired with "changier" in contexts referring to fidelity in love, e.g. in Machaut, *Lou*. **3**.21, **7**.17, **158**.12 (see *DMF* s.v. "muer," II.C.1); and "un seul point" can be adverbial. With the inserted comma, the first half of the line might thus be simply "without changing a bit."

17-21 Macaulay translates instead, "If God should put an end to my happiness and to my life at once, my faith being unbroken, I should be content" (1:461), omitting "solonc" and choosing a weak translation for "esbatementz." See the notes to lines 19 and 21 below.

18 *conclude my achievements.* This is a very unusual use of "accomplissements." In all but one of the dozens of citations in *DMF* s.v. "accomplissement," the word is followed by a prepositional phrase, most often with "de."

19 *in accordance with*. See *DMF* s.v. "selon," II.A.2, 3; *AND* s.v. "sulum," prep., 2. For a similar use, cf. the refrain to *100B* **36**, "serez . . . / Mery selon vostre desserte [you will be rewarded in accordance with what you have deserved]".

20-21 As pointed out in the Introduction and as Macaulay notes (1:xvi-xvii), Gower commonly uses forms ending in *–s* or *–z*, a survival of the singular *cas sujet* of an earlier stage of French, when required by the rhyme, even for nouns that are not in subject position. As suggested by the context, we are therefore justified in translating both "eschangementz" and "esbatementz," and also "serementz" in line 27, in the singular. See further the note to **2**.5 below.

20 "Change" (noun) and "changer" (intransitive verb) are often used in fourteenth-century French poetry with reference to inconstancy or infidelity in love; see *AND* s.v. "change," 4; *DMF* s.v. "change," B.1, "changer," I.A.2.c, II.A.1. For the same use in English, cf. *PF* 582, "Nay, God forbede a lover shulde chaunge," and *T&C* 4.231, where Chaucer inserts a little noticed pun hinting at Criseyde's future inconstancy. See also *Tr* **7**.8, *100B* **27**.11; Granson **78**.1471, and **77**.140-41, where the poet plays this sense off another meaning of "change" drawn from hunting. "Changement" is a much less common word, but in Machaut's one use it has a similar meaning (*Motets* **5**.24), as it does in Granson **78**.267, and in two poems by Charles d'Orléans (see *DMF* s.v. "changement" A.1.a). "Eschange" and "eschangement" are not used in this context in earlier poetry, as best I can tell. Gower uses "eschange" eleven times in *MO* in its common sense of "exchange" (cf. *AND* s.v. "eschange"; *DMF* s.v. "eschange"), but in *Tr* **17**.18, he uses it uniquely with reference to infidelity.

"Eschangement" is less common than "eschange." As Merrilees and Pagan note (p. 128), it has no listing in *AND*. It too ordinarily means "exchange," and it appears twice in this sense in *MO*, in 8387 and 29062. *DMF* s.v. "échangement," B provides one later example in which it is used as a synonym for "changement," though not in an amatory context. As in *Tr* **17**.18, Gower is clearly employing it here with reference to inconstancy, drawing upon the common use of the root word in the lyrics. Cf. **5**.8 and the note.

21 "Av*er*ai" appears four times in *50B*, here and in **23**.18, **23**.20, and **29**.15, in each case with the *er* represented by an abbreviation stroke, and once as "averay" (**17**.R), without abbreviation. In all five instances the meter requires that the *e* not be pronounced. On the inorganic vowel see Macaulay, 1.xxx, and Short, §§ 19.11, 34.R.

pleasure. "Esbatre" and its derivatives, like Modern French "ébattre," suggest something rather less passive than "contentment" (see Macaulay's translation in the note to lines 17-21 above). Machaut uses the noun only once (*Lou.* **220**.11), but closer to Gower's time, there are four examples in *100B* and 14 in Granson. In several of these, it occurs in conjunction with "joie," "rire [to laugh]," or "jouer [to play]." See also *AND* s.v. "esbatre[1]," "esbatement"; *DMF* s.v. 'ébattre," "ébattement." "Pleasure" and even perhaps "joy" seem to be appropriate equivalents. The reference in the earlier lyrics is of course to the joys of love. Both *AND* and *DMF* provide examples in which the verb occurs outside the lyrics as a euphemism for sexual intercourse, and so also seems to be the case in *100B* **65**.5. Gower makes only one other use of "esbatement" (an equally interesting one) in **34**.23. Neither noun nor verb occurs in *MO*.

23 *blessings.* "Biens" can refer very generally to any "good." One might also choose "comfort" (see *AND* s.v. "bien," s.1) to preserve the opposition to "torments."

25-28 As noted in the Introduction, the vast majority of Gower's ballades refer in some way to their written form. "Par cest escrit [by this writing]," a formula Gower uses elsewhere only in **2**.27, here, in the company of expressions referring to surrender and oaths, seems to evoke the formal language of documents and charters rather than that of a letter. See the examples cited in *AND* s.v. "escrit."

25 *surrender*. "Se rendre" is a common expression for "surrender" that is also commonly used for submission to love, to the God of Love, or to the lady, e.g. in **39**.12, *RR* 1882-97, Machaut, *Lou.* **3**.8, and Froissart, Lay 1.186.

27 *have here my pledge, have here my oath.* The verbs might possibly be indicative rather than imperative, "you have."

pledge. AND s.v. "fei[1]," 3; *DMF* s.v. "foi," B.3; *MED* s.v. "feith," 6; as in *CA* 5.2924, "Whan that a man schal make his feith." Cf. Froissart, *Esp.Am.* 2442-43, "Tenés ma foi, m'amour entiere / Sans departir [have here my pledge, my complete love, undividedly]."

2

L'ivern s'en vait et l'estée vient flori;
De froid en chald le temps se muera;
L'oisel, q'ainçois° avoit p*er*du so*u*n ny,
Le renovelle, u q'il s'esjoiera.°
De mes amours ensi le monde va.°
Par tiel espoir je me conforte ades,
Et vous, ma dame, croietz bien cela:
Q*a*nt dolour vait, les° joies vienont pres.

Ma doulce dame, ensi come jeo vous di,
Saver poetz coment mo*u*n coer esta,
Le quel vous serve et long temps ad servi,
Tant com jeo vive et toutditz servira.
Remembretz vous, ma dame, pour cela
Q'a mo*u*n voloir ne vous lerrai ja*m*mes.
Ensi com dieus le voet, ensi serra.
Q*a*nt dolour vait, les joies vienont pres.

Le jour qe j'ai de vous novell*e*° oï,
Il m'est avis qe rien me grievera.
Porceo, ma chiere dame, jeo vous pri,
Par vo message, q*a*nt il vous plerra,
Mandetz a moi q*e* bon vous semblera
Du quoi mo*u*n coer se poet tenir en pes,
Et pensetz, dame, de ceo q'ai dit pieça:
Q*a*nt dolour vait, les joies vienont pres.

O noble dame, a vous ce lettre irra,
Et qu*a*nt dieu plest, jeo vous verrai ap*re*s.
Par cest escrit il vous remembrera:
Qu*a*nt dolour vait, les joies vienont p*re*s.

3 *Mac* qu'ainçois
4 *MS* ses joiera
5 *MS* de va *over erasure. Cross drawn in margin.*
8 *MS* les *over erasure. Cross drawn in margin.*
17 *The abbreviation stroke (a line through the ascenders of the double* L*) occurs three times in* 50B. *Here and in* ***38****.23* (hostell*e*)*, the* –e *is not required for the meter, but in* ***[51]****.15* (cell*e*), it *is.*

2

°Winter departs and summer arrives in flower;
the weather will change from cold to hot;
the bird, which earlier had lost its nest,
rebuilds it, wherein it will take delight.
So too goes the world of my love.°
In such a hope I constantly take comfort,°
and you, my lady, believe this well:°
when sorrow departs, joys draw near.°

My sweet lady, just as I say to you,
you can understand how my heart stands,
which serves you and has served for a long time,
and will serve you always, as long as I live.
Remember, my lady, for that reason
that I will never leave you by my own will.
Just as God wishes it, so will it be.
When sorrow departs, joys draw near.

°The day that I have heard news of you,
it seems to me that nothing will trouble me.
Therefore, my dear lady, I beseech you,
by your messenger, when it pleases you,
send to me whatever seems good to you
with which my heart can remain in peace,
and think, lady, of what I said long ago:
when sorrow departs, joys draw near.

O noble lady,° to you this letter will go,
and when it pleases God, I will see you afterwards.
By this writing you will be reminded:
when sorrow departs, joys draw near.

Ballade **2** could almost be three separate poems. Each stanza treats a different conventional theme: the hope that is offered by the changing of the seasons, the lover's profession of loyalty, and his wish to hear of his lady if he cannot see her. They are united by the recurrence of the refrain, but perhaps more importantly by a tentativeness of expression that seems to undercut its ostensible message and that may be the most interesting thing about this poem. The tone is set in the middle of the opening stanza, in which the confident assertion of line 5—"De mes amours ensi le monde va"—is immediately qualified in line 6, "Par tiel espoir je me conforte

ades." It's only a hope; it's born of the persona's need for reassurance; and this admission colors his insistence that the lady should put faith in the optimistic formula that he offers in the refrain.

Stanza two contains another admission, that whatever the (unspecified) circumstances that separate them, the outcome is up to God (line 15), who is perhaps rather less predictable than the changing of the seasons, a concession that is repeated in the envoy in line 26. It also seems that the persona is less than fully confident in his lady's good regard. His insistence upon his long service may sound less like a reassurance for her than like a plea for what he feels that he deserves. In stanza three he turns to her for reassurance, for the comfort that he claims to take from the changing of the seasons in stanza one. The very form of his plea—"que bon vous semblera"—contains a cautiousness that suggests that he is not at all certain that he will get what he wants or that it will be promptly granted. As in so many earlier lyrics, moreover, he appears focused exclusively on his own situation and feelings, not on his lady's. This would be a very different poem if he referred in line 5 to "nos amours [our love]" rather than just "mine," and the lack of any specific reference, either to her sorrow or even to the circumstances that separate them, imparts a certain hollowness to his insistence that she remember that joy (is it really theirs, or just his?) comes after sorrow.

Or perhaps we read too much between the lines. Hope is often the only consolation for the persona in contemporary lyrics, and neither the claim of long service nor the formality of the persona's request in stanza three is in itself extraordinary. The gap between wish and circumstance may be inherent in the conventions that Gower adopted, and the dissonance that we detect may simply be due to Gower's awkward attempt to adopt a conventional lover's plea to a direct written address to the lady. But if Gower was as aware of the limitations of the lover's rhetoric as some of his other poems imply and if the effects are calculated, then he has given us here an affecting portrait of an unsure and unconvincing lover.

1-5 Genius uses a similar analogy to encourage Amans in *CA* 5.7823-34, as Pandarus does Troilus in *T&C* 3.1062 (see also 3.351-57). See Whiting W372, "After Winter follows May," where the other citations, apart from *T&C* 3.1062, all come from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. (There appears to be no equivalent in Hassell.) In every other instance in *50B* in which the persona compares his condition in love to the changing of the seasons (in **7**.15-18, **20**.10, **32**.1-14, **36**.1-14, and **37**.22-23), he identifies his feelings with winter rather than with spring.

5 *So goes the world of my love.* "Ensi le monde va [so goes the world]" is proverbial, both in French (e.g. Granson **18**.10) and in English (see Hassell M163; Whiting W665, citing *CA* 8.1738 , "So goth the world, now wo, now wel," and *T&C* 5.1434), and the world is often cited as a place of instability, the realm of Fortune; but it is difficult to find any precedent for the use of "monde" (literally "world") to mean "the ensemble of circumstances or activities in a particular domain," as I have taken it here, in French. The closest parallels are in Middle English, and they are not exact, but they are close to home. *MED* s.v. "world," 4(b) offers "circumstances or conditions obtaining within the earthly realm or mundane sphere, the way of things; also, a particular or present state of affairs; (someone's) fortunes, circumstances, or condition," and among the passages they cite are *CA* Prol. 382-83 ("Every clerk his herte leith / To kepe his world in special"), 1.178 ("Mi world stod on an other whiel"), and 5.3635-37 ("Sche...was thurgh nome / With love, and so fer overcome / That al hir world on him sche sette"). There are ten other passages in *CA* in which "world" is preceded by a possessive pronoun. Macaulay offers "fortune" in his glossary to the English works (3:648), perhaps

with these passages in mind. None of these (and none of the citations in *MED*) is followed by a restrictive qualifier ("world of my love"), however, and so we might have to translate instead, "with regard to my love, so too goes the world."

love. Eight times is *50B*, Gower uses the form "amours" preceded by either "mes [my]" or "ses [his, her]," here and in **3**.18, **9**.32, **15**.3, **20**.7, **20**.21, **25.**R, and **41**.16, without being required by rhyme, as in other instances in which Gower evidently resorts to an older *cas sujet* form for the singular, even when not in subject position (see the note to **1**.20-21 above). In all these cases, the reference is to a specific person's condition of being in love. Elsewhere, Gower uses the singular form "amour," e.g. when Love is personified (**10**.15 *et al*.; earlier poets used the spelling "Amours" for the personification [see the note in *DMF* s.v. "amour[1]," B.1.b]); when love is referred to more generally, e.g. in expressions such as "bon amour" (**6**.20 *et al*.) or "fin amour" (**7**.1 *et al*.); or when it is the affection offered by one person to another (the two instances of "mon amour," **34**.12 and **37**.5, and the several of "vostre amour" [see the note to **7**.11]); and all other instances of "amours" are clearly plural (**24**.9, **40**R, **49**.10). In form, "mes" or "ses amours" might be singular or plural, but in none of the instances listed does it imply having more than a single "love." See, for instance, **25**.R: "Car qui bien aime ses amours tard oblie [For he who loves well late forgets his love]," where plural "loves" is obviously excluded. I have translated all these in the singular.

6 This line makes clear that line 5 is the expression of the persona's own optimistic—and therefore possibly misplaced—hope rather than an affirmation.

7 Grammatically, exactly as in English, this line might be a vocative followed by an imperative or a simple declarative. The ambiguity might reflect the same wavering between confidence and hope as in lines 5-6, but circumstantially the imperative appears to be called for, and it is echoed structurally in lines 10, 13, 21, and 23.

8 The collocation of joy and sorrow (or their synonyms) is proverbial: see Hassell C330, D47, J20, J23, P193; Whiting B52, J61, S507. It is also very common in poetry: see Machaut, *Lou* **1**.23, **3**.2, **3**.16, **23**R, **34**R, **69**.1-2, **246**R, **261**.19; see also *T&C* 1.952 ("And also joie is next the fyn of sorwe"), KnT CT I.2841, MLT *CT* II.424, and NPT *CT* VII.3205. Gower uses the device twice more, in **20**.R and **43**.R, in each case reversing the hopeful implication of this line, as he does also in *MO* 28597-99: "De la proverbe me sovient, / Q'om dist que molt sovent avient / Apres grant joye grant dolour [I recall the proverb that says that very often great sorrow comes after great joy]." Cf. also **22**.R, **22**.22.

joys draw near. This might instead be "joys come soon," which suggests somewhat more strongly that they can be counted on. *AND* s.v. "pres[1]" provides three citations in which the word is used in a temporal sense, in sentences meaning "the time is near," "death is near," and "the spring is near"; and in Gower's use it is hard not to hear "après [afterwards]" in the background. I chose "draws near" to sustain the metaphor introduced with "dolour vait," but the equivocation between joys "approaching" and "arriving" may be another part of a calculated lack of certainty in this poem.

17-22 The persona's plea for a response is virtually unprecedented in fourteenth-century lyrics because so rarely do the poets think of their poems as an actual direct address. The persona might express a wish to hear from his lady, as in Deschamps **605**.1-2: "Toute joye est descendue sur my,/ Quant j'ay oy de ma dame nouvelle [all joy falls upon me when I have heard tidings from my lady]," but not in the form of a direct request. I know of none in Machaut (in his lyrics (that is, as opposed, for instance, to the narrative portions of *Voir Dit*), only one, in passing, in Granson (**78**.458), and one in Deschamps (**433**), which is immediately followed by the lady's reply in **434**. But see **28** below, in which such a plea is the motivation for the entire poem. (Amans expresses his joy at hearing news about his lady in *CA* 1.2750-67.)

25 *noble lady*. Gower uses the phrase "noble dame" three times in *50B*, here and in **6**.4 and **20**.13. Just as in Modern English and Modern French, "noble" might refer either to aristocratic rank or to a

quality of character. Without reference to a person, as in **24**.15 and **46**.10, "noble" appears to have no reference to rank, but the "noble port [noble bearing]" of the man addressed in **46**.16 is a little more ambiguous. The three other references to the woman as "noble" in *50B*, on the other hand, are all conjoined with other more specific allusions to her rank. (See the notes to **6**.4 and **23**.25-27 and the commentary to **13**.) If the word order, "noble dame," in the vocative, is enough to suggest that the ladies **2** and in **20** are also of the nobility, then these two ballades count with the others in *50B* that are addressed to a woman of the aristocracy. See further the note to **6**.9 on "noblesce"and Gower's use of "vo noblesce" as an honorific in **28**.15 *et al*. Such references to rank are very rare in fourteenth-century French poetry. Equally rare is the epithet "noble dame." It appears in none of Machaut's or Granson's lyrics, and only once in Deschamps', as far as I know, in the envoy to **1577**.

3

D'ardant desir celle amorouse peigne
Mellé d'espoir me fait languir en joie,
Dont p*ar* dolçour sovent jeo me compleigne
Pour vous, ma dame, ensi com jeo soloie.
Mais qu*a*nt jeo pense q*e* vous serretz moie,
De sa justice amour mo*u*n coer enhorte
En attendant q*e* jeo me reconforte.

La renomée, dont j'ai l'oreile pleine,
De vo valour mo*u*n coer pensant envoie
Milfoitz le jour, u tiel[e]ment° me meine
Q'il m'est avis q*e* jeo vous sente et voie,
Plesante, sage,° belle, simple, et coie.
Si en devient° ma joie ades plusforte
En attendant° q*e* jeo me reconforte.

Por faire honour a dame si halteigne
A toutz les jours sanz departir me ploie,
Et si dieus voet q*e* jeo le point atteigne
De mes amours q*e* jeo desire et proie,
Lors ai d'amour tout ceo q'avoir voldroie.
Mais pour le temps, espoir mo*u*n coer supporte
En attendant q*e* jeo me reconforte.

A vous, ma dame, ensi come faire doie,
En lieu de moi, ceo l*ett*re vous apporte
Q'en vous amer mo*u*n coer dist toute voie
En attendant q*e* jeo me reconforte.

10 *MS* tielment. T*he middle syllable is supplied for the meter.* Tielement *is the normal spelling in both* MO *and* 50B, *e.g. in* ***9****.3,* ***34****.20,* ***38****.20.*
12 *MS* sage *written over the erasure of a longer word. Very faint cross in margin by line 13.*
13 *MS* endevient
14, 21, 25 *MS* Enattendant

3

°This amorous pain of burning desire
mixed with hope makes me languish in joy,
so that out of sweetness, I often complain
on your account, my lady, just as I have been accustomed.
But when I think that you will be mine,°
with its power° Love incites my heart
while awaiting that I be comforted.

The renown, of which my ears are full,°
of your great worth sends forth my pensive heart°
a thousand times a day, where it so leads me
that it seems to me that I perceive° and see you,
pleasant, wise, beautiful, modest, and demure.°
Then my joy immediately becomes greater
while awaiting that I be comforted.

In order to do honor to so exalted° a lady
I strive° unceasingly° each day,
°and if God wishes that I reach the point°
in my love° that I desire and pray for,
then I have all that I would wish from Love.
But in the meantime, hope sustains my heart
while awaiting that I be comforted.

°To you, my lady, just as it should,°
in place of myself, this letter brings to you
what my heart says constantly° in loving you,
while awaiting that I be comforted.

Ballade **3** covers much of the same emotional ground as **2**, and it uses some of the same language. The persona relies upon Hope (**3**.20, **2**,6); he seeks comfort in the face of a long delay (**3**R, **2**.6); he acknowledges that the outcome of his wishes rests with God (**3**.17, **2**.15, 26). And under the influence of hope, his imagination becomes his reality—"vous serretz moie" (**3**.5)—just as for his counterpart in **2**.1-5, who is so sure, at least momentarily, that his prospects in love will warm with the seasons. If **3** is somehow a rewriting of **2**, it is at the same time even more conventional in its diction. There is no way to count how many earlier lyric lovers have languished in joy or experienced the mixed effects of hope and desire that **3** describes. Also more like its predecessors, **3** is focused even more exclusively than **2** on the persona's own

feelings: there is not the slightest allusion to the couple's mutual joy, and by the third stanza, he no longer even seems to be speaking to the lady.

But in the envoy he turns to her directly as he steps back from the focus on himself to talk about the poem: this, my lady, is what my heart constantly says to me and that sustains my love. That stepping back makes this poem very different from **2**: by treating the first three stanzas as an overheard interior monologue, it both recognizes the self-absorption of the rhetoric that Gower inherited and artfully adapts it to the dramatic address that is characteristic of *50B.*

Like **2**, **3** is offered as a "letter," and it has some of the same looseness of structure, shifting from stanza to stanza from one image to another. It is united almost imperceptibly by the references to the heart in each stanza, culminating in the invocation of the heart in the envoy.

1-2 Hope and desire are frequently linked in earlier poems on love. In Machaut's *dits*, they stand opposed, as Hope overcomes the most harmful effects of Desire (see in particular *Remede* 2156-58, 3281-83), as also in Machaut, *Lou*. **182**.10-12. Elsewhere they work in tandem (Machaut, *Lou*. **59**.3-4), or hope incites desire, as in Granson **12**.12-13, *T&C* 3.1333-34.

5 The lover's thinking it does not make it real: the persona here only imagines what that of **4**[1].R promises and what that of **5** is able to affirm.

6 For "justice" as "power" see *AND* s.v. "justise[1]," 2; *DMF* s.v. "justice," II.A; but it is not impossible that the persona is invoking his confidence in Love's fairness or "justice" as well.
Love. "Justice" suggests that "Love" is personified here, which carries over to line 19 as well though the context there is less specific.

8 Cf. Granson **78.**2488, "Vostre renom m'a tout emply l'oreille [your renown has completely filled my ear]"; also **78**.2449-51. Gower uses the same image again in **6**.1-6 and, with reference to a man's reputation, in **44**.8-11.

9 Gower uses the image of the heart traveling again in **6**.18-19, **9**.10-12 and **25**.7. Here it is his "coer pensant [pensive heart]" that is the voyager; in **8**.1-7 it is the thought that emerges from the heart; and in **34**.25-26 it is his thought alone. For variations on the theme, cf., among others, Machaut, **45**.1-2; Mudge **74**.15-16; Froissart, *Esp.Am.* 2437-38. The notion of the heart, in traveling, leading the persona (in his imagination) to his lady so that he seems to see her may be original to Gower.

11 *perceive.* "Sentir" can be used with reference to any of the five senses in Middle French (not just "feel" in the tactile sense) and even more broadly to mean "perceive" (a translation that works well in **4**[1].10) or "to be aware of" (see *DMF* s.v. "sentir"). When the object of the verb is the lady (here and in **5**.11), it might suggest something like "feel your presence."

12 The enumeration of the lady's best qualities (here in adjective form) might well be considered a formula in the poetry of Gower's contemporaries. Butterfield, "Forms of Death," p. 173, treats such clusters as one of the "clichés" of medieval French courtly poetry. Taking examples almost at random: Granson, **51**.2: "Belle, pleisant, jeune, fresche et nouvelle [beautiful, charming, young, fresh, and new]"; Machaut, *Lou*. **21**.1-2: "Gentile dame, douce, plaisant et sage, / Bonne, belle, gracieuse et jolie [Noble lady, sweet, charming, and wise, good beautiful, gracious, and pretty]"; and for a variation on the theme, *T&C* 8.823, "Charitable, estatlich, lusty, and fre." Cf. **4**[1].11 and note.
simple and demure. As Fisher notes (p. 76 and p. 344, n.16), "simple et coie" is a common expression in medieval French lyrics, especially in Machaut, who uses it at least 10 times. See *DMF* s.v. "simple," C.1.c (all but one citation from Machaut). In Froissart, the same phrase appears in Lay **9**.19, **11**.106, andVir. **9**.2; and Chaucer famously employs it in GP *CT* I.119, with reference to the

Prioress' smile. Gower uses it here and in **9**.33, and also in *MO* 11917, describing "Vergogne [Shame]"; in 14012, describing "Pacience"; and in 27963, with reference to the Virgin Mary. "Simple" covers a wide range of meanings; here it suggests "modest, unassuming." "Coi(e)" or "coy(e)" (from Latin "quietus") most often simply means "quiet" in its many other appearances in *MO*, but in the formula "simple et coie," it suggests "demure, reserved, discreet." See *DMF* s.v. "coi," 3; also *MED* s.v. "coi," (a). *AND* offers "coy, demure" (s.v. "coi," 3), but in French, the word seems never to have taken on the implication of elusiveness, of affected shyness, or of coquettishness of Modern English "coy," and it did so in English only later; see *OED* s.v. "coy," 2.a, b.

15 *exalted*. Like "noble" (**2**.25), "haltei(g)n" might refer to social rank (*AND* s.v. "haltein," a.2; *DMF* s.v. "hautain," C.2; *MED* s.v. "hautein," 1.[b]) or to character, in which case, however, the implication is usually pejorative (*AND*, *loc.cit.*, 3; *DMF*, *loc.cit.*, D; *MED, loc.cit.*, 1[a]). See, for instance, *MO* 1211, where it is paired with "fiere," both meaning "haughty," but compare *MO* 12078, where it is paired with "noble" instead. It might also refer only to physical height (as in **48**.11), from which it can be used figuratively for anything high or superior (*DMF*, *loc.cit.*, C.1). In this line the word is certainly not pejorative. The more precise implication is not completely clear, but the context seems to be provided by the preceding stanza, which describes the lady's character rather than her rank. Cf. **14**.3, also referring to the lady's character but where the context is her "fierté [haughtiness or pride]" (**14**.13); **39**.26, which invokes the lady's rank; and **33**.23, where the reference is more ambiguous. On the lady's aristocratic rank in *50B* see the notes to **6** and **13**.

16 *strive.* "Se ploier" most literally means "to bend" and hence "to bow" (see *AND* s.v. "plier"; *DMF* s.v. "plier"), which works well in **15**.10, in **25**.15, and in most uses in *MO*, and that isn't entirely inappropriate here. But in **9**.3 and in *MO* 3379, 11863, 14323, and 27794, some more active effort seems to be implied, and "strive" (or Yeager's "exert myself") seems to be the better meaning, as it does here as well, especially in combination with "sans departir." Gower's use may have been affected by two related verbs. See *AND* s.v. "emploier," v.refl., "to devote oneself"; *DMF* s.v. "employer," II.b., "*S'employer à/en qqc.* 'S'appliquer, s'occuper, se consacrer à qqc.' [to apply oneself to, occupy oneself with, devote oneself to something]." See also *DMF* s.v. "apployer," II, "*S'aploier à qqc.* 'S'adonner à qqc [to devote oneself to something]," and "*S'aploier à* + inf. 'S'appliquer à [to apply oneself to]," where the only two citations are from Gower, *MO* 5739 and 2982, standing in for his eight uses of this verb in the reflexive in *MO*.

unceasingly. On "sans departir," the phrase that links **3** to **4**[1] and **4**[2], see the note to **4**[2].1.

17-19 The tenses here are a bit confusing. One expects "I will have" or "I would have" in line 19, and Gower could have written "averai [I will have]" (two syllables; see the note to **1**.21) instead of "lors ai" since "lors" is not required and is actually infrequent after an *if*-clause in *50B* (cf. **31**.9-12 and **31**.17-19). As it is, the persona is saying that he is glad if God wishes him to achieve his love, not that he will be glad when he does achieve it.

17 *point*. *AND*, s.v. "point[1]," 6, "point, stage of a process," "state, condition (as the result of a process)"; *DMF*, s.v. "point," II.B.2.c, "[À propos d'une chose] "État, situation [With regard to a thing: condition, situation]."

18 On "mes amours" (in contrast to "amour" in the following line) see the note to **2**.5.

22-25 Macaulay and Yeager place a semicolon at the end of line 23. The first of the two resulting clauses is complete grammatically, but "In place of myself I bring this letter to you" suggests both that the persona is present and that he is not, and "dist [says]" in line 24 is left without an object. Removing the semicolon and understanding the "Q[e]" of line 24 as the equivalent of "ce qe [that which]" supplies a different object for "apporte [brings]," it makes "ceo lettre" the subject, and it supplies the object for "dist." For "qe" = "ce qe" see **2**.21, **8**.20, **17**.22, and **40**.12, 15; and DMF s.v. "que"

II.A.2, II.B.2.c. Cf. Gower's use of "that" for "that which" or indefinite "what" in *CA* 1.603, 2.2397, *et al*.

22 *doie*. While the context requires a third-person indicative here (normally "doit," as in **15**.11 *et al*.), "doie" is normally either first-person (as in the same phrase in **12**.26) or subjunctive, or both. Gower allows rhyme to determine form here, as also in *MO* 14779, "malgré q'il doie [despite what it ought to do]," where the subject is not ambiguous and where the verb also rhymes with a different "voie."

24 *constantly*. One might expect "toute voie" to mean "nonetheless" (Modern French "toutefois"; *DMF* s.v. "toutevoie," B), as in *MO* 15402, or "in every way," as perhaps in *MO* 16327 and 22761. Neither sense works well here, however. See instead *AND* s.v. "veie[1]," under the phrase "Tut, tute(s) veie(s) . . ." 2, "always, constantly (thereafter)," with seven citations, a sense that could also work in the latter two passages in *MO*. Cf. *AND* s.v. "feiz," under the phrase "tute(s) (les) feiz," "always" or "continually."

4[1]

D'entier voloir, sanz ja*m*mes departir,
Ma belle, a vous, en qui j'ai m'esperance,
En droit amour mo*u*n coer s'ad fait unir
As toutz jours mais, p*our* faire vo plesance.
Jeo vous asseur p*ar* fine covenance,
Sur toutes autres neez en ceste vie,
V*ost*re amant sui, et vous serrez m'amie.

Jeo me doi bien a vous soul consentir
Et doner qanq*ue* j'ai de bienvuillance,
Car pleinement en vous l'en poet sentir
Bealté, bounté, valour, et suffiça*u*nce.
Croietz moi, dame, et tenetz ma fia*u*nce,
Qe p*ar* doulçour et bone compaignie,
V*ost*re amant sui, et vous serretz m'amie.

De pluis en pluis, p*our* le t*re*sgrant desir
Qe j'ai de vous, me vient la remembrance
Q'en mo*u*n° pensant me fait tant rejoïr
Qe si le mond fuist tout en ma puissance,
Jeo ne querroie avoir autre alliance.
Tenetz certain qe ceo ne faldra mie:
V*ost*re amant sui, et vous serretz m'amie.

Au flour des flours, u toute ma creance
D'amour remaint sanz nulle dep*ar*tie,
Ceo l*ett*re envoie, et croi° me sanz doubtance,
V*ost*re amant sui, et vous serretz m'amie.

17 *Mac* mon
24 croi. *See the note in the commentary.*

Gower, John. *Cinkante Balades*. Edited and translated by Peter Nicholson, Feb. 2021, *John Gower Society*, www.JohnGower.org.

4[1]

With all its will, undividedly and unceasingly,°
my fair one, to you, in whom I place my hope,
my heart has united itself in true love°
forevermore, in order to do your pleasure.
I assure you with a solemn promise,°
above all other women born in this life,
I am your lover, and you will be my *amie*.°

I ought well concur with you alone
and give whatever I have of good will,
for in you one may clearly° perceive
beauty, goodness, worth, and dignity.°
Believe me, lady, and have here my vow,°
that out of° kindness and good companionship,
I am your lover, and you will be my *amie*.

More and more, because of the great desire
that I have for you, the memory comes to me
that in my thought makes me rejoice so much
that if the world were entirely in my power,
I wouldn't seek to have any other alliance.°
Be certain that this will not weaken a bit:
I am your lover, and you will be my *amie*.

To the flower of flowers,° in whom all my faith
in love resides, undividedly,
I send this letter; and believe me° without doubt,
I am your lover, and you will be my *amie*.

Ballade **4[1]**, like **1**-**3**, borrows much of its language from earlier lyric declarations of love, particularly the terms it uses with direct reference to the persona and his lady in lines 2, 11, and 22, and in the refrain, "amant" and "amie." But the key expressions in **4[1]**—"droit amour" (3), "covenance" (5), "fiaunce" (12), "alliance" (19)—are either unknown or very rare in earlier lyrics, and the last three, while all having a more general application, when found in the context of relations between a man and a woman are either commonly or normally used with reference to betrothal or marriage, a sense that is strengthened by lines 3-4, "unir / As toutz jours mais," another expression equally unknown among Gower's lyrics predecessors, who had little occasion for celebrating married love.

The context of betrothal turns the refrain from a presumptuous, even arrogant expectation into a tender promise, that the persona will have as affectionate a regard for his wife after their marriage as he does before. Gower is not the only one to use "ami(e)" in the context of marriage: see the citations in *DMF* s.v. "ami," 5, in which "ami(e)" expresses an affection not contained in the more neutral terms "mari [husband]" or "époux [spouse]." Such affection was central, however, to Gower's conception of marriage as he describes it in *MO* 17245 ff. In denouncing marriages made for money, for instance, he writes that a husband "Comme sa compaigne et bien amee / Cherir la doit en amisté [as his companion and beloved / ought to cherish (his wife) in friendship or affection]" (*MO* 17515-16), and in *Tr* **3**.19, he describes his ideal of marriage, in words closer to those of this poem, as "Loiale amie avoec loials amis [a faithful *amie* with a faithful *ami*]."

Both **4²** and **5**, which immediately follow, echo imagery that is introduced in **4¹**, and though neither makes as explicit a reference to betrothal as **4¹** does, the three poems appear to be intended to be read as a group, and **4²** and **5** are both made more meaningful in that context.

1 *undividedly and unceasingly*. On "sans departir" and "sans nulle departie" (line 23), see the note to **4²**.1.

3 *true love.* Gower uses the phrase "droit amour" four times in *50B*, in **4¹**.3, **4²**.13, **11**.16, and **35**.5. (See also "droit amant" in **50**.17.) He also uses it once in *Tr* (**18**.9) and three times in *MO* (10582, 11525, and 13548). The contexts are highly varied: **11**.16 refers to an unreciprocated love; in **35**.5 the subject is love among the birds; *Tr* **18**.9 treats love in marriage; and *MO* is concerned with love of God in the first two instances and with Augustine's "three loves" (of God, of one's neighbor, and of oneself) in the third. In all cases "droit" appears to be used to validate the authenticity, the force, and also the propriety of the emotion. It is not an expression that is commonly found in the lyrics, and it does not occur at all in Machaut, in Granson, in *100B*, or as far as I know in Froissart.

5 *solemn promise*. "Covenance" may refer to any sort of promise or commitment, but it is also commonly used with particular reference to a promise of marriage. See *DMF* s.v. "convenance," 2. The word occurs only very rarely in the lyrics. Granson uses it once (**17**.7). It also appears in most copies of Machaut's Motet **8**.11, where the variant "contenance" makes better sense, and where the context is the promises (or appearance) of Fortune. "Fine" is difficult to translate, its precise sense varying according to the noun that it modifies. One might well choose "formal" or "most worthy" here.

7 Cf. Deschamps, **911**.34, "Vostre ami suis et vous estes m'amée [I am your *ami* and you are my beloved]" in which, however, the male persona urges his addressee *not* to insist upon marriage. Cf. **44**.R.

amie. There are few words that are more difficult to translate directly into English than "ami(s)" and "amie." In their common general use, they are the masculine and feminine forms of the word for "friend," but in the context of the lyrics, where "amant [lover]" might signify one who still seeks the love of another (see *DMF* s.v. "amant[1]," I.C.1), "ami" and "amie," like Modern English "boyfriend" and "girlfriend," normally imply an existing mutual affection. Hence the many poems in which the persona expresses his wish simply that his lady call him her "ami"; e.g. Machaut, *Lou* **59**.6, **202**.13, **210**.14; Deschamps, **493**.8, **532**.9-10, **664**.8-9; Granson, **78**.1131; *et al*. No specific degree of intimacy is implied. *DMF* divides its citations between those describing "un attachement essentiellement sentimental [an essentially sentimental attachment]" (*s.v.* "ami," B.1-2) and those involving "des relations charnelles hors mariage [carnal relations outside of marriage]" (*loc.cit.*, B.3-4). In most instances in which the words are used in the lyrics, we are simply not given enough

information to judge. As noted above, the words may also occur with reference to spouses, as in *Tr* **3**. In such cases, as in the present instance, the word evokes a sentimental attachment apart from or in addition to the couple's sacramental bond. Lacking an equivalent that carries the same emotional weight and that also rises to the same level of dignity as the two words in French, I have thought it best to leave them untranslated here.

10 *clearly*. "Pleinement" can be either "fully, completely" (from Latin *plenus*; *AND* s.v. "pleinement"; *DMF* s.v. "pleinement," A) or "openly, clearly, plainly" (from Latin *planus*; *AND* s.v. "plainement"; *DMF* s.v. "plainement," and s.v. "pleinement," C). Gower uses both spellings in each sense in *MO*, as Macaulay indicates in his glossary. Both senses might apply, both in this line and in **14**.2, but here the verb "sentir" suggests that "clearly" is dominant.

11 *beauty, goodness, worth*. The enumeration of the lady's good qualities in noun form is also formulaic (cf. the note to **3**.12). The alliterative collocation of "beauté" and "bonté" is so obvious that it is surprising only that it does not occur even more often than it does. For examples: Machaut, *Lou.* **15**.10, "Bonté, valeur, biauté souvereinne [goodness, worth, sovereign beauty]"; Froissart, Lay **1**.92-94, "Sa très parfait biauté / Et bonté / Qui tant ont los [her very perfect beauty and goodness which receive such praise]"; and Granson, **12**.9, "Beauté, bonté, sens, honneur et advis [beauty, goodness, sense, honor, and wisdom]." See also *CA* 5.2595, "Beaute with bounte so besein"; and cf. the common phrase "belle et bonne," e.g. in Machaut, *Lou* **58**.9, **173**.16, **174**.10; Froissart, Lay **4**.65, **7**.36; Granson **30**.22, **39**.1, *et al.;* and in *MO* 29874 (with reference to Mary). Gower uses the collocation of "beauté," "bonté," and "grace" in four ballades that may once have been grouped together; see the note to **21**.

dignity. "Sufficaunce" is a potentially loaded term. In its meaning of "sufficiency" (*DMF* s.v. "sufffisance," A), Machaut uses it in *Remede* 2488, 2777 to translate Boethius' "sufficientas" (*De Consolatione Philosophiae*, 3 pr.9). Granson, on the other hand, uses it to mean mere "satisfaction" (e.g. **68**.11, **77**.67), while for Froissart it implies something stronger, more like "happiness" (e.g. in Lay **2**.154, **9**.149). Here, however, in conjunction with the other nouns in this line, it derives from a different sense of "suffisant" and signifies "competence, dignity, honor"; see *DMF* s.v. "suffisance," B.

12 *vow.* "Fiaunce" has a fairly broad range of meaning. Machaut and Granson use it to mean "faith, confidence in a particular person": e.g. *Lou*. **117**.46 ("Dame, en qui j'ai mist toute ma fiance [Lady in whom I have placed all my faith]"; Chans.Bal. **1**.13; Granson **24**.2, **68**.32, **78**.1947. See *DMF* s.v. "fiance," A.1, A.2.b; *AND* s.v. "fiance," 1. This is the sense in which Gower uses it in its only other appearance in *50B*, in **13**.3. It can also be used with reference to any pledge or commitment generally (*DMF*, *loc.cit.*, B.2; *AND*, *loc.cit*., 3). There is one passage in Machaut in which it might mean something more like "fidelity" (*Lou*. **186**.1-2: "Se par amour ou par fiance / Vous me moustriés estrangeté [if out of love or out of fidelity you show me coldness]"; cf. *DMF*, *loc.cit*., B.3). In the context of a promise made by a man to a woman, however, like the verb "fiancer," it more commonly refers specifically to betrothal (*DMF*, *loc.cit.*, B.2; *AND*, *loc.cit*., 4). "Affiance," evidently rare in continental French (see *DMF* s.v. "affiance"), was also used in contexts of betrothal, e.g. in *MO* 8683 and in the passages cited in *AND* s.v. "affiance," 3.

13 *out of*. In this context, "par" might also be translated as "in," "through," "by means of," or "because of."

19 *alliance*. Like "covenance" (line 5), "alliance" can have a very general meaning. Applied to the relations between men and women, *DMF* provides citations suggesting a shared love (s.v. "alliance[1]," A.2.b), and that appears also to be the sense in one of the rare appearances of the word in earlier lyrics, in *100B* **69**.28-30: "Qui loial acoustumance / D'aliance / Prent en Amours [who takes undertakes a loyal habit of alliance in love]." The word is also used by both Deschamps and Froissart to refer specifically to marriage but in contexts that suggest a political alliance as well

(*DMF*, *loc.cit.*, A.2.d), but see also *AND* s.v. "alliance," 3, which provides citations in which it refers to marriage in which a political context is not evident, as also in *MO* 822.

22 *flower of flowers.* "Flour" is used to designate the lady in far too many of the lyrics to count. (And also in narratives: cf. *T&C* 5.1317.) Gower uses it in **16**.26 and **31**.26 and in the expression "flour des flours," here and in **6**.22 and **9**.41. Machaut uses the same phrase in *Lou.* **3**.5 and **234**.6. Deschamps uses it in **532**.15, **546**.7 (or in the form "flour de toutes flours," **453**.20, **724**.12), and with reference not to a lady but to Machaut, in one of the ballades that he wrote upon Machaut's death (**124**.1).
in whom. For *(o)u* with a personal antecedent cf. **5**.27, **8**.6, and *AND* s.v. "u²," pr.rel. 2. Butterfield includes "flour des flours" among the "clichés" of medieval French courtly poetry ("Forms of Death," pp. 174-75).

24 *Believe me*. Does the unusual switch to the *tu* form of the verb (Gower uses "vostre" in the very next line) suggest that "croi me" ought to be "croietz" instead, as in line 12 or as in **2**.7? Does it anticipate the regular use of "tu" in the next ballade? Or is this another instance of Gower taking liberty with the grammar for the sake of the meter? Cf. **16**.26 and **34**.27, each of which poses a different issue.

4²

Sanz departir, j'ai tout mon coer assis
U j'aim toutditz et toutdis amerai.
Sanz dep*ar*tir, j'ai loialment promis
Por toi cherir tancome jeo viverai.
Sanz dep*ar*tir, ceo qe jeo promis ai
Jeo vuill tenir a toi, ma debonaire.
Sanz dep*ar*tir, tu es ma joie maire.

Sanz dep*ar*tir, jeo t'ai, m'amie, pris,
Q'en tout le mond si bone jeo ne sai.
Sanz departir, tu m'as auci compris
En tes liens, dont ton ami serrai.
Sanz dep*ar*tir, tu m'as tout, et jeo t'ai,
En droit amour, por ta plesance faire.
Sanz dep*ar*tir, tu es ma joie maire.

Sanz departir, l'amour qe j'ai empris
Jeo vuill garder, qe point ne mesprendray.
Sanz dep*ar*tir, come tes loials amis,
Mon t*res*douls coer, ton honour guarderai.
Sanz dep*ar*tir, a mon poair jeo frai
Des toutes p*ar*tz ceo qe toi porra plaire.
Sanz dep*ar*tir, tu es ma joie maire.

De coer p*ar*fit, certain, loial, et vrai,
Sanz dep*ar*tir, en t*res*tout mon affaire,
Te vuil amer, car ore est a l'essai.
Sanz dep*ar*tir, tu es ma joie maire.

Gower, John. *Cinkante Balades*. Edited and translated by Peter Nicholson, Feb. 2021, *John Gower Society*, www.JohnGower.org.

4²

Undividedly, I have placed my entire heart
where I love always and will always love.
Without condition, I have promised faithfully
to cherish° you as long as I live.
In every respect, what I have promised
I wish to uphold to you, my gracious one.°
Without exception, you are my greatest joy.

Fully have I taken you, my *amie*,
for in all the world I know not so good a woman.
Wholly have you so captured me
in your bonds that° I will be your *ami*.
Completely do you have me, and I have you,
in true love, in order to do your pleasure.
Without exception, you are my greatest joy.

°*Perpetually*, the love that I have entered into
I wish to preserve, for I will not act wrongfully.°
Constantly, as your loyal *ami*,
my sweetheart, will I preserve your honor.
Ceaselessly, within my power I will do
everywhere whatever can please you.
Without exception, you are my greatest joy.

With all my heart, firm, loyal, and true,
undividedly, in all my undertakings,
I wish to love you, for now it is put to the test.°
Without exception, you are my greatest joy.

4² is closely linked to **4¹** not just in theme but also in diction: by the initial appearance of "sans departir" and "sans departie" in **4¹**.1 and 13; by the repetition of "promis" (**4²**.3, 5), echoing the repeated pledges of **4¹**; by the echo of **4¹**.3-4, "En droit amour. . . pour faire vo pleasance," in **4²**.13, "En droit amour por ta plesance faire"; by the repetition of "amie" (**4¹**.R, **4²**.8); by the echo of "vous serrez m'amie" (**4¹**.R) in "ton ami serrai" (**4²**.11); by the more distant echo of the refrain of **4¹** in **4²**.12, "tu m'as et jeo t'ai"; by the echo of "rejoïr" (**4¹**.17) in the refrain of **4²**; and by the repeated insistence upon the firmness and permanence of the relationship in **4²**. Though **4²** uses none of the language specifically associated with betrothal, the two may well have been intended as a pair, and in fact **4¹** provides the only context for **4²**.24, "car ore est a l'essai [for now it is put to the test]", for **4²** itself contains no explanation for the reference.

This ballade is obviously most remarkable for its extended use of anaphora, the regular repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of the line. There are precedents for use of the device among Gower's predecessors (see Poirion, *Poéte et Prince*, p. 465, and for more examples, Granson **17**, **28**, and **46**), and Gower turns to it more than once in *MO* (10201 ff., 10623 ff., *et al.*). But perhaps uniquely, in **4²** Gower has chosen to repeat an expression that can have more than a single meaning, depending on the context, creating a greater than normal interest rhetorically but also a nearly impossible task for the translator. "Departir," like Modern English "part," has two general senses, "to depart, to leave" (*DMF* s.v. "departir," III.A) and "to divide or separate" (*DMF*, *loc.cit.*, I, II); and it can also be used to mean, somewhat less commonly, "to cease, come to an end" (*DMF*, *loc.cit.*, III.B). "Sans departir" (and the related phrase "sans departie") thus might mean "without departing," "without division, undividedly" (and thus by extension "unreservedly" or "totally") or "without ceasing, ceaselessly"; and it is in the latter two senses that the phrase in commonly used in the lyrics, and also in *MO*. For the first, *DMF* (*loc.cit.*, I.B.1) gives "[Dans le langage amoureux] . . . 'Sans partager (son coeur), en restant loyal et fidèle' ["in the language of love . . . 'without dividing (one's heart), remaining loyal and faithful']," citing examples from Froissart and Charles d'Orléans; and for the second, it offers "sans cesser [without ceasing]" (*loc.cit*., III.B). Given the choice, the precise sense is often specified by context. References to time, for instance, point to "unceasingly," as in Machaut, Bal.Not. **26**.3, "Sans departir ne nuit ne jour [*sans departir* by night or day]." Similarly the phrase "sans jamais departir [*sans departir* ever]" (e.g. Granson **72**.28) must be a temporal reference, as do the three uses of "sans departie" in *MO* 6876, 23146, and 29183, which refer to eternal rewards. In *MO* 10685-86, on the other hand, Gower writes of Contemplation's union with God, "Qe tout en un se sont tenu / Sans departir [that they are bound together as one / *sans departir*]," and the primary sense is "undividedly" though "eternally" also clearly applies. In one of Granson's ballades, the woman speaker declares "je vous ay donné oultreement / Mon cuer, m'amour, sens nulle departie [I have given you my heart, my love entirely, *sens nulle departie*]" (**32**.19-20), suggesting "undividedly" or "unreservedly." In another poem, Granson writes "Pour ce suis sien sans departir / Entierement jusqu'a la fin [thus I am hers *sans departir* / Entirely, until the end]" (**76**.263-64), evidently invoking both "undividedly" and "unceasingly"; and the existence of more than a single possibility means that neither general sense can ever be totally excluded, especially when the context provides no clues. In **3**.16, "a tous les jours [every day]" leads to "unceasingly," as does the "jammes [never]" in **4¹**.1, but in the latter case "undividedly" might also apply, and in **4¹**.21-22, **25**.14, and **51**.18, "undividedly" seems to be primary but "unceasingly" is also possible, especially in the latter case, with reference to the persona's love for the Virgin Mary.

Here in **4²**, both senses come into play. The first two stanzas invoke "undividedly," but the third refers more to a continuous action over time. Instead of trying to find a single expression that works in all circumstances, I have instead tried to choose the best equivalent for each context, destroying, of course, the incantatory effect of the anaphora that reinforces the persona's pledge and also making precise what is probably intended to be fluid, and one should be alert to the possibility that in each use of the expression, any of the other possibilities might also be in play.

4² is unique in *50B* in the male persona's regular use of *tu* to address the lady. (As Macaulay notes [1:462], a woman uses *tu* for very different effect in **41**-**43**.) It is also the first ballade not to refer to its written form in the refrain: we might well imagine this poem not as a letter but as the male lover's spoken vows.

One of the puzzles in the manuscript of *50B* is why there are two poems bearing the number 4. The misnumbering might be due simply to the inattention of a scribe, of course, but the fact that the last numbered poem bears the number 50, consistent with the title in the heading, suggests that that was at some point the planned total. It is also possible therefore that one or other of the two "4s" was inserted late, after the other poems had already been numbered. If so, **4²** seems to be the latecomer because of the otherwise non-contextualized reference in **4²**.24.

4 Macaulay points out (in his note to *MO* 6328, I:411) that "'pour' is often used by our author instead of 'de' or 'a,' representing perhaps the English 'forto'." See also **45**.12, **[51]**.12. For a different use of "pour" where one might find in English "forto" see the note to **11**.5.

6 "Debonaire" is one of Machaut's favorite words for describing his lady, using it at least a dozen times. It also occurs half a dozen times in Granson. See *DMF* s.v. "debonnaire," with citations from, among many others, Machaut, Deschamps, and Christine de Pizan. With reference to a woman, the word often occurs in the company of "douce," "gentille," and even "belle et bonne" (as in *MO* 29875, with reference to Mary), and it has a range of meanings all describing the qualities of character and comportment that would be most pleasing to a man. This is Gower's only use of the word in *50B*.

11 Macaulay also points out (in his note to *MO* 217, 1:395) that in Gower's usage, "dont" commonly occurs instead of "que" after words such as "auci" (this line), "si" (**14**.6), "tant" (**41**.2), and "tiele" (**45**.13).

15-16 Somewhat hidden by the difference in form is the etymological link between "empris" (from "emprendre") and "mesprendray" (from "mesprendre"). See also "pris" (from "prendre") and "compris" from "comprendre") in lines 8-10. Gower uses the same group of words in two stanzas in his discussion of marriage in *MO* 17665-88.

16 *for I will not do wrong*. Since "mesprendre" can be either transitive or intransitive (as I have translated it here), the "qe" might be a relative, referring back to "l'amour": "the love . . . that I will not take wrongfully." See AND, *DMF* s.v. "mesprendre." But one must let context rule.

24 *put to the test*. *DMF* s.v. "essai," A.1, A.3, citing Machaut, *Font.Am.*, "Car je l'ay tant mis a l'essay / Que fin et vray amant le say [for I have so put him to the test that I know him to be a pure and true lover]." Cf. *CA* 5.3239-40, "Bot whan it comth unto thassay, / Their finde it fals an other day"; and *T&C* 3.1002, "And dredeles, that shal be founde at preve" (Criseyde speaking, with reference to her own fidelity).

5

Pour une soule avoir et rejoïr,
Toutes les autres laisse a no*u*n chaloir.
Jeo me doi bien a tiele consentir
Et faire honour a t*re*stout mo*u*n pooir,
Q'elle est tout humble a faire mon voloir.
Jeo sui tout soen et elle est toute moie;
Jeo l'ai et elle auci me voet avoir.
Pour tout le mond jeo ne la changeroie.

Qui si bone ad bien la dev*er*a cherir,
Q'a sa valour n'est riens qe poet valoir.
Jeo di pour moi, q*a*nt jeo la puiss sentir,
Il m'est avis qe jeo ne puiss doloir.
Elle est ma vie, elle est tout mon avoir,
Elle est m'amie, elle est toute ma joie,
Elle est tout mon confort matin et soir.
Pour tout le mond jeo ne la changeroie.

La destinée qe nous ad fait unir
Benoite soit, car sanz null decevoir,
Je l'aime a tant com coer porra tenir.
Ceo prens tesmoign de dieu qui sciet le voir.
Si fuisse en paradis, ceo beal manoir,
Autre desport de lui ja ne querroie.
C'est celle ove qui jeo pense a remanoir.
Pour tout le mond jeo ne la changeroie.

Ceste balade en gré pour recevoir,
Ove coer et corps, p*ar* tout u qe jeo soie,
Envoie a celle u gist tout mon espoir.
Pour tout le mond jeo ne la changeroie.

9 dev*er*a. *See the note to this line in the commentary.*

5

To have and to give joy to one alone,
I leave all other women with indifference.
I ought well concur with such a one
and to do (her) honor with all my power,
for she is completely humble to do my will.°
I am completely hers and she is all mine;°
I have her, and she wishes to have me too.
For all the world I would not replace her.°

Who has so good a woman well ought to cherish her,
for there is nothing that can match her worth.
I say for myself, when I can feel her presence,°
it seems to me that I cannot be sorrowful.
She is my life, she is everything I own,
she is my *amie*, she is all my joy,
she is all my comfort, morning and evening.
For all the world I would not replace her.

May the destiny that caused us to unite
be blessed, for without any deceit,
I love her as much as a heart could sustain.
For this I take witness of God, who knows the truth.
If I were in paradise, that fair dwelling,°
I would never seek any other joy from Him.
It is she with whom I intend to remain.
For all the world I would not replace her.

This ballade, to receive with pleasure,
with heart and body,° wherever I might be,
I send to her in whom° lies all my hope.
For all the world I would not replace her.

This is the third ballade that celebrates a mutual love, and though it contains no language that is specific to marriage, it is consistent in tone with both of the preceding ballades, and it contains several echoes of their diction. The link to **4**.1 is particularly strong. "Une soule" (**5**.1) recalls "vous soul" (**4**^{1}.8); "rejoïr" (**5**.1) recalls the same word in **4**^{1}.17; "toutes les autres" (**5**.2) recalls "sur toutes autres" (**4**^{1}.6); "jeo me doi a tiele consentir" (**5**.3) echoes "jeo me doi a vous soul consentir" (**4**^{1}.8); "Jeo sui tout soen et elle est toute moi" (**5**.6) recalls a bit less precisely the balanced refrain of **4**^{1}, "vostre amant sui et vous serretz m'amie" (**4**^{1}.R); "la destinée qe nous ad

fait unir" (**5**.17) echoes "moun coer s'ad fait unir" (**4¹**.3); and the hypothetical in **5**.21-22, which ends "autre desport de lui ja ne querroie" recalls that of **4¹**.18-19, which ends "jeo ne querroie avoir autre alliance." Finally, "u gist tout mon espoir" (**5**.27) recalls "en qui j'ai m'esperance" (**4¹**.2), and in this new context, "hope" takes on a slightly different meaning from the sense it bears in most earlier lyrics, not a hope for something that the persona doesn't yet have but a hope to continue possession of something that he possesses. The echoes of **4²** are fewer: "jeo l'ai et elle auci me voet avoir" repeats **4²**.12 with only a change of person; the lady is "bone" in both **5**.9 and **4²**.9; the persona will cherish her in both **5**.9 and **4²**.4; and she is "toute ma joie" (**5**.14) and "ma joie maire" (**4²**.7).

For all the similarity in diction and circumstance to **4¹** and **4²**, Gower chooses, perhaps as a deliberate variation, a third form of address: the persona speaks of his lady only in the third person, even in sending the poem to her in the envoy. As noted in the introduction, such a use of the envoy is unprecedented as far as I know. There are two other examples in *50B*, in **17** and **18**, where the lack of direct address is expressive of the persona's relation to the lady. **36** also lacks any reference to the lady either in the vocative or in the second person even as the persona sends his ballade to her.

Like ballade **1**, **5** is constructed around three linked rhymes: *-ir*, *-oir*, and *-oie*.

5 Though "humble" is often combined with "obeissant(e) [obedient]," e.g. in *Tr* **2**.18, I know of no other example of "humble" followed by an infinitive, either in Middle French or Middle English.

6 Cf. *100B* **19**.17, "J'estoie sien, elle estoit moie [I was hers, she was mine]"; and *MO* 29731-32 (Jesus to Mary), "O tu m'espouse, o tu ma drue, / Tu es la moye et je suy tue [oh, my spouse, oh, my lover, / you are mine and I am yours]."

8 It is not completely clear how to fit in "Pour tout le monde." This is either "I would not exchange her for everything in the world" or "For everything in the world, I would not replace her with someone else." And while the primary meaning of "changer" in this pledge of fidelity must be "quit, abandon, replace" and thus by extension "exchange" (*DMV* s.v. "changer," I.A.2; see also the note to **1**.20), it's not impossible that the persona also declares that he "would not alter her" (*DMF*, *loc.cit.*, I.A.1).

9 On the extra syllable (in "devera"), see the note to **1**.21.

11 *feel her presence.* See the note to **3**.11.

21 Cf. *MO* 307, "Du paradis le beau Manoir [from paradise, the fair dwelling]."

26 *with heart and body.* I.e., "with all my being." *DMF* s.v. "corps," I.A.2, "*Coeur et corps./Corps et entention.* 'Tout son être' [all his being]." The collocation is common, and Butterfield counts it among the "clichés" of medieval French courtly poetry ("Forms of Death," pp. 173-74). Machaut uses it more than a dozen times, often in combination with other nouns, and usually with reference to the offer of service to the lady; e.g. "Eins vueil mettre mon desire et ma cure, / Mon cuer, mon corps et toute ma vigour / En vous servir loyaument, sans folour [Instead I wish to put my desire and my effort, my heart, my body, and all my strength, into serving you loyally, without folly]" (*Lou.* **133**.10-12). Gower uses the phrase seven more times in *50B*, in **8**.23, **17**.11, **21**.4, **23**.3, **28**.16, **34**.14, and **44**.3, in a somewhat wider variety of contexts, and he also juxtaposes "coers" and "corps" in **33**.2 and in the refrain to **34**, but only in the last two instances of this refrain is there the slightest hint of the sensual implication that a modern reader might wish to find in the reference to "corps." See also the note to **12**.6.

27 *in whom*. On the personal use of "u" see the note to **4¹**.22.

The marginal glosses

Les balades d'amont jesqes en ci sont fait especialment° p*our* ceaux q'attendont lours amo*ur*s par droite mariage	The ballades from above to this point are written especially for those who hope for their love through true marriage.°
Mac especialement.	
Les balades d'ici jesqes au fin du liv*er*e sont uni-v*er*seles a tout le monde selonc les propretés et les condicions des Amantz qui sont div*er*semen*t* t*ra*vailez en la fortune d'amour.	The ballades from here to the end of the book are universal, for everyone, according to the characteristics and conditions of lovers who are variously troubled in love's fortune.

These two marginal glosses, the only ones in *50B*, appear on f. 15, the first at the top of the page, next to the last five lines of ballade **5**, and the second next to lines 4-11 of ballade **6**. With the presence of two number **4**s, they constitute the second anomaly at this point in the manuscript, and they pose several puzzles. While they indeed mark a transition from the marital theme of **4**[1], **4**[2], and **5** to the more diverse ballades that follow, in their breadth, they are at best imprecise, for ballades **1**-**3** make no more allusion to marriage than do **6** through **48,** and **49**.15-19, at the "fin du livere," returns to the theme of marriage and exalts it as the only form of "bon amour [good love]" between a man and a woman. The two glosses also appear to have been added later than the rest of the text. Unlike the marginal glosses in *Tr*, both are clearly written in a lighter color ink, and both appear to be inserted into space left after the decoration of the large initial to ballade **6**. The second occurs in the first space not occupied by the tracery from this initial, and the first is more clearly shaped around the tracery that ascends into the margin by the last two lines of ballade **5**. (The evidence in *Tr* is not as clear, but the decoration of the initials at **11**.1, **14**.1, and **15**.1 appears to have been added after the insertion of the glosses.) Except for the evidence of their late addition, one might suppose that the glosses are a

relic of an earlier form of the collection. If not copied at the same time as the adjoining poems, however, it is difficult to explain both why and by whom they were inserted.

5 *q'attendont lours amours par droite mariage*. The sense here is not completely clear. "Amours" might be either "the objects of one's love" (in which case, however, we might expect "amis" instead) or "the condition of being in love" (see the note to **2**.5). "Attendre" can have a range of meanings from "await" to "expect" to "hope for" (see *AND* s.v. "atendre[1], 1-3; *DMF* s.v. "attendre[1], II). It can also mean "pay heed to, tend to" (*AND*, *loc.cit.*, 7; *DMF*, *loc.cit.*, I.B), from which we get the modern English word "attendant." Gower uses "attendant" three times in *MO* to mean something like "servant" (881, 4705, 6507), and in *MO* 308-9, he writes that the devil "bien scieust que par estovoir / Cel homme doit el siecle attendre [knows that perforce man must *attendre* the world]," where one is tempted to translate "attendre" as "serve." It's clearly not a common meaning for the verb, but "Those who serve their love by means of true marriage" might come closer to what Gower intended here. Unless we are simply trying to make sense of something that got garbled in transmission.

6

La fame et la t*re*shalte renomée
Du sens, beauté, man*er*e, et gentilesce
Qe l'en m'ad dit sovent et recontée
De vous, ma noble dame, a g*ra*nt leesce
M'ad t*re*sp*er*cié l'oreille et est impresse
Dedeinz le coer, p*ar* quoi mon oill desire
V*ost*re presence au fin qe jeo remire.

Si fortune ait ensi det*er*minée
Qe jeo porrai veoir vo g*ra*nt noblesce,
Vo g*ra*nt valour, dont tant bien sont p*ar*lée,
Lors en serra ma joie plus expresse,
Car pour service faire a v*ost*re haltesse
J'ai g*ra*nt voloir, p*ar* quoi mon oill desire
V*ost*re presence au fin qe jeo remire.

Mais le penser plesant ymaginée,
Jesqes a tant qe jeo le lieu adesce
U vous serretz, m'ad ensi adrescée
Qe p*ar* souhaid milfoitz le jour jeo lesse
Mo*u*n° coer aler, q'a vous conter ne cesse
Le bon amour p*ar* quoi mo*u*n oill desire
V*ost*re presence au fin qe° jeo remire.

Sur toutes flours la flour, et la Princesse
De tout honour, et des toutz mals le mire,
Pour vo bealté jeo languis en destresce,
V*ost*re presence au fin qe jeo remire.

19 *Mac* mon
21 *Mac* que

Gower, John. *Cinkante Balades*. Edited and translated by Peter Nicholson, Feb. 2021, *John Gower Society*, www.JohnGower.org.

6

°The fame and the most high renown
for sense, beauty, moderation,° and kindness
that one has often told me about and recounted
concerning you, my noble lady,° with great joy
has pierced my ear° and is imprinted
within my heart,° for which my eye desires
°your presence, so that I might see° you in person.

If Fortune had so determined
that I could see your great nobility,°
your great worth, about which so much good is said,
then my joy would be more manifest,
for to do service to your highness°
I have great wish, for which my eye desires
your presence, so that I might see you in person.

But the pleasing imagined thought,
until I reach the place
where you will be, has so guided me
that in wish, a thousand times a day I let
my heart travel,° which doesn't cease to tell you
of the good love° for which my eye desires
your presence, so that I might see you in person.

Above all flowers the flower,° and the princess°
of all honor, and the doctor for all pains,
for your beauty I languish in distress
so that I might see you in person.

Ballade **6** returns to the imagery and diction of **3**, so precisely that **4**[1], **4**[2], and **5** appear almost as an interruption, and the correspondences are as close as those that link the three preceding ballades to one another. The opening, "la treshalte renomée . . . m'ad trespercié l'oreille" (**6**.1-5) directly recalls "la renomée dont j'ai l'oreile pleine" (**3**.8); "vo grant valour" (**6**.10) echoes "de vo valour" (**3**.9); "a vostre haltesse" (**6**.12) echoes somewhat more faintly "a dame si halteigne" (**3**.15); "le penser . . . m'ad ensi adrescée" (**6**.15-17) does not use the same language but it evokes the same image as "moun coer pensant . . . me meine" (**3**.9-10); "milfoitz le jour jeo lesse / Mon coer aler" (**6**.18-19) cannot help but recall "moun coer pensant envoie / Milfoitz le jour" (**3**.9-10); the heart speaks in both "mon coer . . . a vous conter ne cesse / Le bon amour" (**6**.19-20) and "ceo lettre vous apporte / Q'en vous amer moun coer dist toute voie" (**3**.23-24); and both

personae languish (**6**.24 and **3**.2). The latter is a commonplace, as is praise of the lady's worth, but the other correspondences tie these two poems to each other more closely than to any other of the *Balades*.

But there is a difference as well, for in **6**, the persona addresses a lady that he knows only by reputation and that he has never seen; his wish is not for the fulfillment of his desire for her, as in **3**, but only that he might look upon her. This is not a common motif in the lyrics, but it is not unknown. Deschamps defends falling in love by reputation alone in **627**. He also has a rondeau that begins "Cil qui onques encore ne vous vit / Vous aime fort et desire voir [he who still has not seen you loves you strongly and wishes to see you]" (**635**.1-2), citing, like Gower, "les biens que chascun de vous dit [the good things that everyone says about you]" (**635**.5); and a virelai in which the persona has come to see a woman with whom he has fallen in love on the basis only of her "renommée [renown]" (**746**.2). A somewhat similar situation arises at the beginning of Machaut's *Voir Dit*, when the young woman who has never met the narrator writes to him in a rondeau that she loves him "pour les biens que de vous dit / Tout li mondes communement [because of all the good things that the whole world says about you]" (210-11), for which "a son gre pas ne vit / Quant veoir ne vous puet souvent [she does not live as she wishes when she cannot see you often]" (206-7). The narrator replies in three virelais in which he describes his own affection for this woman whom he has not yet seen (969-1169). These latter three poems also appear among Machaut's collected lyrics (Chans.Bal. **34**, **35**, and **36**), and in the posthumous manuscript that serves as the basis for Chichmaref's edition, they are accompanied by a ballade that begins "Dame, comment que n'aie pas veü / Vo gentil corps [Lady, although I haven't seen your noble self]" (*Lou.* **274**). See also *T&C* 5.164-65 (Diomedes speaking); "For I have herd er this of many a wight, / Hath loved thyng he nevere saigh his lyve."

Ballade **6** is one of eight or nine poems in *50B* that are evidently addressed to an aristocratic woman, as evidenced by the epithets "ma noble dame" in line 4 and "vostre haltesse" in line 12. The allusion to her "grant noblesce" in line 9 and the reference to her as the "princesse / de tout honour" in lines 22-23 complement the address, though in the second case evidently more metaphorically than literally. (See the notes to these lines.) The reference to the lady's high rank is actually quite unusual in fourteenth-century poetry; even more unusual is a poem like **13**, in which the difference between the persona's rank and the lady's provides a major theme, and Gower may be drawing upon an earlier tradition of French and Provençal lyric in which such motifs were common. See also **2**.25, **20**.13, **26**.3, **28**.15, **39**.26, and **44**.24, and for a more ambiguous case, **33**.18, 23.

In ballades **6** and **7**, Gower experiments with a refrain of more than a single line, though in each case, the alternating rhyme of the envoy (*bcbc*) makes it impossible to repeat both lines of the closing couplet of the stanza (which rhyme *cc*). Refrains of more than a single line are not unusual, but two full lines (as in **7**) are more common than a line and a half (as in **6**). For one example of the latter, see Machaut, *Lou.* **270**.

1-2 Each of the qualities listed here is also attributed far more than once to the ladies that are the object of praise in earlier lyrics. Precisely the same five occur in Pandarus' description of his niece in *T&C* 1.880-82: "For of *good name* and *wisdom* and *manere* / She hath ynough, and ek of *gentilesse.* / If she be *fayr,* thow woost thyself, I gesse."

2 *moderation.* In the lyrics, unmodified, "man(i)ere" most often means "composure" when it applies to the man, e.g. in Machaut, *Lou*. **3**.12-13, "biauté et grant douçour / Me font perdre sens, maniere et vigour [beauty and great sweetness make me loose sense, *maniere*, and strength]" and in Froissart, Lay **1**.126, a sense recognized by *DMF* in the phrase "perdre maniere" (s.v. "manière," I.A.2.d). With reference to a woman, it more often suggests a quality of character than a passing form of behavior, e.g. "Celle en qui maint sens, maniere et raison [she in whom reside sense, *maniere*, and reason]" (Machaut, *Lou.* ***36***.10). *AND* cites this line from Gower's ballade in defining "manere" as "good manners, propriety" (s.v. "manere," 4). *MED* also gives "proper conduct, good manners" (s.v. "manere," 5), citing the line from *T&C* quoted in the note above. *DMF* provides no definition equivalent to "proper conduct, good manners," but it gives an abundance of citations for "Juste mesure dans la conduite, le comportement [proper measure in conduct, behavior]," "modération" (I.A.4), a sense also recognized by *AND* (loc.cit.) and by *MED* (loc.cit., 8), citing *CA* 7.2132-33, "Be this ensample a king mai lere / That forto yive is in manere," and 7.4344, " Forthi to love is in manere." "Manere" appears in *MO* 11749-96 as the companion of "Discrecioun," one of the five daughters of "Humilité," where it seems to incorporate both "propriety, good conduct" and "moderation" ("Trop halt ne vole a desmesure, / Auci ne trop en bass descent [it doesn't fly too high in excess, nor does it descend too low]," 11792-93). That combination of moderation as the basis of good conduct appears to work well in this line too as well as in Pandarus' description of Criseyde. See also **49**.13.

4 *my noble lady*. By itself, the address to "ma noble dame" may or may not refer to her social rank, but conjoined with "a vostre haltesse" in line 12, the reference to her rank appears clear. See the note to **2**.25.

5 *pierced my ear*. Though both *AND* and *DMF* (s.v. "percer") list other figurative uses of this verb, neither provides examples either of "piercing the ear" or of "piercing heaven" (as in **18**.15-16), but see *MED* s.v. "pērcen," 5(a), "To get through to (heaven), achieve communication with, have an effect in; **~ eres**, engage the attention (of sb., of God)," citing, among other later examples, *CA* 4.3029-30, "Fulofte hir wordes sche reherceth, / Er sche his slepi Eres perceth." "Pierce the ear" occurs again in **44**.10 and (in a different context) in **18**.5-6. The evidence suggests that this is an English expression that Gower has adopted into French.

5-6 *imprinted within my heart*. Machaut uses the same expression, with "empreint(e)" rather than "impresse," in *Lou.* **172**.4, **191**.2, **218**.11. Amans offers a gloomy variation in *CA* 1.553-58: "Min herte is growen into Ston, / So that my lady therupon / Hath such a priente of love grave, / That I can noght miselve save."

7 The final line of the envoy (line 25) illustrates Gower's occasional Latinate habit, in both his English and his French, of moving an adverbial expression or an object (here, "vostre presence") to a position before the conjunction or pronoun with which the clause would ordinarily begin ("au fin qe"). For other examples see **7**.6, **7**.8, **9**.9, **9**.17, *et al.*, and Macaulay's notes to **20**.2, *CA* Prol. 155, and *MO* 415. In the stanzas, where the refrain includes the preceding half line, it appears that "vostre presence" serves first of all as the object of "desire," but if it is so exclusively, then "remire" is left without an object. One might solve the problem by emending "jeo" to "jel" or "jeol" (a contraction of *je(o)+ le*; see *AND* s.v. "jo"), but Gower is not known to have used the contraction elsewhere, and it would be both unnecessary and ungrammatical in line 25. Macaulay, taking the entire clause of the final line of the stanza as a quasi-object for "desire," suggests "'wherefore mine eye hath desire, to the end that I may see again your presence,' i.e. desire to see, &c." This is a brave solution, and some bravery is obviously called for. I suggest instead taking "vostre presence" as the object of both verbs, in what is admittedly a very unusual example of zeugma: "my eye desires your presence, so that I might see your presence."

see. The *re-* in "remire" (here, in **1**.26, and **13**.8) does not indicate repeated action ("see you again") any more than the *re-* in Modern French "regarder." See *AND* s.v. "remirer"; *DMF* s.v. "remirer." For contrast, cf. "revoie" in **8**.R.

see you in person. For "see your presence" (following Yeager), here and in **15**.7. On the use of "vostre presence" to mean "your person" or simply "you," see **7**.24 and the note to **26**.17.

9 *nobility*. Like "noble" (see the note to line 4, above), "noblesce" might refer either to rank or to a quality of character. (See *DMF* s.v. "noblesse"; *AND* s.v. "noblesce"; *MED* s.v "nōbles(se."). Here, in conjunction with "valour" in line 10, it appears to be the latter, though "a vostre haltesse" in line 12 does suggest that the poem is addressed to a person of high rank, and Gower uses "noblesce" as an honorific in **28**.15, **39**.26, **44**.24, and perhaps in **33**.18 as well. See the notes to these lines.

12 *your highness.* This is the only occurrence of "haltesse" in *50B*, and in line 22 occurs the only instance of "princesse." The latter is a common appellation in the lyrics, but as noted below, it does not necessarily indicate a lady's actual rank. With "vostre haltesse," on the other hand, Gower may well imagine his persona addressing a member of the highest aristocracy. *AND* (s.v."haltesce," 5 and under the phrase "vostre haltesce") provides citations indicating such a use of the honorific before and during Gower's time, though the first citation for such a use in *DMF* (s.v. "hautesse," B.3) dates from 1450. See also *MED* s.v. "heighnes(se," 2(c), for which the earliest citation of the honorific "thyn Hynesse" is 1406.

19 On the heart traveling, see the note to **3**.9-10.

20 *good love*. This is the first instance of the expression "bon amour" in *50B*. Here and in **25**.25, it is difficult to say that it means any more than "true love," though in **31**.R and in the three uses in **49**, it takes on greater moral weight, something more like "virtuous love." The range of the fifteen or so uses of "bon amour" in *MO* is equally broad, from "true friendship" (3510, the appearance assumed by Falssemblant) to the love that sustains a marriage (17249) to Mary's love for God (27865-76). Cf. the notes on "droit amour" in **4**[1].3 and "fin amour" in **7**.1.

22 *the flower.* See the note to **4**[1].22.

princess. This is the only reference to a "princesse" in *50B*, but Gower is not the only poet of his time so to designate the lady who is the subject or the addressee of a lyric. Granson refers numerous times to his "princesse," resulting in a long discussion among modern critics of which real princess might have served as his muse (see Granson, *Poems*, pp. 34-36). Normand R. Cartier, "Oton de Grandson et sa princesse," *Romania* 85 (1964), 1-16 traces the use of the epithet, in Granson and the several other poets that he cites, to the common appeal to the "Prince" in the envoy of many fourteenth-century poems and to the motif of the lover's feudal service to his lady, with an even longer history, arguing that the label may not indicate the lady's real social rank at all. In Gower's poem, the title is consistent with the references to "ma noble dame" and "vostre haltesse" in lines 4 and 12, but as "la princesse de tout honour," her realm, on the basis of this line at least, is evidently more abstract than real. Cf. Deschamps' "Noble dame, princesse de vertu" (**1577**.25), also cited above in the note to **2**.25.

7

De fin amour c'est le droit et nature°
Qe tant come pluis le corps soit eslongée,
Tant plus remaint le coer p*re*s a toute hure
Tanqu'il verra ceo qu'il ad desirée.
Pou[r]ceo° sachetz, ma t*re*sbelle honourée,
De vo paiis qe jeo desire l'estre
Come cil qui tout vo chivaler voet estre.

De la fonteine ensi come l'eaue pure
Tressalt et buile et court aval le prée,
Ensi le coer de moi, jeo vous assure,
Pour v*ost*re amour demeine sa pensée,
Et c'est toutdits sanz repos travailée,
De vo paiis qe° jeo desire l'estre
Come cil qui tout vo chivaler voet estre.

Sicome l'ivern despuile la verdure
Du beal Jardin tanq*ue* aut*re*sfoitz Estée
L'ait revestu, ensi de sa mesure
Mo*u*n coer languist, mais il s'est esp*er*ée
Q'encore a vous vendrai joious et lée,
De vo paiis qe jeo desire l'estre
Come cil qui tout vo chivaler voet estre.

Sur toutes belles la plus belle née,
Plus ne voldrai le Paradis terrestre
Qe° jeo n'ai plus v*ost*re presence amée,
Come cil qui tout vo chivaler voet estre.

1 *Cross drawn in margin, but no obvious correction.*
5 *MS* Pouceo
13 *Mac* que
24 *Mac* que

7

It is the law and nature of *fin amour*°
°that the further that the body is removed,
the closer remains the heart at all times
until it° sees what it has desired.
Know, therefore, my beautiful honored° lady,
that I desire to dwell in your country°
as he who° wishes fully to be your knight.

°Just as the pure water of the fountain
leaps and bubbles and rushes down the meadow,
just so my heart, I assure you,
carries on its thought because of your love,°
and it is constantly troubled° without respite,
for I desire to dwell in your country
as he who wishes fully to be your knight.

Just as the winter strips° the greenery
from the beautiful garden until summer once again
reclothes it, just so in its own way°
my heart languishes; but it has set its hope°
that I will come to you again, joyous and happy,
for I desire to dwell in your country
as he who wishes fully to be your knight.

Above all fair women the most beautiful born, °
°I would not wish for the terrestrial paradise so much
that I have not wished for your beloved person more,
as he who wishes fully to be your knight.

Like its immediate predecessor, ballade **7** uses a refrain of more than a single line except in the envoy, where it is prevented by the rhyme scheme. Here, not only is the refrain emphasized by the *rime riche* on "estre," but it constitutes nearly a separate trope. The poem itself consists of four different motifs, three of which have to do with the heart but which are not otherwise related, and only the last of which, in the envoy, has any real relation to the wish expressed in the refrain. One doesn't usually find such a profusion of imagery in one ballade. It might possibly be taken, like the bubbling fountain of lines 8-9, to represent the turmoil in the persona's feeling; it stands, in any case, in sharp contrast to the artful development of a single image in ballade **8**.

The verbal echoes of ballade **6** are neither numerous nor precise: "languist" (**7**.18), "languis" (**6**.24); "joious" (**7**.19), "joie" (**6**.11); and "vostre presence" (**7**.24, **6**.R). Though not in the same words, the separation of the heart and the desire to see the lady in **7**.1-4 recalls **6**.18-21 (and in fact ballades **1**-**3** as well); and the refrain in **7** recalls the wish to serve the lady in **6**.12-13. The circumstances are different, however: there is no suggestion in **7** that the persona knows the lady only by reputation, and in line 19 he wishes to come to her again. The refrain introduces the wish to be the lady's knight that occurs in *50B* only here and in ballade **8**.

1 *fin amour*. Gower uses this expression six times in *50B*. In **21**.5 and **24**.6, it appears to mean nothing other than "pure love," that is, love that is both unqualified and unsullied. That is the sense in which it appears in Machaut (e.g. in *Lou*. **7**.2, **74**.4, **91**.20, **114**.5, **179**.2, and **266**.22), and also the sense in which Gower uses it, more than a dozen times, in *MO*, in contexts as varied as the love of God (10662), love of one's neighbor (13576), married love (17248), and Mary's love for her son (28968). Here, however, and in **37**.2, **47**.2, and **47**.15, "fin amour" seems to suggest a separate species of love, one with its own rules of conduct, more like, as Fisher suggested (pp. 76-77) , that espoused by the Provençal poets of *fin'amors* than like the love described by Gower's closer contemporaries.

2-4 Though not elsewhere cited as a "law," it is common enough for the lyricists of the 14th century to claim that they leave their hearts with their ladies when they themselves cannot be present. In Machaut, see, for example, *Lou*. **14**.19-21, **15**.1-2, **17**.1-4, **21**.9-10, **123**.2, **165**.6-10, **166**.7, **171**, **216**.1-9, **236**.1-4, **266**.19-20; and in Granson, **24**.1-2, **72**.25-28, **74.**25-26, 67-68, 82, 110; *et al*. Gower uses the motif again in **11**.2 and **15**.R, and in **25**.7 the persona sends his heart, a motif that Gower develops more fully in ballades **3**, **6**, and **9**.

4 This passage makes a bit more sense if the "il" refers to the body in line 2 rather than to the heart in line 3. In *Lou*. **165**, Machaut too expresses his hope to see his lady again as he leaves his heart behind.

5 *honored***. "**Honorée" is a commonly applied to the lady in Machaut: see *Lou*. **55**.15, **68**.6, **73**.13, *et al*. See also Deschamps **433**.15, **768**.5; Froissart, Lay **5**.166, Vir. **6**.26, *Esp.Am.* 1256; *et al.*

6 *to dwell in your country*. More precisely, "the dwelling of your country." (Macaulay, 1:463: "I desire your country as my dwelling place." Yeager: "for my home.") For "l'estre" see *AND* s.v. "estre[2]," 2. "lodging place"; *DMF* s.v. "être[3]," B. "Demeure, habitation, maison [dwelling, habitation, home]." For the word order see the note to **6**.6-7.

7 *as he who*. "Com cil qui" might introduce a simile ("like one who"), as in **24**.17, or it might introduce a descriptive clause ("as he who"), as it does in **11**.16, **26**.2, and **36**.12, in all three cases modifying the first person subject. Gower does not distinguish between the two different functions as he might have by means of the person of the verb. In **11**.16 he uses a first-person verb ("sui"), excluding the possibility of a simile, but in **26**.2 and **36**.12 he uses a third-person verb ("est"), as he does here, though in all three cases the clause is equally clearly descriptive. For other examples of the same construction see Macaulay's note to MO 27942.
your knight. Criseyde takes Troilus as her knight in *T&C* 3.176, 982 and Palamon becomes Emelye's knight in KnT 3077, but it is harder to find references to the practice among 14th-century lyrics. There is none in Machaut or Granson, and only one in *100B* (**61**.15), in a poem in which it is a knight who is being addressed.

8-12 I don't know of any model for the use of a bubbling fountain as a simile for one's troubled thoughts.

11 *your love*. The "vostre" in "vostre amour" might be either subjective (that is, the "you" is the subject of the implied underlying sentence, "you love me") as in **28**.18 and **31**.13, or objective (the "you" is

the object: "I love you"), as in **9**.15, **25**.27, and **38**.10. (Less certain are **39**.15 and **46**.3.) Here the context leans towards the objective: "because of my love for you."

12 *troubled*. "To trouble, to torment, to torture" are common meanings for "travailler" in the French of Gower's time (see *AND* s.v. "travailler," 1, 5; *DMF* s.v. "travailler," A.1, 2), evidently less common for the cognate verb in Middle English (*MED* s.v. "travailen," 4.b.), but see *CA* 4.377, "As he whom love schal travaile," and 5.395-96, "And evere his hunger after more / Travaileth him aliche sore."

15 *strips*. "Despouiller" is commonly used, among other senses, to mean "to undress," setting up the metaphor continued in line 17 with "revestu." See *DMV* s.v. "despouiller," A.1.a; *AND* s.v. "depoiller," 1.

17 *in its own way*. "Mesure," in both Middle French and Middle English, ordinarily refers either to actual measurement (as in **34**.3) or by extension, to moderation (as in **13**.5), neither of which works well either here or in **12**.18, "n'acorde pas, mas dame, a vo mesure." Gower uses "a/en sa mesure" at least two dozen times in *MO*. *DMF* does not recognize the phrase, though for "mesure" it does offer (s.v. "mesure," B.4) "Disposition, arrangement, façon [disposition, arrangement, manner or fashion]." *AND* lists the phrase (s.v. "mesure[1]") and translates it "to the best of one's abilities," citing *MO* 6676 and 10710. There are passages in *MO* which evidently require a more general sense, however; e.g. 23883, which speaks of knights who were "de simplesce en sa mesure [of simplicity in nature or character]." That seems to be the sense in **12**.18 as well: "does not accord, my lady, with your character." In this line, "according to its nature" might work; I translate "in its own way" better to sustain the comparison to the changing seasons in the garden.

18 *has set its hope*. The reflexive use of "esperer" is quite unusual. It is not attested in *DMF* and there are no other instances in Gower, but *AND* (s.v. "esperer") offers "**(s') esperer de, en,** to place one's hope, trust, in," with two citations, one from the 13th century and one from the 14th.

22 Another common formula from the lyrics. Cf. (just for examples) Granson **36**.R, "tresbelle et bonne née"; **46**.1, "des belles la plus belle"; and **74**.83, "la plus belle née."

23-24 In his notes to *VC* 1.135 and to this line, Macaulay notes that this is a common type of expression for Gower in all three of his languages, citing four other passages in *VC* 1 plus *CA* 1.718-21, 1259-63, and 1319-22, MO 18589, and *50B* **18**.8-9, and in his note to the latter he also cites **30**.8-13. As he observes, "Usually the 'plus [more]' of the second clause answers to some such word as 'tiel [so, such]' in the first." The "tiel" is missing here; there is another "plus" instead, as in *CA* 1.1259-63, where one also finds a comparative ("betre"). The result is not strictly logical, and it is difficult to get both instances of "plus" into the translation. In the translation offered here, I have replaced the first "plus" by "so much." One alternative is simply to omit the second "plus": "I would not wish for the terrestrial paradise more than I have wished for your beloved person."

But that is not the only issue in these lines. For the translation of "vostre presence" as "your person" or simply as "you," see the note to **26**.1. In line 24, I have taken "amée" as an adjective (see *AND* s.v. "amer[1]," pp. as a.; *DMF* s.v. "aimer," IV.A), though I can find no precise parallel elsewhere, and I have supplied "wished" by implication from the preceding line, though again such a construction would be rather unusual for Gower. If one takes "ai amée" as the verb in this line instead, one gets "I would not wish for the terrestrial paradise so much that I have not loved you more" or "I would not wish for the terrestrial paradise more than I have loved you."

In sum, the sentiment is much clearer in this pair of lines than is the grammar.

8

D'estable coer, qui nullement se mue,
S'en ist ades et vole le penser
Assetz plus tost qe falcon de sa mue.
Ses Eles sont souhaid et desirer.
En un moment il passera la mer
A vous, ma dame, u tient la droite voie
En lieu de moi, tanq*ue* jeo vous revoie.

Si mon penser saveroit a sa venue
A vous, ma doulce dame, reconter
Ma volenté, et a sa revenue
V*ost*re plaisir a moi auci conter,
En tout le mond n'eust si bon° Messager,
Car Centmillfoitz le jour jeo luy envoie
A v*ost*re court, tanq*ue* jeo vous revoie.

Mais combien qu'il ne p*ar*le, il vous salue
Dep*ar* celui q'est tout le v*ost*re entier,
Q'a vous servir j'ai fait ma retenue
Come v*ost*re amant et v*ost*re Chivaler.
Le pensement qe j'ai de vous plener,
C'est soulement qe mon las coer convoie
En bon espoir tanq*ue* jeo vous revoie.

Ceste balade a vous fait envoier°
Mon coer, mon corps, ma sovereine joie.
Tenetz certein qe jeo vous vuill amer
En bon espoir, tanq*ue* jeo vous revoie.

12 *MS* sibon
22 *Cross drawn in margin, but no obvious correction.*

Gower, John. *Cinkante Balades*. Edited and translated by Peter Nicholson, Feb. 2021, *John Gower Society*, www.JohnGower.org.

8

°From a constant heart, which in no way changes,
constantly issues forth and flies the thought
much more quickly than a falcon from its mew.
Its wings are Wish and Desire.
In a single moment it will cross the sea
to you, my lady, to whom° it takes the direct route
in place of me, until I see you again.

If my thought knew how, upon its arrival,
to tell you, my sweet lady,
about my wish, and upon its return
to relate to me your pleasure as well,
in all the world there would not be so good a messenger,
for a hundred thousand times a day I send it
to your court, until I see you again.

But though it does not speak, it salutes you
on the part of him who is entirely yours,
for I have made my commitment° to serve you
as your lover and your knight.°
The abundant° thought that I have of you
is all that guides° my weary heart
in good hope, until I see you again.

My heart, my body, my sovereign joy,°
have caused this ballade to be sent to you.
Hold certain that I wish to love you
in good hope, until I see you again.

Ballade **8** offers one of the best examples of a single sustained metaphor in *50B*. In ballades **3**, **6**, and **9** it is the heart that travels; here it is the thought that proceeds from the heart ("flying" to the lady, as in **34**.25-26). The success of the poem rests not only on the apparent ease with which Gower develops the motif over three stanzas, as he explores what his "messenger" can and cannot do, but also in the briefly stated refrain, starting as only half a line, evolving into a full line only in the last stanza and the envoy; in the reassuring rather than demanding tone with which Gower establishes the existence of a mutual relationship; and in the envoy, as the voyaging thought is replaced by the ballade which the persona's heart sends to his lady.

Ballade **8** echoes imagery from both **6** and **7**: the "penser" that is sent in **8**.2 recalls that of **6**.15; its wings in **8**.4 recall **6**.18 and **7**.4; the brief refrain, "tanque jeo vous revoie," repeats what

is said in more words in **6**.R; "reconter" (**8**.9) echoes "conter" (**6**.19); and the pledge to be the lady's knight repeats the wish expressed in **7.**R. The "estable coer" of line 1, on the other hand, may express not only the persona's constancy but also a contrast to the perpetually troubled heart of **7**.8-12, just as the single sustained metaphor replaces the scattered imagery of that ballade. The closest affinity to **8**, however, may be found in **3**, which also sends a "messenger," which also in the meantime derives comfort from hope, and which also, in the refrain, transforms the "message" into the ballade itself.

1-2 There is another example of the heart sending forth its thoughts to the lady in Mudge **74**.14-16: "C'est mon miroir et par lui vous envoie / Les doulx pensers que le mien cuer convoie / Jusques à vous [It (the portrait of the lady) is my mirror, and by means of it, I send you the sweet thoughts that my heart conveys to you]." I don't know of any other good model for Gower's trope. Here, in his references to the "coer pensant [pensive heart]" in **3**.9 and **26**.20, and in **7**.10-11 and **39**.17-19, Gower evidently follows Aristotle in thinking of the heart as the seat of thought, at least when it comes to thinking about one's lady.

6 *to whom*. On the personal use of "u" see the note to **4**[1].22.

17 *commitment*. From Yeager. For "retenue," Macaulay (I:463) offers "'engagement' to follow or serve," no doubt drawing from Godefroy, s.v. "retenue," who cites Deschamps, **493**.19. There, as in Granson **78**.1847, however, the "retenue" is the "Fait de prendre qqn à son service"[act of taking someone into one's service]" (*DMF* s.v. "retenue," C.2.c), not the act of entering into service to someone else. Gower uses the term for the service itself in **32**.20 ("Fait d'être au service de qqn [fact of being in service to someone]" (*DMF*, loc cit.; see also *MED* s.v "retenūe," 2.(a)), and his two uses of the related verb, in **16**.20 and **39**.10, to refer to those who are "retained." In *MO* we find similar uses of the verb and use of the noun to refer to the body of retainers (e.g. in 2965, 6314, *et al.*; *AND* s.v. "retenue"; *DMF*, loc.cit., C.2.a; *MED*, loc.cit., 1.(a)). None of these, however, gives any help with the phrase "faire sa retenue," here and in **15**.14. The closest analogy is offered by *Tr* **3**.20-21, with reference to marriage: "C'est en amour trop belle retenue / Selonc la loi de seinte eglise due {It is in love a very beautiful *retenue* / according to the law of holy church]." There "retenue" appears to refer to a mutual commitment; in the two lines in question in *50B* it appears to refer to the commitment made by the persona to the lady.

18 *knight*. See the note to **7**.R.

19 While "plener" can mean "full, complete" (as in **31**.25; *AND* s.v. "plener," 1, 2; *DMF* s.v. "plenier," A), it does not suggest "fully" in the sense of "exclusively." Here it means instead "copious" or "great" (*AND*, loc.cit., 5; *DMF*, loc.cit., B).

20 *guides*. The most common senses of "convoier" fall generally under either "accompany" or "deliver" (whence Modern English "convey"): see *AND* s.v. "conveer," *DMF* s.v. "convoyer." But *DMF* also gives "conduire [conduct, lead]' (loc.cit., A.1) and "Au fig. *convoyer qqc.*'entraîner, amener qqc.' [Figuratively . . . 'to lead, bring something']" (loc.cit, B.2), both with citations from the 14th century. *MED* s.v. "cŏnveien," 2.(a) gives "To guide, lead, or take (sb. to a place, etc.); direct the course of (a ship), steer (to a place)," all in a physical sense, with its first citation from *CA* 8.23. In *MO*, however, the most common use of this verb is to "lead" or "guide" in a moral sense, e.g. in 12898 and 15314, in both of which it is set in opposition to "forsvoier [to go or lead astray)," and that seems very much to be the sense here. Cf. **9**.14 and the note.

22 "My sovereign joy" might or might not be a vocative here. Gower uses the phrase elsewhere without vocative sense in **9**.8 and 44 (the very next poem), **33**.11, and *Tr* **18**.5, as does Froissart, Lay **9**.150; and he uses "souveraine" to refer to the lady in **10**.17, **14**.1, **24**.26, and **39**.1, as in, among

many other examples, *T&C* 4.316. The whole phrase occurs as a vocative in Granson **28**.6, "ma belle et souveraine joye," and Froissart, Rond. **88**.1, "ma joie souverainne."

9

Trop tart a ceo qe jeo desire et proie
Vient ma fortune au point, il m'est avis,
Mais nepourq*a*nt mon coer toutdis se ploie,
P*ar*fit, verai, loial, entalentis
De vous veoir, qui sui tout vos amis
Si t*re*sentier qe dire ne porroie,
Q'ap*re*s˚ dieu et les saintz de Paradis,
En vous remaint ma sov*er*eine Joie.

De mes deux oels ainçois qe jeo vous voie,
Millfoitz le jour mon coer y est tramis
En lieu de moi d'aler la droite voie
Pour visiter et vous et vo paiis,
Et tanqu'il s'est en vo presence mis,
Desir ades l'encoste˚ et le convoie,
Com cil q'est tant de v*ost*re amour suspris
Qe nullement se poet partir en voie.

Descov*er*ir a vous si jeo me doie,
En vous amer sui tielement ravys
Q'au plussovent mon sentement forsvoie.
Ne sai si chald ou froid, ou mors ou vifs,
Ou halt ou bass, ou c*er*tains ou faillis,
Ou tempre ou tard, ou p*re*s ou loings jeo soie.
Mais en pensant je sui tant esbaubis
Q'il m'est avis sicom jeo songeroie.

Pour vous, ma dame, en peine m'esbanoie,
Jeo ris en plour et en santé languis,
Jeue en tristour et en seurté m'esfroie,
Ars en gelée et en chalour fremis.
D'amer puissant, d'amour pov*er*e et mendis,
Jeo sui tout v*ost*re, et si vous fuissetz moie,
En tout le mond n'eust uns si rejoïs
De ses amours sicom jeo lors serroie.

O t*re*sgentile dame, simple et coie,
Des g*ra*ces et des vertus replenis,

Gower, John. *Cinkante Balades*. Edited and translated by Peter Nicholson, Feb. 2021, *John Gower Society*, www.JohnGower.org.

9

Too late does my fortune arrive
at what I desire and pray for, it seems to me,
but nonetheless my heart constantly submits,°
undivided,° true, loyal, desirous
to see you—I who am fully your *ami*°
so completely that I could not say,
for after God° and the saints in paradise,
in you remains my sovereign joy.

Before I see you with my two eyes,
a thousand times a day my heart is sent
in place of me to take the direct route
to visit both you and your country,
and until it has set itself in your presence,
Desire constantly accompanies it and escorts° it,
°as one who is so captured by your love
that by no means is it able to get away.

°If I must disclose myself to you,
in loving you I am so fully enraptured
that most of the time my judgment° goes astray.
I don't know if I'm hot or cold, or dead or alive,
or high or low, or constant or disloyal,°
or early or late, or near or far.
But while thinking I am so dazed°
that it seems to me as if I am dreaming.

°For you, my lady, I rejoice in pain,
I laugh in tears, and in good health I languish,
I play in sadness, and in safety I take fright,
I burn in frost, and in heat I shiver.°
Strong and capable of loving, poor and beggarly in love,°
I am completely yours, and if you were mine,
in all the world there would not be anyone as joyful
because of his love as I would be then.

Oh most gentle lady, simple and demure,°
full of grace and virtue

Lessetz venir Merci, jeo vous supploie,
Et demorir tanqu'il m'av*er*a guaris,
Car sanz vous vivre ne suis poestis.°
Tout sont en vous li bien qe jeo voldroie.
En v*ost*re aguard ma fortune est assis.
Ceo qe vous plest, de bon grée jeo l'otroie.

La flour des flours plusbelle au droit devis,
Ceste compleignte a vous directe envoie.
Croietz moi, dame, ensi com jeo vous dis,
En vous remaint ma sovereine joie.

7 *MS* Qa p*re*s
14 *MS* len coste
37 *MS* poestes. *Emended for rhyme. Adjective "poestis" occurs three times in* MO*, in 1222, 7981, and 15368.*

let Mercy come, I beseech you,
and stay until it has healed me,
for I am not capable° of living without you.
In you are all the good qualities° that I wish for.
My fortune is placed under your control.°
Whatever pleases you, I grant it with good will.

The most beautiful flower of flowers, to perfection,°
this complaint° I send to you directly.
Believe me, lady, just as I say to you,
in you remains my sovereign joy.

The tenth lyric in *50B* is not a ballade at all but a *chanson royale* or *chant royal*, a five-stanza poem with an envoy. (On the form, see Poirion, *Poète et Prince*, pp. 362-66, 369-74.) Though the *chanson royale* was far less popular than either ballade or rondeau, each of the major poets provides examples, which are included in the manuscripts among the poets' works in the other *formes fixes*. The terminology was not always precise: though Deschamps recognizes the *chanson royale* as a five-stanza form in his *Art de Dictier* (*Oeuvres*, 7:281), in the list of rubrics at the beginning of the manuscript of his collected works (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fr. 840), ballades and *chansons royales* are mixed together, and most of the *chansons royales* (e.g. on ff. 103-140v) are headed "Balade." Gower's inclusion of a *chanson royale* among his "Fifty Ballades" is unusual only when measured against an atypically uniform collection such as *100B*, but even there, two of the responses that are attached at the end (numbers **3** and **12**) are in five stanzas. Gower's one example follows Machaut's practice of not using a refrain (Deschamps regularly included one), though he repeats the last line of the first stanza in the last line of the envoy. It is exceptional in employing only two rhymes (*-oie* and *–is*); Machaut's, Deschamps', and Froissart's *chansons royales* all use three, four, or five.

The first two stanzas, the last, and the envoy contain a number of direct echoes of ballades **1**-**3** and **5**-**8**, bringing to a conclusion the web of inter-reference among this first group of poems. The echoes of **4**^{1}, **4**^{2}, and **5** are fewer and seem almost incidental. The most obvious are these: "jeo desire et proie" (**9**.1: **3**.18); "vient ma fortune au point" (**9**.2: **1**.22, **6**.8); "se ploie" (**9**.3: **3**.16); "de vous veoir" (**9**.4: the same wish implied or expressed in **1**.26, **2**.26, **6**.R, **7**.24, and **8.**R); "remaint" (**9**.8: **1.**R); "sovereine joie" (**9**.8: **8**.23); "millfoitz le jour mon coer y est tramis" (**9**.9-10: **3**.9-10, 23, **6**.18-19, **8**.13); "en lieu de moi" (**9**.11: **3**.23, **8**.7); "la droite voie" (**9**.11: **8**.7); "vo paiis" (**9**.12: **7.**R); "vo presence" (**9**.13: **6.**R, **7**.24); "le convoie" (**9**.14: **8**.20); "si vous fuissetz moie" (**9**.30: **3**.5); "simple et coie" (**9**.33: **3**.12;) "fleur des fleurs" (**9**.41: **4**^{1}.22, **6**.22); "compleignte" (**9**.42: **3.**3); "croietz moi, dame, einsi com jeo vous dis" (**9**.43: **2**.7-9, **4**^{1}.12). The last stanza and the envoy bring the poem to a close by reintroducing the theme of Fortune from line 1 and by repeating the final line of the first stanza in the envoy. At the same time, the appeal to Mercy in line 35 is a new theme, not present in **1**-**8**, and it provides the transition to the different emotional world of ballades **10**-**20** that follow.

Stanzas three and four are the outliers, highly conventional in themselves but bearing little relation to the imagery of the rest of the poem, and it is not impossible to believe that they were

an afterthought, added for whatever reason to stretch a three-stanza ballade into a five-stanza *chanson royale*.

3 *submits*. "Se ploier" ordinarily means "to bend, to turn, to sag" (see *DMF* s.v. "plier," II.A; *AND* s.v. "plier," v.refl., 1, 2). *AND* also gives examples of a more figurative use, "be subject to, obedient to," "to bow down to, humble oneself before" but in all cases followed by a prepositional phrase (e.g. "to submit *to* something"), as in **25**.15. "Submits," "yields," "surrenders," "succumbs" all might work here, but the thought still seems incomplete. Alternatively, this might be another example of the use reflected in **3**.16, "my heart strives to see you," with both "se ploie" and "entralentis" (in the next line) completed by "de vous veoir" in line 5, though "de" might not be the preposition that one expects in this context.

4 *undivided*. "Parfait" more often signifies "finished, complete, total" than it does "flawless" in Middle French. See *DMF* s.v. "parfait" and *AND* s.v. "parfit," 3, "undivided, loyal," citing a passage in which the reference, as here, is to the heart. Cf. **26**.15.

5 There is no antecedent for "qui" (which must be first person singular because of "sui") in the preceding clause, and it must be supplied, but the "I" is then left without a predicate, even if (and this is another point of uncertainty) it rather than "mon coer" is meant to be modified by the adjectives in the preceding line. The grammar of this stanza would be considerably simplified if the "qui" were "que" instead: "*For* I am fully your *ami*." The use of "sui" without the subject pronoun is a bit unusual for Gower, but there are two other examples in this poem, in lines 18 and 37. On "*ami*" see the note to **4¹**.7.

7 *after God*. The orthodox Gower raises his head, as in **24**.26, **26**.13, and **31**.14.

14 *escorts*. Both "encoste" and "convoie" can mean "accompany, escort," but "convoie" can also have the sense of "guide" or "lead" (cf. **8**.20 and the note), which may not be inappropriate here. See also **12**.14 (for an unusual reflexive form) and **15**.5.

15-16 The referent of "cil" is not entirely clear (Desire? or the heart?); nor is it clear if this clause is meant to be comparative or descriptive ("like one who" or "as one who"?). If the former, the "it" in line 16 should perhaps be "he." See the note to **7**.7.

17-22 Compare Machaut, *Lou*. **162**.12-16: "Me court seure / Desirs par si grant ardour / Que je n'ay scens ne pooir ne vigour, / Einsois me sens de s'amour si ravis / Que je ne sçay se je sui mors ou vis [Desire overwhelms me with such great ardor that I have neither sense nor power nor strength; instead I feel so enraptured with love that I don't know if I am dead or alive]." Also *Lou*. **162**.R: "Que je ne sçay se je sui mors ou vis [that I don't know if I'm dead or alive]." The persona also experiences loss of sense in *Lou*. **3**.13-15, **142**.12, **151**.2, **176**.13, *et al.*

19 *judgment.* "Sentement" can be "feeling" (*DMF* s.v. "sentement," C.2.), as in Machaut, *Remede* 407-08: "Car qui de sentement ne fait, / Son ouevre et son chant contrefait [for he who does not compose with feeling falsifies his poem and his song]." But there are also contexts, like this one, where "capacity for judgment" is more appropriate, as in the passage in Christine de Pizan's *Chemin de long estude*, 5448-50, cited in *DMF*, loc.cit., C.1: "empeschier Ne doit mie son sentement Par boire ou mengier gloutement [(the prince) should not impair his judgment by drinking or eating with gluttony]."

21 *constant or disloyal*. The implication of "true or false in love" emerges from the juxtaposition of "certein" and "failli." Describing a person's character or behavior, "certein" suggests "steadfast, reliable, trustworthy" (*AND* s.v. "certein," 3), "À qui l'on peut se fier, qui est sûr, digne de confiance [whom one can trust, who is reliable, worthy of confidence]," "fidèle, sincère [faithful, sincere]" (*DMF* s.v. "certain," I.B.1.a, b). Gower uses it again in this sense in **40**.4 with reference to a woman who is *not* faithful. "Failli" in such contexts implies the opposite. *AND* s.v. "faillir," "p.p. as

a.," 3, gives "faithless, disloyal," and *DMF* s.v. "failli" gives "Lâche, perfide, traître [cowardly, deceitful, treacherous]," citing Machaut, *Remede* 2028, with reference to those who are banished from Love's court, and with citations from Machaut, Deschamps, and Chartier for the phrase "coeur failli" where the context is disloyalty in love.

23 *dazed*. "Esbaubis," was evidently uncommon and it may have been restricted to continental use. It receives only one citation in *DMF* s.v. "ébaubi" and no entry at all in *AND* (as noted by Merrilees and Pagan, p. 130). The related verb "abaubir" receives a longer entry in *DMF*, including citations from Froissart, and Gower uses the form "abaubis [confused]" in *MO* 25761, but despite Gower's use, this spelling too gets no entry in *AND*.

25-32 Oxymora of this sort are one of the staples of medieval descriptions on love. See **3**.1-4, **13**.2, 24, and **47**.24, and especially **48**, and the notes to **48**.10 (for line 27), **48**.11 (for line 21), **48**.13 (for line 26), and **48**.16 (for line 22).

28 Cf. Machaut, *Lou*. **147**.6: "Trambler sans froit et sans chalour suer [shiver without cold and sweat without heat]."

29 Cf. Machaut, Bal.Not. **5**.1: "Riches d'amour et mendians d'amie [rich in love and destitute of *amie*]."

33 *simple and demure.* See the note to **3**.12.

37 *capable*. This is an unusual use of "poestis." *DMF* s.v. "poesteif" translates only as "puissant, fort [powerful, strong]." *AND* s.v. "poestif" similarly gives "powerful, mighty," but it also provides three citations under "(ester) poestif de (+ inf.)," which it translates as "(to be) able to." Neither dictionary, however, has any citations of the adjective followed by an infinitive without the "de."

38 *good qualities*. A common use of "biens" in *50B*; see **13**.12, **14**.2, **31**.25, **39**.25, *et al.*

39 *under your control*. "Aguard" most literally means "regard" (cf. Gower's use of the related verb in **22**.27), but especially in legal or administrative contexts it has senses that extend to "consideration," "judgment," "control," or "decision" (as in **25**.20); see *AND* s.v. "agard," *DMF* s.v. "égard." For the phrase "ester a l'agard de," *AND*, loc.cit, offers "to be, remain at the mercy, disposal of," which would also work well in this line.

41 *to perfection*. "A . . . devis" is a common expression in Machaut, especially after a word for beauty. See the citations in *DMF* s.v. "devis," B.3. Gower adapts and amplifies the expression "flour des flours"; see the note to **4**[1].22.

42 *complaint* may refer both to the content of the poem and to the poem itself, as in **43**.26 and possibly in **42**.27 as well. "Complainte" was a common label especially for longer lyric poems in the 14th century. It was not a fixed genre metrically: seven of Machaut's nine "complaintes" are in rhyming couplets, and the other two use different stanza forms. But I don't know of any other instance in which a ballade or *chanson royale* is labeled a "complainte" either in the heading or in the poem itself. On the use of the related verb see the note to **41**.5-6.

10

Mon t*res*douls coer, mon coer avetz souleine.
Jeo n'en puiss autre, si jeo voir dirrai,
Q'en vous, ma dame, est toute grace pleine.
A bone houre est qe jeo vous aqueintai,
Maisqu'il vous pleust qe jeo vous amerai
Au fin qe vo pité vers moi se plie
Q'avoir porrai v*ost*re ameisté complie.

Mais la fortune qui les amantz meine
Au plussovent me met en g*ra*nt esmai,
En si halt lieu qe jeo mo*u*n coer asseine
Qe passe toutz les autres a l'essai,
Q'a mon avis, n'est une qe jeo sai
Pareil a vous, p*ar* quoi mo*u*n coer s'allie
Q'avoir porrai v*ost*re ameisté complie.

S'amour me volt hoster de toute peine
Et faire tant qe jeo m'esjoierai,
Vous estes mesmes celle sov*er*eine
Sanz qui jammais en ese viverai,
Et puis q'ensi mo*u*n coer doné vous ai,
Ne lerrai, dame, qe ne vous supplie
Q'avoir porrai v*ost*re ameisté complie.

A vo bealté, semblable au Mois de Maii
Qant le solail s'espant sur la florie,
Ceste balade escrite envoierai
Q'avoir porrai v*ost*re ameisté complie.

Gower, John. *Cinkante Balades*. Edited and translated by Peter Nicholson, Feb. 2021, *John Gower Society*, www.JohnGower.org.

10

My sweetest heart, you alone have my heart.
I cannot help it,° if I tell the truth,
for in you, my lady, is every grace complete.
It is an auspicious moment° when I met you,
were it to please you° that I love° you,
so that your pity might turn towards me
so that I might have your complete affection.°

°But the fortune that guides lovers
most often puts me in great dismay,
for° I have set my heart° in so high a place
that surpasses all others, when put to the test,
°for in my opinion, there is no other woman that I know
equal to you, because of which my heart binds itself°
so that I might have your complete affection.

If Love wants to remove me from all pain
and cause me to have joy,
you are yourself that sovereign lady
without whom I will never live in ease,
and since I have thus given you my heart,
I will not cease, lady, to beseech you
so that I might have your complete affection.

To your beauty, similar to the month of May°
when the sun spreads out over the fields in bloom,°
I will send this ballade in writing °°
so that I might have your complete affection.

Ballade **10** is the first complete poem in what is in effect a new section of *50B*. Ballades **1**-**3** and **6**-**9** presume a physical separation: they are shaped by the persona's wish merely to see his lady, and the most common image is that of sending forth his heart. In **10**-**20** the separation is emotional in nature: each presents the persona's request for "merci" or "pité" in face of the lady's "durté" or "danger" (or in **13**, his request for "allegance [relief]"). Otherwise they are very diverse, and they do not have the same degree of inter-reference as is found either in **1**-**3**/**6**-**9** or in **4**[1]-**4**[2]-**5** (as will be reflected in the smaller number of notes on interconnections, here and below).

10 is perhaps the most generic among the poems on unrequited love. The ballades that follow all use more interesting imagery, and in all but **15**, the persona wrestles with a paradox

or dilemma in some way. Here, in three stanzas loosely united by the allusion to the heart, the persona expresses his praise of his lady, his devotion to her, and his hope for the "pité" that will cure him of his pain, all in polite but conventional language, without providing very much sense of either the nature or the extent of his suffering or even of the degree of his lady's indifference to him. The address to "mon tresdouls coer" in the first line, moreover, suggests that the whole may not be a complaint at all but a pose and a rather tepid compliment.

2 *I cannot help it.* More precisely, "I cannot [be or do] anything else."

4 *auspicious moment*. Gower uses a similar line as the refrain to **23**. As *DMF* explains (s.v. "heure," II), the implication of the phrase "a bonne heure [at a good hour or time]" was influenced by the proximity to "(h)eur," from Latin "augurium," meaning "luck, good fortune." Machaut frequently cites "eür" as his enemy, often in conjunction with "Fortune," e.g. in *Lou*. **38**.11, **56**.6-7, **113**.1, **164**.4. Drawing the two similar words together, *Lou*. **56** begins, "Helas!, je suis de si male heure nez [alas! I am born at so inauspicious a time]."

5 *were it to please you*. "Maisque" offers a number of possibilities to the translator. When it does not follow a negative (as in **17**.27, **40**.7, *Tr* **14**.10), where it means simply "but" or "but that," there is no single good translation. For "mes que," conjunction, *AND* (s.v. "mes[4]") offers "even if," "except that," "provided that," and "as soon as." "Provided that" (or "as long as," as the expression of a condition) is the most common use in *MO* (e.g. at 5387, 5408, *et al*), and that appears to be the sense too in **11**.8, **23**.10, and perhaps **43**.13, in all of which "maisque" (or "mais que") is little more than an alternative expression for "if." A slightly different use occurs in **38**.8. In **16**.28 and in *MO* 29878, however, in both of which the verb that follows is "to please," a wish seems to be implied as much as a condition, and the same appears to be true here, though the context is somewhat different. "Provided that" might suggest that the speaker would be just as satisfied with the alternative were the condition not met. The imperfect subjunctive "were," on the other hand, seems to capture both the qualification to the preceding statement and the wish. I borrow it here from Yeager's translation of **11**.8.

amerai. On the use of what appears to be a future tense where we might expect a subjunctive see the note in the Introduction, pp. 21-22.

7 *affection*. "Ameisté," in this context, apparently means the condition of being one's *ami* or *amie*. See the note to **4[1]**.7. *AND* gives three citations supporting such a use from the 12th and 13th centuries (s.v. "amisté," 2); the relevant citations in *DMF* (s.v. "amitié," B), on the other hand, are all from the late 14th century or after, and it is not a common word in 14th century French lyrics. Machaut uses it only twice that I know of, in *Lou*. **186**.20 and Lai **4**.48; it does not appear in either *100B* or in Granson. Gower uses it again in this sense in **33**.9, **40**.21, **44**.6, and **44**.16, and in *MO* 17516, cited above in the commentary to **4[1]**.

8-14 The compliment to the lady is more evident than the logic in this stanza, which seems to associate the persona's dismay with the qualities that he most admires in her.

10 On the word order see the note to **6**.6-7.

for. This might instead be "that," following "en si halt lieu [in so high a place]" in line 10.

set my heart. Macaulay, in his note to **39**.9 (1:468), notes that Gower uses the verb "assener" in a different sense in each of its three appearances in *50B* (the third is at **14**.17), each of which must therefore be inferred from context. For this line he gives "I direct (the affections of) my heart," a plausible solution supported by one of the eight uses of the verb in *MO*, in lines 15748-49: 'D'almoisne donne ton denier, / U meulx le quidez assener [give your alms wherever you think best to direct them]." There is no precise analogy for such a use in either *DMF* or *AND*, however. *DMF* s.v. "assener," I.A.1.a offers "diriger, guider qqn; conduire qqn (qq. part, vers qqn) [to direct, to

guide someone; to lead someone (somewhere, towards someone)],"and under I.A.1.b, "placer, installer qqn qq. part [to place someone somewhere]," but in all the citations the direct objects are people, not things, and in virtually all, an actual physical action is involved. Under I.C.2, "régler, diriger qqc. [to control, direct something]," the single citation (from Froissart) is about directing one's path. Machaut uses the verb several times (e.g. in *Lou*. **8**.9, Comp. **6**.165), usually in the past participle, and in the sense of "provided for" (*DMF*, loc.cit., I.A.4), which doesn't work here. The translation I offer is based, like Macaulay's, on context, including the references to the lady possessing the persona's heart in lines 1 and 19.

12-13 This might be "there is no woman whom I know to be equal to you" or "there is no woman with whom I am acquainted who is equal to you," not that it makes any difference to the sentiment being expressed. "Savoir [to know]" could be used in Middle French in contexts in which "connaître [to be acquainted with]" would be required in Modern French. See *DMF* s.v. "savoir," I.B.1.a.

13 *binds itself.* From Macaulay (1:463), who adds, in parentheses, "(to you)." As he suggests, one expects "s'allie" to be followed by a prepositional phrase, as in Christine de Pizan, *100BD*, **88**.12-13, "on m'a bien dit qu'il [vo cuer] s'alie / A un autre [I have been told that your heart has become attached to another]," cited in *DMF* s.v. "allier," I.B.1.a; but see I.B.3 for a small number of citations in which the verb stands alone.

22 It is the lady's generosity that reminds the persona of May in **23**.22-23. The comparison to the month of May occurs frequently in Chaucer, with reference both to women (KnT *CT* I.1037, MerT IV.1748, MkT VII.2120, *LGW* 613) and to men (GP I.92, SqT V.281, FranT V.927-28, *T&C* 5.844). As commonplace as it might seem, I cannot recall seeing any similar passages in earlier lyrics.

23 *fields in bloom*. From *AND* s.v. "flurir," p.p. as s., 1, citing this line.

11

Mes sens foreins se pourront bien movoir,
Mais li coers maint en un soul point toutdis,
Et c'est, ma dame, en vous, pour dire voir,
A qui jeo vuill servir en faitz et ditz,
Car pour sercher le monde, a mo*u*n avis,
Vous estes la plusbelle et graciouse,
Si vous fuissetz un poi plusamerouse.

Soubtz ciel n'est uns, maisqu'il vous poet veoir,
Qu'il ne serroit tantost d'amer suspris,
Q'en la bealté qe dieus t'ad fait avoir
Sont les vertus si pleinement compris
Qe riens y falt, dont l'en doit doner pris
A vous, ma doulce dame gloriouse,
Si vous fuissetz un poi plusamerouse.

Jeo˚ sui del tout, ma dame, en vo pooir,
Come cil qui sui par droit amour soubgis
De noet et jour pour faire vo voloir,
Et dieus le sciet qe ceo n'est pas envis,
P*ar* quoi jeo quier˚ vos g*ra*ces et mercis,
Car p*ar* reson vous me serretz pitouse,
Si vous fuissetz un poi plusamerouse.

A vous, ma dame, envoie cest escris,
Qe trop p*er*estes belle et dangerouse.
Meilour de vous om sciet en null paiis,
Si vous fuissetz un poi plusamerouse.

15 *MS* lieo
19 *Mac* quiers

Gower, John. *Cinkante Balades*. Edited and translated by Peter Nicholson, Feb. 2021, *John Gower Society*, www.JohnGower.org.

11

°My outward senses could° well move about,
°but the heart always remains in just one place,
and that is with you, my lady, to tell the truth,
whom I wish to serve in deeds and words,°
for searching throughout the world,° in my opinion,
you are the most beautiful and gracious,
if only you were a little bit more loving.

°Under heaven there is no one, were he to see you,°
who would not be captured at once by love,
°for within the beauty that God made you possess
are the virtues so fully contained
°that nothing lacks, for which one should give praise
to you, my sweet glorious lady,
if only you were a little bit more loving.

I am completely, my lady, in your power,
as he who is° held subject by true love
by night and day in order to do your wish,
and God knows that this is not begrudgingly,
for which I seek your grace and mercy,
for according to reason,° you would take pity on me,
if only you were a little bit more loving.

My lady, I send this writing to you
who° seem very beautiful and distant.°
Nowhere does anyone know one better than you,
if only you were a little bit more loving.

In **11**, the refrain changes everything. Without the final line in each stanza (try reading it that way), this ballade offers routine, almost parodic flattery of the lady together with a formulaic request for her "grace and mercy," as in **10**, but without either the tone of complaint (**10**.9) or that of begging (**10**.20). Instead, three times the refrain breaks in with unanticipated qualification of that praise, and once (in stanza 3) it serves as a final deflation of the persona's hopes. Addressed as it is to the lady herself, but placed in an "if" clause, it captures at once his fear of displeasing her, his impatience and frustration, and his recognition that she isn't likely to change. In the cautious, understated way in which it expresses his real wish, moreover, it constitutes in effect a dismissal of the hyperbole of the rest of the poem. Gower unexpectedly

breaks free of inherited conventions here, and he creates a new dramatic pose out of the old language.

His complaint, in itself, is not unprecedented. In Machaut's *Vergier*, the narrator's only qualification in his praise of the lady that he loves is that she is "vers moy trop dure [too harsh towards me]" (106); and Granson has a ballade (**38**) in which the refrain, "Car trop par est son cuer plein de reffus [because her heart is much too full of scorn]," also serves to qualify the praise of the lady in all of the rest of the poem. In Machaut, *Lou*. **117**.32, the persona claims of his lady that "Riens n'i faut fors merci seulement [nothing lacks in her but *merci* alone]"; and in Froissart's "Joli Mois de Mai," we similarly find, "Il ne li faut fors que pité [nothing lacks in her but pity]" (95), a formula that Gower echoes in lines 12-14. These all have less dramatic effect than Gower's poem since they speak about the lady rather than to her. More like Gower's dramatically is a poem in the Pennsylvania manuscript (Mudge **90**) that is addressed to the lady and in which the stanzas of even more exuberant praise conclude with the refrain, "Mais qu'il vous plaise à moy amer [provided that it please you (or would it please you) to love me]." But where Granson's persona expresses a condition to his praise that serves almost as a demand, Gower's more poignantly offers an expression of regret for what he wishes for but knows that he cannot have.

1-2 This somewhat unusual way of differentiating between the physical body and the heart is illuminated by *MO* 11815-20, which explains the two "delights" that God provided in creating humans with two natures:

> L'un est au corps tout proprement
> Qe les cynk sens forainement
> Luy font avoir, mais pour cela
> Qe l'autre a l'esperit appent,
> Ce vient d'asses plus noblement
> Dedeins le cuer, u l'alme esta.

("One [delight] belongs to the body, which the five senses provide to it externally, but the other belongs to the spirit. It comes rather more nobly within the heart, where the soul resides.")

See also the references to the "sens foreins [outward senses]" in *MO* 10565 and 16585-96. Here too the senses are linked "externally" to the physical and corporeal (that which can move about) as opposed to the internal, the realm of the heart, the seat of the soul or (in this poem) of the emotions. *AND*, s.v. "forein" provides one 13th-century citation for "sens foreins" meaning "physical senses." *DMF*, s.v. "forain," A.2, has several citations for "Externe (p. rapport au corps) [external (with relation to the body)]," "Externe, purement physique [external, purely physical]," but none with specific reference to the senses.

1 *could*. On the use of what appears to be a future tense form for the conditional see the note in the Introduction, pp. 21-22.

2-3 On the motif of leaving the heart behind see the note to **7**.2-4.

4 *deeds and words.* Proverbial: Hassell F16, Whiting W642. The order is reversed in the two languages. Machaut was particularly fond of the expression (see *Lou*. **24**.3, **47**.6, **57**.3, **88**.R, *et al.*), but examples among other writers, in both languages, are far too numerous to count. Cf. **26**.13 and (for contrast) **40**.3-4.

5 *searching throughout the world.* Elsewhere (in **14**.1, **22**.19, **24**.9. *et al.*), Gower uses "pour" plus infinitive very much like Modern French "en" plus present participle, to introduce a verbal

modifier of the subject of the main verb. Here, as in **34**.17 and **45.8,** the structure is somewhat looser since the implicit subject lacks, and it resembles one use of "forto" in ME, e.g . in *CA* Prol.31, "As forto speke of tyme ago," or *CT GP* 73, "for to tellen yow of his array," both cited in *MED* s.v. "forto," 3(b). For a different use of "pour" before infinitives resembling the use of "forto" after certain other verbs, see the note to **4²**.4.

8-9 The hypothetical onlooker who cannot resist being captured by love may be another lyric formula. See, for instance, Granson **36**.7-8, **65**.13-16, **70**.34-36, **74**.129-36, **76**.223-24. See also **38**.8-10, **39**.9-11, and *CA* 2.2023-27:

> Is non so wys that scholde asterte,
> Bot he were lustles in his herte,
> Forwhy and he my ladi sihe,
> Hir visage and hir goodlych yhe,
> Bot he hire lovede, er he wente.

8 *were he to see you*. From Yeager. See the note to **10**.5

10-11 These lines echo the formulaic collocation of "beauté" and "bonté"; see the note to **4¹**.11.

12-14 *nothing lacks.* Gower reprises the formula in **14**.3-4 and **39**.6-7, but without the qualification expressed here in the refrain. The formula appears with a similar qualification in **17**.26. Macaulay punctuates these lines differently, putting a semicolon after "falt," turning "dont" into a conjunction (Yeager: "thus") instead of a relative. With relative "dont," the construction is stil ambiguous. The comma (which of course is modern) makes the "dont" refer to the entire preceding proposition. Without it, the translation might be "nothing lacks of that for which one should give you praise," as in **14**.3 and **39**.6-7, but in both those instances, Gower uses "de ce dont" instead of "dont" alone.

16 The first-person verb ("sui") is impossible to render in translation. On the possibilities offered by "com cil qui" see the note to **7**.7.

20 In the *Roman de la rose*, Reason is hostile to love, but the persona's appeal to reason in support of his claim to pity appears entirely without irony here. (Later in *50B* [**49**.3-4, **50**R, **51**.2], reason is invoked as the proper guide of true love.) For the present line cf. Machaut, *Lou*. **197**.9-10 (a woman speaking): "Car Raisons vuet, s'il aimme sans folour / et sans partir, qu'il en soit remeris [for Reason wishes, if he loves without folly and undividedly, that he be rewarded]"; and Motet **15**, in which "Raison" is allied with "Franchise, Grace et Pité" (line 27) against "Cruauté," "Refus [rejection]," and "Dangiers" (lines 28-35).

23 *who*. This "qe" might be a conjunction instead "*for* you seem very beautiful and distant," though the causative seems to make less sense. Gower elsewhere uses "qe" in subject position, as in **5**.17 *et al*. *distant*. Gower uses "dangerouse" only here and in **48**.13, where it means "perilous." In **30**, he juxtaposes the two different general senses of "danger," with reference to the lady's standoffishness and to the dangers of such activities as seafaring. Here only the former is in play, but there is still a considerable range in meaning, from "reserved" to "disdainful." I chose "distant" as a neutral middle ground. This envoy provides a link and transition to the next ballade. On "Danger," see the note to **12**.8.

12

Ma° dame a la Chalandre comparer
Porrai, la quelle en droit° de sa nature
Desdeigne l'o*m*me a tiel point reguarder
Q*a*nt il serra de mort en aventure.
Et c'est le pis des griefs mals qe j'endure.
Vo t*re*sgent corps, ma dame, q*a*nt jeo voie
Et le favour de vo reguard procure,
Danger ses oels destorne en autre voie.

Helas, q*a*nt pour le coer t*re*stout entier,
Qe j'ai doné sanz point de forsfaiture,°
Ne me deignetz en tant reguerdoner
Q'avoir porrai la soule reguardure
De vous, q'avetz et l'oill et la feture
Dont jeo languis; car si° jeo me convoie
P*ar* devant vous, q*a*nt jeo me plus assure,
Danger ses oels destorne en autre voie.

Si tr*e*sbeals oels sanz merci pour mirer
N'acorde pas, ma dame, a vo mesure.
De vo reguard hostetz pourceo danger.
P*re*netz pité de vo*st*re creature.
Moustretz° moi l'oill de grace en sa figure,
Douls, vair, riant, et plein de toute joie,
Car jesq'en cy, ou si jeo chante ou plure,
Danger ses oels destorne en autre voie.

En toute humilité, sanz mesprisure,
Jeo me compleigns, ensi come faire doie,
Q'a moi, qui sui del tout soubtz v*ost*re cure,
Danger ses oels destorne en autre voie.

1 *The scribe's lower-case* m *beneath the initial letter is still visible (and especially clear in the photograph), but the decorator instead provided an* L.
2 en droit. *See the note in the commentary.*
10 *Cross drawn in margin. All but the first two letters of* forsfaiture *appear to be in a later hand.*
14 si *Mac* ce
21 *Mac* Monstrez. *See the note in the commentary.*

12

I could compare my lady to the calandra,°
which, in accordance with its nature,
disdains to look at a man at the point
when he is at risk of death.°
And this is the worst of the grievous pains that I endure.
My lady, when I see your gracious self°
and seek° the favor of your regard,°
Danger° turns its eyes another way.

°Alas, when in exchange for my entire heart,
which I have given without any compulsion,°
you do not deign to reward me so much
that I might have only a look
from you, who have both the eye and the form°
for which I languish; for if I set myself°
before you, when I am most confident,
Danger turns its eyes another way.

°For° eyes so beautiful to look° without mercy
does not agree, my lady, with your character.°
Therefore remove disdain° from your look.
Take pity on your creature.
Show° me the eye of grace in its visible form,°
sweet, bright, laughing,° and full of every joy.
For until now, whether I sing or weep,
Danger turns its eyes another way.

In all humility, without impropriety,°
I make my complaint, just as I must do,
that° for me, who am entirely under your care,
Danger turns its eyes another way.

This is the first of a group of ballades that begin with a comparison or simile, and it weaves together fairly seamlessly the image of the calandra with common motifs drawn from earlier lyrics: the personification of Danger, the wish for the lady's kind regard, the persona's claim that he receives less than he deserves, and his request for mercy or pity. The persona in **11** expresses a similar wish, but he also makes a large concession to reality. In **12**, more typically of poems that attribute the lady's rejection to a personified Danger, her right and her ability to

make her own choice are effectively effaced, and the persona imagines that he is entitled to a kind response simply because he has set his heart upon the woman that he addresses.

There is some awkwardness in the introduction of Danger in the refrain, since it is now Danger rather than the lady that is being likened to the calandra, as the one who turns away, which might not be such a bad thing if it means overlooking the lover's impertinence. In its classic appearance in *RR*, it is when Danger is attentive that one has to be most concerned. The whole image might make quite a bit more sense if the refrain referred to "vos oels [your eyes]" rather than "ses oels [its eyes]," since each of the three stanzas is in some way about the lady's eyes or the lady's glance, and preventing the lady's friendly glance is one of the roles that Amans imagines for Danger in Book 5 of *CA* (see the note to line 8 below). The awkwardness is particularly visible in lines 16-18, in which Danger's eyes and the lady's eyes appear to be the same. Alternatively, might the refrain be a relic of any earlier version of the poem entirely in the third person, in which the "ses" referred to the lady instead?: "Danger turns *her* eyes another way." I have translated the line as it stands; Yeager silently emends to "your eyes" in his translation.

1 "Perhaps the author wrote 'Ma,'" Macaulay speculates, "but the scribe (or rather the illuminator) gives 'La.'" In fact, beneath the decorated "L" that heads the first stanza one can clearly see a cursive *m* with which the scribe has left instruction for the decorator on which letter to supply, an instruction that he evidently overlooked or ignored.
calandra. The calandra (Modern French "calandre") is a type of lark. In *MO* 10705-14 Gower refers again to its habit of turning away from a person who is dying, and he adds that it flies high into the sky at night. Both characteristics are also included in an early fourteenth-century French bestiary cited by *DMF* s.v. "calandrion." Even closer to Gower, the narrator in Machaut's *Dit dou lyon* compares his lady to a "calendre" in lines 44-66, explaining that he is sure that he will be cured of the pain that he suffers from love when his lady looks upon him and sure that he will die when she turns away. Yeager (pp. 136-37) argues that Gower had in mind instead the plover (Latin "charadrius"), citing a passage from the *Physiologus* describing this bird's habit of turning away from the dying, but in *CA* 6.943, Gower cites the plover instead as a bird that lives only on air rather than any more substantial food. Since in none of these passages is Gower describing a feature that he could have observed in nature, it is perhaps best not to worry too much about which of these birds he might actually have seen in England.

2 *en droit*. The spacing is not unambiguous, but here and at **25**.6, **35**.10, **35**.17, and **50**.26 the scribe appears to have written "en droit" (two words), while at **20**.23 he writes "endroit," as also in **43**.7, and **49**.16 where "endroit" is a noun. "Endroit" is the spelling of the nearly 150 occurrences of the word in Macaulay's edition of *MO* with the sole exception of line 16281, and "endroit (de)" is a common expression meaning "with regard to," and is so listed in *AND* s.v. "endreit" and *DMF* s.v. "endroit," II.B.1, but I have preserved the manuscript spacing rather than regularizing it.

4 Cf. Machaut, *Lou*. **229**.7-8: "Et si me voy de mort en aventure, / Se Dieus et vous ne me prenez en cure [And thus I see myself in danger of death if God and you do not take me under your care]."

6 *self*. This is not an unusual use of "corps," and it carries no sensual connotation. See *DMF* s.v. "corps," I.C.2.a, with numerous citations illustrating the use of "corps" in phrases where in English we would simply say "in person."

7 *seek*. For "procurer," Macaulay in his glossary (1:541) gives "bring about, obtain," certainly the more common meaning (see *AND* and *DMF* s.v. "procurer"), but clearly not consistent with the persona's complaint in the rest of the poem. Less commonly does it mean "seek, request," cf. these

lines from Christine de Pizan, *100BD* **25**.4-5, "jamais jour ne sera procurée / Chose par moy, dont aiez desplaisir [never will be sought by me anything with which you are displeased]," cited in *DMF*, loc.cit., A.2.a, ""Mettre ses efforts, ses soins à qqc. [put one's efforts towards, to care for something]." See also *MED* s.v. "prōcūren," 2(c), "to seek to obtain (sth.)," with one citation from Trevisa's translation of Higden's *Polychronicon* ("a1387"), but no other from before 1450.

regard. "Reguard" is literally a look or glance. The wish for a sweet look from the lady (the "Douz Regart" of *RR* 906 ff.) and its beneficial effect upon her admirer is a common theme of 14th-century poetry, with examples far too numerous to count. See, for one, the passage from Machaut's *Dit dou lyon* cited in the note to line 1, above; also *Lou.* **179**.R, *T&C* 3.129-30; and in *50B*, **19**.13-14 and **33**.R. Cf. also Gower's adaptation of this motif in his address to the Virgin in *MO* 28588-91:

> Je te pry, dame, toutes voies
> Par ta pité que tu me voies;
> Car s'ensi fais, je guariray
> Des griefs pecchés dont langui ay.
>
> ("I pray you, lady, constantly, that you see me out of your pity, for if you do so, I will be healed of the grievous sins for which I have languished.")

8 "Danger" is the most prominent of the guardians of the rose in *RR*. It occurs very commonly throughout 14th-century lyric to represent the qualities of the woman's character that the male persona imagines are the obstacles to his immediate acceptance as a lover, and it might be translated, depending upon circumstance, as "reserve," "reluctance," "standoffishness," or "disdain" (as I have rendered it in line 19). Amans imagines Danger as his lady's guardian in *CA* 5.6617 ff.; one consequence of its vigilance, as in this poem, is that "The leste lokinge of hire yhe / Mai noght be stole, if he it syhe" (5.6625-26).

Gower personifies Danger here, in **23**.10, and in **30**.15, 18, and 23. It appears as an aspect of character or behavior, without personification, in **30**.4, **33**.13, and **34**.21; and it seems to float between the two in **26**.26, **37**.20, and in line 19 below. In his shorter poems, Machaut fully personifies Danger only in his Motets, **2**.9, **4**.20, and **10**.15, but the personification is quite common among later poets, particularly in Granson. In his ballades, Machaut usually uses "dangier" in a sense closer to its ultimate etymological root in Latin "dominus [lord]," as in *Lou*. **14**.18, "Vueil vivre adès en amoureus dangier [I wish always to live under the power of love]." Gower may use the word in this sense in **30**.12. For a third sense of "danger," closer to its meaning in Modern English, see **30**.R and the commentary on ballade **30** below; and for use in a different context, see **34**.21.

9-13 Gower combines two commonplace motifs here (and in **17**.9-13, **28**.5-6 and 15-20), the lover's gift of his heart and his claim to be treated unjustly. For the gift of his heart, see also **26**.R, and among many other examples, Machaut, *Lou*. **110**.16, **274**.20; Deschamps **437**.26-28, **664**; Granson **8**.3. The claim of unfairness is almost as common, but it is usually phrased either as poor payment for the persona's long service, as in Granson **11**.15-20, or as an inappropriate punishment when he has done no wrong, as in Machaut, *Lou*. **55**.8-11 and **66**. Froissart combines the two motifs in Bal. **14** (in which the gift of his heart is one of several proofs of his service, lines 11-12) and in Bal. **17**.21-23, "Car quant je li donne en don / Mon coer, m'amour, n'en ai pour guerredon / Fors escondis et refus jour et nuit [for when I give her as a gift my heart, my love, I have no reward but refusal and rejection day and night]." The closest to these lines, however, may be the passage in *CA* (5.4485-4532) cited by Macaulay, Amans' confession of "Usure," in which he suggests, with cautious self-interest, that his lady might be guilty of the sin in question: "Sche hath mi love, and I have noght / Of that I have diere boght, / And with myn herte I have it paid," he says (5.4509-11), and he prays

to God to send her grace to amend. "Sche mai be such, that hir o lok / Is worth thin herte manyfold," Genius tells him in reply (5.4542-43).

10 *compulsion*. "Forsfaiture" has two general senses, which proceed from the two different uses of the underlying verb "forfaire": "to commit a fault" (*DMF* s.v. "forfaire," A), hence "offense," "sin," or even "infidelity" (*DMF* s.v. "forfaiture," A); or "to forfeit, as to a confiscation or penalty" (*DMV* s.v. "forfaire," B), hence "compulsory confiscation" (*DMF* s.v. "forfaiture," B). Both seem to come into play here, though in the context of exchanges, the latter is perhaps dominant.

13 *form*. "Feture" (from "faire [to make or create]") might be "form," "appearance," or in the plural, "features"; *DMF* s.v. "faiture," A.2.a. Cf. Machaut, Chans.Bal. **3**.25, "vo noble faiture."

14 *if I set myself*. For "convoyer," the dictionaries give "accompany, escort, lead" (see the notes to **8**.20 and **9**.14), but they don't provide any examples of a reflexive use similar to Gower's in this line. Gower uses the reflexive form four times in *MO*. The most helpful is in 8166, "Q'au droit port se puet convoier [that can lead or guide itself to the right port]." "Set myself" is my inference from context.

17-18 The lover's claim that his lady's behavior towards him is inconsistent with her otherwise good character is not as common in earlier lyrics as one might suppose. For one example, see Machaut, *Lou*. **150**.1-3: "Eimmi! dame, coment puet endurer / Vos gentilz cuers, qi tant ha de valour, / Que je me muir einsi pour vous amer? [Alas, lady, how can your gentle heart, which has so much worth, endure that I die this way for loving you]." Gower uses a similar motif in **28**.1-4, 8-10 and by implication in the refrain to **11**..

17 *For*. "Pour" introduces the infinitive which is the subject of "accorde." This is not a common structure, but it is not unlike Gower's use elsewhere of "pour" where in English he would use "for to" (see the note to **11**.5). For one similar Anglo-Norman example, from the 12th-century *Romance of Horn*, see *AND* s.v. "pur[2]," 2: "pur sei bien covrir est sage e veziee [to cover oneself well is wise and cunning]."

look. This use of "mirer" (here and in **22**.17 and **26**.18) is evidently Anglo-Norman. See *AND* s.v. "mirer[1]," v.a., 1. *DMF* s.v. "mirer[1]" lists only the reflexive use, "se mirer," "to reflect" or "to see reflected" (as in a mirror). It appears that from phrases like "C'est comme mirour dont je me mir [it's like a mirror in which I see myself reflected]" (*MO* 21702), "mirer" was extended to other objects as well with the more general meaning of "to see" and then to the intransitive use, as in this line, "to look."

18 *character*. On the possible ways of translating "mesure" see the note to **7**.17.

19 *disdain*. Lost in the translation is the repetition of "danger," fully personified in the refrain but here, referring to the quality of the lady's "look," floating between a personification and an abstraction.

21 *Moustretz*. Lower-case *u* and *n* are often hard to distinguish, but here the letter in question appears to be a *u*. The verb is commonly spelled both ways (see *AND* s.v." mustrer"), and in its two other appearances in *50B* (**23**.27 and **32**.17), it appears to be spelled with an *n* and is so transcribed by Macaulay. In the same manuscript, *Tr* **6**.R, "demo[]stre" and **17**.16, "mo[]stre" also appear to be spelled with an *n*, but Macaulay transcribes both with a *u*. In his edition of *MO*, Macaulay consistently uses a *u* with only one exception, in line 17883. To add to the confusion, see **25**.4, where what appears in the MS to be "mout" can only by "m'ont."

in its visible form, i.e., as explained in the next line. *DMF* s.v. "figure," A.1.

22 *sweet, bright, laughing*. "Bright, sparkling" is the usual translation for "vair" with reference to the eyes. See *AND* s.v. "vair[1]," 2; and *DMF* s.v. "vair," I.B. "Dous," "vair," and "riant" often occur together in the description of the lady's eyes. *AND* s.v. "vair" cites *Horn* 1256: "Oilz veirs, gros, duz, rians." For Machaut, see the passages listed in *DMF*, loc.cit. See also **27**.1 and *MO* 925, "oels vairs riantz," with reference to "Leccherie."

25 *without impropriety*. "Sanz mesprisure" is one of the formulaic expressions by which the persona assures his lady of his honest intentions in the lyrics. See the note to **21**.8 and *DMF* s.v. "méprisure," A, with five citations from Machaut.

27 Since "complaigns" can be transitive or intransitive, "Q[e]" here might be "that" or "for," but it is difficult to see that it makes any difference.

13

Au mois de Marsz, u tant y ad muance,
Puiss resembler les douls mals q*e* j'endure.
Ore ai trové, ore ai p*er*du fiance,
Siq'en amer truis ma fortune dure,
Qu'elle est sanz point, sanz reule, et sanz mesure.
N'ad pas egual le pois en sa balance.
Ore ai le coer en ease, ore en destance.

Qant jeo remire a l'oill° sanz variance
La gentilesce et la doulce figure,
Le sens, l'onour, le port, la contenance
De ma t*re*snoble dame, en qui nature
Ad toutz biens mis, lors est ma joie pure,
Q'amour, p*ar* sa t*re*sdigne pourveance,
M'ad fait amer u tant y ad plesance.

Mais q*a*nt me vient la droite sovenance
Coment ma doulce dame est a dessure
En halt estat, et ma no*u*nsuffisance°
Compense a si t*re*snoble creature,
Lors en devient° ma joie plus obscure
P*ar* droit paour et p*ar* desesp*er*ance
Qe lune q*a*nt eglips la desavance.

Pour vous, q'avetz ma vie en aventure,
Ceste balade ai fait en remembrance.
Si porte ades le jolif mal sanz cure
Tanq'il vous plest de m'en faire allegance.

8 *MS* al loill; *Mac* al oill, *"but we might read* a l'oill." *(Cf.* ***12****.13, 21.)*
17 *MS* no*u*n suffisance
19 *MS* endevient

13

To the month of March, in which there is so much change,
Can I compare the sweet pains I endure.
Now I have found, now I have lost assurance,°
°so that in love, I find my fortune hard,
for it is without limit, without rule, without restraint.°
It doesn't have a fair° weight on its scale.°
Now I have a heart at ease, now in turmoil.°

When I regard attentively with my eye
the noble character and the gentle form,
the sense, the honor, the bearing, the composure°
of my very noble lady, °in whom Nature
has placed all that is good, then my joy is pure,
for Love, out of its worthy providence,°
has made me love where there is so much delight.

But when the rightful memory° comes to me
°how my gentle lady is above
in high estate,° and (how) my insufficiency
compares to° so very noble a creature,
then my joy becomes darker
out of true fear and lack of hope
than the moon when an eclipse reduces it.°

For you, who hold my life in the balance,°
I have made this ballade in remembrance.
Thus do I constantly bear the joyful pain without cure
until it pleases you to give me relief.

The heart of this ballade lies in stanzas 2-3, in which the persona weighs his joy at having chosen so perfect a lady against his own insufficiency and, if I understand correctly the reference in line 17 to her "high estate," the obstacles created by the difference in their rank. It is not unusual for the persona to feel unworthy; see Machaut, *Lou*. **4**.10, **10**.1-3, **11**.1-4, **180**.10-11, **197**.1-4. But a difference in rank is not a common motif in 14th-century poetry. Machaut has only a single ballade in which the male persona feels himself "de tres petit affaire [of very little importance]" compared to his noble lady (*Lou.* **239**.1-2), and another in which a woman urges the man she loves to overlook her lack of wealth (*Lou*. **263**). Deschamps too has a poem in which the heart blames the body for its folly because it "veult amer en hault estat, / en noble lieu, en treshaulte lignie [wishes to love in a high estate, a noble place, an exalted lineage]" (**543**.3-4) .

Gower displays an awareness of rank more than once in *50B*; see **2**.25, **6**, **23**.25-27, and **39**.26. But only here does the lady's higher position become the source of the persona's discomfort. Nowhere else that I know of, moreover, either in *50B* or elsewhere, is a persona's dilemma set out so neatly in two balanced stanzas, each containing a single nicely wrought sentence. Gower's strategy here overrides the normal requirement of a refrain; it would be a different and much more conventional poem if each stanza ended with the last line of stanza 1.

The rest of the poem, by comparison, is less inventive, and less of a piece: the changeableness of the weather and the unfairness and arbitrariness of the lover's fortune in stanza one, culminating in the "ease" and "destance" of line 7, prepare the dilemma of stanzas two and three in most general terms, but they seem to be part of a different sort of experience, much more like the typical pains of unrequited love than like the middle of the poem. The envoy abandons the central motif entirely as it turns to address the lady and asks for her "allegance," resuming the "douls mals" of line 2 but without any further consciousness of the difference in their rank and implying a different sort of relationship than that implied in the central stanzas.

In sequence, this is the first of four ballades (with **14**, **16**, and **17**) without a refrain. (The only other is **51**.) As Dauphant notes (p. 88), they create a counter-pattern which has the effect of drawing greater attention to the refrain of **15**, which in sequence stands out as the exception. "L'absence du refrain pourrait être l'un des moyens d'expression du manque [the absence of the refrain could be one of the means of expressing the lack]" experienced by the persona in each of these poems. **13** is also the first ballade in *50B* that uses only two rhymes (as does **9**, the *chanson royale*), and eight of the twelve ballades with only two rhymes occur between **13** and **24**. (The others are at **36**, **39**, **42**, and **45**.) More importantly, it is the first in a group of ten poems between **13** and **24** that are not addressed directly to the lady in the main body of the poem. (**15** and **20**, addressed to the lady throughout, are the exceptions.) Elsewhere, apart from the last four ballades, only **5**, **35**, and **36** are not addressed in the stanzas by a man to a woman or by a woman to a man. In eight of these ten poems, as here and also as in **35**, after speaking of the lady in the third person, the persona turns to address her directly in the envoy. It's an unusual move, but not entirely without precedent. In two of his seven *chansons royales* Machaut does the same (*Lou.* **47**, **117**; Machaut does not include an envoy on his ballades); and among the only two dozen ballades in Deschamps' vast corpus in which the persona addresses the lady in the envoy, there are four in which he speaks of her in the third-person in the stanzas (**437**, **543**, **974**, and **1177**). In Granson and in the Pennsylvania MS, on the other hand, while one finds a small number of poems that switch from third-person to first in the stanzas themselves (as in the first stanza of **12**, above), there are none that refer to the lady exclusively in the third person before turning to address her in the envoy, as Gower does here. The difference from the ballades in which the persona addresses the lady throughout turns out not to be that great in Gower's case since in all but two instances (**19** and **21**), rather than turning from one imagined audience to another, the envoy refers to the rest of the poem itself as a separate composition (as it does here in line 23), effectively incorporating it into the message that the persona sends. (Machaut does something similar in the envoy to *Lou.* **117** , where he asks his lady to listen to "ceste chanson" in which he has otherwise referred to her in the third person.) Gower makes a very different use

of the envoy in **5**, **17**, **18**, and **36**, in which the persona refers to the lady in the third person throughout. See the note on **17** below.

3 *assurance*. On the range of meanings of "fiance," see the note to **4**[1].12.

4-6 Between lines 4 and 6, "fortune" slips from an abstract noun signifying the persona's general condition into a full personification, unless, that is, Gower originally wrote "la fortune" in line 4 instead of "ma." The use of the article with the personification is not usual, but cf. **42**.1, *MO* 22927, 26357.

5 *without limit, without rule, and without restraint*. Gower uses the same expression in *MO* 948, describing the food served at the wedding of Leccherie and the World, and 9453, with reference to the behavior of a young woman who succumbs to wantonness, and a nearly identical expression in *Tr* **15**.18, "Sanz point, sanz reule, et sanz gouvernement," referring to the diverse fortunes of love, in all three cases suggesting a lack of restraint or orderliness. Finding a precise equivalent for each word is a bit more difficult. "Reule," from Latin "regula," is the usual Anglo-Norman form of the word that appears in continental French more commonly as "regle"; see *AND* s.v. "reule," *DMF* s.v. "regle." It can be used in the sense of "precept, principle" (*DMF* loc.cit., B; *AND* loc.cit., 1), but *AND* also provides two 14th-century citations in which it evidently means "government," as in "under someone's rule," a sense that fits well in the line from *Tr*. "Rule" in Modern English covers both senses. "Moderation, restraint" is a common meaning of "mesure" (*AND* s.v "mesure[1]," 5), a sense that works best in the passages in *MO*. For "sans mesure," *DMF* s.v "mesure," C.1, gives "Qui ne respecte aucune règle [that does not respect any rule]," and cites Machaut's very similar description of Fortune in Motet **8**.6, "Sans foy, sans loy, sans droit et sans mesure [without faith, without law, without rightness, and without *mesure*}." "Point" is the most difficult; neither *DMF* nor *AND* offer any useful help. Of the choices given in Macaulay's glossary, "limit" is the only one that might apply here; Godefroy s.v. "point" (Macaulay's likely source) offers "limite, frontiére [limit, border]" with two citations. Such a sense might derive from the use of "point" to mark the divisions on a measuring instrument (see *DMF* s.v. "point[1]," II.A.3).

6 Fortune is not most commonly depicted with a balance or scale, but unequal weights are a common image of unfairness, as in *CA* Prol. 541, 3 *vv.* 3-4, 5.4670 *vv.* 1-2; and in *CA* 1.42-45, Gower also links the action of Fortune to a scale: "For if there evere was balance / Which of fortune stant governed, / I mai wel lieve as I am lerned / That love hath that balance on honde." See also Whiting, F504, citing Hoccleve, *Regement* 3.60, "fortunes balaunce," and N179, citing Lydgate, *Fall of Princes* 2196, "Fortune holdeth the ballaunce."
fair. *AND* s.v. "egal," 3: "equitable." "Egal" more commonly means "equal, identical," but in the singular we would have to ask equal to what?

7 *turmoil*. *AND* s.v. "destance," 1: "discord, quarrel." No similar definition is listed in *DMF* or Godefroy, suggesting that this is an Anglo-Norman usage.

10 *composure*. "Contenance" might refer either to appearance or behavior generally (*AND* s.v. "contenance," 2, 3; *DMF* s.v. "contenance," II.C.1, 3), and so Gower seems to use it in **15**.19 and in *MO*, in the phrase "en fait, en dit, en contenance" (12439) or a variant thereof, which he employs no fewer than five times. But it also might have a more specific, more positive sense which seems appropriate here. *AND*, loc.cit., 2 also offers "composure, composed manner"; *DMF*, loc.cit. II.B offers "mesure, dignité, calme [moderation, dignity, calmness]."

11-12 Nature is commonly credited with the features that the persona most admires in the beloved, e.g. in Machaut, *Lou*. **195**.10, **205**.25-26, **212**.11; Froissart, Bal. **38**.11, Lay **1**.144, 156; *et al.* See also the note to **38**.15-16 below.

14 *providence*. The range of meaning of "pourveance" is quite broad, encompassing "foresight," "wisdom," and "provision." See *DMF* s.v. "pourvoyance." Gower uses the word in all these senses in *MO* (spelling it "pourvoiance"), but as with "providence" in both Modern English and Modern French, it is difficult, in contexts such as this one, not to hear echoes of "divine pourvoiance," a phrase that occurs in *MO* 8066 and 27639.

15 *rightful memory*. "Droit" here embraces both "true, correct" and "fitting, appropriate to the circumstances." Gower uses the same phrase with reference to the Virgin's recollection of her son in *MO* 29359.

16-18 Cf. *CA* 5.6597-98: "Betwen hire hih astat and me / Comparison ther mai non be." Amans makes a more general statement of his unworthiness in 2.459-59.

17 *high estate*. "Estat" has as wide a range of application as Modern English "state" or French "état," but when modified by a word signifying "high" or "low," it refers most often to social rank or position, as in the lines quoted from Deschamps **543**.3-4 above. See *AND* s.v. "estat," 4; *DMF* s.v. "estat," III; and *MO* 12500, 23391; *Tr* **13**.R; and in English, *CA* 4.1035, 3521. For an exception, where "halt estat" refers instead to the persona's good fortune in love, see **16**.16. With reference to the lady in this poem, "halt estat" appears to refer neither to a temporary condition nor to the gifts of Nature listed in the preceding stanza but to the combination of character and social position implied in the word "tresnoble" in line 18.

18 *compares to*. Etymologically "weighs in comparison to," perhaps picking up on (though in a very different context) the image of the scales in line 6. Cf. *MO* 23100: "Si l'un ove l'autre compensoiez [if you weighed one against the other]."

21 *reduces*. One would like to use "dims" or "obscures" here, but Gower is constrained by the need for a rhyme. "Desavancer" means "to set back, harm, lessen, diminish." See *AND* s.v. "desavancer"; *DMF* s.v. "desavancer."

22 *in the balance.* "En aventure" echoes the arbitrariness of Fortune in the opening stanza rather than specifically the image of the scale (as in my translation). It is an interesting coincidence that our best expression in Modern English for an outcome that is yet to be decided is drawn from the same image that Gower employs in line 6. "En aventure" also echoes **12**.4, drawing one small link between this ballade and its predecessor.

14

Pour penser de ma dame sovereine,
En° qui tout bien sont plainement assis
Qe riens y falt de ce dont corps humeine
Doit p*ar* reson avoir loenge et pris,
Lors sui d'amour si finement espris
Dont maintenant m'estoet soeffrir la peine
Plus qe Paris ne soeffrist pour Heleine.

Tant plus de moi ma dame se desdeigne
Come plus la prie, et si jeo mot ne dis,
Qe valt ce, lors qe jeo ma dolour meine
De ceo dont jeo ma dame n'ai requis?
Ensi de deux jeo sui tant ent*re*pris
Qe p*ar*ler n'ose a dame si halteine,
Et si m'en tais, jeo voi la mort procheine.

Mais si pités, qui les douls° coers enseine,
Pour moi ne p*ar*le et die son avis
Et la fierté de son corage asseine
Et plie au fin q'elle ait de moi mercis,
Jeo serrai mortz ou tant enmaladis.
Ne puiss faillir del un avoir estreine.
Ensi, ma doulce dame, a vous me pleigne.

Ceste balade a vous, ma dame, escris,
Q'a vous p*ar*ler me falt du bouche aleine,
P*ar* quoi soubtz v*ost*re g*ra*ce jeo languis,
Sanz vous avoir ne puiss ma joie pleine.

2 *MS* Een
15 *MS* doules. *The* e *has no grammatical basis, and the emendation is required for the meter.*

14

In thinking° about my sovereign lady,
in whom all virtues are fully and plainly° set
°so that nothing lacks of that for which a human being
ought by reason to have praise and esteem,
then am I so thoroughly° inflamed with love
that° now I am compelled to suffer pain
more than Paris° suffered for Helen.

°My lady disdains° me all the more
the more I beseech her, °and if I don't say a word,
what good is that, when I carry on my grief
for that which I haven't requested of my lady?
°Thus I am caught between the two in such a way
that I dare not speak to so proud° a lady,
and if I'm silent, I see an imminent death.°

°But if Pity, which teaches gentle hearts,
does not speak for me and give its counsel
and strike° and bend° the haughtiness of her heart
so that she have mercy on me,
I will be dead or become so° ill.
I cannot fail to have one of these as my fortune.°
Thus, my gentle lady, I make my complaint to you.

I write this ballade to you, my lady,
for I lack the breath to speak to you aloud,°
because of which I languish beneath your grace.°
Without you I cannot have my joy complete.°

In a collection of poems each of which is addressed by a man to a woman or by a woman to a man, those that deal directly with the effectiveness of the lover's message take on special significance. There are five such poems in *50B*, of which **14** is the first (the others are **17**, **18**, **19**, and **22**), each of which, since the persona's suit has so far been unsuccessful, draws attention in a different way to the paradox of revealing the ineffectiveness of his speech to his lady in a poem that constitutes yet another attempt to attract her attention. In the central stanza of **14** (one of Gower's most tightly crafted), the persona weighs the ineffectiveness of his speech against the ineffectiveness of silence, incorporating motifs with roots in earlier lyrics into a single cogent expression of the persona's dilemma: should he speak to her or not? In stanza three, he invokes the traditional figure of Pity as his spokesperson. In both, it is his fear of death

that justifies his continued complaint, and with the final line before the envoy, he thus turns to address his lady directly. And as in most of the *50B*, he does so in writing: with the envoy, as the ballade itself becomes the vehicle for that which he has otherwise been unable to express, writing replaces speech, solving the dilemma of how to communicate his wish, at least, if not the bigger question posed by her earlier rejection.

As precedent for the persona's addressing his lady after claiming that he dare not do so, there are a small number of earlier poems in which the persona similarly "tells" his lady about that which he cannot tell her directly. In Granson **75**, for instance, the persona declares (in a *lai*) that "Pour riens ne vous ose dire / le mien desir [I don't dare for anything to tell you about my desire]" (3-4), but the communication is clearly imaginary: the poem begins with the silent plea that his lady turn her eyes towards him in order to behold his suffering (1-2), more typically of the lyric mode in which we seem to be overhearing the persona's most private thoughts, even when in the form of an address to another person. Machaut has two similar ballades, *Lou.* **65**.17-18 and Bal.Not. **26**.19-20, in which the persona states, in poems addressed to the lady, that he doesn't dare reveal his suffering to her, though in saying so he does; but without an envoy we can again only imagine how or if this message is actually delivered. Deschamps has a ballade in which the persona states that he must hide his love "Qu'a vous n'a nul dire ne l'oseroye [for I wouldn't dare tell it to you or anyone]" (**768.**7-8), and that he therefore depends upon Love to send its grace, though the poem is ostensibly addressed to the lady both in the stanzas and in an envoy. Bringing us even closer to Gower's, Machaut has several other poems (that are not ballades) that express, in one way or another, the assumption that the lady will be the recipient. In Lai **6**.135-40, for instance, the persona declares that he can reveal his sorrow only in his song; in Chans.Bal. **1**.16-24, a *virelai*, the persona tells his lady that since he becomes speechless in her presence, he cannot tell her of his wishes "autrement [otherwise]" than in this poem; and in *Lou*. **117**, a *chanson royale*, the persona describes his lack of success in love, and then in the envoy (lines 46-54), he asks the lady to listen to his song because he cannot reveal his suffering in any other way. In another poem by Deschamps, finally, the persona, addressing the lady, identifies himself as "cellui qui n'ose a vous parler [he who dares not speak to you]" (**1275**.1), and therefore "vous fait ce rondel presenter [has this rondeau presented to you]" (**1275**.4).

As in most of the *50B*, Gower makes fully explicit the manner of transmission in the envoy, and the resort to writing is also wholly typical, in fact uniquely so, of his collection. And again, it does solve in at least one respect the dilemma that the persona faces: if he doesn't dare speak to her, at least he can write. The bigger issue of the effectiveness of his plea is set aside, however. In none of the other poems just cited has the persona, though sorrowful (as in line 10), already faced rejection. In those, the persona might hope that his "song" might have some effect, but here, given the lady's previous disdain, there is no real reason to think that a written plea will bring him any closer to what we have to imagine is his real objective. The dilemma posed in the second stanza is not so easily resolved. One might also think that the mere distinction between writing and speech actually diminishes the mystery somewhat, compared to the poems by other poets in which the actual communication is much less explicit than the lover's wish. Gower also left a number of loose ends in this ballade. Even more fully than in **13**, the routine praise of the lady in the first stanza seems to belong to an entirely different poem, giving no hint at all (especially in the choice of Paris as an example) either of the nature of the

man's efforts or of his rejection. There are a couple of little contradictions. The appeal to Pity as his spokesperson is immediately followed by the persona's decision to speak for himself; the choice between speaking and death in the second stanza turns into the much less compelling choice between death and illness in the third; and the haughty lady of the third stanza becomes the "doulce dame" of line 21. And given what is evidently at stake in the preceding stanzas, the final line can only be an anticlimax. This ballade is pulling in several directions at once. Gower returns to the theme and handles it a bit more neatly in the similar poems that follow.

1 *in thinking*. Here and in **22**.19 and **24**.9, Gower uses "pour" plus infinitive rather like "en" plus present participle, to introduce a verbal modifier of the subject of the main verb (in all three cases, "I"). Cf. the note to **11**.5.

2 *fully and plainly*. On "plainement" see the note to **4**[1].10. Both senses of the word seem to apply, but the next line suggests that "fully" is dominant.

3-4 Gower repeats the formula in **39**.6-7. See also PhyT, *CT* VI.41-42, "In hire ne lakked no condicioun / That is to preyse." For the use of the same formula but with a qualification see **11**.12.

5 *thoroughly*. *AND* s.v. "finement[2]," 3, "completely."

6 *that*. On "dont" where one might expect "que," see the note to **4**[2].11.

7 *Paris*. Elsewhere when Gower cites Paris and Helen, he does so disapprovingly: see **40**.6, *Tr* **10**.4, *MO* 16700-04, and *CA* 7195-7590. It is a bit surprising to see Paris used as an example of depth of suffering in love. Hassell P39, "Comme Pâris aimait Heleinne," cites three passages in which Paris is used as a model of depth or intensity of love (Machaut, *Remede* 167-70; *Lyon* 258-60; and Froissart, Past. **11**.45-46; one may add Froissart, Bal. **39**.4-5), which isn't quite the same thing.

8-9 The persona in earlier ballades is often tongue-tied (as in **22**), frequently out of fear of rejection, and his efforts to speak to his lady sometimes merely have no effect (as in **17**, **18**, and **19**). Here he has besought her repeatedly and only made things worse. Gower uses the "plus . . . , plus . . ." formula, as does Froissart in Bal **1**.12-16, particularly line 13, "Com plus li pri, et plus m'est desdagneuse [as the more I beseech her, the more scornful she is]"; and Granson in **19**.6, "Plus la depry doulcement, plus m'est fiere [the more sweetly I beseech her, the haughtier she is]."(Granson uses the same formula again for a different purpose in the refrain to the same poem. See the note to **17**.15-16 below.) The formula also appears in the form "plus . . . , moins . . ." (e.g. in **17**.8 and **18**.R). Amans uses both forms, first as he denies his guilt of Sloth: "For ay the more I crie faste, / The lasse hire liketh forto hiere" (*CA* 4.285-86); and then when he defends his lack of Idleness: "The more besinesse I leie, / The more than I knele and preie / With goode wordes and with softe, / The more I am refused ofte"(*CA* 4. 1747-51). Machaut is familiar with the construction (see *Lou*. **14**.3-4, **48**.46-47), but he does not use it, as far as I know, in this context, though he expresses similar frustrations, e.g. in *Lou*. **203**.R, "Qu'adès la pri et riens ne me respont [for I constantly beseech her and she does not answer me]."

8 *disdains*. Gower uses "desdeigner" as a simple transitive verb in **12**.3, **40**.27 and elsewhere. The reflexive use ("se desdeigner de") is not listed in any of the dictionaries, but it also appears in *MO* 2269, 2271-72, 2276, 23712.

9-11 Granson has a ballade (**33**) in which he dismisses those who think that they can win the "don de merci [gift of mercy]" without requesting it, and Genius offers similar advice to Amans in *CA* 4.616-18 and 712-13, comparing the need to make one's wishes known to the necessity for prayer in **4**.717-18. (See also 4.312 *vv*. 1-4.) These are all in the form of counsel to another, however. I haven't found any other example of a man realizing the futility of his own grieving for that which he hasn't requested yet.

12-14 The germ for the alternatives that the persona faces can be found in several earlier poems. In Machaut, Motet **2**.32-34, the persona asserts, "Miex vient en joie manoir / Par proier qu'adès languir / Par trop taire et puis morir [it is better to dwell in joy for having asked than to languish constantly for having remained silent and then dying]. And in Motet **7**.21-32, a woman who initially rejected her lover and now wants him back faces the same choice. Both resolve to find the courage to makes their wishes known. The narrator in *Remede*, fearful of refusal (559-68) wonders how his lady will ever know of his love (579-90) and decides to place his confidence in the reassurances of Hope (633-38). The persona in Machaut, *Lou*. **3**.22-26, on the other hand, leaves the issue unresolved: "L'aim et desir de tres loyal amour, / Ne ne sara par moy, car j'ai paour, / Se je li di, d'avoir son mautalent; / Ne je ne puis avoir aligement / Sans li, de qui je sui descongneüs [I love and desire her out of a very loyal love, and yet she will not know it from me, for I fear, if I tell her, to incur her ill will, nor can I have relief without her by whom I remain unknown]." So too does the persona in Granson **78**.2368-70: "Ouir ne vault rien que je die. / Las! Comment pourra elle savoir / Mon penser et ma muserie [she doesn't want to hear anything I say. Alas, how will she know my thought and my imaginings?]"; and Amans weighs the same choices in his lesson on Disobedience, *CA* 1.1280-96. Froissart, finally, has three *rondeaux* in which he weighs speaking against silence (Rond. **83**-**85**). The closest to Gower's is perhaps **84**, particularly lines 1-3: "Se je parole et ne ne sui oïs, / Trop me sera parole virgongneuse, / Et sanz parler n'est nulls homs conjoïs [if I speak and I am not heard, speech would be very shameful for me, but no man was ever warmly welcomed without speaking]." **83** offers no conclusion, **84** ends with a resolution to speak up, and **85** with the fear of rejection. Gower chooses to end this stanza, at least, upon a dilemma, but see further the note to 15-20 below.

13 *proud.* "Halteine" might point to the awe-provoking qualities of the lady that the persona praises in lines 1-4, as in **3**.15; less likely does it refer to her social rank, as in **39**.26 (cf. **13**.17), since there is no other allusion to a difference in rank in this poem. But in the context of her disdain (line 8) and her "fierté" (17), the dominant reason for the persona's speechlessness appears to be her haughtiness and pride (*AND* s.v. "haltein," 3; *DMF* s.v. "hautain," D).

14 *imminent death*. The persona's claim that he may die of his unrequited love is a staple of earlier lyrics, found in between a quarter and a third of the poems in Machaut's *Louange des dames* (as in the first two passages cited in the note to lines 12-14 above). It is also a common motif in Froissart. Gower invokes the possibility only here, in **16**.23, and in **30**.6.

15-20 Pity is one of the principal aids to the lover in *RR* (3233 ff.), but she has a long history in earlier lyric and romance, and she frequently appears among other allegorical agents that either aid or impede the lover in the lyrics that precede *50B*. For one example in which Pity (in the company of "Humblesse [Humility]" serves as the lover's spokesperson, see Granson **78**.165-68. For another, closer to Gower's, see Machaut, *Lou*. **2**, in which the persona, faced with a choice similar to that in the poems cited in the note to 12-14 above, prefers to remain silent rather than risk the death that will result if he is rejected, and thus the woman will not know of his love "Tant que Pitès or Amour li dira [until Pity or Love tell her]" (*Lou*. **2**.R). Machaut uses the same line as the conclusion to Comp. **2**, in which a woman invokes Pity and Love when both she and her male admirer are prevented from revealing their love to one another. See also Froissart, Lay **12**.5-11, 29-40; and Deschamps **727**.22-25: "Or veil Pitié reclamer / Qu'elle veuille demander / Piteusement / Merci et grace rouver [Now I wish to call upon Pity, that she please ask piteously for mercy and request grace]."

17 *strike*. Macaulay, in his note to **39**.9, remarks on the variety of senses in which Gower uses "assener." For this line, he offers "strike down the pride of her heart," but there is better support elsewhere for "strike, hit, wound" rather than "strike down, vanquish" (and none at all for "erase," as in "to strike something from something"). See *AND* s.v. "asener," 1; *DMF* s.v. "assener," III.

bend. "Plie [bend]" (line 18) doesn't have an object unless we take it as part of a compound verb with "asseine" in the preceding line, and so have I translated it. For this metaphorical use see *DMF* s.v. "plier," I.B: "Fléchir, faire céder qqn, son coeur, sa volonté . . . [bend, make someone, their heart, their will, yield]." The alternative is to emend it to "prie [pray, plead]": "and plead so that she have mercy on me." "Prier" is not commonly used intransitively, but Gower does so in *MO* 1066 *et al.*

19 Macaulay (1:464) notes that the "tant [so] ""is not answered by anything and does not seem to mean much."

20 Word by word, from Macaulay (I:464): "I cannot fail to have the fortune of one (or the other)."

23 *aloud*. I.e. "from the mouth," as opposed to in writing. See *DMF* s.v. "bouche[1]," B.4.b.

24 *grace*. See the note to **1**.8. The sense here appears to be the same: "beneath your power to grant or withhold mercy."

25 Cf. Machaut, *Lou*. **76**.6: "Que je ne puis sans vous grant joie avoir [for I cannot have great joy without you]."

15

Com l'esp*er*ver qe vole p*ar* creance
Et de son las ne poet partir envoie,
De mes amours ensi p*ar* resemblance
Jeo sui liez, siq*ue* p*ar* nulle voie
Ne puiss aler s'amour ne me convoie.
Vous m'avetz, dame, estrait de tiele Mue.
Combien qe vo p*re*sence ades ne voie,
Mon coer remaint, qe˚ point ne se remue.

Soubtz vo constreignte et soubtz vo gov*er*nance
Amour m'ad dit qe jeo me supple et ploie
Sicome foial doit faire a sa liegance,˚
Et plus d'assetz, si faire le porroie.
Pour ce, ma doulce dame, a vous m'otroie,
Car a ce point j'ai fait ma retenue,
Qe si le corps de moi fuist ore a Troie,
Mo*u*n˚ coer remaint, qe point ne se remue.

Sicome le Mois de maii les prées˚ avance,
Q'est tout flori q*a*nt l'erbe se verdoie,
Ensi p*ar* vous revient ma contienance
De vo bealté, si penser jeo le doie.
Et si merci me volt vestir de joie
Pour la bounté qe vous avetz vestue,
En tiel espoir, ma dame, uq*ue* jeo soie,
Mon coer remaint, qe point ne se remue.

A v*ost*re ymage est tout ceo qe jeo proie
Qant˚ ceste lettre a vous serra venue,
Q'a vous servir, come cil q'est v*ost*re proie,
Mo*u*n˚ coer remaint, qe point ne se remue.

8 *Mac* que
11 *See the note to this line in the commentary.*
16 *Mac* Mon
17 *MS* lesprees
26 *Mac* Quant
28 *Mac* Mon

15

Like the sparrowhawk that flies on a leash°
and cannot get away° from its bond,°
so in similar fashion am I bound°
by my love,° so that by no path°
can I go if love° does not accompany° me.
Lady, you have drawn me from such a cage.°
Although I do not always see you in person,°
my heart remains, for° it does not move at all.°

°Under your constraint° and under your governance
Love has told me to bow and to submit°
just as a vassal should do homage,°
and rather more, if I could do so.
Therefore, my sweet lady, I submit° to you,
for I have made my commitment° in this way,°
that if my body were now in Troy,
my heart remains, for it does not move at all.

°Just as the month of May quickens the meadows,
which° is all in flower when the grass becomes green,
just so, through you, does my appearance revive°
because of your beauty, if I must think about it.°
And if Mercy wishes to dress° me in joy
because of the goodness that you have donned,
in such a hope, my lady, wherever I am,
my heart remains, for it does not move at all.

To your image° is everything that I pray
when this letter will have come to you,
for to serve you, as he who is your prey,°
my heart remains, for it does not move at all.

The poem is a bit unusual for Gower. It is linked to the others with which it is grouped by its use of simile and by the repetition of "douce dame" from **14**.21 in line 13. But with **20**, it is one of only two poems between **13** and **24** that is addressed to the lady in both the stanzas and the envoy. Yet despite its direct address, we can tell nothing about the relationship between the lady and the persona or about how the poem will be received, except perhaps as an artful compliment. The interest lies not in the dramatic situation but almost exclusively in the very profusion of its figurative imagery and in the mixing of literal and metaphorical, for example in the refrain (see the note to line 8). Each stanza begins with a different simile: the bird of prey

that cannot escape its restraint in the first, the obedient vassal in the second, and the return of springtime in the third, which evolves into the metaphor of "dressing" with joy. Two more metaphors, each using a different sense of "proie," occur in the envoy (echoing the *rime riche* of "voie" in stanza one). Of the multitude of images, the most original may be the first, but it is also the most difficult to grasp in all its details, and line 6 suggests that it may not have been fully understood by a scribe. Other puzzles, also possibly due to errors in transmission, occur in lines 11 and 20.

1 *leash*. A "creance" is a "longue corde attachée à la laisse d'un oiseau de proie pendant qu'on l'exerce à prendre le leurre [long cord attached to the leash of a bird of prey while it is being trained to seize a lure]" (*DMF* s.v. "creance[1]," B.4.b), as also noted by Macaulay, I.465. This sense does not appear in *AND*, as noted by Merrilees and Pagan, p. 129.

2 *get away*. Yeager: "break loose."
bond. A "las" might be a string or cord (*DMF* s.v. "lacs," A.1, 2), like the "creance" in the preceding line, but more generally it refers to any type of bond, including metaphorical ones, e.g. "les pièges d'Amour [the snares of Love]" (*DMF*, loc.cit., B.1.d); "lien affectif qui attache une personne à une autre [an emotional bond that attaches one person to another]" or "ce qui retient, séduit la personne qui aime [that which retains, seduces the person who loves]" (*DMF*, loc.cit., B.2.c, the latter with four citations from Machaut).

3 *bound*. Despite the alliteration, there is no etymological link between "las [bond]" in line 2 and "liez [bound]." Like "las," however, "liez" can refer to both physical and emotional binding. On the latter, see *DMF* s.v. "lier," I.B.1.e, citing, among others, Machaut, Lai **3**.83, "Vostre amours me lie [your love binds me]." See also Whiting L497, citing *T&C* 1.237, "Love is he that alle thing may bynde." Gower uses "lier" again in this sense in **37**.R and also in *MO* 25406, describing the effect of wool upon covetous merchants, "L'amour de toy tant point et lie [love of you bites and binds so greatly] . . . ." Cf. also the use of "liens [bonds]" in **4²**.11.

3 *mes amours*. On the *cas sujet* form, see the note to **2**.5.

4 *by no path.* Like Modern English "way," "voie" might be a literal road, path, or route (as in **9**.11), a direction (as in **12**.R), or metaphorically, a means or manner (as in *Tr* **18**.26), and the latter sense might also be present here, "by no means." See *DMF* s.v. "voie," esp. D.2, 3.

5 *love*. A personification or not? There are clearer instances (e.g. **3**.6, **9**.35). Gower did not use capitalization to indicate the distinction, with the consequence that we can keep both possibilities in mind.
accompany. "Convoie" is perhaps compelled by the rhyme, but it alters the metaphor somewhat, and it is not the best choice of verb if Gower means "if love does not restrain me or keep me attached to you." On the choices offered by the verb see **8**.20 and **9**.14.

6 This line is problematic. "Mue [mew]" sustains the bird simile from lines 1-2, but it also has a figurative use, and this line is cited in *AND* s.v. "mue," 2, to illustrate the sense "cage, prison." "Estrait" appears to be the past participle of "estraire," most generally "to extract or remove," (*AND* s.v. "estraire," 1; *DMF* s.v. "extraire," II), but if this is what Gower wrote, it alters the metaphor again. The verb appears several times in *MO*, usually in the sense of "to form, to give birth to" (AND loc.cit., 3; *DMF* loc.cit., I), as in lines 93, 5322, 17211, 28244. In lines 25285-86, however, we find the same expression as in this line, "Cil q'est estrait de ceste mue / N'ad mye la parole mue [he who is *estrait de ceste mue* is not at all silent]," with reference to a garrulous shopkeeper. Here too the sense is at best puzzling, and one suspects an idiom meaning something like "drawn from that box," meaning "of this sort" or "in this circumstance." Macaulay offers no assistance, either in his glossary

or his notes. Yeager takes "estrait" as a form of the adjective "estreit" (*AND*), "estroit" (*DMF),* and offers "You have me, lady, close in such a Cage." The image works a little better, emphasizing the binding rather than the release, but it would seem to require the emendation of "de" to "en." Without any satisfactory solution, I have simply translated both words in their most common sense.

Punctuation is also an issue. Macaulay places a comma at the end of this line, implicitly joining this clause to those that follow, but if this were so, we would expect "tiele [such]" to be followed by "q(u)e [that]" or some equivalent word at the beginning of line 7. "Tiel" without "q(u)e" normally refers to what precedes, as it does in line 23.

7 *in person*. See the note to **6**.7.

8 On the appearance of the refrain after two poems without one, see the explanatory note to **13**.
for. As in **12**.27 and elsewhere, the "qe" might be either a conjunction ("for"), like the first "q[e]" in line 27, or a relative ("which"), like the second "q[e]" in the same line, but the effect is the same.
move. There is another double meaning here which cannot be captured in translation. Intransitive "remuer" can mean "to move or depart" (*AND* s.v. "remuer," v.n., 2, 3; *DMF* s.v. "remuer," II.B.1.a), consistent with the verbs of motion in the rest of this stanza and recalling the image of the separation of the heart from the body in **7**.2-4 *et al.*; but also, with reference to sentiments or one's heart, "to change" (*DMF*, loc.cit., I.B.1; *AND*, loc.cit., 1), making the refrain also a profession of fidelity, the dominant sense in stanza 3 and in the envoy. Gower uses the root verb "muer" in the reflexive to mean "to change" in **8**.1 with reference to the heart, where he also rhymes it with the noun "mue." See also **1**.15.

9-13 The imagery of feudal service (which recurs in **23**.5-7 and **25**.22) has a long history in earlier poetry, describing both the lover's submission to a personified Love and his submission to his lady. For the former see, among many examples, Machaut, *Lou*. **83**.11, 22; for the latter, *Lou*. **40**.20. Machaut also freely uses "ligement" ("in the manner of an *homme lige*") to describe the depth of the persona's commitment; see *DMF* s.v. "ligement," A.1, "De manière entièrement dévouée [in a fully devoted way]," with numerous examples from the "Lang. de l'amour [language of love]," most from Machaut.

9 *constraint*. A common term with reference to the force of love (as in **27**.8, **42**.12), especially in the verb form (as in **45**.11). See Machaut *Lou*. **13**.17, **191**.18; Granson **30**.5, *et al.*; *DMF* s.v. "contraindre," II.A.

10 *to bow and to submit*. *DMF* distinguishes between two verbs, both derived from Latin *supplicare*: "souployer" (either intransitive or reflexive), "to bow, submit," and "supplier," "to pray, beseech." Godefroy also lists both "souploier" and "soupleier" (the latter in the Supplement), while *AND* has only a single entry under "supplier." Gower seems to have been a bit casual in the distinction. He uses "supplie" consistently to mean "pray, entreat, beseech," but "supploie" to mean either "beseech" (*50B* **9**.35) or (reflexively) "bow" (MO 18125). The form "supple" occurs only once elsewhere in Gower, in *MO* 29171-72, "Et ceaux qui furont en errour / En droite foy les supple et ploie [and those who were in error he bends to the proper faith]." Here, used reflexively, it evidently means "bow, submit," as does the cognate verb "ploie" (from Latin "plicare"). This verb too had two different forms, "ploier" and "plier," but they appear in *DMF* in a combined entry s.v. "plier," and only in senses having to do with bowing and submitting rather than praying. Gower uses both forms (for "plie," see **10**.6, **14**.18). For a possible different use of "se ploier," however, see **3**.16 and the note.

11 *do homage*. The "a" in the manuscript is superfluous grammatically and it has no effect metrically, and one is tempted to delete it. "Faire (sa) ligence" (without the preposition) is a common expression. See *DMF* s.v. "ligence," "remplir ses obligations d'homme lige [fulfill one's obligations as an *homme lige*]", and *AND* s.v. "ligance," "to do homage." See also *MED* s.v. "ligeaunce," 1.b.: "**don (maken) ~** . . . to swear allegiance"; *CA* Prol. *25, "To whom belongeth my ligeance."

13 *submit*. This is another very common image in earlier lyrics. See *DMF* s.v. "octroyer," A.3, with a dozen citations from Machaut.

14 *commitment*. On "retenue," see the note to 8.17.
in this way. For "a ce point," see *DMF* s.v. "point[1]," II.B.2.a. Possibly also "at this time," *DMF*, loc.cit., II.B.1.b.

17-20 May and springtime are commonly invoked in the lyrics (see the note to **36**), but I don't know of any model for Gower's conceit in this stanza, comparing the effects of the coming of springtime to the effects of the lady's beauty upon the persona's mood. For another invocation of May for comparison to the lady, see **23**.22-23.

18 *which*. The singular verb ("est") suggests, but does not prove, given the looseness of agreement elsewhere in *50B*, that the antecedent is "Maii," not the fields. Cf. **10**.22-23, **23**.22-23.

19 *revive*. The verb "revenir" can also be used with reference to plants that grow back after cutting (*DMF* s.v. "revenir," I.B.2), continuing the image from the preceding lines.

20 Another problematic line. Macaulay's punctuation, with a comma at the end of line 19, no punctuation after "bealté," and a colon at the end of line 20, places "de vo bealté" in the same clause as the rest of the line, which appears less than likely because of the "le" which serves as the object of "penser." The use of "de" to mean "because of," as I have translated it, with reference to the preceding line, is nonetheless a bit unusual. If the "le [it]" does not refer vaguely to the entire preceding clause (making this half line a nearly meaningless filler, rather like "pour dire voir" [**11**.3] or one of its variants), then it must refer to "bealté," in which case one would expect the feminine form "la" instead. Unusual gender accords are not that uncommon in Gower (see Merrilees, p. 176, and Macaulay, 1:xvi-xvii), though not normally with pronouns of this sort (though cf. **16**.7-8). "Penser" without a following "de" can have various senses, including "consider," "imagine," and "remember." See *AND* s.v. "penser," 1, 2; *DMF* s.v. "penser," I.B.2.c, II.A.1.a, c, II.B.

21-22 *dress, donned.* The translation loses the repetition of the verb "vestir," which might have as object either the person who is dressed or the object that is being donned (*AND* s.v. "vestir," 1, 2). The image of dressing emerges from that of the return of spring. Cf. **7**.15-17, in which Gower uses "revestir" to describe the return of greenery to the garden with the departure of winter.

25 *image*. In addition to the play on two different senses of "proie" in lines 25 and 27, in line 25 Gower blends two different meanings of "ymage." In combination with "proier [to pray]," an "ymage" might be a painting or sculpture that serves as an object of veneration. (See *DMF* s.v. "image," II.A.) In Machaut's *Voir Dit*, the lady sends the narrator an "image" (a painted representation) of herself (1532 ff.), before which he kneels (1566), which he holds in reverence (1582), and which he addresses (1594-99), though he does not actually pray to it as here. But after the praise of the lady's beauty in the preceding stanza, the reference might also be her face (*DMF*. loc. cit., I.B.1, "visage, figure [face]," where four of the six citations are from Machaut) or to the "image" of the woman's appearance that the persona bears in his mind (whence modern "imagination"; *DMF*, loc.cit., II.C; also *MED* s.v. "imāge," 2(a), citing *CA* 7.4876) . Gower similarly blends these meanings in Amans' confession of Sacrilege in *CA* 7125-34, where he admits to venerating his lady's "ymage" when he's in church as he expectantly observes her face. Cf. **23**.R.

27 *prey*. "Proie" might be either the object of a hunt (*DMF* s.v. "proie," A) or the booty or spoils of battle or war (*DMF*, B). The first vaguely recalls the hunting image of the first stanza, though it greatly alters the roles. Macaulay (1:465) gives "'your prey,' i.e., your possession by right of capture." Cf. *Tr* **18**.4, where the adulterous husband "Grant pecché fait s'il quiert ailours sa proie [commits a great sin if he seeks his *proie* elsewhere, i.e. outside of marriage]."

16

Camelion, c'est° une beste fiere,
Qui vit tansoulement de l'air sanz plus.
Ensi pour dire, en mesme la maniere,
De soul espoir qe j'ai d'amour conçuz
Sont mes pensers en vie sustenuz.
Mais p*ar* gouster de chose qe jeo sente,
Combien° qe jeo le serche sus et jus,
Ne puiss de g*ra*ce trover celle sente.

N'est pas ma sustenance assetz pleniere
De vein espoir qe m'ad ensi repuz.
Ainz en devient° ma faim tant plus amiere
D'ardant desir qe m'est d'amour accruz.
De mon repast jeo sui ensi deçuz,
Q'ove voide main espoir ses do*u*ns presente,
Qe q*a*nt jeo quide meux estre au dessus
En halt estat, jeo fais plusgrief descente.

Quiqu'est devant, souhaid n'est pas derere
Au feste quelle espoir avera tenuz,
U° volenté sanz fait est chamberere.
Tiels officers sont ainçois retenuz.
P*ar* ceux jeo vive et vuill ceo qe ne puiss.
Ma fortune est contraire a mon entente.
Ensi morrai si jeo merci ne truis,
Q'en vein espoir ascun profit n'avente.

A vous, en qui sont toutz biens° contenuz,
Q'es flour des autres la plusexcellente,
Ceste balade avoec centmil salutz
Envoie, dame, maisq'il vous talente.

1 *Mac* est
7 *MS* Com bien
11 *MS* endevient
19 *Mac* A. *See the note to this line in the commentary.*
25 *Mac* bien

16

The chameleon is° a wild beast
that lives exclusively on air, nothing more.
In just the same way, so to speak,
by the hope alone that I have conceived from love
are my thoughts kept alive.
But by eating of a thing that I feel,°
however much I seek it, high and low,
I cannot find the way° to grace.

My sustenance is not adequate
from the vain hope that has fed me thus.
Instead my hunger becomes so much sharper
from the burning desire which has increased in me from love.
Thus I am deceived and disappointed° in my meal,
for Hope presents its gifts with empty hands,
for when I most expect° to be above,
in high estate, I make a more painful descent.

Whoever is in front, Wish is not behind
at the feast that Hope will have held,
where° Wish without deed° is the servant.
Such are the officers° that are preferred.°
Through them I live and want what I cannot have.
My fortune is contrary to my desire.°
Thus I will die if I do not find mercy,
For in vain hope no benefit comes to pass.

°To you, in whom all good things are contained,
who among others are° the most excellent flower,
this ballade with a hundred thousand greetings
I send, lady, would that it please you.°

Like **12**, **13**, and **15**, this ballade begins with a simile drawn from the natural world, but it evolves a bit unpredictably. The chameleon, living on air, is the model for the way in which hope sustains the persona's thoughts of love, but (unlike the chameleon's?–the comparison gets a little fuzzy here), that food does not lead him to grace. The two stanzas that follow are about the inadequacy of the sustenance offered by this food, which is both hope itself and also served at a banquet at which Hope is the host and Wish and Desire are the servers, and in the final lines of each stanza, as in the first, Gower abandons the metaphor for a different, more familiar

way of accounting for the persona's disappointment. This is perhaps the one poem among the four in this section without a refrain in which the lack of the order that the refrain imposes is most strongly felt.

While a bit dizzying if one tries to follow closely, the poem nonetheless offers, in its assortment of imagery, a persuasive picture of the deceptiveness of hope and its effect upon the persona. The central metaphor of the feast in the second and third stanzas recalls Gower's treatment of Delicacy in Book 6 of *CA*. Amans first complains of his unwilling "fast" of any of the pleasures of love (6.688-726), and then, in his single longest uninterrupted speech in *CA* (6.743-950), he describes the three "foods"—seeing, hearing, and thinking about his lady—by which he is sustained. Hearing stories about other lovers gives him the temporary comfort of hope (6.888-91), just as hearing his lady speak is his "hertes leche" (866), but all three foods leave him unsatisfied and disappointed (6.927-31), a state he compares to that of the plover, which like the chameleon in this ballade, lives on air alone (943-44). Amans' speech is itself drawn from *RR* 2581-2748 in which Esperance ("Hope") provides the gifts that Amans describes as his three foods in order to comfort the imprisoned lover. Among these three different versions of a feast, only in the ballade is hope itself the empty food rather than a source of relief, and only in this poem among the *50B* does the persona find Hope to be so deceptive, the theme of a different lament by Amans in *CA* 1.1954-68.

The biggest shift in the poem occurs in the envoy, as the persona turns to address his lady for the first time. Indeed, this is his first direct reference to her, and this is the only poem in *50B* in which the lady (or the man, in the poems in which the persona is a woman) is not named in the stanzas themselves as either the subject or the addressee. The change in address is also marked by a change of tone and, even more than in **13**, by a change in the implicit relationship between the persona and his lady, for as he sends her the ballade, with his compliments and his greetings, he is much less the despairing lover that he describes, and he hopes only "qu'il vous talente," that it please her. These last four lines could easily be dismissed as an afterthought, but in view of the consistent use of the envoy to affirm a dramatic setting in most of the other ballades, the effect must be deliberate even if the poem might once have existed without them. And the effect of the disjunction between stanzas and envoy is to draw attention to the literariness and artificiality of the poetic language of the main part of the poem. In contrast to the gracious address of the final lines, the lyrical mode of the first three stanzas is merely a pose and the persona's distress and suffering merely another way of offering a compliment to the lady, a strategy with important implications for the reading of several of the later poems.

1 Macaulay omits the redundant "c(e) [it]," either having overlooked it while transcribing or silently emending it. A similarly redundant "c(e)" appears in **8**.20 and **37**.1-2. In none of these three cases is it required metrically.

6 *a thing that I feel.* A tricky phrase. Macaulay finds in "sente" an implicit distinction between the persona's mere hope and some more substantial food, and he translates lines 6-8, "But by feeding on this food of the mind I cannot, though I seek it up and down, find for myself the path of grace" (1:465). The context certainly suggests a reference to "hope" in line 4, but while the range of "sentir" (as of "chose") is very broad, it is difficult to find any other examples in which it suggests a distinction between purely mental activity, particularly imaginary activity, and real experience, or in which it refers to mere "feelings." See *AND*, *DMF* s.v. "sentir."

8 *way*. "Sente," like "voie" (**15**.4, *Tr* **18**.26) can refer to paths both concrete and metaphorical. Both Machaut (e.g. Comp. **1**.225) and Deschamps (e.g. **477**.17, **528**.7) refer to the "sente" of love.

13 *deceived and disappointed*. "Deçuz" embraces both senses: *AND* s.v. "deceivre," 1, 2; *DMF* s.v. "décevoir," A, B.

15 Gower repeatedly uses "meux quide" with reference to illusions or to foolish or misplaced expectation, as in **48**.12, *Tr* **8**.8, *MO* 10951 ("Qant om meulx quide estre au dessus [when one most thinks to be above]"), and some dozen other passages in *MO*.

19 *where*. Macaulay's error of transcription ("A" for "U") completely alters the meaning here. "Volenté" must be the subject, and it provides a second server at the feast. "Volenté" in this context is not very different in meaning from "Souhaid" in line 17. See *AND* s.v. "volenté," 1; *DMF* s.v. "volonté," B.1.a, B.2.a.

without deed. The basic meaning of "fait" is "deed, act." Gower uses the phrase "sanz fait" only once elsewhere, in *MO* 17960, where the context is the one who does not sin but who does not perform a positive act of virtue. *AND* s.v. "fait[1]," 1, cites a passage from Nicole Bozon in which "Tiele fei saunz fet" translates "fides sine operibus [faith without deeds]." *DMF* s.v. "fait," II.B, cites Froissart, "Ne pensés . . . que sans fait l'omme martir me claimme [Don't think that I call myself a martyr *sans fait*],"translating "sans fait" as "Hors de toute réalité, sans raison [outside of all reality, without reason]," though again the sense seems to be more simply without a deed to back up the claim. Here, in context, in combination with "Volenté," the sense seems to be "Wish without attainment," and perhaps we should treat the three words together as a compound name for the personification, rather like "Dolour d'autry Joye [sorrow for another's joy]" (*MO* 3027) and "Joye d'autri mal [joy for another's pain]," (*MO* 3163). For the condition that Gower describes, cf. **47**.13.

20 *officers*. "Officer" normally refers to a somewhat more exalted position, but in *MO* 17982 Gower also uses it, as here, with reference to two figures who are enlisted to serve at table.

preferred. Though the primary meaning of "ainçois" is temporal, "before, earlier" (*AND* s.v. "anceis," 1, 2), like Modern English "rather" (also temporal in its original sense) and Modern French "plutôt," it can also be used to indicate preference (*AND*, loc.cit, 3), as seems to be the case here.

22 *desire*. "Entente" embraces both "intention" and "desire." See *DMF* s.v. "entente," I.A.1 (with numerous citations from Machaut). The context here is shaped by "souhaid" (line 16) and "vuill" (line 21).

25-28 Cf. the similar greeting in the envoy to **39**.25-27.

26 *are*. One expects "estes," the plural form of the verb (used for formal singular) with "vous" rather than "es," which is singular (and informal). Macaulay (1:465) notes that "The confusion of singular and plural in the second person is common in our author," citing *MO* 442, though there and in the other passages in *MO* that he cites in the note to that line, Gower uses a plural verb with a singular pronoun subject (as in **42**.R below). Here he uses a singular verb in a context in which he elsewhere uses formal pronouns, as in **4[1]**.24 and **34**.27. Cf. also **38**.19, where we find an unexpected singular pronoun.

28 *would that it please you*. Or "provided that it please you," but as in **10**.5 (see the note to that line), "maisq(ue)" here introduces a wish rather than a condition.

17

Ne sai si de ma dame la° durtée,
Salvant l'estat d'amour, jeo blamerai.
Bien sai qe p*ar* t*re*sfine loialté
De tout mon coer la serve et serviray,
Mais le guardon, s'ascun deservi ai,
Ne sai coment, m'est toutdis eslongé,
Dont jeo ma dame point n'escuseray.
Tant meinz reprens com plus l'averay doné.

A mo*u*n avis ceo n'est pas egalté,
Solonc reson, si jeo le voir dirrai,
A doner tout, coer, corps, et volenté,
Q*a*nt pour tout ceo rep*re*ndre ne porray
D'amour la meindre chose qe jeo sai.
Om dist, poi valt service q'est sanz fée.
Mais ja pour tant ma dame ne lerray,
Q'a lui servir m'ai tout abandoné.

Ma dame, qui sciet langage a plentée,
Rien me respont q*a*nt jeo la prierai,
Et s'ensi soit q'elle ait a moi p*ar*lée,
D'un mot soulein lors sa response orrai.
A basse vois tantost me dirra, "nay."
C'est sur toutz autres ditz qe jeo plus hée.
Le mot est brief, mais qant vient a l'essay,
La sentence est de g*ra*nt dolour parée.

Ceste balade a celle envoieray,
En qui riens falt fors soulement pitée.
Ne puis lesser maisq*ue* jeo l'ameray,
Q'a sa merci jeo m'ai recomandé.

1 *Erasure between* la *and* durtee, *the space filled in with a line crossed with two slashes. Cross drawn in margin.*

17

I don't know if I'll blame my lady's hardheartedness,°
with all due respect to love.°
I do know that out of pure loyalty
I serve and will serve her with all my heart,
but the reward, if I have deserved one,
I don't know how, is always denied° me,
for which I will not excuse my lady at all.
The less I get back, the more that I have given.°

In my opinion that isn't fair,°
according to reason,° if I will speak the truth,
to give all—heart, body, and will—
when for all that I could not get back
the slightest thing from love, as far as I know.
They say, of little worth is service without reward.°
°But nonetheless I will not leave my lady,
for I am completely dedicated to serving her.

°My lady, who knows language in abundance,
makes no response to me when I entreat her,
and if it should happen that she speak to me,
then I'd hear her answer in one word alone.
In a low voice, she'd immediately tell me, "Nay."°
It is above all other statements what I hate the most.
The word is short, but when it comes to the test,
the meaning is wrapped in great sadness.

°This ballade I will send to her
in whom nothing is lacking° except pity.
I cannot desist from loving her,°
for I have commended myself to her mercy.

Ballade **17** seems to be assembled out of pieces borrowed from other poems, but the envoy ties it together in a uniquely Gowerian way. Stanzas one and two weigh the lover's devotion against the lack of any perceived reward. The claim of unfairness is not an uncommon theme (see the note to **12**.9-13), but nowhere is it approached more delicately than in the first stanza, as the persona is at first reluctant to blame his lady but then gains the courage to assert that she shouldn't be excused. The stanza ends in a line that, with its balanced phrases, has all the appearance of a refrain: "Tant meinz reprens com plus l'averay doné." The second stanza takes a rather stronger stand, but while

one might expect it to be heading to a repetition of the same line, the tone of complaint yields to a statement of the lover's willing subjection to a service without rewards and another final line that could well have served as a refrain. The third stanza returns to the theme of the persona's attempts to address his lady first introduced in ballade **14**, and as in **14**, his account of his lack of success in followed by the announcement in the envoy that he will send his ballade to her.

The envoy achieves two effects. It unites the themes of the first two stanzas in a statement of the persona's compulsion to seek the "mercy" of a woman whom he acknowledges is without "pity," and the choice to send her the poem becomes another expression of the same paradox. The confession of helpless undying love to a lady without pity is one thing; to send a ballade about his rejection to the lady who has already rejected him is quite another, for it doesn't just describe the persona's condition, it re-enacts it. In **17** and also in **18**, moreover, the persona doesn't address his lady in the envoy, as he does at the end of **14** and **16**, for instance, but he continues to speak of her in the third person to the impersonal, imagined audience of the first three stanzas to which we belong. The only other such poems that I know of that speak of sending the poem that are not addressed directly to the addressee are Gower's own ballades **5** and **36**. Ballade **5** is an ardent expression of the lover's sincere devotion, and there is no evidence that it will not be happily received: sending it is another act consistent with the lover's feeling. (On **36**, see the note to **36**.23.) In **17** and **18**, the act of sending is also consistent with all of the persona's earlier entreaties, but his inability to address his lady directly adds another dimension to his plight, for it underlines the very pointlessness of the attempt. It is not even clear what he expects: he doesn't ask for a response, and as the poem ends, he remains even more firmly caught between his helpless love and his inability to win either his lady's mercy or her pity.

1 *hardheartedness*. The lady's "durté" (or her "dur cuer [hard heart]" as in Machaut, *Lou*. **214**.19) as the obstacle to the lover's success appears just as commonly as "Danger" in the lyrics of the 14th century, and often in its company (as in Machaut, Motet **4**.20, 22, **15**.31, 35; Granson **61**.25-26, *et al.*), but it implies that the fault lies even more strongly in the lady's character than mere "disdain" or "standoffishness." The noun recurs in **18**.22.

2 *with all due respect to love.* More precisely "preserving the status of love" (*AND* s.v. "salver," 2, 3; *DMF* s.v. "sauver," I.B); as Macaulay notes (1:465), "a kind of apology for the idea of blaming his mistress." See *MED* s.v. "sāving(e" (prep.), 2, "with due respect, regard, or consideration for," with numerous citations from this period. This may be another English expression that has crept into Gower's French. It recurs in **22**.26.

6 *denied*. More literally, "eslonger" means "to keep away, to keep at a distance," but for its figurative use, see *DMF* s.v. "esloigner," B.1.

8 The "plus . . . , moins . . ." formula, here and in **18**.R, echoes the "plus . . . , plus . . ." construction in **14**.8-9. Amans uses the English equivalent in his denial of Sloth (4.285-86). Deschamps uses it in a refrain—"Quant plus me voit ma dame et moins me prise [when the more my lady sees me, the less she values me]"(**414**.R)—in a ballade in which the persona claims, as here, that his service "de cuer, de corps, de tout mon pensement [in heart, in body, in all my thoughts]"(**414**.9) goes unrewarded; and he uses a similar line in another ballade on the arbitrariness of fortune (**921**.R).

9 *fair*. The noun "egalté" does not appear in *AND*; it does in *DMF* s.v. "egalité," but not in this sense. Each also lists the cognate "equalité," defining it roughly as "equivalence." *AND* s.v. "egal," 3, however, offers "equitable" as one of its definitions, with two citations, one from approximately 1400, and that is clearly the sense of "egalté" in this line. Cf. **13**.6 and note.

10 *according to reason*. "Solonc raison" might go with the preceding clause or, because of Gower's habit of placing modifiers before the beginning of the subordinate clause to which they belong (see the note to **6**.6-7), with the clause that follows. The position has little consequence on the sense, as the persona makes an appeal to reason to support his claim.

14 The obverse of this expression is proverbial; see **28**.20 and the note. But I have not found any analogues in this form, despite "om dist [they say]."

15-16 The persona is not the first to persist in his love despite the lack of any reward. The first stanza of Granson **19**, for instance (already cited above in the note to **14**.8-9), ends, "Et si n'en quier pourtant mon cuer oster. / Plus m'escondit, plus la vueil tenir chiere [And yet I do not want to remove my heart from her. / The more she rejects me, the more I hold her dear]." This last line appears twice more as the refrain.

17-21 Earlier lovers whose solicitations meet with rejection are too numerous to count. To choose four different but typical examples, all from Machaut: In *Lou.* **78**.18-31, the persona's effort to speak to his lady only provokes the intervention of Danger and "Reffuz [Rejection]"; in *Lou*. **184**.7-8, he declares, "Quant je li di mon amoureux martyre, / Las! et ses cuers ne me fait qu'escondire [When I tell her about my suffering for love, alas! and her heart only rejects me]"; in *Lou.* **203**.R he complains, "Qu'adès la pri et riens ne me respont [that I constantly entreat her and she says nothing in reply]"; and in *Lou.* **254** a woman addresses her lover directly, complaining of his "cuer de marbre [heart of marble]" (9) and that "or ne me vues oïr ne regarder [now you don't want to hear or see me]" (15). See also the passages cited in the note to **14**.8-9 above.

17 *language in abundance*. *AND* s.v. "plenté," translates "a plenté" as "thoroughly," citing only this line, and one wants very much to agree. (Cf. Yeager: "who has a full command of language.") All other uses of the phrase "a plenté" in *AND*, in *DMF* s.v. "plenté," and in *MO* 11144, 19960, however, refer either to a plural noun or to a non-count noun (in one instance, "vitaille [food]") and are the equivalent of English "plenty of." "My lady knows plenty of languages"? Perhaps "my lady knows plenty of language" comes closer to what Gower meant, shifting the meaning of "langage" a bit to the act of talking, as in Christine's "Vous perdez vostre lengaige [you're wasting your speech]" (*100BD* **4**.1). But then is this a praise of her eloquence or a hint that perhaps she sometimes talks too much? Cf. *DMF*, loc.cit, A.1., "*Avoir beaucoup langage*. 'Parler beaucoup [to speak a lot]'," with one mid-15th-century citation.

21 *Nay*. This is, of course, an Anglo-Norman form (as opposed to continental French), borrowed from contemporary English. Cf. **30**.19. **36**.R; *AND* s.v. "nai." Amans receives the same answer from his lady in *CA* 1.2749, 3.55-60, 4.2813, 8.2048. Cf. Granson, **26**.R, "Mais vous m'avez tousjours respondu 'non' [But you have always answered me with 'no']"; and his light-hearted rondeau, "Se Dieu eust oblié 'non' / Quand il faisoit le langaige, / Je tien qu'il eust fait que saige / Et que gracieux et bon [If God had just forgotten 'no' when he created language, I hold he would have proven wise and gracious and good]" (**1.**1-4).

25-28 As noted above, there is no precedent for an envoy that refers to sending the poem to the addressee in the third person. Machaut does have a *chanson royale* in which after complaining about his lady's lack of *merci*, the persona requests the "princes" who are his addressees to have his lady hear his song, "Car tant me het que l'eüst refusé [for she hates me so much that she would have refused it]" (*Lou*. **46**.43), thus imagining, at least, a presentation to the lady while not addressing her directly.

26 *nothing is lacking*. For the formula, see **11**.12-14 and the commentary on **11**.

27 More precisely, if much more awkwardly, "I cannot desist but that I love her." More colloquially, "I cannot help loving her." "Maisque" is "but that" rather than "provided that" in this context, as also in **40**.7, and as pointed out by Macaulay in his note to this line (I:465). He translates, "I cannot leave off from loving her." Cf. the note to **10**.5 above.

18

Les goutes d'eaue qe cheont menu
L'en voit sovent p*er*cer la dure piere,
Mais cest essample n'est pas avenu
Semblablement, qe jeo de ma priere
La tendre oraille de ma dame chiere
P*er*cer porrai; ainz il m'est defendu,
Com plus la prie et meinz m'ad entendu.

Tiel esp*er*ver crieis unqes ne fu
Qe jeo ne crie plus en ma maniere
As toutz les foitz qe jeo voi temps et lu,
Et toutdis maint ma dame d'une chiere
Assetz plusdure qe n'est la rochiere.
Ne sai dont jeo ma dame ai offendu,
Com plus la prie et meinz m'ad entendu.

Le ciel amont de la justice dieu
T*re*sp*er*cerai si jeo les seintz requiere,
Mais a ce point c'est ma dame abstenu,
Qe toutdis clot s'oraille a ma matiere.
Om p*er*ce ainçois du marbre la quarere
Q'ell[e]° ait a ma requeste un mot rendu,
Com plus la prie et meinz m'ad entendu.

La dieurté de ma dame est ensi fiere
Com Diamant, qe n'est de riens fendu.
Ceo l*ett*re en ceo me serra messagiere
Com plus la prie et meinz m'ad entendu.

20 *MS* Qell

Gower, John. *Cinkante Balades*. Edited and translated by Peter Nicholson, Feb. 2021, *John Gower Society*, www.JohnGower.org.

18

°Drops of water that fall bit by bit
one often sees pierce the hard stone,
but this example hasn't come to pass
similarly, that I with my prayer
°the tender ear of my dear lady
might pierce. Instead, it is denied me,
as the more I entreat her and the less she has heeded me.°

There was never a sparrow hawk so clamorous°
that I do not cry more, in my own way,
whenever I see the time and place,
and my lady always remains with the same expression,
quite a bit harder than a rock.°
I don't know how I have offended my lady,
as the more I entreat her and the less she has heeded me.

°The heaven above of God's justice°
I would pierce° if I entreat the saints,
but to this point my lady has abstained,°
for she always closes her ear to what I say.°
One cuts sooner through a block° of marble
than she has returned a word to my request,
as the more I entreat her and the less she has heeded me.

°The hardheartedness of my lady is as hard°
as a diamond, which is not split by anything.
This letter on this will be my messenger
as the more I entreat her and the less she has heeded me.

Ballade **18**, like **14** and **17**, plays with the paradox of the persona's revealing the ineffectiveness of his speech in yet another attempt to address his lady, and to an even greater extent than in those two poems, since he has no real prospect of any better outcome, it appears that he simply re-enacts the very rejection of which he complains. Unlike those two poems, **18** makes the persona's persistence the entire theme. The only suggestion of his actual affection for the woman is the reference to "ma dame chiere" in the fifth line. There is nothing about why he finds her attractive, about the pains he suffers, about his dedication to her service, about the dilemma he faces, or even about his hope for her pity, as in **14** and **17**. Instead, he believes that he deserves a reward simply for the duration and the doggedness of his entreaties—that repeating his complaint will simply wear her down—and as he expresses his frustration and his

bewilderment at his lady's resistance, he places all blame directly upon her character, comparing his efforts to reach her to the erosion of a stone, to prayer, and to cutting a block of marble, and comparing his lady's hardheartedness both to a rock and to a diamond. But it is the cries of a sparrowhawk in the second stanza, clamorous, loud, and insistent, that best seem to describe his efforts, including this poem. At the conclusion of that same stanza, he wonders how he could possibly have offended her. The juxtaposition is telling, but it reveals more to us than it does to him. Even as he expresses his puzzlement, he unwittingly introduces another whole perspective both on his language and on his expectations, and he implicitly acknowledges a sensitivity that is not a mere defect of character, one that suffices to explain his plight.

This introduction of the woman's perspective in this way, through the persona's own words—our sudden understanding of that which the persona himself seems so unaware, that his every attempt is self-defeating—has no real precedent in the lyrics as far as I can tell, and it undermines not just the persona's own claims upon her regard but the entire rhetorical tradition on which he draws, not least the assumption, commonplace in poems of this sort, that the lover somehow deserves a "reward" merely for the intensity of his efforts—to reverse the refrain, that she *should* heed him the more that he entreats her. In the envoy, the persona tells us that the poem will be his "messenger," immediately after his strongest statement of her impenetrable "durté." The final statement of the refrain guarantees that yet another entreaty will have no happier effect. By the end, in fact, "durté" seems an entirely reasonable response, and the balanced phrases of the refrain express not an unfathomable mystery but a completely understandable cause and effect.

Gower finds a different way of crediting the lady's will in **19**.

1-2 Proverbial. Hassell G44, "La goutte creuse la pierre [the droplet hollows the rock]" (citing this passage, Deschamps **939**.7, and one other); Whiting D412, "Little Drops thirl (*pierce*) the flint on which they fall."

5-6 Gower uses the image of "piercing the ear" in **6**.5 (possibly an English expression; see the note) and **44**.10, but here he juxtaposes the figurative use of the verb with the more literal sense in line 2. See further the note to line 16 below.

7 Amans makes a similar lament in *CA* 4.285-86: "For ay the more I crie faste, / The lasse hire liketh forto hiere." On the "plus . . . moins . . ." formula, see the notes to **14**.8-9 and **17**.8.

8 *clamorous*. *AND* s.v. "crieis." Macaulay (glossary, 1:494), "loud in crying." Cf. *MO* 25287, "Ainz est crieys plus q'esperver [rather is he more clamorous than a sparrowhawk]," with reference to a fraudulent shop-keeper calling in customers from the street.

12 A proverbial comparison. Hassell P174, "Dur comme une pierre (roche) [hard as a stone (rock)]," citing among many others *MO* 2053-54, "Desobeissance . . . ad le cuer dur plus que perrine [Disobedience has a heart harder than stone]"; Whiting S763, "As hard as (the, any, a) Stone(s)." See also Machaut, *Lou*. **258**.19, "A son dur cuer, plus dur que marbre bis [to her hard heart, harder than grey marble]"; Mudge **60**.11, "cuer de pierre [heart of stone]."

15-18 Amans too compares the effectiveness of prayer with the ineffectiveness of his appeals to his lady in *CA* 4.3489-95.

15 *God's justice*. See Short §31.3 ; "The expression of possession by juxtaposition of substantives, the so-called "fiz le roi" construction, is widely used in AN . . . , particularly with *Deu* as possessor, and survives throughout the 13th century and beyond." On the use of the construction in Old French;

see Lucien Foulet, *Petite syntaxe de l'ancien Français*, 3rd ed. (Paris: Champion, 1968), §§ 19-32. Gower refers to "la justice dieu" or "la dieu justice" four times in *MO*, in 2600, 7612, 16091, and 20185. He also uses expressions such as "autry pecché [another's sin]," *MO* 12817.

16 Like "piercing the ear" (see the note to **6**.5 above), "piercing heaven" may be an English expression. There are no similar citations in *AND* or *DMF* (s.v. "percer"), but see *MED* s.v. "pērcen," 5(a), "To get through to (heaven), achieve communication with, have an effect in"; and *CA* 5.5674, "That my vois schal the hevene perce."

17 *has abstained.* Macaulay notes the use of "c'est" for "s'est" (1:xxxi and the note to this line, 1:465).

18 *to what I have to say*. More precisely, "to my subject matter."

19 *block of marble. AND* s.v. "quarrere," 2.

22-23 Proverbial. Hassell D67, "Plus dur que diamant," with seven citations, four from Machaut and one from Deschamps; Whiting D227, "As hard as (the, a) Diamond"; *MO* 2052-53, 7538. It is usually the heart that is compared to the diamond, but for this line cf. Machaut, Chans.Bal. **31**.1-3: "Plus dur qu'un dyamant / . . . Est vo durté [harder than a diamond . . . is your hardheartedness]." See further the note to **38**.1.

22 *hard*. "Fier(e)" can be a synonym for "dur(e)," as is needed here for the comparison to the diamond, but with reference to one's disposition it can also mean "cruel, harsh." See *AND* s.v. "fer[2]," a.1.

19

Om solt danter la beste plussalvage
P*ar* les p*ar*oles dire soulement
Et p*ar* p*ar*ole changer le visage
Et les semblances muer de la gent,
Mais jeo ne voie ascun exp*er*iment
Qe de ma dame torne° le corage.
Celle art n'est pas dessoubtz le firmament
Por atrapper un tiel oisel en cage.

Jeo p*ar*le et prie et serve et faitz ho*m*mage
De tout mon coer entier, mais nequedent
Ne puis troever d'amour celle avantage
Dont ma t*re*sdoulce dame ascunement
Me deigne un soul regard pitousement
Doner; mais plus qe Sibille le sage
S'est*ra*nge, ensi qe jeo ne sai coment
Pour atrapper un tiel oisel en cage.

Loigns de mon proeu et p*re*s de mon damage
Jeo trieus toutdis le fin du p*ar*lement.
Ne sai p*ar*ler un mot de tiel estage
P*ar* quoi ma dame ne change son talent,
Siq*ue* jeo puiss veoir tout clierement
Qe ma p*ar*ole est sanz vertu, volage,
Et sanz esploit,° sicom frivole au vent,
Pour atrapper un tiel oisel en Cage.

Ma dame, en qui toute ma g*ra*ce attent,
Vous m'avetz tant soubgit en vo servage
Qe jeo n'ai sens, reson, n'entendement
Pour atrapper un tiel oisel en cage.

6 *MS* torne *over erasure. Cross drawn in margin.*
23 *Mac* exploit

19

One is used to taming the most wild beast
just by speaking words
and by speech to changing the expression
and altering the appearance of people,
but I don't see any device
that turns the heart of my lady.
That art does not exist beneath the firmament
to catch such a bird in a cage.°

I speak and pray and serve and do homage
with all my entire heart, but nonetheless
I cannot find that benefit from love
by which my gentle lady in any way
might deign to give to me piteously a single look,
but more than Sibyl the wise°
she remains aloof, so that I don't know how
to catch such a bird in a cage.

Far from my profit and close to my harm
I always find the end of the conversation.
I don't know how to speak a word of such a nature°
by which my lady might change her will,
and thus I can see completely clearly
that my speech is without power, fleeting,
and without success, like a trifle° in the wind,
to catch such a bird in a cage.

My lady, on whom all my grace° depends,°
you have so subjected me in servitude° to you
that I don't have sense, reason, or understanding°
to catch such a bird in a cage.

Like **18**, **19** is a poem on the ineffectiveness of the lover's pleas, but it wears its imagery much more lightly, and it presents a very different view of his relationship to his lady. The examples that he uses for contrast in stanza one are both drawn from actual, more successful uses of language rather than from another realm, and the rest of the poem directly concerns his unsuccessful attempts to solicit her regard, which seem, in contrast to **18**, both sincere and even well-mannered. His claims against her are also more modest and less accusatory: she remains unaffected, aloof, like a bird that cannot be caught and caged. The image of the bird provides

the focal point for the subtle inter-reference of the imagery in the poem, echoing the "beste salvage" of the first line (as well as performing its own transformation of the bird imagery—the "chalandre" of **12**.1, the sparrowhawk of **18**.8—in the preceding poems), and echoed in turn by the description of the lover's language as "volage" (22; from "voler," "to fly") and as "frivole au vent" (23), a "trifle in the wind." And like the comparison to the Sybil in line 14, it is not necessarily unflattering. In **34**.25, "ma belle oisel" is used as a term of affection. Here, as the figure for the lady's elusiveness, there is no reason for her to be displeased with the comparison, and it helps to turn the persona's admission of his lack of success from blame of her to a simple acknowledgment of her nature. Despite the failure of his earlier words, he turns to address her directly in the envoy, unlike his predecessors in **17** and **18**, not with any expectation of change and thus not simply re-engaging in the same unsuccessful efforts that he has described, but instead reaffirming her elusiveness and the independence of her will. And isn't there finally some begrudging admiration in his final lines? He makes no further mention of his frustration but only of how he has become subject to her, and "tiel oisel," "such a bird," now seems to refer to the very aspects of the woman that have attracted him: the qualities that make her so hard to catch are also the ones that have most captured the lover's affection. And perhaps putting her in a "cage" might not be so desirable after all.

8 "Like a bird in a cage" is listed in both Hassell (O52) and Whiting (B307) as a proverbial expression for close or unwilling confinement.

14 It is difficult to know how much knowledge Gower might have had of classical Sybils. Chaucer uses "Sibille" to refer to Cassandra in *T&C* 5.1450, as does Gower in *CA* 5.7451-55, where (as in this passage) he refers to her as "sage." (Macaulay, in his notes to the reference in *CA* [3:510], cites Godfrey of Viterbo's *Pantheon* as the source for the identification.) Gower would have known of Ovid's account of the Cumaean Sybil in *Metamorphoses* 14.101-53, and in *HF* 439, Chaucer refers to the same Sybil's accompanying Aeneas in his descent into the underworld in the *Aeneid*, Book 6. But as Macaulay's note suggests, there were also many available medieval sources. (For a survey, see the first two chapters of Jessica L. Malay, *Prophecy and Sybilline Imagery in the Renaissance: Shakespeare's Sibyls* [London: Routledge, 2010].) Via Lactantius and Augustine, the Sibyl was credited with foretelling the birth of Christ. Elsewhere her prophecies were cited in both eschatological and historical writings, the latter including Geoffrey of Monmouth, Matthew Paris, and Ranulf Higden. The *locus classicus* for most medieval authors appears to have been a 4th-century Lain text known as the *Tiburtine Sibyl*, which was translated (with some additions) into Anglo-Norman by Philippe de Thaon in the mid-12th century; see *Le Livre de Sibile*, ed. Hugh Shields (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1979). Philippe identifies the sixth of ten ancient Sibyls (the Tiburtine Sibyl is the tenth) as Cassandra (line 36), perhaps based on a version of the Latin text that is known now from a 16th-century edition (see Shields' note, page 92). Philippe also refers to the Sibyls as "sage," lines 12, 53. Among earlier lyricists, Deschamps refers to Sibyl's prophecies regarding both Christ and the Last Judgment at least four times (**192**, **284**, **1046** and **1212**). Gower provides too few details to indicate which Sybil he had in mind or in what guise, but in none of her many manifestations is the Sibyl known either for her elusiveness or for her taciturnity, which seem to be his point here.

19 *nature*. "Estage" not the word one would expect in this context, but it is susceptible to several extended meanings. See *DMF* s.v. "estage," C. Macaulay includes "kind" (among other choices) in his glossary (1:509).

23 *trifle*. "Frivole" might refer generally to something of little value (*DMF* s.v. "frivole," II.A,"bagatelle"), or more specifically to valueless talk (*DMF*, loc.cit., II.B), a sense that is clearly appropriate to this passage. *AND* s.v. "frivole" gives only "idle chatter, unfounded words," citing this passage and *MO* 10388; and five of the six uses of the word in *MO* are in contexts having to do with speech or language.

25 *grace*. See the note to **1**.8. Here the sense appears to be "amatory grace," the benefits that one derives from love.

depends. This is not the most common use of this verb, but see *DMF* s.v. "attendre[1]," I.B.2.a, "compter sur qqn pour faire qqc [count on someone to do something]."

26 *servitude.* "Servage" is a much stronger word than "service.," though it appears frequently in contemporary lyrics. See *DMF* s.v. "servage," B.3, with nine citations from Machaut and two from Charles d'Orléans. In *50B* it occurs only here and in **23**.14. Cf. also the first "Dedicatory ballade," line 6, and *Tr* **1**.11.

27 *understanding*. "Entendement" might be "Intelligence, jugement, esprit [intelligence, judgment, wit]" (*DMF* s.v. "entendement," II.a.1.a), close in meaning to both "sens" and "raison" in this line, but it might also be "Façon d'envisager les choses, intention, dessein, volonté [way of imagining things, intention, design, will]" (*DMF*, loc.cit., II.B.3), offering an even larger concession to the unchangeableness of the woman's character.

20

Fortune, om dist, de sa Roe vire ades.
A mon avis mais il n'est pas ensi,
Car as toutz jours la troeve d'un reles,
Qe jeo sai nulle variance en li.
Ainz est en mes deseases establi.
En bass me tient, q'a lever ne me lesse.
De mes amours est tout ceo qe jeo di:
Ma dolour monte et ma joie descresce.

Ap*re*s la guerre om voit venir la pes;
Ap*re*s l'iv*er*n est l'estée beal flori,
Mais mon estat ne voi changer ja*m*mes
Qe jeo d'amour porrai troever merci.
Hé, noble dame, pour quoi est il ensi?
Soubtz v*ost*re main gist ma fortune opp*re*sse.
Tanq'il vous plest qe jeo serrai guari,
Ma dolour monte et ma joie descresce.

Celle infortune dont Palamedes
Chaoit fist tant q'Agamenon chosi
Fuist a l'empire; auci Diomedes,
P*ar* ceo qe Troilus estoit guerpi,
De ses amours la fortune ad saisi:
Du fille au Calcas mesna sa leesce.
Mais endroit moi la fortune est faili:
Ma dolour monte et ma joie descresce.

Le coer entier avoec ceo l*ett*re ci
Envoie a vous, ma dame et ma dieuesce.
P*re*netz pité de mon t*re*spov*er*e cri:
Ma dolour monte et ma joie descresce.

20

°Fortune, they say, constantly turns her wheel°
But° that isn't so, in my opinion,
°for I always find it in the same position,°
for I don't know any variation in it.
Instead it is stuck on my distress.
It holds me down, for it doesn't let me rise.
Everything I say is with regard to my love:
my sadness mounts and my joy decreases.°

°After war, ones sees come the peace,°
after winter is the beautifully flowered spring,°
but I don't ever see my condition change
so that I might find mercy in love.
Oh noble lady,° why is it so?
My fortune lies crushed beneath your hand.
Until it pleases you that I be healed,
my sadness mounts and my joy decreases.

°That misfortune by which Palamedes
fell brought about that Agamemnon
was chosen as ruler.° °Diomedes too,°
because Troilus was forsaken,
seized fortune in his love:°
he carried on his joy with the daughter of Calcas.
But as regards myself, fortune is lacking:
my sadness mounts and my joy decreases.

The entire heart with this letter
I send to you, my lady and my goddess.°
Take pity on my miserable cry:
my sadness mounts and my joy decreases.

The course of love is often linked either to the arbitrariness or to the predictable effects of Fortune, represented by her wheel, in the literature that Gower knew. The fullest narrative exposition of the latter is certainly Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* (see in particular 1.837-54 and 4.1-11). Warnings against placing one's trust in Fortune or her gifts, echoing Boethius, are also commonplace, e.g. in Machaut, Motet **8** or *Remede*, 1113-28. But the moral lesson as applied to love is rarely so simple. While Troilus is disappointed in the outcome of events, certainly we are meant to feel, as he does until he ascends to the eighth sphere, that something truly valuable has

been lost. In Machaut's *Remede*, the narrator's denunciation of Fortune leads to a lesson from Esperance on a form of love between a man and a woman that is a 'bien de vertu [good of virtue]" rather than a "bien de Fortune [good of Fortune]" (2797-2803), echoing Lady Philosophy's description of friendship in *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, 3, pr.2. And while Fortune is often cited as governing the outcomes of love in *CA*, Genius' lessons for Amans in Books 1-7, like Esperance's, have to do with the lover's conduct rather than with simply eschewing the deceptiveness of love. Lyrics typically take a much more limited view, as seen from the perspective of the unhappy lover. Especially during the earlier part of the century, Fortune is almost invariably personified (without exception in Machaut), and she is typically held to blame for her hostility, her arbitrariness, or her indifference to the lover's cause (e.g. in the woman's lament in **43**.15, or in Machaut, *Lou*, **38**.11, **56**.7, **189**.1), but there are only very rare references to her wheel (none in Machaut or Granson), and no allusion at all to the dangers of the downward course that must inevitably follow great happiness.

Gower varies the motif somewhat in this ballade. The persona refers to Fortune's wheel but not because he has suffered, for he hasn't "fallen" and he hasn't experienced any loss. His complaint is that Fortune *hasn't* turned her wheel in his case: he is always stuck at the bottom, and he can't foresee anything that resembles the pleasant outcomes that he describes in stanza two. The persona's implicit expectation that he should be able to benefit from Fortune's changeability is not entirely unprecedented: Esperance offers a similar consolation in *Remede* 2695-97, as does Pandarus, perhaps a bit more ambiguously, in *T&C* 841-54, which, especially in combination with the examples in the following stanza, makes one think that Gower might actually have had Chaucer's poem in mind as he composed this ballade. But the persona's (and Pandarus') hope would have been ridiculed by Lady Philosophy, and his implicit self-deceptiveness might be reinforced by his reference to the lady as his "dieuesce" in line 26, though other lovers have made the same claim without evident irony (see the note to this line). Did Gower intend us to understand that his persona was deluded not just about his prospects with his lady or about the effect of his persistence (as in ballade **19**), but about the very value of so transient a phenomenon as human love? If so, this poem is not just unique to *50B* but without any precedent in earlier 14th-century lyrics as far as I know.

The third stanza does little to clarify the issue. The persona cites two examples. Both are offered as evidence that good fortune can follow bad, but in both cases, the bad fortune in someone else's and therefore not really much like winter yielding to spring, and the consolation is strained in any case since there isn't any real reason for the persona to think that he should be more like Agamemnon and Diomedes than like Palamedes and Troilus. The ballade ends, like several others in this section, by setting aside the entire trope around which it is built as the persona describes the poem itself as his "trespovere cri" and transmits it to his lady. Whatever the intended effect here, Gower juxtaposes this poem with ballade **21**, which also suggests that the lady is "divine" but for reasons having to do with her character rather than with the persona's obsession with her, and which describes a type of love of which Esperance and Lady Philosophy might well not disapprove.

1-6 The opening stanza contains Gower's fullest personification of Fortune in *50B* and his only reference to her wheel. Fortune personified also occurs in **1**.22, **6**.8, **10**.8, **43**.15, and *Tr* **15**.15, but

Gower more commonly uses "fortune" to mean "situation" or "circumstances," for better or for worse, as in line 14 (cf. **9**.2 and 39), or more specifically "good fortune," as in lines 21 and 23 (cf. **33**.20).

1 *turns her wheel*. The "de" is problematic and should perhaps be omitted. "Virer" normally takes a simple object (see both *AND* and *DMF* s.v. "virer"), as in *MO* 10942: "[Fortune] Soudainement sa roe vire." "De" is also unnecessary metrically. As Macaulay notes (1:465), "roe" is treated as two syllables in *MO* 10942, as also in 22043 and in Machaut, *Remede*, 2557, but it must be counted as monosyllabic if "de" is included. (Gower's only two other uses of "roe," in *MO* 21984 and 22101, are not helpful since in each case it is followed by a word beginning with a vowel.) "Virer" itself is not as common as "tourner" in this context. Gower uses "virer" only here, in the passage cited in *MO*, and in *MO* 28061, in a different context, in the reflexive.

2 On the position of "mais [but]" see Macaulay's note (1:465) and the note to **6**.6-7 above.

3-6 The pronouns here are uncertain, since it is not entirely clear when he is talking about Fortune and when about her wheel. For "it" one might well read "her" or "she" instead.

3 *position*. Gower normally uses "reles" to mean either "delay," especially in the phrase "sanz (nul) reles," as in *MO* 2421 *et al.* (*DMF* s.v. "relais," C; *AND* s.v. "relès," 3), or "release, remission," as in **29**.22 (*AND*, loc.cit., 1). Neither works here. "Relais" was also used with reference to horses and dogs posted along a route or hunting path to substitute for those that have become fatigued (*DMF*, loc.cit., B.1), from which we get "relay race." In Middle English, "relai" could be used for the hounds used in relay (as in *BD* 462), or for "the place where the hounds are posted" (*MED* s.v. "relai," with the earliest citations from c.1410). Lacking any better solution, I take "reles" in this line too to refer to positions or stages on a route or path, more specifically the position of Fortune's wheel.

8 On the common collocation of joy and sorrow see the note to **2**.8. The refrain to this ballade is in effect the reverse of that of **2**, "Qu*an*t dolour vait, les joies vienont pres [when sorrow departs, joys draw near]." It seems to borrow the vocabulary of the wheel with its rising and falling, but in fact it is a quite different image, more appropriate, say, to a balance scale or to the two buckets in a well (as in the description of Fortune in Machaut, *Remede* 969-75), since in what is only superficially a paradox, the rise and fall are simultaneous and indeed mutual conditions.
mounts. "Monter" might be used both for increase in height (suiting the metaphor of the wheel) and increase in quantity (the persona's sadness), but "descresce" refers to a decrease in quantity alone (*AND* s.v. "decrestre").

9-12 Amans makes a similar complaint (using two of the same analogies) in his "Supplication" in *CA* 8.2259-65.

9 Proverbial. Hassell G59, "Après grant guerre grant paix," citing this passage and one other.

10 For other similar lines see **2**.1 and the accompanying note.

13 This ballade may count among the small number in *50B* addressed to a woman of noble rank. See the note to **2**.25.

17-22 Lists of her victims were commonplace in the descriptions of Fortune (see the examples listed by Patch, *Fortuna*, pp. 70-71). Here the narrator's intention is the opposite, to align himself with those who have benefitted from another's fall, consistent with his expectations of Fortune in the rest of the poem.

17-19 Benoit tells how after Agamemnon resigned command of the Greeks, Palamedes was chosen as his successor (*Roman de Troie*, 16859-17030), but after Palamedes was slain by Paris (18833-40), Agamemnon was again chosen as leader on the advice of Nestor (19035-75). Guido recounts the same events more briefly in *Historia*, Books 22 and 25. I owe the reference to Guido (which led me to Benoit) to a personal communication from R.F. Yeager.

19 *as ruler*. More precisely, "for rule, command." *AND* s.v. "empire," 1, 3; *DMF* s.v. "empire[1]," C.

19-22 Gower uses Diomedes as an example of Supplantation in *CA* 2.2456-58, and he cites the story again in 5.7597-7602 and 8.2531-35. In all three cases he refers to Criseyde by name. This is the only passage in which he identifies her as the daughter of Calcas.

21 *seized fortune in his love*. I can find no other examples of the phrase "saisir la fortune." One might be tempted to translate "seized his chance; i.e., seized his opportunity," but such a use of "fortune" is not recorded. One might compare, however, "qui la fortune essaie [who tries his fortune]" in **27**.11 (see the note). Perhaps something more like "took advantage of his good fortune" comes closer to the sense here.

26 *my goddess*. Cf. Machaut, *Lou*. **255**.1: "Mon cuer, m'amour, ma deesse, m'amie [my heart, my love, my goddess, my *amie*];" *Voir Dit* 2686, 3580; Granson **78**.386, 905, *et al*. In three of Machaut's *dits*, the narrator refers to the lady as his "dieu terrien [earthly god]": *Remede* 146; *Font.Am.* 1012; *Voir Dit* 1760, 5139.

21

Au solail, qe les herbes eslumine
Et fait florir, jeo fai comp*ar*iso*u*n
De celle q'ad dessoubtz sa discipline
Mon coer, mon corps, mes sens, et ma reso*u*n,
P*ar* fin amour, t*re*stout a sa bando*u*n.
Si menerai p*ar* tant joiouse vie
Et servirai de bon entencio*u*n,
Sanz mal penser d'ascune vilenie.

Si femme porroit estre celestine
De char humeine a la creacion,
Jeo croi bien qe ma dame soit devine,
Q'elle ad le port et la condicion
De si t*re*ssainte conv*er*sacio*u*n,
Si plein d'onour, si plein de courtoisie,
Q'a lui servir j'ai fait ma beneiso*u*n,°
Sanz mal penser d'ascune vilenie.

Une autre tiele belle et femeline,
Trestout° le mond pour sercher enviro*u*n,
Ne truist om, car elle ad de sa covine
Honte et paour po*ur* guarder sa meso*u*n,
N'i laist entrer ascun amant felo*u*n,
Dont sui joious, car jeo de ma p*ar*tie
La vuill amer d'oneste affeccio*u*n,
Sanz mal penser d'ascune vilenie.

Mirour d'onour, essample de bon noun,
En bealté chaste et as vertus amie,
Ma dame, jeo vous aime et autre noun,
Sanz mal penser d'ascune vilenie.

15 *MS, Mac* veneiso*u*n. *See the note to this line in the commentary.*
18 *MS* Terstout

21

°To the sun, which shines brightly upon the meadows
and makes them flower, I make comparison
of her who has under her rule
my heart, my body,° my sense, and my reason
out of pure love,° entirely in her power.
I will lead therefore° a joyous life°
and I will serve with good intent,
without evil thought of any baseness.°

°If a woman of human flesh
could be heavenly upon creation,
I do believe that my lady is divine,
for she has the comportment and the character
of so holy a way of life,°
so full of honor, so full of courtesy,
that to serve her I have made my blessing,°
without evil thought of any baseness.

Another such a one, beautiful and womanly,°
in searching° all about the entire world,
one does not find, for she has in her party°
Shame and Fear° in order to guard her house,
nor does she allow any wicked lover to enter,
for which I am joyous, for I, on my part,
wish to love her with virtuous° affection,
without evil thought of any baseness.

Mirror° of honor, example of good name,
chaste in beauty and a friend to virtue,
my lady, I love you and not another,
without evil thought of any baseness.

21 is the first of a group of five poems—with **31**, **38**, **39**, and **45**—that are all but exclusively concerned with praise of the lady, in which her beauty is not neglected but in which the dominant theme—as in **21**—is her virtue and the effect that it has not just upon the persona but also upon others, in inspiring not just love but equally virtuous conduct. We learn little else about her and there is virtually nothing about their relationship: the persona neither complains nor pleads; he says nothing about hope or desire, about languishing or healing, or about the false turns of Fortune. He is joyful simply to know and love her because of her great "bonté."

These poems also share a common diction, a group of words found either exclusively or all but exclusively in this group, some of which are not even necessarily inherent to the theme that they share but which serve to link them together even more strongly:

- "Eslumine [brightens, illuminates, enlightens]," in **21**.1, occurs elsewhere in *50B* only in **45**.2, and it links the image of the sun to that of the crystal, each cited as an analogy to the lady's effect upon those around her.
- "Beneisoun [blessing]" in **21**.15 (if my emendation is correct; see the note below) is echoed in "benoit [blessed]" in both **31**.23 and the refrain to **39**, in nearly synonymous lines. "Benoit" occurs elsewhere in *50B* only in **5**.18 in a very different context.
- "Discipline" appears in *50B* only in **21**.3, **31**.6, and **45**.12, in slightly different senses in each case. In **21**, it refers to the lady's command over the lover; in **31**, the reference is to the commands of Love; and in **45** it refers to the effect that the lady has upon the lover's behavior.
- "Femeline [womanly]" occurs only three times in *50B*, in **21**.17, **31**.26 and **45**.9, in all three cases as a compliment to the lady (see the note below).
- "Covine" appears in *50B* only in **21**.19, **31**.22, and **45**.16, also with a slightly different meaning in each case. In the first instance it has the common meaning of "company" or "party," though with a possible double meaning; in **31** it seems to mean "agreement"; and in **45** it refers to "nature, character." (See the notes to each of these lines.)
- The woman provides an "essample" to others in **21**.25 and in **45**.13 and 24. The word occurs only once elsewhere in *50B*, in **18**.3, but not with reference to the lady.
- "Vertu [virtue]" occurs in each of these five poems, but in three different senses. It refers specifically to moral virtues in **21**.26 and (we presume) the refrain of **31**. ("Vertuouse" is also used in this sense in **31**.9.) It refers to good qualities more generally (that might include beauty) in **38**.15 and **39**.2; and it means "power" or "force" in **45**.4. "Vertu" occurs elsewhere in *50B*, but less frequently than one might imagine. It refers to "power" or "force" in **19**.22 and **40**.20 and to the moral virtues only in **9**.34 (presumably, where it is paired with "graces"), **11**.11 and **28**.8.

"Vertu" is the only one of these words that occurs in all five poems. There are other linkages among the remaining four that do not include ballade **21**:

- "Encline" occurs only twice in *50B*, in the refrain of **31** and in **45**.22, in the first case as a verb and in the second as an adjective. See the notes on the possible double meaning in the first case and on the uncertainty of meaning in the second.
- "Piere [rock]"in **38**.1 links the image of the lodestone to that of the crystal in **45**.3. The word occurs elsewhere in *50B* only in **24**.2 in a very different context.
- The "fine force [pure force]" of the lodestone in **38**.4 echoes the same phrase in **31**.5 but occurs nowhere else in *50B*. Except in the recurring phrase "fin amour" (as in **21**.5; see the note to **7**.1), "fin(e)" itself occurs elsewhere in *50B* only in **4**[1].5.

- The lady's qualities are attributed to God and Nature together in **38**.15-18 and **45**.18-19. God gets credit in **11**.10 and Nature in **13**.1-12, but nowhere else in *50B* do they work together.
- The strongest link among the other four ballades is provided by the "bealté, bonté, grace [beauty, goodness, grace]" triad, each of which provides the subject for an entire stanza in **31**. They are directly echoed in **39**.3-5; in **38** they appear in the list of the woman's qualities in lines 18-23; and in **45** they also provide the basis for the persona's praise in lines 6, 8-9, and 23. This triad appears elsewhere in *50B* only in **32**.15-19, where the context, however, is the qualities that the woman lacks and where "grace" is used in a very different sense.
- Elsewhere in *50B*, "grace" is used almost exclusively to refer to that which the lover seeks from his lady (as in **32**.19). (On the range of meanings see the note to **1**.8.) Except for the allusion to this sense in **31**.17, "grace" is used in this group of poems to refer instead to the lady's "graciousness" and her quality of character (in **31**.19, **31**.21, **38**.23, **39**.5, and **45**.23), a sense that occurs elsewhere in *50B* only in **9**.34 and **10**.3.

These verbal links create a texture of inter-reference very much like that which we find among the ballades at the beginning of *50B*. Five of these words—"eslumine," "discipline," "femeline," "covine," and "encline"—share the same final syllable and all are used in the rhyming position. Three of these poems (and only these three in *50B*, but also *Tr* **13**) use *–ine* as one of the three rhymes, and a fourth uses the closely related *–eine*. If the choice of word was governed by the rhyme, the choice of the same rhyming syllable for a group of poems also so closely united by theme is no less remarkable than the similarity of diction, and it suggests no less strongly that they were conceived and written as a group, as was perhaps true of the opening ballades and is more certainly true of the thematically interconnected ballades at the end of *50B*.

One has to wonder if Gower might have had in mind as a model Granson's "Cinq balades ensuivans [Sequence of five ballades]" (Granson **37**-**41**). Granson's poems were known in England: Chaucer drew directly upon them for his "Complaint of Venus," and he acknowledges his debt to Granson in the final line (82). If Granson's did provide the idea for assembling five ballades into a group, Gower did not imitate their structure. Granson's all use the same rhyme scheme (*ababbccb*, a scheme that he uses nowhere else, though Gower could not have known this), while Gower's mixes seven-line and eight-line stanzas. On the other hand, Granson does not employ the same kind of verbal inter-reference as Gower, nor are all five poems simply variations on a single theme. They proceed instead from the persona's praise of the lady to expressions of his frustration and disappointment at her "durté," ending in ballade **41** with a resolution to continue to serve her nonetheless, imitating the conventional argument of a great many individual ballades. Perhaps the best reason to think that Gower might have known Granson's poems comes from the similarity in the way in which their two ladies are described. Granson's lady too is provided with all the virtues (**37**.12, **38**.1-4); God and Nature (and in Granson, Reason too) join together in creating her (**38**.1; cf. *50B* **38.15-18**), she too inspires good in others (**37**.17); and most suggestively, in **37**.9 we find reference to the same triad with which Gower praises the lady in four of his five ballades: "Il a en lui beauté, bonté, et

grace [in her there is beauty, goodness, and grace]." While each of these qualities is commonplace in earlier poetry, I have not found any other occurrence of this triad in this form.

Whatever their origin, Gower finally chose to disperse these ballades among the others in his collection rather than to present them as a group. Each is unique in some particular way, and each now is also positioned so that it has some link to the poems that immediately surround it. **21** begins the sequence with the strongest affirmation both of the lady's good character—though there is no reference to her "bonté," line 26 contains the only instance in *50B* of the word "chaste"—and of the persona's own chaste affection. It draws upon a number of recognizable motifs from earlier poetry (see the notes below), but turned to a use that would seem to make love as normally understood in the lyrics all but impossible. Echoes of the two immediately preceding ballades in lines 4, 6, and 9-11 suggest that this version of love is offered as a deliberate alternative to the more painful and less stable version that they describe. In that way, and in the affirmation of honest intention in the refrain, this poem, as others in this group do sometimes in more specific terms, seems to anticipate the advocacy of virtuous love with which *50B* concludes.

1-7 Machaut makes a similar comparison of the effects of his lady to those of the sun in *Lou.* **196**.1-6.

4 The collocation of "coer" and "corps" is commonplace; see the note to **5**.26. The invocation of "sens" and "raison" echoes **19**.27.

5 *pure love.* On "fin amour" see the note to **7**.1.

6 *therefore*. "Si . . . par tant" is redundant. "Therefore" covers both.
lead a joyous life. "Mener" echoes **20**.22; "joiouse" echoes (with a reversal) the refrain to the same poem.

8 The refrain offers one version of a common lyric formula which appears identically in line 24 of the second "Dedicatory Ballade" and in the form "sanz null penser vilein" in **27**.23 and "sanz mal penser" in **49**.5. Other variants include "sans penser vilainne" (Granson **14**.18), "sans penser villonnie" (Machaut, *Lou.* **21**.12), "sans nul vilain penser" (Granson **11**.3), "sans penser nul villain tour" (Machaut, *Lou*. **21**.5). More broadly, the formula includes such expressions as "sanz mesprisure" (**12**.25), "sans penser deshonneur" (Machaut, *Lou.* **3**.4), "sans meffaire" (Machaut, *Lou.* **30**.19), "sans mesprison" (Machaut, *Lou.* **36**.18), *et al.* For contrast, cf. *Tr* **10**.8, with reference to Tarquin, "q'ot la pensé vileine [who had base intent]."

9-11 This flattering description echoes **20**.26, where, however, the comparison to a goddess suggests the persona's veneration rather than a proof of her character.

13 *a way of life.* "Conversacioun" is a "false friend." See *AND* s.v. "conversacion," *DMF* s.v. "conversation." In *DMF*, the first citation for definition C, "entretien ['conversation' in the modern sense]" is from 1489.

15 *blessing*. For MS "veneisoun," Macaulay offers (in his note to this line, 1:466) "'chase,' hence 'endeavour'," evidently drawing upon Godefroy s.v. "venacion" "chasse, vénerie [hunt, hunting]," who includes, however, only one undated citation that might be from before 1482, and the only figurative example that he cites (also undated) does not mean "endeavor" but rather "persecution," as listed in Godefroy, *Lexique* s.v. "venacion." *AND* s.v "veneisun" provides only two definitions, "game" and "venison, flesh of game," and no suggestion in any of the citations that the word might also mean either "hunt" or "endeavor"; see also *DMF* s.v. "venaison." One has to suspect that Gower instead wrote "beneisoun," "benediction or blessing," a word that appears (as "beneiçon" or "beneiçoun") four times in *MO* and in *Tr* **5**.15. See *AND* s.v. "beneiçun," *DMF* s.v. "beneïsson," with many citations from the same period. Lower case *B* and *V* might easily be confused: on f. 21 of

the manuscript, compare the first letters of "bien" in **21**.11 and "vilenie" in the refrain, especially line 16. The resulting line does not strike me as idiomatic, but "I have made it my blessing to serve her" is certainly more consistent with the other imagery in this stanza, and it anticipates "benoit [blessed]" in **31**.23 and **39**.R. For "blessing" in the sense of "favor bestowed by God" see *DMF*, loc.cit., A.

17 *womanly*. In *MO* (e.g. in 9155, 13481, 21334) and in the very rare uses in most earlier lyrics (as in Machaut *Lou.* **205**.22), "femelin/femenin" serves only to identify gender, not as a term of praise, as it is used here and in **31**.26 and **45**.9. The citations in *AND* s.v. "feminin," 2 and *DMF* s.v. "feminin," B, suggest that when the word is used to mean "feminine, typical of a woman" rather than "female," the implication is most often pejorative. *DMF* does cite one passage from Froissart's *Chroniques* in which it is conjoined, as here, with "belle," and the reference to "li corps feminins [the feminine body or person]" in Froissart's Bal. **1**.8 occurs in a complimentary context, as does Granson's reference to "ses doulz fais femenins [her sweet feminine qualities]" in **37**.5 (the first of Granson's "Cinq balades ensuivans"). (Granson uses "femenins" in the more neutral sense in **71**.46.) Gower's usage here, in **31**.26, and in **45**.9 corresponds to both his and Chaucer's use of "wommanliche," e.g. in *CA* 1.2757, 7.4879; *T&C* 3.106, 5.557; *LGW* 243; MerT *CT* IV.1604; *et al*., where it is consistently a term of praise.

18 *in searching*. On the construction see the note to **14**.1.

19 *in her party*. I.e., on her side (*AND* s.v. "covine," 4; *DMF* s.v. "convine," I.B), introducing the personifications in the next line. For a similar use cf. *MO* 17980. On the range of meaning of "covine" see the note to **31**.22.

20 *Shame and Fear*. "Honte" and "Paour" are traditionally the guardians of the woman's honor and therefore the obstacles to the lover's approach, as in *RR* 2820 ff., where they are appointed as guardians of the rose. Consistent with his own chaste intent, the persona enlists them here in his praise of the lady's virtue.

23 *virtuous*. "(H)oneste," here and in **29**.2, **31**.26, **34**.4, **49**.18, and **50**.11 (and in most appearances in *CA*, e.g. "honeste love" in 4.2297) , implies much more than merely "truthful" or "genuine." See *AND* s.v. "honest," *DMF* s.v. "honneste," and *MED* s.v. "honest(e."

25 *Mirror*. I.e., "A model or examplar," as also in **42**.17. See *AND* s.v. "mirur," 2; *DMF* s.v. "mireur," B; *MED* s.v. "mirŏur," 3.(a). Cf. *MO* 22884, with reference to David: "As autrez Rois il fuist mirour [he was a mirror for other kings]"; *CA* Prol. 496, 5.2605.

22

J'ai bien sovent oï p*ar*ler d'amour,
Mais ja devant n'esprovai la nature
De son estat; mais ore au p*re*sent jour
Jeo sui cheeuz de soudeine aventure
En la sotie u jeo languis sanz cure.
Ne sai coment j'en puiss avoir socour,
Car ma fortune est en ce cas si dure
Q'ore est ma vie en ris, ore est en plour.

Pour bien penser jeo truiss assetz vigour,
Mais q*a*nt jeo doi p*ar*ler en ascune hure,
Le coer me falt de si t*re*sg*ra*nt paour
Q'il hoste et tolt la vois et la p*ar*lure,
Q'au peine lors si jeo ma regardure
Porrai tenir a veoir la doulçour
De celle en qui j'ai mis toute ma cure,
Q'ore est ma vie en ris, ore est en plour.

Q*a*nt puiss mirer la face et la colour
De ma t*re*sdoulce dame et sa feture,
Pour regarder en si° tr*e*sbeal mirour
Jeo sui ravis° de joie oultre mesure,
Mais tost ap*re*s, q*a*nt sui soulein, jeo plure.
Ma joie ensi se melle de dolour.
Ne sai q*a*nt sui dessoubtz ne q*a*nt dessure,
Q'ore est ma vie en ris, ore est en plour.

A vous, t*re*sbelle et bone creature,
Salvant toutdis l'estat de v*ost*re honour,
Ceo l*ett*re envoie; agardetz l'escripture,
Q'ore est ma vie en ris, ore est en plour.

19 *MS* ensi
20 *Mac* ravi

22

°Quite often have I heard talk of love,
but never before have I experienced the nature
of that condition; but now, on the present day,
I am fallen by sudden chance
into the folly° where I languish without cure.
I don't know how I can have relief,
°for my fortune in this case is so hard
that now is my life in laughter, now in tears.°

I find sufficient strength to think well,
°but when at any time I have to speak,
my heart fails me out of so great a fear
that it strips and removes voice and speech,
so that hardly then can I thus hold my gaze
in order to see the sweetness
of her in whom I have placed all my care,
so that now is my life in laughter, now in tears.

°When I can gaze at the face and the complexion
of my sweet lady and her form,
in looking into so beautiful a mirror
I am ravished with joy beyond measure,
but soon afterwards, when I am alone, I weep.
My joy is thus mixed with sadness.°
I don't know when I am below and when above,
for now is my life in laughter, now in tears.

To you, very beautiful and good creature,
always with all due regard° for your honor,
I send this letter. Behold the writing,
for now is my life in laughter, now in tears.

The appearance here, near the center of *50B*, of a poem on the first effects of love and on the persona's speechlessness, in contrast to the repeated, vain attempts to address the lady in **17**, **18**, and **19**, constitutes the most obvious evidence against the presence of any sort of continuous narrative in the ballades as they are presently ordered. Gower draws upon the most completely conventional vocabulary to describe falling in love in this poem: "cheor" (4), "languir" (5), "socour" (6), "ravir" (20), "pleurer" (21), "joie" (22), "dolour" (22), and the two terms, "ris" and "plour," from which he has constructed the balanced phrases of the refrain. In the envoy, the

persona turns to address his lady directly as he does in **14**, offering her the poem in writing to convey what he has been afraid to say aloud. As in the other ballades in which he switches from the third person to the first, Gower again overlays the lyric mode—in which the persona speaks of his lady to an impersonal audience, often of the feelings that he cannot reveal—with the dramatic, in which he addresses her directly, though in writing. Precedent can be found in the small number of poems in which the persona declares that he can reveal his love only in his poem, cited in the commentary to **14** above, and as in Machaut's Chans.Bal. **1**.16-24, for instance, the persona's speechlessness becomes part of his message to her as he tells her what he cannot tell her about her effect upon him. In **22**, Gower avoids the dilemma posed in **14**, in which the persona complains that his earlier attempts have just provoked his lady's disdain, yet he fears just as greatly the effect of his silence. Here, the lady has had no apparent notice of the persona's affection, but her rejection is by no means a given. The dramatic context does add another dimension to a common theme; on the other hand, Gower does not introduce here the possibility of another perspective on the persona's condition that has us reading between the lines as in **18** and **19**.

1-6 Granson has two poems that refer to the first effects of love, **62**, a ballade which refers in lines 19-21 to the mixed joy and pain, and a "complainte" in the *Livre Messire Ode* in which the persona speaks, as here, of the "folie" into which he has fallen (**78**.2347) and of his lack of hope of any "secours" (**78**.2356).

5 *folly*. "Sotie" occurs three times in *50B*, here and in **48**.23 and **51**.4. There are another 20 or so uses of "sot" or its derivatives in *MO*, and when there is enough context to allow an inference, these refer either to self-deceptive and thus self-destructive behavior (as in *MO* 1155, 1159, 5422 *et al.*) or to easy deception by others (as in the description of the ignorant cuckold in 8017 and 8841, the only reference to "sot amour," or in the warning against believing the promises of an adulteress in 8962), and it is three times conjoined to "nyce [silly, foolish]" or "nyceté [silliness, foolishness]"in 16090, 17430, and 17837. It does not therefore seem in itself to bear a moral connotation, though of course in *MO* it occurs with reference to behavior of which Gower disapproves. The same would be true of the use of "sotie" in the heading to *Tr* (with reference to the subject of *CA*) and in *Tr* **15**.3, referring to Tristam and Lancelot. Here too it appears to suggest only foolishness. In similar contexts, both Machaut and Granson use "fol" or its derivatives rather than "sot" or "sotie," which Gower uses with reference to love only in **48**.13 and **51**.3, the same two poems in which "sotie" recurs. See further the notes to **48**.23 and **51**.4 below.

7-8 Cf. *Tr* **15**.16-17: "As uns est blanche, as uns fortune est noire. /Amour se torne trop diversement. / Ore est en joie, ore est en purgatoire [To some it's white, to some fortune is black. Love is transformed quite variously. Now it's in joy, now it's in purgatory]." Patch, *Fortuna*, p. 55 notes that the "now . . . now . . ." formula frequently occurs with reference to Fortune, citing, among others, *MO* 22154-56 and *CA* Prol.569-70, to which we can add, among many others, *CA* 8.1736-38: "Fro this day forth fortune hath sworn / To sette him upward on the whiel; / So goth the world, now wo, now wel." The formula also occurs with reference to the effects of love, as in Machaut, *Remede* 875-81.

8 The collocation of joy and sorrow is commonplace, usually in the context of one succeeding the other, as in the passages cited in the note to **2**.8. Here and in line 22 they are equal parts of the experience of love, as, for instance, in Machaut, *Lou*., **3**.1-2, "me doy pleindre et loer / D'Amour qui m'a mis en joie et en plour [I must reprove and praise Love, which has put me in joy and in weeping]."

10-12 When the persona is tongue-tied, it is most often out of a fear of rejection, as in Machaut, *Lou* **1**.11-13, **2**.12-13, **3**.23-24; *Remede* 545-68; Froissart, Can.Roy. **2**.48-50, *Bal*. **36**.16-18, *Rond*. **26**; and Granson, **75**.178-80. Less common is his mere incapacity in the lady's presence, as in Machaut, *Lou*. **19**.4-5; **124**.5-6, in which the persona is overcome by his lady's beauty; and Chans.Bal. **1**.16-24; and in Froissart, Can.Roy. **1**.29-33, which claims that a true lover is so overcome with pleasure in his lady's presence that he cannot speak. See also Amans' confessions to Pusillanimity and Forgetfulness in *CA* 4.358-62 and 569-93.

17-19 Lost in translation here is the repetition of the root *mir-* in "mirer [to see]" (see the note to **12**.17) and "mirour [mirror]" (see the note to **21**.25). In line 19, a "mirour," in its most literal sense, is something that one looks into, but in the praise of the lady, the sense of "model, paragon" may also be present. So too may the "miroërs perilleus [perilous mirror]" in *RR* 1569 ff. (Chaucer, *Romaunt*, 1601 ff.), the fountain of Narcissus in which the narrator sees two crystal stones (the lady's eyes?) and in which he first sees the reflection of the rosebush and the rose. "Whoso loketh in that mirrour, / Ther may nothyng ben his socour / That he ne shall there sen somthyng / That shal hym lede into lovyng" (*Romaunt* 1605-8).

23 For the effects of love cf. **9**.20-22, particularly "halt ou bass," 21.

26 *with all due regard.* For "salvant" see the note to **17**.2.

23

Pour un regard au p*ri*mere acqueintance
Q*a*nt jeo la bealté de ma dame vi,
Du coer, du corps, t*re*stoute m'obeissance
Lui ai doné, tant sui d'amour ravi.
Du destre main jeo l'ai ma foi plevi,
Sur quoi ma dame ad resceu mo*u*n ho*m*mage
Com son servant et son loial ami.
A bone° houre est qe jeo vi celle ymage.

Par lui veoir, sanz autre sustenance,
Mais qe danger ne me soit anemi,
Il m'est avis de toute ma creance
Q'as toutz les jours jeo viveroie ensi.
Et c'est tout voir qe jeo lui aime si
Qe mieulx voldroie morir en son servage
Qe viv*er*e ailours mill auns loigntain de li.
A bone houre est qe jeo vi celle ymage.

De son consail, ceo me dist esp*er*ance:
Qe q*a*nt ma dame av*er*ai long temps servi
Et fait son gré d'onour et de plesance,
Lors solonc ceo qe j'av*er*ai deservi,
Le reguerdo*u*n me serra de merci,
Q'elle est plusnoble et franche de corage
Qe Maii q*a*nt ad la t*er*re tout flori.
A bone° houre est qe jeo vi celle ymage.

Ceo dit envoie a vous, ma dame, en qui
La gentilesce et le t*re*shalt parage
Se monstront,° dont espoir m'ad rejoï.
A bone° houre est qe jeo vi celle ymage.

8, 24, 28 *Mac* bon
27 monstront. *On the spelling, see the note to* ***12****.21.*

23

Because of° a look upon first meeting
when I saw the beauty of my lady,
with heart, with body, ° all my obedience
I gave to her, so much am I overcome by love.
With my right hand I promised her my faith,
whereupon° my lady received my homage
as her servant and her loyal *ami*.
It is at an auspicious moment that I saw that image.°

°By seeing her, without other sustenance,
provided that Danger° is not my enemy,
I believe with all of my conviction
that I would live this way forever.
And it is completely true that I love her so much
°that I would rather die in servitude to her
than to live a thousand years elsewhere, far from her.
It is at an auspicious moment that I saw that image.

°Out of its wisdom,° Hope tells me this:
that when I have served my lady for a long time
and done her will regarding both honor and pleasure,
then in accordance with what I will have deserved
the reward of mercy will be mine,
for she is more noble° and generous of heart
than May when it has made the whole earth flower.°
It is at an auspicious moment that I saw that image.

I send this poem to you, my lady, in whom
gentility and very noble birth°
are displayed, for which Hope has gladdened me.
It is at an auspicious moment° that I saw that image.

Like **10** (which it echoes in the refrain and in line 23), **23** is one of the more Machaut-like of Gower's ballades in imagery, in its avoidance of overly figurative language, in its use of personifications, and especially in its consistency of tone, here optimistic and celebratory, lacking the pain and pleading of **10**. It strings together, smoothly and unchallengingly, some of the most common motifs to describe the lover's devotion and his hope for reward. Even the envoy, while it turns to address the lady who up to that point is referred to only in the third-person, constitutes a continuation of the poem rather than a stepping aside: it repeats both the

imagery and the wish from the preceding stanza in such a way that the shift of person is hardly felt. But unlike the more interesting of Gower's ballades, the lady is hardly present even in being addressed, an "ymage," hidden behind the familiar tropes of "service," Danger, and Merci.

This ballade is also unusual for Gower in its self-conscious use of sound. Not only does it employ only two rhymes, but the "vi" of the refrain is echoed in the first and third stanzas by the "–vi" rhymes in lines 2, 4, 5, 18, and 20, and in the second stanza by alliteration, for all but the second line contains an accented syllable beginning with *v*, and by the echoes of "vi" in "avis" (11), "viveroi" (12), and "vivere" (15).

1 *because of*. "Pour" might also be "in exchange for," suggesting that the lady has given the persona a friendly glance. In all other appearances of "reg(u)ard" in *50B* (in **12**.7, **12**.19, **19**.13, **38**.3) as also of "regardure" in **12**.12 and "regarder" as a noun in **33**.R, it is the lady looking at the persona rather than v.v. But lines 2 and 9 suggest that in this case it is the persona's sight of his lady that has done him in, as in **22**.17-20, which line 1 appears to echo. The choice here—who is seeing whom—is similar to the difference between the subjective and objective uses of "vostre"; see the note to **7**.11. For a different use of "regard" see **38**.3.

3 *with heart, with body*. For the collocation see the note to **5**.26. The other uses of similar phrases suggest that here they modify "gave" rather than the alternative, "all my obedience of heart, of body."

6 *whereupon*. *AND* s.v. "sur[2]," 14.

8 Earlier lyric lovers recall the moment of their first falling in love, either happily, as in Machaut, *Lou*. **7**.19-20, "Certes bien doy amer l'eure et le jour / Que je senti l'amoureuse pointure [Surely should I love the hour and the day that I felt the sting of love]," or unhappily, as in *Lou*. **53**, Granson **53**.
auspicious moment. On the merging of "heure [hour]" and "eur [luck, good fortune]," see **10**.4 and the note.
image. See the note to **15**.25-28. Here the primary meaning of "ymage" seems to be the woman's appearance, more specifically her face (*DMF* s.v. "image," I.B.1, 2), but the common use of "ymage" as an object of veneration (*DMF*, loc.cit., II.A) may also be present. See **15**.25-28 and the note.

9-12 Earlier lovers frequently allude to their love as their "sustenance" (Granson **17**.13, **24**.20, **68**.36; Machaut *Lou*. **7**.13) or even their "norriture [food]" (Machaut *Lou*. **7**.13, **25**.22), without necessarily implying, however, that they require no other food, as Gower does here. Cf. **47**.1-2 and the fuller, less optimistic use of the image of feeding in **16**.

10 *Danger*. On the personification see the note to **12**.8.

14-15 "I prefer X (something less desirable) with my lady to Y (something more desirable) without her" is a very common formula, another version of which appears in **27**.R. For examples, see Machaut *Lou*. **9**.R, **94**.18-19, **138**.15-18, **158**.5-6, 8-13, **184**.22-23. There are also no fewer than eleven variations on the formula in Granson.

17-23 When Esperance appears to the narrator in Machaut's *Remede*, she encourages him, among her other reassurances, to think that his lady, replete with so many virtues, cannot be without Pity, "Franchise [Generosity]," or the other traits of character that will aid his cause (1671-83). Similar confidence in the lady's good nature appears, for instance, in Machaut, *Lou*. **4**.15-20 and **20**.14-16, while in *Lou*. **88**.9-10 and **109**.19-25, the persona expresses a simple hope in his ultimate reward. Such confidence is, of course, the opposite of the persona's protest that his lady's behavior is inconsistent with her character, as in **12**.17-18 and **28**.1-4, 8-10, or that he has not gotten what he deserves for his long service, as in **17**.

17 *wisdom*. *AND* s.v. "conseil," 1; *DMF* s.v. "conseil," I.D.3.

22 *noble*. "Noble" by itself might refer only to a quality of character (see the note to **2**.25), but as in **6** and **13**, it is here conjoined with a more specific allusion to the lady's rank in lines 25-27 and carries the implication that her character is a function of her rank.

23 Cf. the invocation of May as a measure of the lady's beauty in **10**.22 and **15**.17-18. I don't know of any model for the use of May as an image of generosity of heart.

26 *very noble birth*. "Parage" refers to rank at birth, especially in expressions such as "de haut parage" and "de bas parage," and in some contexts, such as this one, it also implies qualities of character associated with that rank. See *DMF* s.v. "Parage[1]." *AND* s.v. "parage," 3 includes this passage as one of three citations under the definition "quality of nobility, i.e. courtesy, generosity etc.," but neither of the other two citations suggest that "parage" in this sense could be used with reference to someone who was not of noble birth. This is perhaps the clearest example in *50B* of a poem addressed to a woman of the nobility. See the note to **2**.25.

24

Jeo quide qe ma dame de sa mein
M'ad deinz le coer escript son p*ro*pre no*u*n,
Car q*a*nt jeo puiss oïr le chapellein
Sa letanie dire et sa leço*u*n,
Jeo ne sai nomer autre si le no*u*n,
Car j'ai le coer de fin amour si plein
Q'en lui gist toute ma devocio*u*n.
Dieus doignt qe jeo ne prie pas en vein!

Pour penser les amours de temps longtein,
Com la priere de pigmalion
Faisoit miracle, et l'image au darrein
De piere en char mua de s'oreiso*u*n,
J'ai g*ra*unt espoir de la comp*ar*iso*u*n
Qe p*ar* sovent prier serrai certein
De g*ra*ce; et pour si noble reguerdo*u*n,
Dieus doignt qe jeo ne prie pas en vein!

Com cil qui songe et est en no*u*ncertein,
Ainz semble a lui qu'il vait tout environ
Et fait et dit, ensi q*a*nt sui soulein,
A moi p*ar*lant, jeo fais maint question,
Despute et puis responde a ma reso*u*n.
Ne sai si jeo sui faie ou chose humein,
Tiel est d'amour ma contemplacion.
Dieus doignt qe jeo ne p*ri*e pas en vein!

A vous, qe m'avetz en subjeccion,
Soul ap*re*s dieu si m'estes sov*er*ein,
Envoie ceste° supplicacion.
Dieus doignt qe jeo ne p*ri*e pas en vein!

27 *Mac* cette

24

I think that my lady with her hand
has inscribed her own name within my heart,°
°for when I can hear the chaplain
reciting his litany and his lesson,
I can't say any other name but that one,°
for I have a heart so full of pure love°
that in her° lies all of my devotion.
God grant that I do not pray° in vain!

In thinking° about the loves of long ago,
how° the prayer of Pygmalion°
caused a miracle, and how he finally transformed
the image° from stone to flesh with his prayer,
I have great hope from the comparison
that by praying often I will be assured
of grace;° and for so noble a reward,°
God grant that I do not pray in vain!

Like one who dreams and is in uncertainty,°
but it seems to him that he goes about
and acts and speaks, just so, when I am alone,
talking to myself, I pose many a question,
I argue and then I reply to my argument.°
I don't know if I am *fée*° or a human being,
such is my contemplation of love.
God grant that I do not pray in vain!

To you, who have me in subjection—
alone after God you are thus my sovereign—
I send this supplication.
God grant that I do not pray in vain!

This is a distinctively Gowerian poem (none of his contemporaries would have thought of using the same setting) and an unusually successful one, with its multiples senses of "prayer" and "grace" and with its subtle and affecting portrait of mixed hopefulness and futility. The first of its several paradoxes is embodied in the refrain: "Dieus doignt qe jeo ne prie pas en vein!" There are two prayers here—or better, perhaps, a prayer about a prayer—the one to the lady who is the object of the persona's devotion and the one to God, whom he has just admitted that he otherwise neglects and who might not therefore be very receptive to his plea, especially

given its nature. In the second stanza he hopefully invokes another prayer, that of Pygmalion, as a model for his own. The comparison doesn't necessarily work in his favor if it suggests that his lady too might be made of stone (an image that also occurs in **18**.12), and his hope, as a fourteenth-century Christian, for Venus' aid might seem to be somewhat misplaced. The poem is simultaneously a prayer to God, a prayer to Venus, and a prayer to his lady (the "supplicacion" that he sends to her in the envoy), each of which, despite the fervency of his wish, is undercut in some way by the others. The third stanza, as in several other of Gower's ballades, does not sustain the dominant image, but it does transform the refrain into an expression of uncertainty about the effect of the persona's prayer. It is only appropriate that in the final line he prays not for his lady's good will but only that he doesn't pray in vain.

2 For a similar image cf. **6**.5-6.

3-7 The church also provides the setting for Genius' lesson on Sacrilege in *CA* 5.7032-95, but both his warning and Amans' response (5.7096-7182) are concerned with flirting rather than with the lover's fervent but silent prayers, as here. In *MO* 20677-88, it is a priest who is distracted from his duty by a female parishioner.

5 *but that one*. "Si . . . noun" became Modern French "sinon [except]" (cf. **33**.18), the same sense that it has here. Cf. *MO* 10197, "si dieus noun [except for God]" and the citations in *AND* s.v. "sinun." As Macaulay notes (1:466), the "le" refers to "no*u*n [name]" in line 2.

6 *pure love*. On "fin amour," see the note to **7**.1.

7 *her*. I choose "her" based on sense, though the normally masculine form "lui" might refer instead to the lady's name. Gower elsewhere uses "lui" for a feminine direct object (e.g. in **23**.13), however, and the choice of "lui" over "elle" in this line could be meant to satisfy the meter.

8 *pray*. "Prier" is commonly used both for prayers to God and for entreaties to other mortals, such as one's beloved, as in **14**.9, **17**.18, **18**.R, *et al.* See *AND*, *DMF* s.v. "prier."

9 *in thinking*. For the construction with "pour" see the note to **11**.5. One wants to change "les" to "des," as in **14**.1, **21**.R. Cf. **15**.20 and note.

10 *how*. Gower commonly uses "com(e)" as a preposition or conjunction meaning "like" or "as." The only other instance in *50B* where we might expect "comment [how]" instead is in the exclamation in **35**.15, but there are numerous such examples in *MO*, e.g. at 506, 784, 796, *et al*., and in exclamations, 565, 4087, 4735 *et al.* For this use see *AND* s.v. "cum," conj., 1, *DMF* s.v. "comme," 1.A. Here "com" governs both of the following clauses.

Pygmalion. Genius tells the story of Pygmalion in his lesson on Pusillanimity in *CA* 4.371-436, but with reference to an active pursuit of love, not to prayer specifically, as here. In his reply (4.516-23), Amans cites his repeated efforts to address his lady without mentioning prayer. In the ballade, it is not actually clear whom Gower imagines that Pygmalion prays to. In Genius' version, he directs his prayer to the unliving statue (4.407-10). In Ovid's, he prays to "the gods" (*Metamorphoses* 10.274), while in *RR* (21053-78), he begins by addressing the gods and then prays directly to Venus. The ambiguity might actually suit Gower's purpose. In all three, the prayer is ultimately answered by Venus.

Other poets as well, of course, knew the story. Machaut (*Lou.* **203**.1-16) compares a woman's lack of response to that of the statue before its transformation. Both Froissart (Lay **1**.145-54) and Granson (**65**.7-8) believe that not even Pygmalion could have created a woman as beautiful as his lady. (Cf. *RR* 16147, where the same claim is made in praise of the beauty of Nature.) And in an anonymous ballade in Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, MS J.II.9, f. 113, Pygmalion's

success is cited as model of hope and effort for other lovers, as in *CA* (see http://jechante.exeter.ac.uk/archive/text.xql?id=CyBa039ca&wit=base&view=ms).

11 *image*. This echo of **23**.R may account in part for the juxtaposition of these two poems in Gower's final ordering of *50B*.

15 *grace.* On the range of meanings of "grace," see the note to **1**.8. Here it is the "reguerdon" that will be granted in response to his prayer. That God, Love, and the lady all might be the granters of "grace" in this sense helps create the uncertainty over whom the persona is praying to at any moment and who will grant the reward that he seeks. Gower uses the overlap in a very different way in *CA*, for as part of Genius' general lesson that the ethical demands of Love are consistent with God's commands, he holds out to Amans the prospect of "grace" in both senses, e.g. in 2.3497-3505.

reward. There is a very faint echo of **23**.21 in the repetition of "reguerdon."

17 *uncertainty*. There is no listing for "nouncertein" in *DMF*, and it appears only as an adjective (not as a noun, as in this line) in *AND* s.v. "nun-certein," which lists, however, the nouns "nun-certé" and "nun-certeinté." The three appearances of the word in *MO* are all adjectives. Gower uses "noncertain" as a noun in English, however, in *CA* 8.2179 and 2378, as does Chaucer, in *T&C* 1.337, "Complaint of Venus," 46 (translating "sans nul certain" in Granson **40**.22), and *Romaunt* 5426 (no equivalent in *RR* 4830).

21 *argument*. A common use of "resoun." *AND* s.v. "raisun," 2, 5; *DMF* s.v. "raison," III.A.1. For a similar use cf. **39**.23.

22 *fée*. Since Modern English "fay" might suggest "elfin" or "elfish" rather than "supernatural, non-human," there is no single appropriate word to translate Gower's "faie." *AND* s.v. "fee[1']" offers "enchanted being, elf," citing this line. See also *DMF* s.v "fee[1]," "être fantastique [fantastic being]." Gower uses the same word again in **27**.22 with reference to the lady's supernatural beauty (see the note to that line), and five times in *CA*, providing four of the six citations in *MED* s.v. "faie," adj. and n., "possessed of magical powers or properties; enchanted, enchanting; as noun: a person or place possessing such powers or characteristics."

25

Ma dame, si ceo fuist a vo plesir,
Au plussovent jeo vous visiteroie,
Mais le fals jangle et le t*res*fals conspir
De mesdisantz m'ont° destorbé la voie,
Et v*ost*re honour sur toute riens voldroie;
P*ar* quoi, ma dame, en droit° de ma p*ar*tie,
En lieu de moi mon coer a vous envoie,
Car qui bien aime ses amours tard oblie.

Ils sont assetz des tiels qui de mentir
Portont le clief pendant a lour curroie;
Du quoi, ma dame, jeo ne puiss sentir
Coment aler; ainçois me torne envoie.
Mais sache dieus, p*ar* tout uq*ue* jeo soie,
D'entier voloir sanz nulle dep*ar*tie
A vous me tiens, a vous mon coer se ploie,
Car qui bien aime ses amours tard oblie.

De vo p*re*sence a long temps abstenir
Grief m'est, en cas q'a force ensi feroie,
Et d'aut*re*p*ar*t, si jeo voldrai venir,
Sanz v*ost*re esgard ceo faire ne porroie.
Comandetz moi ceo qe jeo faire en doie,°
Car vous avetz de moi la seignorie.
Tout est en vous, ma dolour et ma joie,
Car qui bien aime ses amours tard oblie.

As mesdisantz, dont bon amour s'esfroie,
De male langue dieus les motz maldie,
Q'en lour despit a v*ost*re amour m'otroie,
Car qui bien aime ses amours tard oblie.

4 *MS* mout. *See the note to* ***12****.21.*
6 en droit. *See the note to* ***12****.2.*
21 *MS* endoie

25

My lady, if it were to your pleasure,
I would visit you as often as possible,
But the false gossip° and the evil plotting°
of slanderers° have blocked° my way
and above all else, I wish for your honor,°
because of which, my lady, as for my part,
in place of myself I send you my heart,°
for he who loves well late forgets his love.°

°There are enough of those who carry the key
of falsehood hanging from their belts,
because of which, my lady, I cannot think
how to proceed; instead I turn away.
But may God know, wherever I am,
with my whole will, undividedly,°
I remain loyal to you,° my heart submits° to you,
for he who loves well late forgets his love.

To abstain for a long time from your presence
is sorrowful for me, when by necessity I do so,
and on the other hand, if I wished to come,
I couldn't do so without your decision.°
Command me what I ought to do,
for you have lordship over me.
All depends on you, my sadness and my joy,
for he who loves well late forgets his love.

Of the slanderers, whom good love fears,
May God curse the words of the evil tongue,
for in defiance° of them I submit to your love,
for he who loves well late forgets his love.

25 is the first in a long series of ballades, extending to **47**, that are addressed either to the lady or by a lady to a man throughout, as in **1**-**12** (**35**, **36**, and **41** being the exceptions, for different reasons discussed below). Most of the poems in **13**-**24**, by contrast, speak of the lady in the third person before turning to address her in the envoy.

It offers Gower's only treatment of the "mesdisantz," the "detractors" or "slanderers," one of the most common recurring themes in the poetry of his fourteenth-century predecessors. The "mesdisantz" are the successors to the figure of "Malebouche" in *RR* (who does not entirely

disappear from the lyrics: see Machaut, Lai **23**.101ff.; Deschamps **44** and **45**; Granson **22**). The poems dealing with the "mesdisantz" offer several variations on the theme: in some, they have maligned the lover/persona, who therefore urges his lady not to believe them as he proclaims his faithful love (Machaut, *Lou.* **127**, **183**, **187**; Granson **35**); in others, he has already lost her affection because she did believe them (Machaut, *Lou.* **108**, **192**; Deschamps **529**); in others the male persona simply chooses to ignore them, in order to increase their envy all the more (Machaut, Chans.Bal. **15**; Mudge **72**); in some, it is the woman who fears their effect upon her reputation (Froissart, Bal. **19** and numerous poems by Christine de Pizan); and in others, the woman speaks up to dismiss their slander (Deschamps **703**, **737**; Froissart, *Buisson* 2707 ff.). In another group, their precise action is unspecified, but either by slandering both man and woman or simply by drawing unwanted attention to their relationship, they cause them to be separated, as in Gower's poem, for the sake of the lady's good name (Machaut, *Lou.* **70**.1-5, **128**; Deschamps **645**, **667**, **720**; Froissart, *Buisson* 2456 ff., 2746 ff.).

Gower's poem offers a mixture of motifs. It begins with the forced separation and the persona's concern for his lady's honor, but it proceeds to an affirmation of love more typical of the poems in which the man's honor is at stake rather than the lady's. In stanza three, as the persona places the decision on whether to continue the separation on the lady herself, his concern for his own happiness seems to have taken over from his worries about her honor. And the envoy, in which the persona curses and chooses to defy the slanderers, turns to the threat of the "mesdisantz" to love itself rather than to the honor of either.

Tying the stanzas together is the refrain, perhaps the single most repeated line in all of Middle French poetry, occurring in a great variety of different contexts (see the note to line 8 below). Gower himself uses a variation on this line twice in *MO*, both times, however, with reference to one's love of God. It is cited apparently as the first line of a familiar song in some manuscripts of Chaucer's *PF* and also in the post-Chaucerian "Parliament of Birds," a song that we have to presume would be concerned with some form of romantic love, but the only surviving song in which it is the first line is a thirteenth-century hymn to the Virgin by Moniot d'Arras. Moniot's editor suggests that his song is based on two earlier surviving *chansons* in which the context is strictly secular (but which cannot be Chaucer's reference, since the line in question is not the first line in either). These two poems contain the earliest known examples of the line; the second also provides the only other known instance in which the setting, as in Gower's poem, is a separation for which the persona blames the "mesdixans" (line 10). In several later examples, the line serves within a reassurance of fidelity from one lover to another, as in Gower's stanza two. Gower would almost certainly have come across the line in the works of Machaut, but perhaps not before he had already cited it in *MO*. The variety of its surviving appearances suggests that it occurred many other times which have left no record. We should presume that Gower came across it more than once and that no particular version served as his source.

3 *gossip*. "Jangle" (or "gengle") and words derived from it are used for a wide variety of forms of speech, from frivolous gossip to boasting, but in the lyrics they occur most often with reference to the false report of those who slander either the lover or his lady, whether or not these are labeled "mesdisantz" (Machaut, *Lou*. **190**.8, Chans.Bal. **15**.5, 40; Deschamps **528**.23, **695**.8, **699**.3; Froissart

Bal**. 19**.18, *Buisson* 2712, 2758; but cf. Mudge **67**.13, where "jangler" refers to a lover's meaningless prattle). See also *AND* s.v. "jangle," 1, "gossip, slander," citing the present line, and *DMF* s.v "jangle," B. This is Gower's only use of "jangle" in *50B*. He uses it along with various related forms—"jangler," "janglerie"—eight times in *MO* with reference to idle speech generally but only once in the context of malicious gossip, in the section on "Detraccioun" (2621). By contrast, at least 8 of the 13 occurrences of one or another form of "jangle" in *CA* refer to gossip of this sort, in the lesson on "Detraction," for sure (2.398, 425, 452, 526), but also in "Cheste [Chiding]" (3.832) and in Amans' confession on "Hate" (3.887, 929, 941).

plotting. "Conspir" does not appear in *AND*, which does however list "conspirer," "conspiracie," and "conspiracion." The only citation in *DMF* s.v. "conspire" dates from "c.1474-1500." This is the only appearance of the word in *50B*, but it occurs ten times in *MO* (e.g. at 6566). Merriless and Pagan, p. 131, list it among Gower's neologisms.

4 *slanderers.* See *DMF* s.v. "mesdisant," where 11 of the 14 citations are from Machaut and a twelfth is from Christine de Pizan. This listing under-represents Christine, for whom the "mesdisantz" are an important recurring theme in both her "Cent balades" and her "Cent balades d'amant et de dame."

blocked. *AND* s.v. "desturber," 4.

5 The lover's concern for his lady's honor is a conventional motif; cf. **4²**.18, and among the poems already cited, Machaut *Lou.* **127**.7, **187**.15, Deschamps **529**.15, and the woman's assertion of her need to protect her honor in Froissart, Bal**. 19**. Troilus cites his concern for Criseyde's honor as a justification for his inaction in *T&C* 4.564-67.

7 Gower returns here to an image he also uses in **3**.9-10, **6**.18-19, **9**.10-12

8 The line is proverbial (and recognized as such in Gower's time; see below). Using readily available sources, I have found the following, listed in approximately chronological order. (Most of those not attributed to another source are from Hassell A65.)

- Two very similar anonymous *chansons* (for which we do not have the music), "Quant voi venir la gelee" and "En yver an lai jallee" (both 13th century), line 19. See Holger Petersen Dyggve, "Moniot d'Arras et Moniot de Paris, Trouvères du XIIIe siècle: Édition des chansons et étude historique," *Memoires de la Société Néo-Philologique de Helsinki* 13 (1938): 146-49. Spoken by a man, the first blames the "lausengier [dishonest flatterers]" (line 28), the second the "mesdixans" (line 10) for his forced separation from his beloved (who in both cases happens to be married). These and the song of Moniot d'Arras, next on the list, are cited by Charles Muscatine in Chaucer, *Works*, p. 1002.
- Moniot d'Arras (fl. 1213-39), "Ki bien aime a tart oublie," the first line of a song for which the music is preserved, referring to the narrator's love of the Virgin Mary. See Dyggve (as above), 70, who suggests (p. 146) that the two preceding songs served as Moniot's model.
- Montpellier Codex, ff. 240v-241r, "Biaus douz amis, or ne vouz anuit mie," line 3, "Car on dit qui bien aime a tart oublie," spoken by a woman reassuring her lover during their separation, though the cause is not described. Yvonne Rokseth, ed., *Polyphonies du XIIIe siècle: le manuscrit H 196 de la Faculté de médecine de Montpellier*, 4 vols. (Paris: Éditions de l'Oiseau Lyre, 1935-39), 1.240v-241r (facsimile), 3:21 (transcription).
- Paris, Bibliothèque Ste-Geneviève, MS 550, ff. 282v-294v, a late 13th-century compilation of proverbs. Morawski, no. 1835.
- *Les Propriétés des choses selon le Rosarius (B.N. f. fr. 12483)* [c.1330], ed. Anders Zetterberg and Sven Sandqvist, Études romanes de Lund, 52 (Lund: Lund University Press, 1994), "De sa perte avoit grant paour, Quar qui bien aime a tart oublie, Si com il apert en Marie." Not seen; cited in *DMF* s.v. "aimer," I.B.4.

- Machaut, *Remede* 4258: "Car qui bien aimme, a tart oublie." The narrator describes the depth of his commitment to his lady.
- Machaut, Lai **22**.1 ("Le Lay de plour"): "Qui bien aimme a tart oublie." Spoken by a woman mourning her lover's death, promising to keep him in her memory.
- Machaut, Motet **3**.39: "Qui bien aimme a tart oublie." Also spoken by a woman mourning her lover's death..
- Machaut, *Voir Dit*, Letter 10 (p. 122): "qui bien aimme a tart oublie." The narrator offers general reassurance to his lady.
- Machaut, *Voir Dit*, Letter 30 (p. 394): "qui bien aimme a tart oublie." The narrator seems to gently reprimand his lady.
- Machaut, *Voir Dit*, 7372, in the description of a painted image of "Vraie Amour": "Car qui bien aimme a tart oublie."
- Deschamps **1345**.R, "Car je voy bien: Qui aime, a tart oublie." This ballade , in which the poet thanks ladies who had prayed for him believing that he had died, is the only other example listed here in which the line appears in a refrain.
- Gower, *MO*16990, "N'est pas amy qui tost oublit," in the discussion of Virginity, describing the perfect love of God. Though we cannot be sure of the date of composition of Gower's ballade, this and the next item appear to be the first recorded appearances of this proverb from a writer in England.
- Gower, *MO* 27867, "Car qui bien ayme point n'oublie," describing the Virgin Mary's love of God.
- "Qui bien aime a tard oublie" appears in some manuscripts of *PF* after line 677 in place of the "roundel" that is printed from other copies in the standard editions of the poem. (See Charles Muscatine's note in Chaucer, *Works*, 1002.) It apparently indicates either an actual song that the birds are heard singing or the tune to which the birds' "roundel" was sung.
- Philippe de Mézières, *Songe du vieil pelerin* (1386-89), Book 1, chapter 6 (ed. Joël Blanchard [Geneva: Droz, 2015], 1:164), "Et non pourquant il se dit en proverbe: qui bien aime a tart oublie." "Doulce Amour" (a figure for God's charity) describes her love even for those who have sinned.
- *Roman de Cardenois* (Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional MS 10264) (a late 14th-century prose romance with extensive borrowings from Machaut), ed. Marcello Cocco (Bologna: Pátron, 1975), 186, 208. Each of the main characters cites this line in their reassurances to one another. Cited by Lawrence Earp, *Guillaume de Machaut: A Guide to Research* (New York: Garland, 1995), 366.
- Jean Régnier, *Les Fortunes et Adversitez* (c. 1432), 969, the final line of a *chanson* promising not to forget his lady during their separation; ed. E. Droz (Paris: Champion, 1923), 37.
- The post-Chaucerian "Parliament of Birds" (c. 1430), line 32, "Qui bien ayme tard oublye," as in *PF* (above), evidently identifying a song that the narrator hears the birds singing. Eleanor Prescott Hammond, "A Parliament of Birds," *JEGP* 7, no. 1 (Jan. 1908): 106.
- *La Vie de nostre benoit Sauveur Ihesuscrist et la saincte vie de Nostre Dame*, ed. Millard Meiss and Elizabeth H. Beatson (New York : The College Art Association of America, 1977), 118. In this early 15th century French prose life of Christ, as she mourns Jesus at his sepulcher, "On povoit bien aplicquer en celle heure a la benoiste Magdaleine le proverbe qui dit: 'Cueur qui bien ayme a tart oblie." Cited in *DMF* s.v. "aimer," I.B.4.
- Martin Le Franc, *Le Champion des dames* (1440-1442), ed. Robert Deschaux (Classiques Français du Moyen Âge, Paris: Champion, 1999), 12961, with reference to one whose lady has died: "Qui sa dame *aime* tart l'oublye." Cited in *DMF* s.v. "aimer," I.B.4.
- Jean Miélot, "Qui bien aime, tart il oublie" (1456). "Proverbes en françois. Die Sprichwörtersammlung Jehan Mielot's," ed. J. Ulrich, *Zeitschrift fur Französische Sprache und Literatur*, 24/1 (1902), 198. Cited in *DMF* s.v. "aimer," I.B.4.

- Jean Molinet, "Complainte sur la mort de Madame d'Ostrisse," 280: "Car qui bien sa dame aime, tard l'oublie" ("Noblesse" praises the affection of the widower for the deceased); "Ung dictier de Renommee, Vertus et Victoire," 160: "Coeur qui bien aime tard oublie" ("Renommee" speaks of her love for Burgundy, known for both fame and virtue). *Les Faictz et Dictz* [1482-83], ed. Noël Dupire (Paris: Société des Anciens Textes Français, 1936), 1:172, 1:199.
- "Proverbes en rimes," late 15th century, line 304, "Car qui bien aime, tart oublye"; a man asks to be remembered in his absence. Grace Frank, "Proverbes en rimes (B)," *Romanic Review* 31 (1940): 209-38, at 215, from London: British Library MS Add. 37527, f. 19v.
- Octovien de Saint-Gelais, *Eurialus und Lukrezia* (1490), ed. Elise Richter (Halle a. S.: Niemeyer, 1914), 101. Not seen. Cited in *DMF* s.v. "aimer," I.B.4.

For the equivalent in English, Whiting L565 cites *Cursor Mundi* (ed. Richard Morris, EETS , o.s. 57 [London: Trübner, 1874), 4510, "Qua leli luues for-gettes lat" (with variations in spelling in other copies), where the context is a rebuke of the ungrateful butler who left Joseph languishing in prison in Genesis 40-41. *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs*, 3rd ed., rev. by F.P. Wilson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 755, adds six more citations from the 16th to 19th centuries. Buttterfield, *Familiar Enemy*, 246-50 discusses the implications of Gower's use of this line in the central ballade of *50B*.

love. On the singular, see the note to **2**.5.

9-10 Yeager (p. 141) suggests that "perhaps" there is a phallic reference here, citing Exeter Book Riddle 44. Such a figurative use of "key" also occurred to the author of the late fifteenth-century text cited in *DMF* s.v. *clef*, B.1, "Contexte grivois [bawdy context]." It's an odd choice of image whatever the case, nor is it clear whether it refers to those with whom the persona is falsely associated by the slanderers (for which the phallic reference might be crude but appropriate) or (perhaps more likely?) the "mesdisantz" themselves, whom he blames for their false accusations (for which it would not).

14 *undividedly*. See the note to **4**2. For a similar construction, see Froissart, *Esp.Am.* 2441-42: "Tenès ma foi, m'amour entiere / Sans departir [you have my commitment, my entire love, undividedly]."

15 *I remain loyal to you*. Cf. **27**.13. While the context in both cases makes the meaning clear, this is not a common use of "tenir." It is not recorded in *AND* s.v. "tenir," either for the reflexive use or in the list of phrases, under "se tenir a"; but see *DMF* s.v. "tenir," IV.B.3.a., "*Se tenir a qqn.* 'Être du parti de qqn, être fidèle à qqn' [to be of someone's party, to be faithful to someone]," with three citations, including one from Froissart.

submits. *AND* s.v. "plier," v.refl. 1: "be subject to, obedient to." For Gower's use of this verb see the notes to **3**.16, **9**.3.

20 *decision*. Macaulay, in his glossary s.v. "esgard," gives "counsel," citing Gower's only other use of the noun "esgard" in *MO* 21060, "A vostre esgard le vuil lesser," which more clearly means, however, "I wish to leave it to your judgment or decision," as defined in *AND* s.v. "agard," 6. ("Agard" or "aguard" is evidently the more common Anglo-Norman spelling; cf. **9**.39, *MO* 4997, 14034, 17148, 25252.) Many of the citations under this definition and under those for phrases using "agard" come from formal judicial contexts. See also *DMF* s.v. "esgard," II.B: ""Jugement porté sur qqn ou qqc., décision concernant qqn ou qqc. [judgment passed upon someone or something, decision concerning someone or something]."

27 *defiance*. "Despit" covers a range of attitudes, but all with considerably more force than Modern English "in spite of." *AND* s.v. "despit1," *DMF* s.v. "despit."

26

Salutz, honour, et toute reverence,
Com cil d'amour q'est tout v*ost*re soubgit,
Ma dame, a vous et a v*ost*re excellence
Envoie, s'il vous plest, d'umble espirit,
Pour fare° a vous plesance, honour, profit.
De tout mo*u*n° coer entier jeo le desire.
Selonc le corps combien qe j'ai petit,
Sanz autre do*u*n le coer doit bien suffire.

Qui do*n*ne soi, c'est une exp*er*ience
Qe l'autre bien ne serront escondit.
Si plein com dieus m'ad de sa p*ro*vidence
Fait et formé, si plein, sanz contredit,
Soul ap*re*s lui, ma dame, en fait et dit
Vous do*n*ne; et si Rois fuisse d'un Empire,
Tout est a vous; mais en amour perfit
Sanz autre do*u*n le coer doit bien suffire.

Primer q*a*nt vi l'estat de vo presence,
En vous mirer me vint si g*ra*nt delit
Q'unqes depuiss d'ascune negligence
Mon coer pensant v*ost*re bealté n'oublit,
P*ar* quoi toutdis me croist celle appetit
De vous amer, plusqe ne porrai dire,
Et pour descrire amour en son droit plit,
Sanz autre do*u*n le coer doit bien suffire.

A vous, ma dame, envoie ceste escript.
Ne sai si vo danger le voet despire,
Mais si reson soit en ce cas eslit,
Sanz autre do*u*n le coer doit bien suffire.

5 fare. *See the note to this line in the commentary*.
6 *Mac* mon

26

Greetings, honor, and all reverence,
as one who is totally your subject in love,
my lady, to you and to your excellence°
I send, if it pleases you, in humble spirit,
to do you pleasure, honor, benefit.
With all my whole heart I desire it.
Although mine is small, in accord with the body,°
without other gift the heart should well suffice.

When one gives oneself,° it is a demonstration
that other goods will not be refused.
As fully as God has of his providence
made and formed me, so fully, without reservation,°
alone after him, my lady, in deed and word
I give° to you; and if I were the king of an empire,°
all is yours. But in perfect° love,
without other gift the heart should well suffice.

When I first saw the quality of your person,°
such great delight came upon me in looking at you
that never since out of any negligence
does my pensive heart° forget your beauty,
because of which the desire° to love you
constantly increases in me, more than I could say,
and to describe love in its true condition,
without other gift the heart should well suffice.

To you, my lady, I send this writing.
I don't know if your disdain° wishes to disregard it,
but if reason be chosen in this case,
without other gift the heart should well suffice.

Like all but a few of the *50B*, **26** is addressed to the lady and it is meant to be delivered to her, but this is the only one in which its letter-like form is announced in the opening stanza. With its "greetings," the poem begins, in fact, much more like a typical envoy; compare **16**.27 and **39**.27. Such a beginning is not unknown; one may compare Granson ***56***, which begins "Salus assez . . . A tous amans [abundant greetings to all lovers]" (1-2). The address to the lady, however, is uniquely Gower's. The poem's written form is expressly stated in the envoy, but the envoy also reveals that the entire poem assumes a relationship that may exist only in the

persona's mind. In that regard, the poem as a whole offers an interesting study of both the presumptions and the blind spots in the male-dominated rhetoric on which it draws.

The poem is built around the common motif of the gift of the heart. The persona links "heart" in that sense both to the heart as the seat of desire in line 6 and to his physical heart in line 7 (if I have understood it correctly; see the note). In the second stanza he compares the gift of his heart to the far larger gifts that he is unable to give, either because he cannot do so literally (his whole self) or because he does not in fact possess them (his "empire"). There are certainly contexts in which the assertion that the heart alone should suffice would constitute an appealing image of the purity of his affection. But here it appears to be at least to some degree self-serving, both because it becomes clear that he expects something in return and because it appears that he has in fact nothing else to give. In one of Machaut's ballades, a woman makes a similar claim: "Et bonne Amour, ce m'est vis, / Ne demande que le cuer, si qu', amis, / Le mien avés [and true love, it seems to me, demands only the heart, just as, my *ami*, you have mine]" (*Lou.* 263.21-23). Her plea is made in the context of her lack of material wealth (lines 16-20), but unlike Gower's poem, it also occurs within an already existing relationship in which she is able to address her beloved as "tres dous amis" (line 2) and in which she makes several allusions to his changed behavior towards her, and the entire poem consists of an argument that between lovers rank and wealth should not matter. In Gower's poem, a difference in rank is never expressed openly but it is hinted at throughout, notably in the formality of the opening (see the note to line 3), in the persona's professed humility (4), in his reference to "l'estat de vos presence" (17; see the note), and finally in the fact that he must address her in writing; and in lines 11-12, the way in which he defines his total being can also serve as a not very subtle reminder that everyone is equal, if not in society, at least before God. Unlike Machaut's ballade, however, as that little hint suggests, there is less of an attempt to persuade and more of a demand, for the repetition of the refrain—"doit bien suffire"—implies that the persona deserves some compensation for his supposed "gift" (a claim that is expressed more openly in **12**.9-13, **17**.9-13 and **28**.5-7). In the envoy, any reason that the woman might have not to return his affection is simply attributed to "danger" (26), and only in that word is there any hint—unrecognized by the persona—not only that the woman remains indifferent to him but that she might have a will or desires of her own; and in making a final appeal based on "reason" (27), he seems to abandon any claim upon an affection like that which he claims to offer to her. At very least, the poem ends upon the contrast between the generosity of the persona's rhetoric and the rather low level of his actual prospects, but it is also possible to feel that his insistence upon the merit of his claim makes each repetition of the refrain a little weaker, and in the final instance, exposes its emptiness. In focusing so exclusively on the man's expectations, this poem has its roots deep in the self-absorbed rhetoric of earlier song, and whether deliberately or not, Gower manages to draw attention here to some its most common pretensions.

3 *excellence*. There is no support in either *AND* or *DMF* for taking "excellence" as an honorific ("your excellency"), especially at so early a date (the citation in *DMF* s.v. "excellence," C.2, that might support it dates from 1492). But there is in English. See *MED* s.v. "excellence," 3, citing Gower's "In Praise of Peace," 375, "This lettre unto thin excellence I sende," and Chaucer's "Complaint unto Pity," 59, "unto youre rial excellence." Arguing in favor of such a use would be the "soubgit" of the

previous line; perhaps arguing against it is the compound phrase with the plain "a vous." Cf. the note to **6**.9.

5 This is the only occurrence of the spelling "fare" in Gower's works. It is listed as an alternative spelling in *AND* s.v. "faire," but it does not appear in any of the included citations, nor does it appear in any of the citations in *DMF* s.v."faire." One is tempted to emend by adding the missing *i*.

7 *in accord with the body*. This is a tricky line, and I believe that it is meant to compare the small physical size of his heart with the immensity of his gift in the refrain. Machaut uses "selon le corps" in a very similar way in *Behaingne* 370-71, with reference to a woman's breast: "et si estoit petiz, / Selon le corps," which Wimsatt and Kibler translate as "small, in perfect accord with her body." See *DMF* s.v. "selon," II.A.1; for the position of the conjunction "combien qe," see the note to **6**.6-7. Somewhat more loosely, one might take "selon" as "with regard to" (*DMF*, loc.cit, II.B.1), and translate the line, "with regard to my body, though mine is small," implying the small physical size of the heart as well.

9 *When one gives oneself*. Macaulay calls the introduction of an "if" or "when" clause with "qui" or "cil qui" "a favourite one with our author" (1:466), and in his note to *MO* 1244 (1:398) he also cites *MO* 9055, 16541, and *CA* Prol. 460. See also **47**.4, **49**.5, 13.

12 *without reservation*. *DMF* s.v. "contredit," A.1 ("sans réserve").

14 *give.* "Donne" lacks an expressed object. Presumably it is to be supplied from the preceding clause: "I give myself to you."

if I were the king. As noted in the introduction, the hypothetical expressed here is formulaic; cf. **4**[1].18-19, **38**.11, **44**.5-6. It takes on a bit more resonance in this poem, however, because of the other hints at a difference in rank between the persona and his addressee. Amans makes a similar assertion in *CA* 5.4729-37.

15 *perfect*. "Perfit" still bore its etymological sense of "finished, complete" in Middle French (from Latin "perficere"), as well as the more recent sense of "flawless." See *DMF* s.v. "parfait." "Amour perfit" might of course be both. Cf. **9**.4.

17 *quality of your person*. "Estat" is about as general as a word can be, and it is used in a wide variety of contexts, though most often in a positive sense. One might simply translate it as "nature," but it is also commonly used in contexts suggesting "status" or "rank." See *AND* and *DMF* s.v. "estat." "Presence" is trickier. There is no support for taking it to mean "bearing, carriage" at so early a date, much less "dignified or impressive appearance" ("he has a real presence"). Here and possibly in **7**.24 as well, it appears merely to designate the person herself, a sense not recorded until somewhat later in both French (*DMD* s.v. "presence," A.2.c, "P. méton. 'Personne présente' [By metonymy, 'person present']," with the earliest citation from 1448) and English (*MED* s.v. "presence," 1(c), "with possessive pron., as a polite substitute for the simple personal pron.," with the earliest citation from 1415). Such a translation works in **6**.7 and **15**.7 as well, though there also seems to be the additional implication of the woman's actual physical presence, as suggested by the definition cited from *DMF*. Gower also uses "presence" to mean "the condition of being present" (in phrases such as "in her presence") in **9**.13, **25**.17, **39**.21 and in the many uses of the noun in *MO*.

20 *pensive heart*. Cf. **3**.9.

21 *desire*. "Appetit" is used much more broadly than merely with reference to literal hunger in Middle French. See *DMF* s.v. "appetit."

26 *disdain*. "Danger" floats between personification and abstraction here. See the note to **12**.8.

disregard. The verb "despire" might simply mean "despise," but *AND* s.v. "despire," 2 offers "scorn, disregard," with three citations in which the object is "commandment" or "prayer."

27

Ma dame, q*a*nt jeo vi v*ost*re oill vair et riant,°
Cupide m'ad ferru de tiele plaie
P*ar*mi le coer d'un dart d'amour ardant
Qe nulle medicine m'est verraie
Si vous n'aidetz; mais° certes jeo me paie,
Car soubtz la cure de si bone mein,
Meulx vuil languir qe sanz vous estre sein.

Amour de sa constreignte est un tirant,
Mais sa banere q*a*nt m*er*ci desplaie,
Lors est il suef, courtois, et confortant.
Ceo poet savoir qui la fortune essaie.
Mais combien qu'il sa g*ra*ce me deslaie,
Ma dame, jeo me tiens a vous certain.
Mieulx vuill languir qe sanz vous estre sein.

Ensi ne tout guari ne languisant,
Ma dame, soubtz l'espoir de vo manaie
Je vive, et sui vos g*ra*ces attendant
Tanq*ue* m*er*ci ses oignementz attraie
Et le destroit de ma dolour allaie.
Mais si guaris ne soie enquore au plein,
Mieulx vuill languir qe sanz vous estre sein.

Pour vous, q'avetz la bealté plus qe faie,
Ceo l*ett*re ai fait sanz null penser vilein.
P*ar*entre deus combien qe jeo m'esmaie,
Mieulx vuill languir qe sanz vous estre sein.

1 *See the note to this line in the commentary.*
5 Mais *in later hand over erasure. Cross drawn in margin.*

27

My lady, when I saw your eyes, bright and laughing,°
Cupid struck me with such a wound
amidst the heart with a dart of burning love°
that no medicine is real° for me
unless you help. But truly I am satisfied,°
for under the care of so good a hand,
I would rather languish than be well without you.°

°Love in its binding° is a tyrant,
but when Mercy unfurls its banner,°
then it is gentle, courteous, and comforting.
Anyone who tries his fortune° can know this.
But though it delays its grace for me,
my lady, I remain attached° to you.
I would rather languish than be well without you.

Thus neither completely healed nor languishing,
my lady, in hope of your pity°
I live, and I await your grace
until Mercy brings forth its ointments
and alleviates° the distress° of my suffering.
But if I am not yet completely healed,
I would rather languish than be well without you.

For you, who have more than unearthly° beauty,
I have composed this letter without any base intent.°
However much I am troubled° between the two,
I would rather languish than be well without you.

The imagery in **27** is so conventional and so familiar that it one might not notice how exceptional it is for Gower: this is the only of his ballades in which the onset of love is attributed to Cupid's arrow and in which Love and Mercy are so fully personified. Gower combines rather successfully here the mixed pleasure and pain of the hopeful lover, the allegorical "wounds" that require the lady's "healing," and the formulaic refrain in which the persona expresses his willing but paradoxical choice. It is a pretty poem, like so many earlier lyrics, but its very conventionality precludes anything that might be unique to the persona's situation, and in contrast to Gower's more typical dramatic mode—in which the persona interacts (or not) with the lady rather than with familiar abstractions—we learn virtually nothing about the lady herself, about how the poem might be received, or even his objective in sending it to her.

1 *bright and laughing*. As Macaulay notes (1:466), the line as it appears in the manuscript is two syllables too long, but it is easily corrected by deleting "vair et" ("riant" being required for the rhyme). He suggests that the mistake is authorial, but it is just as easy to attribute it to a scribe familiar with the common formula for describing the lady's eyes; see the note to **12**.22. Alternatively, one could keep the formula and either omit "Ma dame" at the beginning of the line or treat it as extra-metric.

3 *dart of burning love*. This could just as easily be the "burning dart of love," as in Yeager. In love poetry (unlike in *MO*, where it refers almost exclusively to literal flame), "ardant" is typically used metaphorically to describe the intensity of the emotion, as in **3**.1 and **16**.12, but with reference to Cupid's dart, the distinction between literal and metaphorical is perhaps obscured.

4 *real*. For other examples of the use of "verraie" after "être" see *DMF* s.v. "vrai," II.B. For a citation with reference to healing ("...vraye terminacion de la maladie"), *DMF* offers "effectif."

5 *satisfied*. *AND* s.v. "paier," v.refl. 1. The second definition, which might work equally well here, is "to be pleased."

7 For the formula ("I prefer X with my lady to Y without her"), see the note to **23**.13-15.

8-9 Love is gently personified elsewhere in *50B*, e.g. in **3**.6, **10**.15, and **13**.13, but only here is "Amour" evidently used as another name for Cupid. "Merci" is also personified in **9**.35 and **15**.21 and perhaps in **37**.19 as well, in the first instance offering her "healing" (as in line 18-19 below), but in none of these is she as active as in this poem.

8 *binding*. I borrow the translation from Chaucer, *T&C* 1.255-56: "Refuseth nat to Love for to ben bonde, / Syn, as hymselven liste, he may yow binde." The entire passage describing Troilus' falling in love draws upon the same conventions as Gower's first two stanzas, but the resemblance exhausts itself very quickly.

9 *unfurls its banner*. See *DMF* s.v. "déployer," A.1.a: "*(À) banniere(s) desployee(s).* "Bannière(s) au vent; en position de combat [*With banners unfurled*: Banners to the wind; in combat position]." An interesting choice, to say the least, for Mercy.

11 *tries his fortune*. *DMF* s.v. "essayer," B.1.a, for "Essayer sa fortune" gives "Tenter sa chance [try his luck]," with an unambiguous citation from Christine de Pizan. Except that one wouldn't expect "qui" in this context, "la fortune" could conceivably be the subject of "essaie," "anyone whom Fortune tests," as in Yeager. *DMF*, loc.cit., "*Essayer qqc.* 'Mettre à l'épreuve (la force de qqn) en l'affrontant' [*essayer* something: put to the test (someone's strength) by confronting him]."

13 *I remain attached*. See the note to **25**.15.

16 *pity*. "Manaie" is not a common word, and this is the only time that Gower uses it. *AND* s.v. "manaie" defines it as "pity, mercy," but all of the included citations, including those for the various phrases in which the noun appears, are from the 12th and 13th centuries. *DMF* s.v. "manaie" offers "puissance, pouvoir qu'on a sur qqn ou sur qqc. [power that one has over someone or something]" with citations from the 14th and 15th centuries. Only the *AND* definition is appropriate here, and it appears that Gower may be reviving an archaic term.

19 *alleviates*. French "allaier" normally had an entirely different meaning. See *DMF* s.v. "allier" and "alloyer," both from Latin "ligare" and both with senses linked to Modern English "ally" and "alloy," and *AND* s.v "alaier," with a single citation in the sense of "alloy." The Middle French verb that meant "to allay, alleviate, relieve" is "aleger" (*AND),* "alleger" (*DMF*), so commonly used by Machaut along with the related noun "aligement [relief]," e.g. in *Lou.* **3**.25, **86**.11. Both "allaier/allier/alloyer" and "aleger/alleger" entered Middle English, and their history became entwined with that of a different Middle English verb, "aleien, aleggen," from Old English "alecgan." See the etymological notes in *OED* s.v. "allay" and "allege." Only in English, however,

are the forms without a *g* recorded in the sense of "allay"; see *MED* s.v "aleien," 3(c). It appears that Gower may have let an English word slip into his French here. This is the only time he uses this verb in French, but cf. *CA* 6.310, 7.5406.

distress. Both "destroit" and "destresce" (Modern English "distress") derive from Latin "destrictus." Machaut uses "destret" in this sense in Lai **4**.14.

22 *unearthly*. One thinks immediately of the famous couplet in *CA* 4.1321-22, "The beaute faye upon her face / Non erthly thing it may desface." Both Machaut and Christine de Pizan also use "fée" as a measure of beauty: Machaut, *Font.Am.* 200, *Lou*. **254**.8; Christine, *Le Livre de la mutacion de fortune*, line 10171 (ed. Suzanne Solente, 4. vols. Sociéte´des Anciens Textes Français. Paris: Picard, 1959-66, 2:222). In French, however, "faie/fée" appears to be used only as a noun. See *AND* s.v. "fee[1]," *DMF* s.v. "fee[1]." Here Gower uses it an adjective, which happens also to be his most common use in English. In addition to the lines just cited, see *CA* 1.2317, 2.1019, 5.3769; also 5.4105 and **24**.22, where it might be adjective or noun; and *MED* s.v. "faie," adj. and n.

23 *without any base intent*. For the formula, see the note to **21**.8.

24 *troubled*. *DMF* s.v. "esmayer" would have one believe that this verb belongs to formal poetic diction: all but a few of the many citations are from Machaut or other poets. Gower uses it here, in **36**.13, and **46**.20, and the related noun in **10.**9 and *Tr* **10**.11, and the verb and noun also occur eight times in *MO*.

28

Dame, u est ore celle naturesce
Qe soloit estre en vous? Tiel° temps jeo vi
Q'il ne vous plest de v*ost*re gentilesce
Un soul salutz mander a v*ost*re ami.
Ne quier de vous forsq*ue* le coer demi,
Et vous avetz le mien t*re*stout entier.
Om voit sovent de petit poi doner.

Les vertus de franchise et de largesce
Jeo sai, ma dame, en vous sont establi,
Et vous savetz ma peine et ma destresce,
Dont p*ar* dolour jeo sui semp*re*s faili
En le defalte soul de vo merci,
Q'il ne vous plest un mot a moi mander.
Om voit sovent de petit poi doner.

Tout qanq*ue* j'ai, ma dame, a vo noblesce
De coer et corps, jeo l'ai doné p*ar*mi,
P*ar* quoi ne vous desplese, en ma simplesce
De v*ost*re amour si jeo demande ensi,
Car cil qui done, il ad dou*n* deservi.
Loial servant doit avoir son loer.
Om voit sovent de petit poi doner.

Ma doulce dame, qui m'avetz oubli,
P*re*netz ceo dit de moi pour remembrer,
Et mandetz moi de vos beals ditz auci,
Q'om voit sovent de petit poi doner.

2 tiel *is severely abraded in the MS and is perhaps deliberately though incompletely erased . Cross drawn in margin. See the note to this line in the commentary.*
16 l'ai. *See the note to this line in the commentary.*

28

Lady, where is now that goodly nature°
that used to be in you? I have seen such times°
that it doesn't please you out of your kindness
to send a single greeting to your *ami*.
I don't seek from you but half a heart,
and you have mine in its entirety.
One often sees from a little, a little given.°

The virtues of generosity and of largesse
I know, my lady, are fixed in you,
and you know my pain and my distress,
from which out of grief I am often weakened
in default only of your mercy,
for it doesn't please you to send a word to me.
One often sees from a little, a little given.

Everything I have, my lady, to your nobleness,°
of heart and body, I have given completely,°
for which, may it not displease you, in my simpleness, °
if I thus ask for your love,
for he who gives, he has deserved a gift.°
A loyal servant ought to have his pay.°
One often sees from a little, a little given.

My sweet lady, who have forgotten me,
take this poem from me as a reminder,
and send me some of your fair words° as well,
for one often sees from a little, a little given.°

28 offers another version of the persona's claim that the woman that he addresses owes him something in return for his affection, as in **17** and **26**. It echoes the motif of the gift of the heart from both (**17**.11, **26**.R). Like **17**, it equates his unrequited love with uncompensated service (**17**.14); and as in **26**, there are small hints of a difference in rank (lines 15, 17), and he addresses the poem directly to his lady. It differs from both in the presumed narrative situation: they have a longstanding relationship, one in which she used to be kinder and in which he can claim to be her "ami" (4), and rather than simply failing to respond to him, she has evidently turned away.

In that respect **28** again recalls Machaut's *Lou*. **263**, discussed in the commentary to **26** above. But in Machaut's ballade, the woman seeks to persuade the man that she loves that a

difference in rank matters not in matters of love. Here, as in **26**, the persona makes a balder claim for a *quid pro quo* based upon what he claims to have "given," and as in **26**, his claim might seem to grow weaker with each repetition of the refrain. The other examples of a similar expression (see the note to line 7 below) confirm the proverbial character of the refrain and indicate that its primary meaning is an encouragement to charity: from the contrast to those who have nothing to give, we should understand it as "one sees from a little, a little given" (that is, even the poor give something) rather than "one sees from a little, little given" (that is, the poor don't give very much and maybe nothing at all). In its first use in this poem, it might suggest a modest lack of presumptuousness in the persona's request. By the fourth instance, however, it sounds more like pleading, and increasingly desperate pleading at that, as "petit" is applied in different specific contexts. In the second stanza, the persona bases his claims not on reason as in **17**.10 and **26**.27 but on the lady's generous nature, but lines 12- 14 suggest that, at least with regard to the persona, she doesn't have very much "merci" at all, and like the persona in **17**, he pursues something that doesn't actually exist. In stanza three it is her love that is evidently in short supply, and in the envoy, lines 24-25 suggest that the woman doesn't have that many encouraging words to give. In each case, one can take the "petit" of the refrain as a resigned concession, as a complaint, or as a mixture of both, but it is difficult to see how the woman will be altered by this plea. Perhaps by the end we are meant to feel that, in the repetition of "petit," the persona finds it unpersuasive too.

1 *goodly nature*. So was "naturesce" used, though the word was evidently not very common in Gower's time. Gower employs it only here and in **44**.18. It appears also to be an Anglo-Norman term: all of the citations in *AND*, *DMF*, and Godefroy (all s.v. "naturesse") are from English sources. The early 14th-century Anglo-Norman author Nicole Bozon, better known for his *Contes moralisées*, wrote a verse "Tretis de denaturesse"; British Library MS Add. 46919 (olim Phillipps 8336), ff. 49^{v}-50 (Dean and Boulton, no. 145). "Denaturesse [unkindness, ingratitude]" is also cited only from English sources in *AND* s.v. "denaturesce," *DMF* s.v. "denaturesse." It appears to be equally uncommon, but one wonders if Gower's "unkindeschipe" (e.g. in *CA* 5. 5202, 5207) is a calque on the Anglo-Norman word. All but one later citation in *MED* s.v. "unkīndeshipe" are from *CA*.

2 *I have seen such times*. Macaulay punctuates this line differently, placing "tiels temps jeo vi" within the same clause as the first half of line 2 and placing the question mark at the end of line 4. He may be right, but the resulting construction is awkward at best. For "tiel," Macaulay's glossary includes "many a one," and we might therefore have "where is now that goodly nature that used to be in you many a time I saw." Macaulay may, however, have had in mind not this line but instead passages like *MO* 9493, "Et tiele y a q'en sa vielexce / Devient d'amour la sorceresse," where Gower is clearly thinking of a type rather than a particular individual and where one might therefore translate "And there is many a one who in old age become a sorceress of love." The use of the noun "temps" adverbially (that is, without a preceding preposition) is perhaps less striking than the omission of the relative ("many a time *that* I saw"). But the result perhaps makes better sense than the translation that I offer. Grammatically, "tiel . . . q[e]" is unexceptional, and making "tiel temps" the object of "vi" eliminates the need both for a preposition and for a relative, but the past tense of "vi" confuses the time scheme a bit: in the past tense, "vi [saw]" should refer to the earlier friendly times rather than the current chillier ones, and I have by glossed over the problem by translating "vi" as "have seen." The third alternative is to treat the entire clause as parenthetical: "(I saw such

times)"; but that leaves the "q'" in the next line hanging. The abrasion of "tiel" in the manuscript and the cross in the margin might indicate some uncertainty both about what was written and about what was intended, and we might therefore be trying to make sense of a corrupted passage.

7 The sense of this line is best clarified by two similar passages in *MO*. In the discussion of "Almosne [Almsgiving]," Gower urges everyone to give according to his means. A rich man will give more; "du petit un poy dorra [from a little, one will give a little]" (*MO* 15499); and the one with nothing will give his "bon voloir . . . Pour l'amour dieu et de ses seintz [good will . . . for the love of God and of His saints]" (15500-04). He makes the point again later in the same section: "Du petit poy serra donné / Du nient l'en dorra volenté [from a little, a little will be given; from nothing one will give good will]" (*MO* 15817-18). One of Machaut's ballades begins with a very similar statement:

> De petit po, de niant volonté,
> De moult assés doit penre, ce m'est vis,
> Chascuns amans de s'amie en bon gré.
>
> [From a little, a little; from nothing, good will; from much a great deal ought each lover receive from his *amie* with pleasure, it seems to me.]
>
> (*Bal.not.* **20**.1-3)

(The speaker is a woman who has been abandoned by the man she loves.) The expression is proverbial. See Morawski 539, 540; and Hassell P139, citing in addition to these passages a similar line from Philippe de Mézières' *Songe du vieil pélerin* (1386-89), also cited in *DMF* s.v. "peu," I.B.1.b. *DMF* s.v. "donner," I.A.1.g cites another example, "Qui a peu peu donne [who has little gives little]," from *Les Enfances de Doon de Mayence* (c.1450-1500). See also Whiting L401, "Of a Little one gives a little," with one anonymous citation from c.1450; and *VC* 2, Prol. 63: "Non miser est talis, aliquid qui non dare possit," trans. Stockton, "There is no one so poor that he cannot give something."

In reading the line, one mustn't be distracted by the common Modern French expression "un petit peu," which does not occur, according to Rey, *Dict.Hist.* s.v. "peu," before the 16th century.

15 *to your nobleness*. "Noblesse" might be a quality of character, as in **6**.9, but here and in **39**.26 and **44**.24, it is evidently used as a title and a form of address. (**33**.18 offers an ambiguous case.) The honorific is recognized by *AND* s.v. "noblesce" (citing **39**.26) but not by *DMF* s.v. "noblesse," suggesting that this is an Anglo-Norman usage. It also occurs in contemporary English: see *MED* s.v." nōbles(se," 1.(c), citing as its first example Chaucer's Mel *CT* VII.2926. See also the notes to **2**.25 (on "noble"), to **6**.12 (on "haltesse") to **26**.3 (on "excellence"), and to **13**.

16 The "l'" in "l'ai" is grammatically redundant, but it preserves the meter by preventing the elision of "jeo" and "ai." There is a similar construction in **41**.16-17 in which the expressed object also occurs in initial position but in which the redundant object pronoun ("les") provides a needed syllable.

completely. "Parmi" as an adverb ordinarily means "right through, throughout," the first two senses that Macaulay gives in his glossary. See *AND* s.v. "parmi," *DMF* s.v. "parmi," II. Macaulay also provides "completely, utterly," a sense not recorded in the dictionaries but well supported by numerous examples in *MO*, e.g. at 818, 1628 *et al.*

17 *simpleness*. "Simplesce," like "noblesce," with which it is set in opposition by the rhyme, might also be a quality of character, the simplicity or candor with which the persona makes his request, or a confirmation of his inferiority and thus his lower rank. See *DMF* s.v. "simplesse," B, C; and *MED* s.v. "simplesse," (c), "lowliness, low rank; unworthiness," citing *CA* 1.2099. In *CA* 1.2099-2100 and 2.2819-20, Gower uses the same rhyming pair.

19 This line has the appearance of a proverbial saying (and is the first of three such lines in succession), but I haven't found it recorded elsewhere in this form. Cf. Morawski no. 1077, "Li dons est perdus qui n'est reconeü[s] [the gift that is not acknowledged is wasted]."

20 A common proverbial expression, for which there are several variants. See Hassell S80 ("Qui bien sert bon loyer attend [he who serves well expects good pay]"), S84 ("De tel service tel loyer [from such service, such reward]"; Whiting S157 ("A good Servant must have good wages"), S168 ("Service [Labor] asks meed [reward]", citing *CA* 4.2023-24, 7.2110, 8.2012); *DMF* s.v. "service," under the "Proverbes" tab ("Qui bon service fait bon guerdon en attend [he who performs good service expects a good reward]").

24 *words*. "Ditz" could be "poems," as in the preceding line, but not necessarily. Gower uses "dit" in this sense in **23**.25 and in *MO* 27340 ("les fols ditz d'amours [the foolish poems of love]." But the more general meaning, "word" or "saying," is far more common, for instance in the expression "faitz et ditz [deeds and words]" (**11**.4, or in the singular, in **24**.19, **26**.13) and elsewhere (**17**.22, the first "Dedicatory Ballade," *Works* 1:335, line 19), and in many different contexts in *MO*, e.g. at 1753 ("les ditz des sages [the sayings of the wise]") and 27626 ("les ditz que l'angle lour apporte [the words that the angel brings to them]"), and it appears to be the default meaning. If "ditz" in this line refers specifically to "poems," it introduces a narrative situation like that in Machaut's *Voir Dit*, in which the narrator and his beloved indeed exchange ballades and other lyrics with one another, but lacking any such context, it seems more likely that the persona merely expresses the same wish as in lines 4 and 13 or as in **2**.20-21, not excluding, of course, the possibility that the "words" that she sends be in rhymed rather than unrhymed form.

25 Setting aside the ballades in which there is only a half-line refrain or no refrain at all, this is the only instance in *50B* which the final line is not identical in all three stanzas and the envoy. The "Q[e]" in this final instance is not really necessary though it does make sense, and one can imagine that it was introduced accidentally at some point in the copying because of the similarity between *Q* and *O*.

29

Par droite cause et p*ar* necessité
Q'est sanz feintise, honeste, et resonable,
M'ai p*ar* un temps de vous, dame, eslongé,
Dont p*ar* reson jeo serroie excusable,
Mais fame, q'est p*ar* les paiis volable,
De vo corous me dist novelle ades.
Si m'ad apris, et jeo le croi sanz fable,
Q'est d'amour loigns est de desease p*re*s.

Si vous, ma dame, scieussetz ma pensé,
Q'a vous servir remaint toutditz estable,
Ne serrai point sanz cause refusé,
Car jeo vous tiens si bone et merciable
Qe jeo, q'a vous sui toutditz serviçable
Et de mon grée ne vuill p*ar*tir ja*m*mes,
Vo g*ra*ce av*er*ai; et c'est tout veritable,
Q'est d'amour loigns est de desease pres.

Le fait de l'o*m*me est en la volenté,
Car qui bien voet p*ar* droit est co*m*mendable,
Et pourcella, ma t*re*sbelle honourée,
Hostetz corous et soietz amiable.
Si riens ai fait q'a vous n'est pas greable,
De vo m*er*ci m'en donetz un reles,
Q'ore a l'essai la chose est bien provable,
Q'est d'amour loigns est de desease pres.

Ma g*ra*ciouse dame et honourable,
Ceste balade a vous pour sercher pes
Envoie; car jeo sui assetz creable,
Q'est d'amour loigns est de desease pres.

29

For a rightful cause and out of necessity
that is without pretense, honest, and reasonable,
I have taken leave of you for a while, my lady,
for which by reason I would be worthy of being excused,
but Fame,° which flies about the world,
constantly tells me news of your anger.
Thus it has taught me, and I believe it truly,
that he° who is far from love is near to distress.°

If you, my lady, knew my thought,
which always remains steadfast to serve you,
I would not be rejected without cause,
for I hold you to be so good and merciful
that I, who am always ready to serve you
and never wish to part by my own will,
would have your grace; and it is completely true,
that he who is far from love is near to distress.

A man's character° is in his will,
for he who wishes well is by right commendable,
and for that reason, my honored beauty,
set aside anger and be amiable.
°If I have done anything that is not pleasing to you,
grant me a pardon out of your mercy,°
for now, at the test, the thing is easily proved,
that he who is far from love is near to distress.

My gracious and honorable lady,
this ballade to you, in order to seek peace,
I send, for I believe it well,°
that he who is far from love is near to distress.

29 invokes a new situation, in which the persona seeks to excuse himself for his (in his mind) blameless absence, though we never learn precisely what the cause is. The pains of separation are a common theme in the lyrics (as in **1-3, 7-9** above). Here the persona's distress, however, is caused less by the separation itself than by his lady's anger, a type of misunderstanding that is not unknown in earlier lyrics (see the note to lines 21-22 below) but that is more typical of the *dits amoureux* and that occurs more than once, for instance, in Machaut's *Voir Dit*, and like most of Gower's ballades, this one arises out of a specific dramatic

moment rather than describing to an impersonal audience the persona's general state of feeling. In some ways his situation is the opposite of that described in **25**, in which, equally conventionally, the man has separated himself temporarily in order to preserve the lady's reputation. That poem is about the persona's sorrow, which he presumably shares with his beloved; this one is more concerned with his reassurance of her; and except for the rhyme, the refrain of each might actually be more appropriate for the other. Especially here in **29**, the refrain and the stanzas seem to be pulling in somewhat different directions. Gower tries to bridge them with an affirmation of the credibility of the refrain in the second to last line of each stanza, but it isn't smooth. In poems like these, one wonders whether the narrative event or the well crafted refrain came first in Gower's mind during the process of composition.

The choice of *–able* for the rhyme isn't just tedious; it results in a number of awkwardnesses that I have not tried to preserve in the translation.

5 *Fame*. Yeager has "Rumor," not a bad choice though the persona clearly accepts the report to be true. In English too, Gower uses "fame" for truthful reports rather than dubious ones; cf. *CA* 8.238, 1338, *et al*. As here, Fame "flies" in *CA* 2.382 *vv*. 4, 3.2107-8. Gower uses "fame" in a different sense, conjoined with "renown," in **3**.1.

8 With its balanced but opposing phrases, the refrain has a proverbial character, and while one can find examples of a similar sentiment, the wording itself is different in each case. See, for instance, Machaut, *Lou.* **243**.7-8, "Et s'elle m'est lonteine, / Toute dolour sera de moy prochaine [and if she's far from me, every sorrow will be close to me]." Only the last whole line serves as the refrain to this poem. One of the persona's concerns is the effects of the separation upon his lady's affections: "Qu'amy changier fait longue demourée [for a long absence causes an *ami* to change]," he notes (**243**.18), a line that itself appears proverbial; see Hassell D25, with six of eight citations from Machaut. (Hassell cross references Whiting S307, "Out of Sight, out of mind.") See also Granson **77**.287-88: "Et bien cognois qu'amour lointainne / Est de doulour rente certainne [And I know well that love from afar / is a sure payment of sorrow]," without the opposition between "far" and "near."

The "Q'" in this line seems to function both as the conjunction "qe [that]" and as the pronoun "qi [who, whoever]." For other instances in which Gower elides "Qi" with a following vowel see lines 2, 10, and 13, **30**.7, **31**.9 *et al*.

17 *character*. Something more than "act" or "deed" is implied here. Cf. *DMF* s.v. "fait," III.A, "Ce qui concerne qqn, la situation de qqn, son état, son cas [what concerns someone, someone's situation, one's state, one's circumstance]."

21-22 Similar apologies can be found, e.g., in **39**.13-15, Machaut, *Lou.* **43**.1-2, **66**.1-2, **155**.11-12; Froissart, *Esp.Am.* 1274-75; and Granson **72**.83-84, **78**.892-93.

22 Cf. *MO* 21766-66, "Porrons du nostre creatour / avoir reless de sa mercy [we can from our creator / have a pardon out of his mercy]."

27 More precisely, "I am credulous enough." See *AND* s.v. "creable," 3; Godefroy s.v. "creable." Yeager gives "because I am sufficiently ready to believe."

30

Si com la Nief q*a*nt le fort vent tempeste
P*ar* halte mier se torne ci et la,
Ma dame, ensi mo*u*n coer maint en tempeste
Q*a*nt le danger de vo p*ar*ole orra.
Le vent° qe v*ost*re bouche soufflera
Me fait sigler sur le p*er*il de vie.
Q'est en danger, falt qu'il merci supplie.

Rois Uluxes, sicom nous dist la geste,
Vers son paiis de Troie qui sigla,
N'ot tiel paour du p*er*il et moleste
Q*a*nt les Sereines en la Mier passa
Et le danger de circes eschapa,
Qe le paour n'est plus de ma p*ar*tie.
Q'est en danger, falt qu'il merci supplie.

Danger, qui tolt d'amour toute la feste,
Unqes un mot de confort ne sona.
Ainz plus cruel qe n'est la fiere beste,
Au point q*an*t danger me respondera
La chiere porte, et q*a*nt le nai dirra,
Plusq*ue* la mort m'esto*n*ne° celle oïe.
Q'est en danger, falt qu'il merci supplie.

Vers vous, ma bone dame, horspris cella,
Qe danger maint en v*ost*re compainie,
Ceste balade en mon message irra.
Q'est en danger, falt qu'il merci supplie.

5 vent: *MS, Mac* Nief. *See the note on this line in the commentary.*
20 *Mac* m'estone

30

°Just as the ship when a strong wind blows°
on the high sea turns here and there,
my lady, so does my heart remain in turmoil°
whenever it hears the *danger*° in your speech.
The wind° that your mouth blows about
makes me sail in peril of my life.
Whoever is in danger° is forced to beg for mercy.°

°King Ulysses, as the story tells us,
who sailed towards his country from Troy,
did not have so much fear of peril and harm
when he passed by the sirens in the sea
and escaped the power° of Circe
that the fear isn't greater on my part.
Whoever is in danger is forced to beg for mercy.

Danger, which takes all the joy out of love,
never pronounced a word of comfort.
Instead, crueler than a wild beast,
at the point when Danger answers me
it removes welcome,° and when it says "nay,"
that which I hear° stuns me more than death.
Whoever is in danger is forced to beg for mercy.

To you, my good lady—except for this,°
that Danger remains in your company—
this ballade will go as my messenger.°
Whoever is in danger is forced to beg for mercy.

30 has to represent Gower at his most playful, not just for the double (or triple) meaning of "danger" but also for the gentle exaggeration of the conventional rhetoric of unrequited love and for the tone of address in the envoy. This is the only ballade in which Gower uses "danger" to mean either "peril" (in the refrain) or "power" (if that is indeed the sense in line 12; see the note). It is also one of only three ballades in which the persona fears for his death, a particularly common *topos* in Machaut that was passed on to most of his successors, and the only one in which it is so prominent. (The others are **14** and **16**.) Even in **12**, which uses some very similar imagery, death is referred to directly only with reference to the calandra. Here the persona invokes the danger of his death in dramatic terms in each of the three stanzas. His fear is greater than Ulysses' (suggesting that the lady might bear comparison to the sirens or to Circe); Danger

itself is "crueler than a wild beast," though it does no more than to say "no"; and in stanza one, which is perhaps the key to Gower's intention here, the image of the storm-tossed sea as a metaphor for the persona's troubled mind yields to the highly unflattering image of the lady as some kind of human Zephirus, blowing the persona about (however one understands the beginning of that line; see the note to line 5). The elevation of the danger posed by Danger also changes the "merci" of the refrain into something different from that which a lover normally requires. In all, the poem reads as a mild but straight-faced parody of poems more like **12**, in which these terms are all used more conventionally. The envoy is more like a parody of the address to the lady that Gower has cultivated in the rest of his own ballades. Only here does the persona refer to the lady as "bone dame [good lady]"; elsewhere she is "doulce dame [sweet lady]" or "noble dame [noble lady]" or simply "dame." But then, if I have understood it correctly (see the note to line 22), he immediately takes it back: she is good except for her choice of companion. His qualification suggests a lingering resentment, and it undercuts the effect of all his other pleas.

How do we know that the effect of the poem is due to Gower's playfulness rather than to a series of misjudgments on his part? That question is not easy to answer, but while Gower is capable of writing a dull poem or a disjointed poem, he is characteristically tactful and restrained in his choice of imagery. Elsewhere he reveals his consciousness of the limitations of poetic language by his shifts in register or by allowing another point of view to intrude on the persona's. He exposes those limitations in this case by carrying the familiar conventions to their logical extremes.

1-2 Gower uses the storm-tossed ship as an image of emotional tumult in *CA* 1.1064-70, 2.24-27, and 5.443-44, and in a somewhat different sense in **50**.19-21. Cf. Deschamps **543**.9-10: "Sinon je sui en la mer sanz nacelle, / Près de perir, se Pitez ne m'appelle [Otherwise I am at sea without a boat, near to death, if Pity doesn't summon me]."

1, 3 *tempeste . . . tempeste.* Like his contemporaries, Gower makes frequent use of *rime riche*. Most involve a whole word rhyming with part of another (e.g. "voir"/"decevoir" in **5**.18-20). There are also a dozen examples of rhymes of whole words, always in different parts of speech (e.g. "voie" in **12**.7-9). But with the exception of "deçuz"/"dessus" in **11**.13-15, these are all either monosyllables or single syllables followed by an unstressed *–e* (like "voie"). "Tempeste" is the only *rime riche* with two strong syllables in *50B*. Does its prominence foreshadow in some way the extravagant imagery in the rest of the poem?

4 *danger*. Here and in the personifications in the third stanza and the envoy, "danger" is the aspect of the woman's character that the persona imagines prevents his acceptance as her lover. See the note to **12**.8. I leave it untranslated here and where it is personified in order to preserve the play on the different senses of the word, the more modern of which (*DMF* s.v. "danger," D) appears in line 12 and in the refrain.

5 *wind.* Macaulay is surely right in suggesting (in his note to this line) that Gower wrote "vent [wind]" rather than "nief [ship]," which is the reading in the manuscript. The masculine article is a clue ("nief" is normally feminine, as in line 1 and **50**.19), but the strongest reason is the sense: as Macaulay puts it, "it is not the ship that imperils his life but the storm." Gower uses a similar image for a very different purpose in *MO* 16648, "La bouche souffle a malvois port, / Qant des folditz fait son report [the mouth blows to an evil port when it recounts foolish words]." In both cases, Gower

seems to be aware that the image is not very flattering. The error is more likely due to scribal inattention than to any similarity in appearance between the two words. (Cf. the note to **21**.15.)

7 *danger*. The use of "danger" to mean "peril" is quite common in *MO* (2836, 2963, 6246 *et al*.) For another poet's use in this sense, see Granson **47**.6. See also Gower's use of "dangerouse" in **48**.15, also perhaps with a double meaning.

beg for mercy. When "supplier" takes a simple object, it is more often the person being beseeched than the thing that the subject asks for, as in **9**.35, **10**.20 and **51**.20, but see *DMF* s.v. "supplier," I.B, and *AND* s.v. "supplier," v.a., which provides as one example "vostre amistee suplee et requere [I beseech and request your friendship]" See also *MO* 18881-83, "supplier / Estoet ainçois la bienvuillance / Du pape [but first it was necessary to ask for the good will of the pope]." The alternative for this line would be "Whoever is in danger is forced to plead to Mercy."

9-12 Gower cites Ulysses and the Sirens in *MO* 10909-20 to illustrate the dangers of Vainglory and in *CA* 1.481-529 to illustrate the temptations that enter by way of the ears. Ulysses' outwitting of Circe appears in the tale of Ulysses and Telegonus, *CA* 6.1427 ff. In all of these, the lesson derives from Ulysses' prudence or cleverness rather than his fear, and in *CA* 1.560, Amans admits that he fails to live up to Ulysses' example.

12 *power*. This is the third common sense of "danger" (see the note to **12**.8 above). It is common in Machaut: see *Lou*. **14**.18, **153**.9, **187**.6, **252**.7; and *DMF* s.v. "danger," A; *AND* s.v. "dangier," 1. It is less common in poetry at the end of the century, but see Froissart, Bal. **32**.2, Granson **78**.2343. This would be Gower's only use of the "danger" in this sense. He might simply have meant "peril" instead, or with reference to Circe, he perhaps invokes both senses at once.

19 *it removes welcome*. This is my best attempt to make sense of this line as appears in the manuscript, and it is determined in part by the parallelism to "tolt . . . toute la feste" in line 15. For "chiere," Macaulay lists "welcome" in his glossary, as in *MO* 460, "Et de ma part te ferray chiere [and on my part, I will offer you welcome]," and *DMF* also recognizes this sense s.v. "chere," C.3, as does *MED* s.v. "chēre," 6 and 7. If this were the sense, however, we might expect "enporte" (Modern French "emporte," "removes, carries away") rather than simply "porte [carries]" (a change that would not affect the meter). One has to wonder if Gower might perhaps have written instead "la chiere torne [turns its face]"; *DMF* s.v. "chere," A.2.b, gives another 14th example of "torner la chere," which it translates as "Tourner le dos à qqn, détourner le regard de qqn [turn one's back to someone, look away from someone]." For a different sense of "chiere" see **37**.4.

20 *that which I hear*. "Oïe" is derived from the verb "oïr [to hear].' There is no good single word equivalent in English. Macaulay, in his glossary (1:532) provides "sound."

22 *except for this*. "Horspris" (like the closely related "horsmis") commonly means "except" or "except for" (see *AND* s.v. "horsmis," "horspris"; *DMF* s.v. "hormis," "horspris"), but it is difficult to find other examples in which it introduces an exception to a preceding adjective rather than, say, to a collective or plural noun (e.g., "all of them except for . . ."). The closest I have found is in Froissart, *Buisson*, 2295-96, "Je sui chi seuls et desgarnis / De consel, hors mis que de vous {I am alone and deprived of counsel, except from you]," in which "hors mis que" could be analyzed as introducing an exception to "desgarnis." Based on the available citations, reading "irra" as a conditional and "horspris cella" to introduce an unmet condition (i.e., "except for the fact that Danger remains in your company, this ballade would go as my messenger") appears to be even more of a stretch, but if that is the sense, then this ballade goes with the **37**, **40**, and **46**, the other ballades in which, paradoxically but for different reasons, the poem cannot be sent to the person to whom it is addressed, and the futility of the address might in this case be considered another element of parody.

24 *as my messenger*. "Message" can mean either "message" or "messenger"; see *AND, DMF* s.v. "message." For "aler en message," *AND* gives "to take a message, perform an errand."

31

Ma belle dame, bone et g*ra*ciouse,
Si pour bealté l'en doit amour doner,
La bealté, dame, avetz si pleintevouse°
Qe vo bealté porra nulls coers passer
Qe ne l'estoet p*ar* fine force amer
Et obeïr d'amour la discipline
P*ar* soulement vo bealté regarder,
Car bon amour a les vertus encline.

Et si bounté, q'est assetz vertuouse
De sa nature, amour porra causer,
Vous estes, dame, assetz plus bountevouse
Q'ascun amant le p*ur*ra deviser,°
Et ceo me fait v*ost*re amour desirer
Secondement ap*re*s l'amour divine,
Pour chier tenir, server, et honourer,
Car bon amour a les vertus encline.

Et si la sort de g*ra*ce est amorouse,°
Lors porrai bien, ma dame, tesmoigner,
Vo grace entre la gent est si famouse,
Q'a quelle p*ar*t qe jeo me vuil torner,
Jeo puiss oïr vo g*ra*ce proclamer.
Toutz en parlont° et diont lour covine.
L'om est benoit qui vous purroit happer,
Car bon amour a les vertus encline.

Ma dame, en qui sont t*re*stout bien plener,
T*re*sfressche flour, honeste et femeline,
Ceste balade a vous fais envoier
Car bon amour a les vertus encline.

3 *Mac* plentevouse
12 *Cross drawn in margin*. P*ur*ra *may be in a later hand*.
17 *Mac* amourouse
22 *MS* enp*ar*lont

31

My beautiful lady, good and gracious,
if for beauty one ought to give love,
beauty, lady, you have in such abundance
that no heart could encounter° your beauty
such that it is not compelled° by sheer necessity to love
and to obey the discipline of love
simply by looking upon your beauty,
for good love° inclines° toward the virtues.

°And if goodness, which is powerful° enough
by its nature, can cause love,
you, my lady, are much more virtuous°
than any lover could describe,
and this makes me desire your love,
secondly after divine love,°
to hold dear, to serve, and to honor,
for good love inclines toward the virtues.

And if the nature° of grace is with regard to love,
then I could well bear witness, my lady,
your grace is so famous among the people
that wherever I wish to turn
I can hear your grace proclaimed.
All speak about it and express their agreement.°
Blessed is the man° who could capture° you,
for good love inclines toward the virtues.

My lady, in whom all good qualities are complete,
fresh flower, virtuous and womanly,
I cause this ballade to be sent to you
for good love inclines toward the virtues.

This is the second of five ballades on the lady's virtue and on her effect upon others that also anticipates the advocacy of virtuous love with which *50B* concludes. For the lexical as well as thematic links between **31** and the other four poems, see the note to **21** above. As in the other four, the context excludes any consideration of the persona and lady's actual relationship or of how the poem might be received.

In three cases the need for a rhyme seems to have forced Gower into an unusual choice of word (see the notes to lines 4, 22, and 23). At the same time, this is one of the more neatly

structured of Gower's ballades: the first line announces the three qualities—"belle," "bone," and "graciouse"—that will be taken up one by one in the three main stanzas. The same triad occurs again in **39**.3-5 and in more attenuated a form in **38**.18-23 and **45**.6, 8-9, and 23, the other poems on the same theme. It also occurs in the next following ballades, **32**.15-19, where, however, the context is a complaint about the qualities that the lady lacks.

4 *encounter*. The translation is compelled by context, but this is a very unusual use of the verb "passer."

5 *such that it is not compelled*. One is tempted to take the "Qe" as a relative and to translate, "that is not compelled to love," but "estoet' (from "estover" [*AND*], "estovoir" [*DMF*]) is normally used impersonally, like "il faut" in Modern French, and when it takes a third-person object, Gower normally elides it to "l'," as in *MO* 1871, 2099 and as he apparently does here. The "Qe" appears therefore to be a conjunction, but the sense, of course, is the same.

sheer necessity. This is the translation offered by *AND* for "fine force" in the entries both for "fin[2]" and for "force[1]," in the list of phrases at the end of each entry. For a similar use see *MO* 4119, 6251. Gower uses the same phrase in a more literal sense in **38**.4 and *MO* 17966.

8 *good love*. In the two earlier uses, in **6**.20 and **25**.25, "bon amour" seems to mean little more than "true love," but here "good love" takes on more moral weight, preparing the way for **49**, where it is used to mean genuine, that is to say virtuous, love.

inclines. There is likely a double meaning here. The primary sense, since the verb is apparently used intransitively, is "tends," that is, "has an inclination for" or "has a preference for" (as in *Tr* **13**.19) *AND* s.v. "encliner[1]," v.n. 3; *DMF* s.v. "encliner," III.A.1.c. But the verb can also be used transitively (though evidently less commonly) to mean "to incline" in the sense of "to dispose, to cause to have a preference" (*AND*, loc.cit., v.a., 3; *DMF*, loc.cit., III.B.1.a); or to put it differently, "to cause to be *enclin*" in the sense of "porté, disposé à qqc. [directed, disposed towards something]"; *DMF* s.v. "enclin," B.1.a. Thus "love disposes towards the virtues," with the object (the lover) understood. The Middle English verb is also used in both senses. See *MED* s.v. "enclīnen," 8b, "to be favorably disposed (toward something), citing *CA* 8.2081-83, "I wolde . . . / To vertu more than to vice / Encline"; and 8a, "to dispose or incline (a person, . . . etc.) favorably toward some course of action," with four citations from Chaucer.

9-16 The lady's "bonté [goodness]" is frequently cited as a stimulus to love, often along with her other qualities, such as her beauty and her comportment. See for instance Machaut, *Lou.* **88**.15-20, **173**.1-7, **179**.1-7, **196**.9-16.

9 *powerful*. "Vertuous," like the underlying "vertu," might refer either to strength or to moral goodness, in both Middle French and Middle English (*DMF* s.v. "vertu," "vertueux"; *MED* s.v. "vertū," "vertuŏus"). The former sense seems to be required by the context here, though the latter is certainly also relevant to "bounté." (*AND* has entries for "vertu" and "vertueusement" but not for "vertueux.")

11 *virtuous*. "Bountevouse" is the adjective formed from "bonté [goodness]." According to *DMF* s.v. "bontiveux," the word is Anglo-Norman rather than continental, meaning "Qui manifeste de la bonté [that manifests goodness]." (*AND* s.v. "bontivous" defines only as "bounteous.") It also appears in Middle English. Chaucer uses it twice (*T&C* 1.883, PhyT *CT* VI.110). See *MED* s.v. "bŏuntevŏus," 1.(a), "Good, virtuous, worthy."

14 For the comparison cf. **9**.7, **24**.26, and **26**.13.

17 *nature*. *AND* s.v. "sort," 3; *DMF* s.v. "sort," A.3.d. Though this is not a common use of "sort," in providing the transition from the preceding stanza, with its reference to divine love, this line seems to imply "If we are to speak of grace in love as opposed to divine grace." In doing so, it hints very

briefly at the normal sense of amorous grace, which is the favor that the lady bestows upon her lover, before switching quickly to the different sense of grace, that aspect of the lady's character with which this poem and the others with which it is linked is most concerned, the sense that is invoked in the reference to her as "graciouse" in line 1. On the range of meanings of "grace," see the note to **1**.8.

22 *agreement*. The translation is compelled by context, but it is difficult to find any other examples in which *co(n)vine* has so neutral a sense. The word has a wide range of meanings. Elsewhere, Gower uses it to mean "company, companions," as in **21**.19, or "nature, character, behavior," as in **45**.16 (see the notes to these lines). It can also be used with reference to the contents of one's thought: see *DMF* s.v. "convine," II.B, "Disposition d'esprit, intention, dessein, projet [disposition of mind, intention, design, plan]," but as the citations in this entry demonstrate, the context is almost exclusively negative, referring to the designs of enemies or to malicious plans. The same is true in *MO*: see for example 136, "Ly deable conta sa covine [the devil explained his plan]." Cf. *Tr* **13**.4, with reference to the Pharaoh, and *AND* s.v. "covine," 7, "connivance, collusion"; 8, "trick, deceit." The same range occurs in Middle English, with the same implications in context. See *MED* s.v. "cŏvīne," 1.(a), "a group of confederates" (with two citations from *CA*); 2.(b), "collusion, conspiracy" (two citations from *CA*); 3. "A secret plan or intention" (three citations from *CA*); 4. "fraud, deceit, guile" (one citation from *CA*). Definition 2.(a) is "Agreement, assent," the sense that is required in this line, but there is only a single citation, from 1425. The neutral sense may derive from the neutral or positive contexts in which "covine" as "company" sometimes occurs, but the choice of word may simply be compelled in this case by the need for a rhyme.

23 *blessed is the man.* Cf. **21**.15 (and the note) and the refrain to **39**.

capture. The citations in both *AND* (s.v. "haper") and *DMF* (s.v. "happer") suggest that this is a rather violent term in this context, though *AND* also notes that it can be used with reference to chess. Neither provides any other examples of the use of this verb in the context of love. Gower uses the verb twice in *MO*, in 13679, with figurative reference to the evils that will seize and imprison the one who reveals what he should not, and in 25317, describing how the dishonest draper steals a customer's money.

32

Cest aun novell Janus, q'ad double face,
L'yvern passer et l'estée voit venant.
Comp*ar*ison de moi si j'ensi face,
Contraire a luy mes oills sont regardant:
Je voi l'ivern venir, froid et nuisant,°
Et l'estée vait, ne sai sa revenue,
Q'amour me poignt et point ne me salue.

La cliere Estée, qui le solail embrace,
Devient obscure a moi, siq'au° devant
L'yvern me tolt d'amour toute la g*ra*ce,
Dont p*ar* dolour jeo sui mat et pesant.
Ne sai jeuer, ne sai chanter p*ar* tant.
Ainz sui covert dessoubtz la triste Nue,
Q'amour me poignt et point ne me salue.

Vo bealté croist, q'a null temps se defface.°
Pourceo, ma dame, a vous est acordant
Qe vo bounté se monstre en toute place,
Mais jeo, pour quoi qe sui tout vo servant,
Ne puis veoir de g*ra*ce ascun semblant.
C'est une dure et forte retenue,
Q'amour me poignt et point ne me salue.

5 *MS* nuisand
9 *MS* si siqau
15 *Mac* desface

Gower, John. *Cinkante Balades*. Edited and translated by Peter Nicholson, Feb. 2021, *John Gower Society*, www.JohnGower.org.

32

This new year, Janus,° who has a double face,
sees the winter pass and the spring arrive.
If thus I make a comparison to myself,
my eyes look opposite to his:
I see the winter coming, cold and baleful,
and spring departs, nor know I its return,
for love pricks° me and doesn't soothe° me at all.

The bright springtime, which embraces the sun,°
becomes dark for me, just as previously
winter took from me all the grace of love,
so that out of sorrow I am downcast and depressed.
I cannot play, I cannot sing as a result.
Instead I am covered beneath a sad cloud,
for love pricks me and doesn't soothe me at all.

Your beauty, which never fades, increases.
Therefore, my lady, for you it is fitting
that your goodness be shown in every place,
but I, although I am fully your servant,
cannot see any semblance of grace.
It is a hard and painful service,°
for love pricks me and doesn't soothe me at all.

32 is the first of six ballades in *50B* that are attached to particular times of the year and the first of two that are set on New Year's Day. New Year's poems are easily found among Gower's predecessors. Deschamps has nearly a dozen (**112**, **293**, **412**, **437**, **496**, **528, 531,** 581**, 593, 640, 749**), and Granson four more, **8** (a rondeau), **13** (a ballade), **69**, "L'Estraine du jour de l'an," in couplets, and **70**, the "Complainte de l'an nouvel." Poirion, pp. 117-18, cites other examples from Garencières, from Christine de Pizan (which are all in the form of compliments to particular patrons), and from Charles d'Orléans. There are, however, none from Machaut, a lack that Poirion associates with the absence of topical allusion in "poèmes de pur amour courtois [poems of pure courtly love]" (p. 118).

As noted below, **33** is far more typical of this group. **32** uses the setting not as the occasion for gift-giving but only as the moment for anticipating the change of seasons with the arrival of spring, placing this ballade in the much larger group of poems in which the lover's moods are matched, or not, to the seasonal weather, as in **7**.15-18 and Gower's two poems set in May, **36**.1-14 and **37**.22-23. Gower develops the comparison in two different, perhaps not fully consistent ways, in the first two stanzas. Seeing spring depart in favor of winter, in a reversal of the

normal order of the seasons, in the first stanza, is not the same as seeing spring turn dark in the second stanza (an image Gower uses again in **40**.26), which presumes that the cold effects of winter have already passed. The dark cloud that covers the persona anticipates some of our own ways of thinking about emotions in terms of weather and the overlap in meaning in words such as "gloomy" and "depression." The more captivating image, however, is that of the first stanza, and the most effective touch in the poem, not captured in the translation, is in the refrain, in the way in which the repetition of "poignt"/"point" (which are homonyms for Gower; he rhymes them in *MO* 11860-61) in the middle of the line embodies in verbal form the two faces of Janus, looking outward in opposite directions, in lines 1-2.

32 is also exceptional in being one of only two ballades in *50B* without an envoy. (The other is the unnumbered ballade with which the collection concludes, here labeled **[51]**.) The omission might well be due to a scribal mishap during the copying of the poem, but the third stanza already serves much of the function of the envoy in Gower's other ballades. It abandons the metaphor of the seasons, and the persona turns to address the lady herself, of whom there has been no mention at all in the first two stanzas, with the request for the "grace" that will provide the persona's relief. Gower may simply have felt that an envoy would be redundant in this case.

The request in that stanza echoes the beauty-goodness-grace triad of the preceding ballade and of the closely related **39**, not for the purpose of praising the lady, however, but for a bit of special pleading. "Grace" in this case is not the graciousness of the lady that complements her beauty and her goodness but rather the favor that she shows, or doesn't, to her admirer, the more common sense of the word in earlier lyrics. The presumption in **31** that the three qualities are linked becomes an argument that since the lady is beautiful, she owes it to the persona to be kind. In that respect, this poem is actually quite typical of a great many of its predecessors, and one wonders if Gower, obviously aware of the juxtaposition, was also conscious of the way in which the more generous **31** serves to mark the limits of the emotional range of **32**.

1 *Janus*. Gower's ultimate source for his image of Janus, and perhaps his only source, is Ovid's *Fasti*, particularly 1.63-66:

> Ecce tibi faustum, Germanice, nuntiat annum
> inque meo primus carmine Ianus adest.
> Iane biceps, anni tacite labentis origo,
> solus de superis qui tua terga vides.

["See Janus comes, Germanicus, the herald of a lucky year to thee, and in my song takes precedence. Two-headed Janus, opener of the softly gliding year, thou who alone of the celestials dost behold thy back." Trans. James George Frazer. Loeb edition. 1931.]

Gower knowledge of Ovid's poem is not in doubt: Stockton identifies 61 lines in *VC* borrowed directly from the *Fasti* (p. 28). For a similar description of Janus' double vision upon the arrival of the new year see *CA* 7.1204-13.

7 *poignt/point*. Similar rhymes of "poi[g]nt' (from "poindre [to prick]"; cf. **36**.6) and "point" (the negative particle) can be found in Machaut, *Lou.* **190**.2, 9 (also playing on other senses of "point"), Motet **2**.11-13, and Froissart, *Buisson* 2690-97, but in none of these are the two words placed in the same line. Froissart also plays with different senses of "point" in Bal. **27**, but not including the negative particle.

soothe. The choice of verb is compelled by the rhyme and the translation ("heal" would also work) is compelled by the context, but "saluer" is much more commonly used to mean "to greet" rather than

in any of the senses associated with "to save." Gower uses the verb 10 times in *MO*, exclusively in the former sense. Throughout *MO*, and also in *50B* **17**.2 and **22**.26, the verb meaning "to save" is spelled with a consonant *v* rather than a vowel *u* (as confirmed by both meter and rhyme). *AND* (s.v. "saluer," "salver") does not recognize any overlap between the two; *DMF* s.v. "saluer," II, gives only a small number of citations for the use of "saluer" for "sauver." The noun "salu(t)" could also be used in both senses, and the distribution is somewhat more even. Gower uses it to mean "greeting" in **16**.27, **26**.1, **28**.4, **39**.27, and *MO* 2262 and 3958, but to mean "salvation" more than a dozen times in *MO* (e.g. in 323, 13546, 20003). See *AND* s.v. "salu"; *DMF* s.v. "salut."

8 *which embraces the sun*. "Which the sun embraces" might seem to make more sense, but while Gower can use "q(u)e" as the subject of a relative clause and "qui" as the object of a preposition,, he doesn't use "qui" as a direct object.

20 *service*. On the various senses of "retenue" see the note to **8**.17.

33

Au comencer del aun p*re*sent novell,
Mon corps ove tout le coer a bone estreine
Jeo done a vous, ma dame, sanz repell,
Pour le tenir sicom v*ost*re demeine.
Ne sai conter les joies qe° jeo meine
De vous servir, et pour moi guardoner,
Si plus n'y soit, donetz le regarder.

Ne quier de vous avoir autre Juel
Fors soulement v*ost*re ameisté certeine.
Guardetz vo Nouche, guardetz le v*ost*re anel.
Vo beal semblant m'est joie sov*er*eine,
Q'a mon avis, toute autre chose est veine.
Et s'il vous plest, ma dame, sanz danger,
Si plus n'y soit, donetz le regarder.

L'en solt toutditz au feste de Noël
Reprendre joie et hoster toute peine
Et doner do*u*ns, mais jeo ne demande el
De vo noblesce si no*u*n q'il vous deigne
Doner a moi d'amour ascune enseigne
Dont jeo porrai ma fortune esp*er*er.
Si plus n'y soit, donetz le regarder.

A vous, ma doulce dame t*re*shalteine,
Ceste balade vait pour desporter,
Et pour le bo*u*nté dont vous estes pleine,
Si plus n'y soit, donetz le regarder.

5 *Mac* que

Gower, John. *Cinkante Balades*. Edited and translated by Peter Nicholson, Feb. 2021, *John Gower Society*, www.JohnGower.org.

33

At the beginning of the present new year,
my body with the entire heart for an auspicious start°
I give to you, my lady, irrevocably,
in order to hold as if it were your own.°
I cannot count the joys that I experience
in serving you, and in order to repay me,
if nothing else, give me a glance.°

I don't seek to have from you any other jewel
except for your assured affection° alone.
°Keep your brooch; keep your ring.
Your beautiful appearance is my sovereign joy,
for in my opinion, everything else is vain.
And if you please, my lady, without reluctance,°
if nothing else, give me a glance.

One is always accustomed during the Christmas feast
to take up joy and to remove all pain
and to give gifts, but I ask nothing else
except that out of your nobleness° you deign°
to give to me some sign of love
from which I might hope for my good fortune.°
If nothing else, give me a glance.

To you, my sweet exalted lady,
this ballade goes in order to entertain,°
and out of the goodness° of which you are full,
if nothing else, give me a glance.

Of Gower's two New Year's poems, **33** is the more conventional in imagery. Like most of the poems cited in the note to **32** above, the holiday is the occasion for gift-giving, and more specifically, for an exchange of gifts, and in most of those addressed to the lady, the persona offers her either his heart (Granson **8**.3, Deschamps **412**.37) or his body (Deschamps **412**.3) or, much more commonly, both (e.g. Granson **69**.18-19; Deschamps **496**.1, **528**.1), just as Gower's does in line 2. In return, he asks for as little as that the lady accept his gift (e.g. Deschamps **496** and **531**) or as much as that she return his love (Granson **13**). Gower's falls in between, asking that she give him a kindly look, drawing upon another commonplace from earlier lyrics.

In other respects the poem is more typically Gowerian, particularly in the envoy, with its gentle change of register. As the lover addresses it to his lady, the ballade too implicitly

becomes part of his "gift" (as also in Dechamps **531**.28), and he sends it "pour desporter," in order to amuse or entertain. Even more strongly than in **16**, the desire to please reduces the rest of the poem to a mere trope, a kind of exaggerated compliment, and it suggests a shared awareness both of its literariness and its artificiality.

2 *for an auspicious start*. No translation is going to catch all of the implications of this line. Depending on context, "estreine" could be used in three different senses: "luck or fortune" (good or bad), the sense in which Gower uses it in **14**.20 (*DMF* s.v. "estrenne," A; *AND* s.v. "estraine," 1); "a gift, especially a New Year's gift" (*DMF*, loc.cit., B; *AND*, loc.cit., 2); or "a start or beginning" (*DMF*, loc.cit.,C; *AND*, loc.cit., 3). Not surprisingly, the noun or the related verb "estrainer" (*AND*) / "estrenner" (*DMF*) occurs frequently in New Year's Day poems, but usually only with direct reference to the giving of gifts, e.g. in Garencières Bal. **4**.1 or Deschamps **412**.9. Among earlier poets, only Granson seems to be aware of the possibility of mixing the senses, as one offers a gift as an expression of hope for good fortune as the year begins. He entitles one of his poems (**69**) "L'Estraine du jour de l'an [The New Year's Gift]," and in the third line the persona offers his lady "Bonne aventure et bonne estraine [good luck and good fortune or a good beginning]." In his "Complainte de l'an nouvel [New Year's Complaint]" (**70**), he uses the verb "estrener" in line 14 to mean "to give as a gift," and in line 17 "la bonne estraine [the good "estraine"]" can mean both "the lucky gift" and "good fortune." Here in Gower's ballade, "a bone estreine" invokes the habit of giving "estreines [gifts]" on New Year's day, but it also suggests "auspiciously" or "with the hope of good fortune" (*DMF*, loc.cit., A.1.b). My effort captures part of this, but not all.

4 *your own*. "Demeine" might be a noun meaning simply "possession" or "domain" (*AND* s.v. "demeine[1]," s., 2, 3, 4; *DMF* s.v "domaine," B, C.1), but in Anglo-Norman (though not evidently in continental French) is could also be used, in conjunction with a possession pronoun and often another noun, as an adjective corresponding to Modern English "own" (*AND*, loc..cit., a., 1). Macaulay lists it as such in his glossary, citing three convincing examples from *MO* (12180, 17568, and 27983).

7 *give me a glance.* One might translate more loosely as "look my way." "Le regarder" is the sweet look from the lady that the persona in the lyrics conventionally seeks; see the note to **12**.7. The use of the infinitive in place of the noun "reg(u)ard" (as in **12**.7, **19**.13, and **38**.3) or "reguardure" (as in **12**.12) is unusual, but *DMF* s.v. "regarder," I.A.5 provides four examples, all from fourteenth-century love-poetry, including Froissart, Lay **5**.210, and Garencières, Bal. **8**.18, to which we can add Machaut, *Lou.* **185**.6 and Granson **72**.101. Gower similarly uses the infinitive "comencer" in place of the more common noun in line 1 above.

10-12 "Fy on the bagges in the kiste [chest]!," Amans exclaims; "I hadde ynogh, if I hire kiste" (*CA* 5.83-84). I don't know of any examples in earlier lyrics in which the lady's affection is weighed against mere material possessions, but it is a common theme in Book 5 of *CA*, e.g. in 5.85-92, 2534-68, 2849-52, 4729-39.

9 *assured affection*. This is the same request that the persona makes in the refrain to **10**. See the note to **10**.7.

13 *reluctance*. On the range of meaning of "danger" see the note to **12**.8.

18 *out of your nobleness*. This might instead be "I ask nothing else of your nobleness" in which "nobleness" is an honorific, rather like "your highness," a possibility that is supported by the use of "treshalteine" in line 22, but the allusion to a difference in rank is far less clear than in **28**.15 and elsewhere. See the note to that line.

deign. The impersonal use of "deigner," here, in **51**.22, in *MO* 10435, and in Machaut, *Lou.* **143**.15 and **147**.18, is not recorded in either *AND* s.v. "deigner" or *DMF* s.v. "daigner." For the more common usage, see **12**.11, **19**.13, **36**.20.

20 *hope for my good fortune*. By itself, "esperer ma fortune" might well be ambiguous, since "esperer" could be used for the anticipation of negative outcomes as well as good ones (see *DMF* s.v. "esperer," A.3), and since one's fortune might very well be either good or bad. But the more common use of the verb is "to hope" as in Modern French, and as in both Modern French and in Modern English, "fortune" could be used without modifier for "good fortune" and even "riches" (*DMF*, s.v. "fortune,"B.1.c, d). In this case, context rules.

23 *entertain*. Gower uses the same verb in the "Second Dedicatory Ballade" (*Works* 1:336-37), line 27, "Por desporter vo noble Court roial [in order to entertain your royal court]," and also in the (now defective) prose heading to *50B*, where the object is also presumably Henry IV and his court.

24 *goodness*. "Bonté" echoes the praise of the lady in **31**.9-16 and the hope expressed in **32**.17. It anticipates more precisely **39**.3.

34

Saint Valentin l'amour et la nature
Des° toutz oiseals ad en gov*er*nement,
Dont chascun d'eaux semblable a sa mesure
Une compaigne honeste a son talent
Eslist tout d'un acord et d'un assent.
Pour celle soule laist a covenir
Toutes les autres, car nature ap*re*nt,
U li coers est, le corps falt obeïr.

Ma doulce dame, ensi jeo vous assure
Qe jeo vous ai eslieu semblablement.
Sur toutes autres estes a dessure
De mon amour, si t*re*sentierement
Qe riens y falt p*ar* quoi joiousement
De coer et corps jeo vous voldrai servir,
Car de reson c'est une experiment:
U li coers est, le corps falt obeïr.

Pour remembrer jadis celle aventure
De Alceone et Ceïx ensement,
Com dieus muoit en oisel lour figure,
Ma volenté serroit tout tielement,
Qe sanz envie et danger de la gent
Nous porroions ensemble p*ar* loisir
Voler tout francs en n*ost*re esbatement.
U li coers est, le corps falt obeïr.

Ma belle oisel, vers qui mon pensement
S'en vole ades sanz null contretenir,
Pren cest escript, car jeo sai voirement,
U li coers est, le corps falt obeïr.

2 *Mac* De

Gower, John. *Cinkante Balades*. Edited and translated by Peter Nicholson, Feb. 2021, *John Gower Society*, www.JohnGower.org.

34

Saint Valentine has under his governance
the love° and the nature of all birds,
°whereby° each of them chooses a worthy° partner
similar to its size,° according to its desire,
entirely of one accord and one assent.°
For that one alone it leaves alone°
all others, for Nature° teaches,
where the heart is, the body must obey.°

My sweet lady, thus do I assure you
that I have chosen you similarly.
Above all other women, you are uppermost°
in my love, so totally
that nothing lacks° with which joyfully
I would wish to serve you with heart and body,
for by reason it is shown by experience:°
where the heart is, the body must obey.

Likewise, calling to mind° the destiny
of Alceone and Ceix,° long ago,
how God transformed their bodies into birds,
my wish would be entirely the same,
that without envy or hindrance° from people,
together, at our leisure, we could
fly completely free in our joy.°
Where the heart is, the body must obey.

My beautiful bird,° °to whom my thought
constantly takes flight without restraint,
take° this writing, for I know truly,
where the heart is, the body must obey.

34 is the first of two ballades that begin by invoking Saint Valentine in his role in presiding over the mating of the birds. The origins of the association between the saint and love and between the saint and the birds are lost in time. (For different accounts, see Oruch, "St. Valentine," and Kelly, *Saint Valentine*.) Two different traditions seem to have been current in Gower's time, one, best represented by Chaucer's *PF*, in which the birds choose their mates on the saint's feast day, and the other, appearing exclusively among French poets (notably Granson and Christine de Pizan), in which humans rather than birds choose his day on which to

celebrate and express their love. (See Wimsatt, *French Contemporaries*, p. 234). Granson actually shows knowledge of both traditions, but the two poems in which he refers to the mating of the birds (**77**, "Le Songe Saint Valentin," and **78**.1246-47) we have other reason to believe may both be derived from Chaucer (see Wimsatt, *op. cit.*, pp. 236-37, and Granson, *Poems*, pp. 32-34). Gower is firmly in the English camp (along with Chaucer and Clanvowe), and since, whatever their date, his ballades must have been written after *PF*, he does not provide any useful evidence on either the origin or the development of the tradition. Nor does he provide any convincing evidence on when the date of the saint's feast was finally fixed on February 14, another point of uncertainty. Kelly argues (pp. 72-74), based on the proximity to the two May poems (***36*** and ***37***) and on two passages in *CA*, 1.100-03 and 2088-90, which clearly refer to the birds choosing their mates in May, that Gower thought of the feast taking place late in spring, but the two passages that Kelly cites from *CA* don't actually make any reference to Saint Valentine's Day, and one might argue that in placing these two ballades between the New Year's and the May poems, Gower thought of the feast as also falling between the two (though **34** in fact makes no mention of the saint's day either).

Of all of the relevant surviving texts, Gower's are the first to incorporate the St Valentine's day motif into a ballade. They are much less concerned with the saint himself, however, than they are (like *CA* 1.100-03) with the happiness and the lack of restraint in love that is enjoyed by the birds under the supervision of Nature, for two very different purposes in ballades **34** and **35**. The more playful and more artful is **34**. It begins soberly enough, using birds as an example of faithful monogamy. The refrain, on the body obeying the heart, invokes the fantasy of a natural, and thus unproblematic, passage from desire to fulfillment, but little more. The monogamy of the birds becomes the model for the persona's own fidelity to his lady in the second stanza, but already the sense of the refrain shifts a bit, as it now describes the willingness of his service to her. A bigger shift occurs in the third stanza, which invokes a very different image of birdlife and a very different fantasy of a love not hindered by social constraint, as the "obeying body" now refers to their flying off together in joy, with everything this implies about their union.

As in other of Gower's most successful ballades, the envoy defines the relationship within which this message occurs. It begins with the affectionate address to "ma belle oisel," which extends the imagery around which the poem is built but which is presumptuous at best unless the woman is already comfortable with the implied intimacy, and it follows, in the verb form "pren" in line 27, with an almost unnoticed shift from "vous" to "tu" which is equally impermissible unless it is already expected by the addressee. At the same time, the persona weaves in the play on words in "s'en vole" (26) and possibly "esbatement" (23) as well (see the note below). This time, we can be sure that the lady shares not just the joke but also the wish that the poem expresses and that she is receptive to the implicit instruction in the final instance of the refrain.

2 *the love*. This might simply be "love" generally rather than just that of the birds.

3-7 The male does the choosing in these lines. "Une compaigne [a partner]" in line 4, "celle [that one]" in line 6, and "toutes les autres [all others]" in line 7 are all feminine in form. The roles are evidently reversed in **35**.4-5.

3 *whereby*. The antecedent of "dont" isn't fully clear: most likely "governement," which immediately precedes, but possibly "nature" in line 1, and possibly the entire proposition in lines 1-2 (see *DMF*

s.v. "dont," II.C), typical of the rather loose way in which "dont" can be employed as relative, as conjunction, or as adverb.

worthy. The range of meaning of "honeste" is quite broad. In this context it might also mean "chaste, virtuous" (*AND* s.v "honest," 1; *DMF* s.v. "honneste," A.2) or "suitable, appropriate" (*AND*, loc.cit., 2; *DMF*, loc.cit., B.1). See the note to **21**.23.

4 *size*. The primary sense of "mesure" has to do with physical measurement (*AND* s.v. "mesure[1]," 1; *DMF* s.v. "mesure,"A.2.), but one wonders (perhaps under the influence of *PF*) if Gower might also had something like "rank" in mind. Yeager translates "in its degree."

5 *entirely of one accord and one assent.* That is, by mutual agreement. Deschamps uses "tous d'un acort [both of one accord]" with reference to marriage in **1342**.3.

6 *leaves alone*. *AND* s.v. "convenir," with several good citations for the phrase "lesser convenir, lesser a, al convenir," "to leave alone, leave the decision to."

7 *Nature*. **34**, **35**, and **36** (the first of the two May poems) introduce a new sense to the personified Natura, not the creative divinity of **13**.11, **38**.16 and **45**.18 but more specifically the goddess of regeneration, preparing the way, if the last section of *50B* can be said the have an "argument," for the reconciliation of Nature and Reason that is offered in ballade **50**. In *50B*, Gower does not have as much scope to explore the different senses of Nature as he has in both *MO* and *CA*. Here, while Nature is associated with the innocent coupling of the birds, she is also cited in favor of their monogamous union.

8 *where the heart is, the body must obey*. This refrain is obviously proverbial in character, but I can find no precise analogue elsewhere. The closest that I know of is in the Middle English *Romaunt*, 1794-95, "For evere the body must be lad / After the herte," for which there is no equivalent in any of the available texts of *RR* (at line 1757 in the Lecoy edition used for citation here). Whiting lists this passage under H303, "Who has the Heart is lady (lord) of the body," citing also *BD* 1152-54, "She was lady / Of the body; she had the herte, / And who hath that may not asterte," and *Romaunt* 2084-85, "For of the body he is full lord / That hath the herte in his tresor," for which the underlying source is *RR* 1994-95, "Il est assez sire dou cors /qui a le cuer en sa comande [he is lord enough of the body / who has the heart under his command]." Whiting's H302, "Where the Heart is, the body must be abandoned," is also close, with only one citation, from Berners' *Arthur* (c. 1533), "Where as the hert is, there is the body habandoned, for the body enclyneth to the herte." Among the lyricists, see Machaut, *Lou.* **171**.18-20, "S'ara le cuer et le corps sans partie, / Car quant mes cuers le vuet, je ne doi mie / Desobeïr a faire son voloir [thus she will have heart and body undivided, for when my heart desires it, I must not disobey in carrying out her wish], and Granson **45**.27, "Bien tient le corps qui a le cuer en gage [he or she who has the heart as gage possesses the body]." There does not appear to be any relevant listing in Hassell.

11 *uppermost.* Gower uses a similar expression in **39**.4.

13 *nothing lacks*. This is a variation of the formula used to praise the lady in **14**.3-4 and **39**.6-7 and to gently criticize her in **11**.12 and **17**.26.

15 *shown by experience*. "Experiment" can mean "an experiment" in the modern sense, but it was also used for the knowledge gained by experiment or experience. See *AND* s.v. "esperiment," 3,4,6; and *DMF* s.v. "experiment," B.

17 *calling to mind.* For the construction with "pour" see the note to **11**.5.

18 *Alceone and Ceix*. Genius tells the story in *CA* 4.2927-3123 as an example of the truthfulness of dreams. His source is the much longer version in Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 11.410-748. See also Chaucer's *BD* 62-217, which omits, however, the happy reunion of husband and wife after their transformation into birds that Gower celebrates both here and at the end of his version in *CA*.

21 *hindrance*. With reference to a third party rather than to the lady herself, "danger" must take on a somewhat different meaning from its most common use in the lyrics. See *AND* s.v. "dangier," 2; *DMF* s.v. "danger," C.1. On the range of sense of "danger" see the notes to **12**.8 and to **30**.

23 *joy*. "Esbatement" commonly means "joy" or "pleasure" (*AND* s.v. "esbatement," 2 , also offers "frolicking, amusement, fun") as in **1**.21, sometimes in a specifically sexual context (see the note to that line), but *AND*, loc.cit., 1, provides one citation to indicate that it could also be used, like Modern French "battement," to refer to the beating of wings, appropriate enough (like "s'en vole [takes flight]" in line 26) in a poem in which the lovers are likened to birds. (There seems to be no justification in Middle French for invoking the Modern French expression "les battements de mon coeur [the beating of my heart].")

25 *bird*. "Oisel" is grammatically masculine, but natural gender (in the feminine forms of "ma" and "belle") takes priority as the persona addresses the term to his lady. Cf. **35**.22.

25-26 *my thought takes flight.* Gower uses a similar image in **8**.1-4, comparing the flight of his wishes to the flight of a falcon.

27 *take*. This is one of three instances (with **4**[1].24 and **16**.26) in which the persona slips from the formal form of the verb to the familiar ("pren"). Here the choice is consistent with the change of tone in the envoy, with the address to "ma belle oisel" and the gentle play on words in "s'en vole."

35

Saint Valentin, plus qe null Emp*er*our,
Ad p*ar*lement et convocacion
Des toutz oiseals, qui vienont a son jour,
U la compaigne p*re*nt son compaignon
En droit amour; mais p*ar* comp*ar*ison,
D'ascune p*ar*t ne puiss avoir la moie.
Qui soul remaint ne poet avoir g*ra*nt joie.

Com la fenix souleine est au sojour
En Arabie, celle regio*u*n,
Ensi ma dame, en droit° de son° amour,
Souleine maint, ou, si jeo vuill ou no*u*n,
N'ad cure de ma supplicacion,
Siq*ue* d'amour ne sai troever la voie.
Qui soul remaint ne poet avoir g*ra*nt joie.

O com nature est pleine de favour
A ceos oiseals q'ont lour eleccion!
O si jeo fuisse, en droit° de mon atour,
En ceo soul cas de lour condicio*u*n!
Plus poet nature qe ne poet reso*u*n.
En mon estat t*res*bien le sente et voie.
Qui soul remaint ne poet avoir g*ra*nt joie.

Chascun Tarcel gentil ad sa falco*u*n,
Mais j'ai faili de ceo q'avoir voldroie.
Ma dame, c'est le fin de mon chanço*u*n.
Qui soul remaint ne poet avoir g*ra*nt joie.

10, 17 en droit. *See the note to* ***12****.2.*
10 *MS* deson

35

°Saint Valentine, more° than any emperor,
holds a parliament° and convocation
of all the birds, who come on his feast day,
where° the female takes her partner
in true love;° but in comparison,
nowhere can I have mine.°
Whoever remains alone cannot have great joy.

°Just as the phoenix is alone° in its dwelling
in Arabia, that region,
so my lady, with regard to her love,
remains alone, where, whether I wish or not,
she has no regard for my supplication,
so that I cannot find the way° to love.
Whoever remains alone cannot have great joy.

O how Nature is full of favor
to those birds who have their choice!
O, if I were, with regard to my situation,
in this one respect in their condition!
Nature can do more than can reason.°
In my state I feel and see it well.
Whoever remains alone cannot have great joy.

°Every noble tercel° has its falcon,
but I have not attained what I wish to have.
My lady, this is the end of my song.
Whoever remains alone cannot have great joy.

35 takes the opposite tack from **34**, decrying the lady's unwillingness to participate in the joys of the season rather than inviting her complicity, and contrasting the persona's hard luck to the natural joy and fulfillment of the birds, invoking, especially in stanza three, a similar fantasy of "naturatus amor [natured love]" (*CA* 1. *vv.* 1) (one that that might be troubling to Genius), not for its freedom from social constraint, however, but for the lack of such obstacles as are posed by the lady's rejection. As in **34**, Gower includes more than a single bird image in the poem, evidently unconcerned that in its solitude the phoenix provides an exception to "toutz oiseals" who happily choose their mates in line 3. Also as in **34**, its refrain has more than a single sense, depending on who is discussed in the stanza. In stanzas one and three it clearly refers to the persona's condition, but in stanza two, which is about the lady's solitude, and in

the envoy, in which the persona addresses her directly for the first time, there is the suggestion that it might apply to her as well. But if so, it expresses the persona's wish in modest terms, and the comparison to the joy of the birds also transforms the more conventional complaint of the lover who believes that he deserves more into mere wishful thinking, born more of loneliness than of his claimed subjection to love.

1-7 In his "Songe Saint Valentin" (**77**), which is most likely derived from Chaucer's *PF*, Granson too makes a comparison between the ease with which the birds find their mates and the complications that ensue for humans (lines 329-66), but without reference to the particular situation of the persona.

1 *more*. One is tempted to translate "plus" as "greater," but the use of "plus" as an adjective is very rare. No examples are recorded in *DMF*, and the few citations in *AND* s.v. "plus," a[djective], provide no good analogy for the use in this line. I have found no use of "plus" as an adjective in *MO*.

2 *parliament*. It is difficult not to see a recollection of and perhaps a deliberate allusion to Chaucer's *PF*.

4 *where*. Since "u" might also be "when" (*DMF* s.v "où," II.A.2), the antecedent might be "jour" rather than "convocacion." Or it might simply be both.

5 *true love*. On "droit amour" see the note to **4**[1].3.

6 *mine*. That is, "my partner," in the feminine. *DMF* s.v. "mien" marks "moie" as "ancien ["former," or in this context "archaic"]," but it occurs commonly in Machaut, who provides the source for many of the *DMF*'s citations.

8-11 This is Gower's only reference to the phoenix. Compare *BD* 981-83: "Trewly she was, to myn yë, / The soleyn fenix of Arabye, / For ther livyth never but oon." On the source, see Yeager's note, who traces the location of the bird in Arabia to Isidore, *Etymologies* XII.vii.22. To the texts that he cites add the early fifteenth-century French bestiary cited in *DMF* s.v. "phenix," also placing the bird in Arabia.

8 *alone*. "Soulein(e)" appears eight other times in *50B* and some two dozen times in *MO*, but *DMF* s.v. "solain" provides only one citation, from *MO* 73, suggesting that the word may be exclusively Anglo-Norman. On its different possible senses see the note to **36**.11.

13 *way*. Gower uses a similar metaphor in **16**.8. Cf. also **48**.15.

19 *Nature can do more than can reason*. Nature and Reason are traditionally cited as opposing impulses with regard to love. Much of Genius' lesson for Amans in *CA* is encapsulated in *50B* **[51]**.1-2: "Amour de soi et bon en toute guise / Si resoun le governe et justifie [Love in itself is good in every guise if Reason governs and controls it]." The persona here evidently invokes "resoun" in a very different sense, however, not as the source of moral governance but as a way of distinguishing between the very different ways in which avian and human relations are conducted, employing "resoun" in the broader sense of "reasoning" (as in **39**.23) to refer to the persona's far from successful efforts to persuade his lady, including his "supplicacion" in line 12. If that is so, we should perhaps put a colon or semicolon at the end of line 19 to clarify that it rather than the refrain is the "estat" that the persona refers to in line 20.

22 The final episode in Chaucer's *PF* is concerned with the contention among three tercels for the eagle on Nature's wrist, and the longest part of Granson's "Songe Saint Valentin" (**77**) is a tercel's account of his love for a particular falcon.
noble tercel. Chaucer refers to the "gentyl faucoun" (*PF* 337) and to a "royal tersel" (*PF* 415; cf. also 393-94). Birds of prey were clearly regarded as being of higher rank than other birds and in that sense "noble."

its falcon. A tercel is by definition male. The word "faucon" is normally masculine, and in using feminine "sa" as the possessive (which we might have translated as "his"), Gower again allows natural gender to take priority over grammatical gender as in **34**.25.

24 *my song*. In both **40**.22-23 and **43**.7, the persona refers to singing, but this is the only instance in *50B*, apart from the Latin colophon following **[51]**, in which one of the ballades is referred to as a song. As in Modern French, the usual Middle French word for a bird's song is "chant" rather than "chanson," but "chanson" could so be used as well, as in Deschamps **476**.7, "Mais d'oysel nul n'oy chanson ne glay [but I didn't hear the song or cry of any bird]"; see *AND* s.v. "chançun,," 2; and *DMF* s.v. "chanson," A.4, citing Chrstine de Pizan, "Le livre du dit du Poissy," 121-22 (*Oeuvres* 2:163), "ces haies / Ou rossignolz disoyent chançons gaies [these hedges in which nightingales sang their song]." Does the lover subtly adopt a bird-like persona here? Hopefully? Or instead to emphasize the contrast to the tercel in line 22?

36

Pour comparer ce Jolif temps de Maii,
Jeo le dirrai semblable a Paradis,
Car lors chantont et Merle et Papegai,
Les champs sont vert, les herbes sont floris.
Lors est nature dame du paiis,
Dont venus poignt l'amant au tiel assai
Q'encontre amour n'est qui poet dire Nai.

Qant tout ceo voi et qe jeo penserai
Coment nature ad tout le mond suspris
Dont pour le temps se fait minote et gai,
Et jeo des autres sui soulein horpris
Com cil qui sanz amie est vrais amis,
N'est pas mervaile lors si jeo m'esmai,
Q'encontre amour n'est qui poet dire nai.

En lieu de Rose urtie cuillerai,
Dont mes chapeals ferrai p*ar* tiel devis
Qe toute joie et confort jeo lerrai
Si celle soule en qui j'ai mon coer mis
Selonc le point qe j'ai sovent requis
Ne deigne alegger les griefs mals qe j'ai,
Q'encontre amour n'est qui poet dire Nai.

Pour pité querre et pourchacer m*er*cis
Va t'en, balade, u jeo t'envoierai,
Q'ore en certein jeo l'ai t*res*bien apris,
Q'encontre amour n'est qui poet dire nai.

Gower, John. *Cinkante Balades*. Edited and translated by Peter Nicholson, Feb. 2021, *John Gower Society*, www.JohnGower.org.

36

In comparing° this joyful° time of May,
I would call it similar to paradise,
for then sing both the blackbird and the parrot,°
the fields are green, the plants are in flower.
Then is Nature mistress of the country,
and° Venus pricks the lover in such a way
that in face of love there is none that can say no.°

When I see all this and when I think
how Nature has overtaken the whole world
so that for the season it becomes elegant° and gay,
and I, alone, am excluded from the others°
as he who without *amie* is a true *ami*,°
then it's no wonder if I am dismayed,
for° in face of love there is none that can say no.

Instead of a rose, I will pick nettles,°
with which I will make my chaplet in such a way
that I will give up all joy and comfort
if she alone on whom I have set my heart
with regard to that which I have often requested
deigns not to relieve the grievous pains I bear,
for in face of love there is none that can say no.

To seek pity and to obtain mercy
go, ballade,° where I will send you,
for now I have well learned for certain
that in face of love there is none that can say no.

The association between the rebirth of nature in the spring and the onset or the joys of love has a long history, and it is a commonplace in the poetry of Gower's most immediate predecessors, both in the *dits amoureux* and in the lyrics. In the *dits*, the model is set by *RR*, in which the narrator's dream begins in May, "el tens enmoreus, plain de joie, / el tens ou toute rien s'esgaie [the season of love, full of joy, the season when everything is joyful]" (48-49). Three of Machaut's *dits* begin in springtime, though Machaut sets two of them in April rather than May (*Behaingne* 1-9; *Lyon* 1-33; see also *Vergier* 1-36), all celebrating the joy that accompanies the new season. In his lyrics, Machaut has fewer occasions to refer to the seasons, but in *Lou* **18**.1-6, instead of celebrating its joys, he uses the contrast to the effects of spring to heighten the true source of his feelings:

Feuille ne flour ne verdure
Ne douceur de temps pascour
Ne nulle autre creature
Fors vous, dame de valour,
Ne pueent mettre en baudour
Mon cuer.

[Neither leaf nor flour nor greenery nor the sweetness of the Easter season nor any other creature but you, my worthy lady, can put my heart in joy.]

He echoes here a move also made by some of his thirteenth-century predecessors, who sought, according to Dragonetti (pp. 183-85, 187), not just to valorize love itself by denying an external cause but also implicitly to critique those poets who celebrated in far simpler terms the association between human love and the natural world. Machaut's successors tended to be more celebratory, echoing instead much of the language one finds in *RR* and in Machaut's *dits*. From Froissart, for instance, we have a 461-line poem in praise of "Le Joli mois de Mai [the lovely month of May]" in which the warmth of the season inspires the narrator's thoughts on love. Among the lyricists, Deschamps leaves at least ten poems linking love to the arrival of May, six of them presuming an occasion of joy (**306**, **316**, **419**, **441**, **560**, and **974**); and Christine de Pizan as well has a number of poems either encouraging lovers to enjoy the coming of May or describing her own contentment (e.g. *Autres* **9**, **10**, **25**, **28**, **44**, and **52**). (See also Mudge **6**, **72**). As a third variation on the theme, both Deschamps (**415**, **420**, **476**, **744)** and Christine (*100B* **34**, *100BD* **79**) also have a smaller number of poems in which the persona evokes the joys of the season in order to heighten by contrast the description of his or her own sorrow, usually because of a separation from the beloved. (See also Granson **2**, **3;** and Mudge **22**, **65**.) This motif too has roots in earlier poetry (see Dragonetti, 188-90), and Gower uses a version of it in *50B* **35**, in which the persona cannot enjoy the same pleasures as the other birds, and in *CA* 1.98-107, in both cases because a man's love is unrequited.

36 and **37**, both set in May, draw much of their imagery from these earlier poems, but they use it in a typically Gowerian way. In **36**, the first stanza is the most celebratory: it re-uses familiar imagery to link the paradise-like setting to the onset of love, and the refrain serves to describe the persona's own condition in conventional and unsurprising terms. But the refrain is rather broad in its implication, and over the course of the poem we learn that, as for Amans, there is at least one person who is unaffected by the season and who in fact does say no, at least to the persona, despite his repeated entreaties. As in **34** and **35**, the refrain shifts in implication from one stanza to the next. In the second stanza, it conveys the persona's puzzlement in the face of the evident contradiction, and in the third, it expresses the pain and helplessness of his subjection rather than the irresistibility of the joys of love. In the envoy, finally, as he sends his poem to his lady in the hope of obtaining her "pity" and her "mercy," the refrain describes not just his own feeling but what he expects of hers, and he places his hope in the very expression that has already proved to be so unstable. Uniquely in *50B*, moreover, rather than addressing the lady directly, he addresses the envoy to his poem: "Go, ballade, where I will send you." In a quite literal way, he again counts on poetic language alone to bring about the change that he desires, the same tradition of poetry that provides the basis for the expectation expressed in the final instance of the refrain. It is not persuasive: there is no reason to think that the woman will

be moved or that a mere trope will prevail over a woman's freedom to make her own choice; and in our perception of the gap between the persona's hope and reality, there is the germ of a very different critique of the tradition on which his poem is based, a critique that emerges more strongly in **37**.

1 *In comparing*. On the "pour" plus infinitive construction, see the note to **11**.5. The use of "comparer" without a prepositional phrase ("to X") is unusual, but *DMF* provides other examples s.v. "comparer," A.1.
joyful. This earlier, very common sense of "jolif" lies behind Modern English "jolly." By Gower's time "jolif" had also taken on some of the connotations of Modern French "joli [pretty]," as in Froissart's "le temps estoit si bel et si jolys [the weather was so beautiful and so pleasant]," cited in *DMF* s.v. "joli," II.C.1.a, a sense that obviously works well in this line too.

3 *then sing both the blackbird and the parrot*. *RR* 76-77: "Lors s'envoise /le papegauz et la kalandre [for then rejoice the parrot and the lark]." (On the "kalandre,"see the note to **12**.1.)
Papegai. Macaulay: "This seems to stand for any bright plumaged bird. It is not to be supposed that Gower had the definite idea of a parrot connected with it."

6 *and*. As in **34**.3, the "dont" is imprecise. If we take it as a relative ("by which"?) rather than as a weak conjunction, the antecedent might be the preceding clause, implying that Venus works under the aegis of Nature. "Dont" might also be "donc [then]," implying both a temporal sequence and possibly a cause and effect but somewhat less oversight on Nature's part. Yeager's "whereupon" effectively combines the two. See *DMF* s.v "donc," I, and cf. lines 10 and 16 below.
in such a way. That is, more precisely, "in such a test or trial." Macaulay, in his note, suggests "'with such trial,' i.e. 'so sharply'." The expression "au tiel assai" invites filling in the details from context. Cf. *DMF* s.v. "assai," B, "affrontement, assaut [clash, assault]," where the "test" occurs on a field of combat.

7 *no*. On "Nai," see the note to **17**.21.

10 *elegant*. *AND* s.v. "minot," citing this line. See also *DMF* s.v. "mignot."

11 *and I, alone, am excluded from the others*. The sense is clearer than the grammar here. "Horspris" is normally a preposition (*AND* s.v. "forspris"; *DMF* s.v. "horspris"), but in *MO* 23777 Gower writes "De tieux taillages sont horspris [from such taxes they are exempt]," using "horspris" as an adjective as he does here. The precise sense must be inferred from context. "Soulein" offers two possibilities, however. As noted above at **35**.8, there is only a single citation in *DMF* s.v. "solain," from *MO* 73, suggesting that this is an Anglo-Norman usage. *AND* s.v. "sulein" provides citations to support both "alone" in the sense of "solitary" and also in the sense of "exclusively" (cf. "soule" in line 18). Gower uses the word in both senses in the dozens of its appearances in *MO* (spelled variously "solain," "solein[e]," "soulain[e]," and "soulein[e]"). In *MO* 13417, for instance, he writes "Modeste auci n'est pas souleine [Modesty too is not alone; that is, she has companions]," the sense in which he also uses the word in **22.**21, **24**.19, **35**.8, and **35**.11; but in *MO* 10564, "C'est pour l'amour de dieu soulein {it is for love of God alone, that is, exclusively]," as in **10**.1, **17**.20, **40**.21, and **48**.22. For this line, therefore, we might have "I am alone, excluded" or "I alone am excluded." And perhaps the point is that each applies equally well to the persona.

12 On the construction see the note to **7**.7. On "ami(s)" and "amie" see the note to **4**[1].7.

14 *For*. The sense of "q[e]" is determined by what precedes. Lines 7 and 25 demand "that"; line 21 demands "for" or "since." Either works here. (*DMF* s.v. "esmayer," II, provides two contemporary examples in which "s'esmaier" is followed by a clause beginning with "que [that]."") But the difference is felt more strongly in the translation than in the French.

15 As Macaulay observes (in his note to *MO* 3721), "The opposition of rose and nettle is common in our author," citing **37**.24 and *VC* 7.181. See also **48**.6, *MO* 9977-78, 11278-80, 20938, 25304-05 (in addition to other references to the nettle, e.g. at 3538, 26489-94); *CA* 2.401-02, 5.6411* *vv*. 1; and *VC* 2.59-60. In most of these, the contrast serves to distinguish sin from virtue or to reveal the nature of hypocrisy. The use of the comparison to express differences in fortunes in love goes back at least to Ovid. In his note to *VC* 2.59-60, Macaulay cites Ovid, *Remedia Amoris* 46, "et urticae proxima saepe rosa est [often is the nettle near the rose]." Godefroy, Supp. s.v. "ortie" cites Gautier D'Arras, *Eracle* (c. 1180), line 1275 "Car feme prendre est mout granz chose, / Cil prent l'ortie et cil le rose [for to take a wife is a serious matter; some take nettle and some a rose]." The rosebud with which the narrator becomes infatuated in *RR* is surrounded by briars and "orties" (line 1676). In *T&C* 1.948-49, the context is the promise of joy after sorrow. Whiting, N94 and N95, lists some mid- to late fifteenth-century examples of the opposition of rose and nettle, but I find no reference in Hassell, nor do I know of any similar use of the comparison among the fourteenth-century lyricists that preceded Gower.

23 *go, ballade.* This is one of only four ballades in *50B*, apart from **48**-**[51]**, that are not addressed to the recipient (see the note to **17**). This is the only one that addresses the ballade itself. One will think on Chaucer's "Go, litel book, go, litel myn tragedye" (*T&C* 5.1786) and of Gower's "Vade, liber purus [go, fair book]" in the explicit to *CA* (8.3172 *vv.* 6). J.S.P. Tatlock, "The Epilog of Chaucer's *Troilus*," *MP* 18 (1921), 627-30, traces the motif to Ovid. He provides other examples from Italian sources and from French and Provençal poets of the 12th and 13th centuries, but he observes that "It is not a usage of the French lyrists whom Chaucer was most familiar with" (p. 629, n. 2), nor do I know of any similar examples among Gower's 14th-century French predecessors.

37

El Mois de Maii la plusjoiouse chose
C'est fin amour, mais vous, ma dame chiere,
P*re*netz a vous plustost la Ruge Rose
Pour vo desport, et plus la faites chiere
Qe mon amour, ove toute la priere
Qe vous ai fait maint jour y ad passé.
Vous estes franche et jeo sui fort lié.

Jeo voi toutplein des flours deinz vo p*ar*close,
P*ri*vé de vous, mais jeo sui mis derere.
N'y puiss entrer, qe l'entrée m'est forsclose.°
Jeo p*re*ns tesmoign de vostre chamberere,
Qe sciet et voit trestoute la matiere,
De si long temps qe jeo vous ai amé.
Vous estes franche et jeo sui fort lié.

Qant l'erbe croist et la flour se desclose,
Maii m'ad hosté de sa blanche banere,
Dont pense assetz plus qe jeo dire n'ose
De vous, ma dame, qui m'estes si fiere,
A vo m*er*ci car si jeo me refiere,°
V*ost*re danger tantost m'ad deslaié:
Vous estes franche et jeo sui fort lié.

En le douls temps ma fortune est amiere;
Le Mois de Maii s'est en yvern mué;
L'urtie truis si jeo la Rose quiere:
Vous estes franche et jeo sui fort lié.

10 *Mac* forclose
19 *Mac reads* refiers *and emends to* refiere. *It's a close call. The scribe's* e *and his final* s *are very similar in form, and the letter in question is written over a natural wrinkle in the parchment that distorts its shape. It is easier to think that the scribe's pen slipped slightly in forming an* e *than it is to think that he wrote both an ungrammatical and a non-rhyming form ending in* s.

37

In the month of May the most joyous thing
is *fin amour*,° but you, my dear lady,
sooner take to yourself the red rose
for your pleasure, and show it greater joy°
than (you do) my love, with° all the pleading°
that I have made to you for many a day gone by.
You are free° and I am tightly bound.°

I see a great many° flowers in your garden,
your private place,° but I am left behind.
I cannot enter there, for the entry is closed to me.
I take witness of your chambermaid,
who knows and sees the entire matter,
that I have loved you for so long a time.
You are free and I am tightly bound.

When the grass grows and the flower opens up,
May has excluded me from her bright banner,°
°for which I think rather more than I dare say
about you, my lady, who are so haughty towards me,
for if I make appeal° to your mercy,
your *danger*° immediately has put me off:°
You are free and I am tightly bound.

In the sweet season my fortune is bitter;
The month of May has turned into winter;°
I find the nettle if I seek the rose:°
You are free and I am tightly bound.

37 heightens the confrontation between poetry and reality that we perceive in **36** both by identifying in more precise terms the source of the persona's expectation and by giving greater substantiality to the woman's very different point of view. In the first two lines, the persona's claim to his lady's love is based exclusively on expectations of behavior drawn from the poetry of *fin amour* rather than on worth or any personal attraction. His other statements are equally figurative in nature: he is excluded from her garden (8-10), May bars him from her company (15-16), and when he seeks "merci," he finds "danger" (19-20). The lady, by contrast, experiences the arrival of spring by taking pleasure in the blooming of the rose. Butterfield was the first to draw attention to the importance of this ballade and to its self-conscious use of

language ("French Culture," pp. 109-12) . But if I may quibble with her: She finds the rose enigmatic: "Is not the red rose normally a sign for love? . . . [The lady] can play fast and loose with metaphors, [but the persona] is tied to real emotion" (111). There is no tradition in which the rose serves as a metaphor for the object of a woman's desire, however, and it is the persona who invokes the metaphorical sense when, echoing **36**.15, he refers to his quest of a "rose" in the second to last line (24). While the lady's conduct might well be a painful and paradoxical reminder of everything that the persona fails to achieve, her admiration for the flower appears to be quite literal, all the more to his frustration. All of her experience, in fact, takes place in this more literal register: however symbolic for the persona, her garden is real, and she even has a real chambermaid as her companion, the witness to the man's pleading in the second stanza, as opposed to his supposition that she is accompanied by "Danger" (20). The poem is built around that contrast between figurative and literal and between artifice and reality: she experiences the return of spring in very literal terms, and he is tied to convention and metaphor. In the envoy, he can express his frustration only by the same means, in a string of three formulae, each of which appears elsewhere in *50B* but that here, in its briefness, is reduced to a mere cliché (22-24). And the refrain, which in the first instance seems to be about only the separate degrees of their attachment to love, becomes a statement of how he is confined by the commonplaces of the language that he has inherited and she is not. "Vous estes franche et jeo sui fort lié [You are free and I am tightly bound]" (25). In this final instance, it sounds less like reproach than envy.

Like **40** and **46**, this poem does not end with the narrator sending the ballade to his lady, but in all three cases, the lack of a direct exchange between them is expressive of their lack of communication at a much more important level. Here, our consciousness of the addressee makes us aware of an entirely different attitude both to their relation and to the language that the lover uses. Separating the lady's perspective from the persona's also separates the persona's from that of the poet, and in this case suggests a critical view of the entire poetic idiom around which the persona's complaints are shaped. This ballade does not cancel out those in which that gap between artifice and reality is treated more playfully nor those in which the same idiom is used for the expression of a serious commitment to love. Instead, it offers another of the many voices in the collection. But Gower's ability to distance himself from that idiom, both in **36** and **37** and in the more lighthearted examples, is important testimony to his own awareness of the nature and limitations of the language and the devices that he inherited.

2 *fin amour*. See the note to **7**.1.

4 *show it greater joy*. *DMF* s.v. "chere," B.3 "faire/montrer chere," "Laisser paraître de la joie, de la bonne humeur [to show joy, good humor]." There are also contexts in which "grant chere" might signify "welcome" (*DMF*, loc.cit., C.2.a, "Faire grant chere à qqn," "Faire grant chere"), as evidently in **30**.19 (see the note to that line). "Plus" functions as the comparative of "grant," and as Macaulay notes (1:467), "la" appears for the feminine indirect object. Less likely does this mean "hold it more dear." "Faire" + noun + "cher" can be used to mean "to cause something to be dear" (*AND* s.v. "faire[1]," 8), as in *MO* 12840, but the normal expression for "to hold dear" was "tenir cher" (*DMF* s.v. "cher," II.A.1.b, II.A.2.b), as in *MO* 8907.

5 *with*. That is, "despite."
pleading. "Priere" is commonly used with reference to the lover's supplication. See the note to **24**.8.

7 *free*. "Franc(he)" can suggest "noble, generous" as in **50**.4, **23**.22; *AND* s.v. "franc[1]," 3; *DMF* s.v. "franc," adj., I.C; cf. "franchise" in **28**.8 and **51**.11. But opposed to "bound," it bears its earlier and primary meaning, "free, unrestrained"; *AND*, loc.cit., 1; *DMF*, loc.cit., I.A, B. Machaut uses the word in the latter sense with reference to release from love in *Lou.* **252**.9. Gower warns knights to remain "free" ("liber") of love in *VC* 5.31.
bound. See the note to **15**.3.

8 *a great many*. *AND* s.v. "plein[1]," a. "tut plein de(s), 1. many, all sorts of"; *DMF* s.v. "plein," I.C.4. "*Tout plein de* + subst. 'Beaucoup de.'"

9 *your private place*. In his glossary (s.v. "priver," 1.541), Macaulay takes "privé" as a form of the verb meaning "to deprive," thus "deprived of you," modifying "jeo" with inversion of the conjunction and the modifying phrase (see the note to **6**.6-7). This isn't impossible, though such an inversion is much more common with an adverbial modifier or an object than with an adjective. But despite the lack of agreement in form (not uncommon in Gower's French), it may be more consistent with the sense of the stanza to take "privé" as modifying one of the words in the preceding line. *AND*, *DMF*, and *MED* all provide numerous examples of the use of the adjective "privé" to mean "private," as in "prive place," which appears 9 times in *CA*, a sense that would work well with "parclose" but not well in the phrase "privé de vous." In its less common use as a noun, it can mean "an intimate, a close friend" (*AND* s.v. "privé," s., 1; *DMF* s.v. "privé," A.1.b; *MED* s.v. "privē," 3), but with reference to a location, it signifies a "privy" (*AND*, loc.cit., 3; *MED*, loc.cit., 2.) In brief, the available sources don't provide any good solution, and on the basis of context alone (notably the line and a half that follows), I have taken "privé" as a noun referring exceptionally to the private place which is the lady's garden. One has to wonder, though, if this should not instead be "prisé de vous," "valued, esteemed by you," modifying "flours" as in lines 3-4; see *AND* s.v. "preiser," p[ast] p[articiple] as a[djective], "renowned, held in high esteem," a verb that Gower uses in a similar sense in **[51]**.17.

16 *from her bright banner*. That is, from her company, a common metonymy; cf. *MO* 6190, 6380, 8001, 9820, and Love's banner in **27**.9. See *DMF* s.v. "banniere," A.4 and the many figurative expressions under C; also *MED* s.v. "banēr(e," 6. "Blanche" might be "white," but in heraldic use it can also mean "blank," that is, without any markings (*DMF* s.v. "blanc," I.B.2.c), or silvery and shining (*DMF*, loc.cit., I.D), though why May's banner might be any of these is not completely clear.

17-18 Grammatically, these lines are as ambiguous in French as they are in English, signifying either "I think with regard to you rather more than I dare say about you" or "I think about you to a rather greater extent than I dare tell you." For the former, the "plus qe" clause functions as an object of "pense," as in this sentence cited in *DMF* s.v. "plus," II.A, "Tu dis trop plus que tu ne sces! [you say much more than you know]." For the latter, the clause is adverbial, modifying "pense" (and should perhaps therefore be marked off by commas), and "penser de" serves where in Modern French we would say "penser à," for which other examples are provided in *DMF* s.v. "penser," I.A.2.b, I.B.1.a, I.C.2. For all that, the primary sense is surely the former: the persona explains why he cannot reveal what he is thinking in the lines that follow. Cf. *CA* 1.2105-06, "And to his tale an Ere he leide, / And thoghte more than he seide," cited in Whiting M685, "To think More than one says (*varied*)."

19 *make appeal*. The translation, compelled by the context, is borrowed from Yeager, but it is not supported by any contemporaneous examples in our dictionaries. See *AND* s.v. "referir[2"]; *DMF* s.v. "referir"; *MED* s.v "referren." Gower uses the same verb reflexively six times in *MO* (in 1997, 2365, 4777, 15731, 19024, and 20200), but in varying senses. The closest is in 19024, "Au verité si m'en refiere," which might well be "If I make appeal to the truth on this matter." Rey, *Dict.Hist.* s.v. "référer" refers to the sense "s'en rapporter à qqn, à qqch. comme à une autorité, pour s'en prévaloir [to rely upon someone, something as to an authority, as a precedent]" emerging late in

the 15th-century. *OED* s.v. "refer" also cites as a sense of the underlying French verb "to submit or refer (something to someone for a decision) (15th cent.)." Gower's use in this line emerges somewhere in the intersection of these varying senses, and perhaps unknown to him, may have been somewhat before its time.

20 I leave "danger" untranslated as it seems to hover between the personification and the simple noun "disdain." See the note to **12**.8.

has put me off. An apt translation from Macaulay's glossary s.v. "deslaier" (1:499), combining the notion of rejection with that of "delay." Cf. **27**.12.

23 *The month of May has turned into winter.* Cf. **32**.8-9, **40**.26.

24 *I find the nettle if I seek the rose.* See the note to **36**.15.

38

Sicom la fine piere D'aiamand
De sa nature attrait le ferr au soi,
Ma dame, ensi vo douls regard plesant
P*ar* fine force att*ra*it le coer de moi.
N'est pas en mon poair, qant jeo vous voi,
Qe ne vous aime oultre mesure ensi
Qe j'ai pour vous toute autre chose oubli.

Soubtz ciel n'est oill, maisq'il vous soit voiant,
Qu'il n'ait le coer tantost deinz son recoi
Suspris de v*ost*re amour et suspirant.
De tout le monde si jeo fuisse Roi,
Trop fuist petit, me semble, en bone foi,
Pour vous amer, car jeo sui tant ravi
Qe j'ai pour vous toute autre chose oubli.

Toutes vertus en vous sont apparant
Qe nature° poet doner de sa loi,
Et dieus vous ad doné le remenant
Des bones mours; p*ar* quoi t*res*bien le croi
Qe jeo ne puiss amer meilour de toi.
V*ost*re bealté m'ad tielement saisi
Qe j'ai pour vous toute autre chose oubli.

D'omble esp*er*it, sicom jeo faire doi,
U toute g*rac*e son hostell*e*° ad basti.
Ceo l*ett*re envoie ove si t*res*fin otroi
Qe j'ai pour vous toute autre chose oubli.

16 nature: tur *written over erasure. Cross drawn in margin.*
23 hostell*e. See the note to* **2**.*17.*

38

°Just as the precious° lodestone°
by its nature attracts iron to itself,
my lady, so does your sweet pleasant appearance°
out of pure force° attract my heart.
°It isn't in my power, when I see you,
that I not love you so immoderately
that for you I have forgotten everything else.

°Under heaven there is no eye, should it see you,°
that it doesn't at once have the heart privately°
overtaken by love of you,° and sighing.
°If I were king of the entire world
it would be too little, it seems to me, in good faith,
in order to love you, for I am so overcome
that for you I have forgotten everything else.

°In you are evident all the good qualities
that Nature is able to give according to her law,
and God has given you the rest
of the moral virtues, for which I well believe
that I cannot love one better than you.°
Your beauty has seized me to such a degree
that for you I have forgotten everything else.

With humble spirit, just as I ought to do,
where all grace has established its dwelling
I send this letter with such perfect° submission°
that for you I have forgotten everything else.

38 and **39** are the third and fourth of the five ballades devoted to the lady's virtues (see the note to **21** above). One can only speculate on the reasons for their present arrangement. **38** introduces a different view of Nature from that in the seasonal poems, **32**-**37**. Together, **38** and **39** offer an interlude between the generally unhappy poems that precede and the four poems on infidelity that follow (**40**-**43**) , establishing (along with **44**-**48**, which return to a happier view of love) a kind of dialogue in anticipation of the reconciliation offered in the final group of ballades. Though not as obviously as either **31** or **39**.3-5, **38** also invokes, in lines 15-23, the triad of the lady's beauty, goodness, and grace and their effect upon the persona in inspiring love. It is most closely linked to **45**, the last of the five poems in this group, in the two different "stones"

with which each poem begins (**45**.1-4) and in the reference to the gifts that the lady has been given by both God and Nature (**45**.18-19).

1-2 Proverbial. Hassel A58 (citing, among many others, *MO* 18343-44), Whiting A39. To lines 1-4 compare Machaut, *Remede*, 295-98:

> Et son tres doulz plaisant regart
> Atraioit mon cuer de sa part
> Tout aussi, par son doulz attrait,
> Com l'aymant le fer attrait.

[And her sweet pleasant appearance attracted my heart just as, by its gentle attraction, a loadstone attracts iron.]

1 *precious*. The range of "fin" is very broad. Here it might mean simply "pure" (*AND* s.v. "fin[2]," 1; *DMF* s.v. "fin," adj, II.A.1.a), but with reference to stones, it may also imply "precious" and "costly" (*DMF*, loc.cit., II.A.1.b). Cf. lines 4 and 24 below.

lodestone. Macaulay prints "la fine piere Daiamand" (and in *MO* 18343 "la pere daiamant") without an apostrophe, but the word for the naturally occurring mineral with magnetic properties is "aimant" (*DMF* s.v. "aimant"; *AND* s.v. "adamant"). It occurs either without an article or with one (as in the passage quoted from Machaut above), and after "piere," the *d* is the contraction of "de": "piere d'aiamand." "Aimant" is related etymologically to the word for diamond, and the lodestone was even sometimes attributed with the quality of hardness, as in Machaut *Lou.* **254**.9 "Cuer de marbre couronné d'aÿmant [heart of marble crowned with 'aÿmant']" and Froissart, Rond**. 38**. Even so, Machaut at least appears to have been aware that these were two different substances: *Lou.* **254** concludes (line 52) with a reference to the "cuer plus dur qu'un dyamant [heart harder than a diamond]," and in Chans.Bal. **31**.1-3 he writes, "Plus dure qu'un dyamant / Ne que pierre d'aÿmant / Est vo durté [harder than a diamond or a 'pierre d'aÿmant' is your hard-heartedness]." *MO* 12463-67 is more problematic:

> Semblable auci je la diffine
> Au piere dyamant tresfine,
> Q'en orr seoir est dedeignouse,
> De la richesse se decline
> Et est au povre ferr encline.

[I declare it (Humility) similar to the pure "piere dyamant," which disdains to be set in gold; it turns away from riches and inclines to poor iron.]

Macaulay notes that Gower here seems to confuse the diamond with the lodestone (1:lxi, 1:468). Despite the spelling, one has to believe that Gower has the lodestone in mind for there is no reason to think that a diamond might scorn to be set in gold. Gower cites the diamond as an example of hardness in **18**.23.

3 *appearance.* All other uses of "regard" in *50B* refer either to the lady's glance at the persona or the persona's viewing the lady; see the notes to **12**.7 and **23**.1. The former seems to be the sense in the passage from Machaut quoted in the note to lines 1-2 above, and it is supported by *CA* 5.4493, 4540-41, in which Amans is overcome by "o lokinge of hire [his lady's] yë." But "regard" (like Modern English "look") can also mean "Aspect, apparence de qqn ou de qqc. [aspect, appearance of someone or something]" (*DMF* s.v. "regard," I.B.2.a), which works much better with the comparison to the lodestone and with lines 5, 8, and 20.

4 *pure force*. See the note to **31**.5. Here "force" perhaps suggests "strength" or "compulsion" rather than "necessity."

5-6 The placement of a negative subordinate clause within a negative main clause, here, in lines 8-10, and in **39**.17-19, resembles the "ne . . . ne plus" construction that Macaulay notes is common in Gower; see the note to **7**.23-24 above. Machaut has at least one similar example (*Lou.* **46**.11-13):

> Qu'en monde n'a si dure creature,
> S'elle savoit quels maulz j'ay a sentir,
> Qui grant pité n'eüst de moy veir.
>
> [That in the world there is not so harsh a creature, if she knew what pains I must endure, who would not have great pity upon seeing me.]

8-10 The awkwardness of these lines (the uncertain antecedent for "il [it]", the mixture of past and present participles) is also present in the French.

8 *should it see you*. On "maisq(u)e" see the note to **10**.5. This line recalls two passages in *MO*, 9376, "maisq'il les voie," and 14778, "maisque la voie," in which the context strongly suggests the more definite "once it sees it or them," a translation that would also work well here.

9 *privately*. "Recoi," most literally, refers to a private or enclosed place, but it is not likely that Gower is thinking of the thoracic cavity here. "En recoi" meaning "secretly, privately" is well attested; see *DMF* s.v. "recoi," B.2, and *MO* 7506, 23300, "Ou en apert ou en recoy [either openly or privately]"; and Gower also uses "en/deinz son recoy" evidently with the same meaning, e.g. in *MO* 15227, 16385, and *Tr* **18**.15.

10 *love of you*. A clear instance of the objective use of "vostre." See the note to **7**.11.

11-13 The intensity of the persona's feeling is more evident in these lines than is his logic. Gower makes a better use of similar expressions in **4**[1].18-19, **26**.14-15, and **44**.5-6.

15-18 In **13**.11, the persona credits Nature alone with what he admires in his lady. Here it is God and Nature together. That they join to create the perfect woman is a common motif; see Machaut, *Lou.* **8**.R, **267**.18, **270**.5, Deschamps **496**.3, Froissart, Lay **3**.198, Mudge **41**.R, and Granson **38**.1, the second of Granson's "Cinq balades ensuivans" (see the note to **21** above). In none of these are their roles distinguished, but in *MO* 17353-64, Gower explains that God rather than Nature is responsible for providing the moral virtues (17355) and "bonnes mours" (17361). Here in line 15, "vertus" must be "good qualities" more generally (as also in **39**.2-5, where they are enumerated), since the moral virtues are provided by God in the following lines. One would like to put a comma after "remenant" and to take "des bonnes mours" as an appositive: "and God has given you the rest, the moral virtues," but the use of "des" as a plural indefinite article as in Modern French is not well attested in Middle French, and I find no examples in *50B*. "Remenant de," on the other hand, is a common phrase; see *DMF* s.v. "remenant," A.1. With regard to the distinction that he is making, Gower may mean something like "and God has given you the rest of what constitutes moral behavior."

19 *you*. Gower slips an informal second-person pronoun ("toi") into the same stanza in which he as four times uses the more formal "vous" and "vostre." One has to believe that he had to do so for the rhyme. This is his only inconsistent use of the pronouns in *50B*; elsewhere (in **4**[2], **41**-**43**), where the informal form appears, it does so throughout. Unexpected verb forms are a bit more common; see **4**[1].24, **16**.26, **34**.27, and **42**.R.

24 *perfect*. The broadest range of "fin" seems to be invoked here, including "pure," "refined," "complete," and "certain" as well as "perfect" (see *AND*, *DMF* s.v. "fin"), together with an allusion to "fin amour" (as in **37**.2).

submission. The ordinary meaning of "otroi" is something that is granted or given, as the verb "octroyer" means "to grant"; see *AND* s.v. "otrei"; *DMF* s.v. "octroi," esp. A.1, "[Lang. de l'amour] 'Fait d'accorder son amour, faveur [Language of love] act of granting one's love, favor]"), with numerous citations from Machaut. That sense will not work here. Based on context, I take it instead

to be the noun form of the reflexive verb "s'octroyer" which Gower uses in **15**.13, **25**.27, meaning "to submit". Se *DMF* s.v "octroyer," A.3, "S'octroyer à qqn . . . [Lang de l'amour] 'S'abandonner, se livrer, se consacrer, se dévouer à qqn' [Language of love] abandon oneself, surrender, consecrate oneself, devote oneself to someone]"), with 10 citations, all from Machaut.

39

En vous, ma doulce dame sov*er*eine,
Pour remembrer et sercher les vertus,
Si bo*u*nté quier et vous en estes° pleine;
Si bealté quier, vous estes au dessus;
Si grace quier, vous avetz le surplus;
Qe riens y falt de ceo dont char humeine
Doit avoir pris, car c'est t*re*sbien conuz,
Molt est benoit q'ove vous sa vie meine.

Qui vo p*er*sone en son corage asseine,
Trop ad dur coer s'il ne soit retenuz
Pour vous servir come a sa capiteine.
Pour moi le di q'a ceo me sui renduz,
Et si vous ai de rien, dame, offenduz,
Vous me poetz sicom v*ost*re demeine
Bien chastier, q'en v*ost*re amour jeo trieus,
Molt est benoit q'ove vous sa vie meine.

N'est un soul jour de toute la semeine
El quell deinz soi mon coer milfoitz et pluis
De vous ne pense; ascune foitz me pleigne,
Et c'est q*a*nt jeo sui loign; mais qant venuz°
Sui en p*re*sence, uq*ue* vous ai veeuz,
Lors est sur tout ma joie plus certeine.
Ensi de vous ma reson ai concluz:
Molt est benoit q'ove vous sa vie meine.

Ma dame, en qui tout bien sont contenuz,
Ceo l*ett*re envoie a vo noblesce halteine
Ove Mil et Mil et Mil et Mil salutz.
Molt est benoit q'ove vous sa vie meine.

3 *MS* enestes
20 *Mac* quant venuz

39

In you, my sweet sovereign lady,
˚in calling to mind and seeking out the virtues,˚
˚if I seek goodness, of that you are full;
if I seek beauty, you are at the summit;
if I seek grace, you have an abundance;
for nothing is lacking˚ of that for which human flesh
ought to have praise, for it is well known,
he is greatly blessed who leads his life with you.

He whom your person˚ strikes˚ in his heart
has too hard a heart if he is not retained
to serve you as (he would) his captain.˚
I say for myself that I have surrendered to that,
and if I have in any way offended you, lady,
you can well punish me as your own,˚
for in your love˚ I find,
he is greatly blessed who leads his life with you.

˚There is not a single day in the whole week
in which within itself˚ my heart a thousand times and more
does not think about you. Sometimes I grieve,
and it is when I am far away; but when I am come
into your presence, wherever I have seen you,
then above all is my joy more assured.
Thus have I concluded my statement˚ about you:
he is greatly blessed who leads his life with you.

My lady, in whom all good things are contained,
I send this letter to your high nobleness˚
with 1000 and 1000 and 1000 and 1000 greetings.˚
He is greatly blessed who leads his life with you.

39 is the fourth of the five ballades on the lady's virtues and their effect upon the persona; see the note to **21** above. In stanza one it reprises the beauty-goodness-grace triad from **31**, and in its refrain it echoes **31**.23. It differs somewhat from the others in describing the woman's emotional effect upon the persona in the third stanza, and in implying, in line 15 and in the refrain, that his affection for her is reciprocated, questions that simply don't arise in the praise of the woman in the other four. It is also set apart by the honorific in line 26. Line 23 might have

served as the conclusion to the group if they once stood together, though this is not the last of the five as they are presently ordered (see **45** below).

2 For the "pour" plus infinitive construction see the note to **11**.5.
virtues. As in **38**.15, Gower evidently uses "vertus" in its most general sense, for "good qualities," rather than moral virtues in particular.

3 The "et [and]" is needed for the meter, but it certainly creates an awkwardness grammatically. Macaulay, in his note to this line (1:468), refers for comparison to **18**.7, "Com plus la prie et meinz m'ad entendu," but it is difficult to see what the two lines have in common. Nor can we translate simply by moving the conjunction ("in calling to mind and seeking out the virtues, *and* if I seek goodness, of that you are full"). Gower frequently inverts a conjunction and a modifying phrase (see the note to **6**.6-7), but when he does, it is the main clause that follows the conjunction that is linked to what precedes, not the modifying phrase ("si bounté quier"). Lacking any good solution, I have omitted the "et" in the translation.

6 *nothing is lacking*. For the formula, see **14**.3-4 and the note to **11**.12.

9 *person*. This is an unusual use of "person(n)e," but cf. *MO* 1508, 15426, 16010, where "personne" evidently signifies "character" or "nature." See also *MED* s.v. "persŏun(e," 2, "An individual's physical being, body, appearance," citing *CA* 2.1098-99, "He tok good hiede of the persone, / And sih sche was a worthi wiht"; as well as *T&C* 2.1267, *LGW* 1067.
strikes. This is one of the more common senses of "assener" (*AND* s.v. "asener," 1; *DMF* s.v. "assener," III). Macaulay, in his note (1:468), offers instead, "he who addresses himself to your person," a much less common use (*DMF*, loc.cit., I.B.1), and certainly less consistent with what follows.

11 *captain*. Grammatically, "capiteine" might be either masculine or (less commonly) feminine; *DMF* s.v. "capitaine," A.1, lists three citations in the feminine, all from Froissart. Gower makes it feminine in *MO* 2593, but he also uses "capitein" in the masculine in *MO* 9836, in addition to other passages in which there is no specific clue to the gender. (All of his 15 uses of the word in either form occur in rhyme position.) Here the feminine grammatical form is also appropriate to the woman's natural gender.

14 *own*. On "demeine," see the note to **33**.4. As in that line, if we take this as a simile rather than an equivalence, this should be "as if I were your own."

15 *your love*. The context is less than perfectly clear, but this is perhaps more likely "your love for me" rather than "my love for you." On the choice, see the note to **7**.11 and cf. **38**.10.

17-19 Another instance of the heart as the seat of thought. See the note to **8**.1-2.

18 *within itself*. "Deinz soi" suggests "secretly, privately," perhaps echoing **38**.9.

23 *statement*. In addition to its use to refer to the intellectual faculty and to what is considered "reasonable," "reson/raison" also covered a wide range of meanings that we might group under "reasoning." *AND* s.v. "raisun" provides "argument" (as in **24**.21), "opinion, view," "explanation," "case," "speech, discourse" (as in *MO* 350, "Le deable sa reson commence [the devil begins his speech]"), and "written work, composition," among others, several of which would work equally well in the translation, to which we might also add "thoughts" or "reflection." See also *DMF* s.v. "raison." The punctuation here also presents a choice. The colon that I have placed at the end of this line implies that the refrain is the conclusion that the persona draws from this stanza. If we put a period instead, he offers this stanza as the conclusion to the ballade and perhaps to the entire sequence of five ballades, suggesting that they might once have been in a different order.

26 *high nobleness*. Evidently an honorific, as also in **44**.24. See the note to **28**.15 and *AND* s.v. "noblesce," citing this line, and the note to **13** on the use of rank in *50B*.

27 *1000 greetings*. Cf. **16**.27.

40

Om dist, p*ro*messes ne sont pas estables.
Ceo piert en vous, ma dame, au tiele enseigne:
Qe les p*ar*oles avetz amiables,
Mais en vos faitz vous n'estes pas certeine.
Vous m'avetz fait com jadis fist Heleine
Q*a*nt prist Paris et laissa Menelai.
Ne puiss hoster maisq*ue* de vous me pleigne.
Loials amours se provont a l'essai.

Si vos promesses fuissent veritables,
Sur vo p*ar*ole q'estoit prim*er*eine
Vous ne serretz, ma dame, si changables,
Pour lesser qe vous avetz en demeine
Et p*re*ndre ailours la chose q'est foreine.
Vous savetz bien, ma dame, et jeo le sai,
Selonc qe le p*ro*verbe nous enseine:
Loials amours se p*ro*vont a l'essai.

Qant verité d'amour se torne en fables
Et qe vergoigne pas ne le restreigne
P*ar*mi les voies qe sont honourables,
N'est un vertu qe la fortune meine.
V*ost*re ameisté vers un n'est pas souleine,
Ainz est a deux; c'est un cha*u*nçon verrai
Dont chanterai sovent a basse aleine:
Loials amours se provont a l'essai.

Adieu, ma joie; a dieu, ma triste peine.
Ore est yvern qe soloit estre Maii.
Ne sai pour quoi Cupide me desdeigne.
Loials amours se provont a l'essai.

40

They say that promises are not reliable.
˚That is evident in you, my lady, from such a sign:
that you have words (that are) loving,˚
but in your deeds you are not trustworthy.
˚You have done to me as Helen did long ago
when she took Paris and left Menelaus.
I can't refrain from complaining about you.˚
Loyal loves are proven at the test.

If your promises were truthful,
in your initial word
you would not be so changeable, my lady,
to leave what you have in your possession˚
and take elsewhere something that is not.˚
You know well, my lady, and I know it,
according to what the proverb teaches us:
loyal loves are proven at the test.˚

When truth in love is turned into fables
and shame does not confine it
along paths that are honorable,
there is no force or virtue that guides Fortune.˚
Your affection is not exclusively for one,˚
rather it's for two. It is a true song
which I will sing often in a low voice:
loyal loves are proven at the test.

Adieu, my joy; adieu, my sorrowful pain.
Now it is winter that formerly was May.˚
I don't know why Cupid˚ disdains me.
Loyal loves are proven at the test.

This is the first of four ballades on a partner's infidelity, and the only one spoken by a man. The situation that underlies it—a woman's change of heart—is not, of course, unknown among Gower's predecessors. It is at the center of Machaut's *Behaingne*, which weighs the grief of a partner's death against the sorrow caused by a woman's infidelity. Among the lyrics, one may compare the very different treatments in (among others) Machaut, *Lou*. **52**, **53**, **55**, **193**, **206**, **207**, **213**, and **248**; Deschamps **1342**; and Granson **49**. (For poems on a man's infidelity, see the note to **41** below.) Of these, Machaut's **193** is perhaps closest to Gower's in its blame of the lady's

deceptiveness rather than merely proclaiming the persona's grief. Most such poems are addressed to an impersonal audience; of those listed, only Granson **49** and Machaut **206, 207** (both rondeaux rather than ballades), and **248** are addressed to the lady herself. (Granson's is paired with the lady's apt response in **50**.) Gower's begins that way, addressing the lady directly in line 2, and holding up a mirror to her conduct in the first two stanzas. But if she is listening, she of course makes no reply, and more in the manner of the ballades that have no specific addressee, it really seems that we overhear the man talking to himself, trying to make sense of his betrayal. As he does, the refrain, "Loials amours se provont a l'essai," serves variously as a complaint, as a justification of his own commitment, and as a silent but ineffective plea. The paradox of addressing a complaint to one who has already proved her indifference recalls the earlier ballades (**17**, **18,** and **19**) on the ineffectiveness of the lover's language. Machaut seems to be aware of the same paradox in *Lou*. **254**, a *chanson royal* spoken by a woman complaining to her lover not just about his infidelity but also that "ne me vues oïr ne regarder [you don't want to hear or see me]" (14). Despite her own wishes, though, she does not renounce him (47-48), and the envoy addresses her poem to the "Princes" (51). Gower's ballade takes a different turn. In the conclusion to the final stanza, the persona contrasts his lady's false words to his "chaunçon verrai" which he sings "a basse aleine" (22-23), only to himself and not to her: he turns away from the lady completely, abandoning his complaint, not expecting to be heard, and recognizing the futility of any attempt to change her. Despite the address to the lady in the opening lines, the poem is finally less about reproach than about sorrow and loss. The envoy begins "A dieu, ma joie, a dieu, ma triste peine" (25), but in the lines that follow, the man says nothing at all about sending the poem to his lady. This is one of only three poems in *50B* (with **37** and **46**) that are not sent to the person to whom they are ostensibly addressed, and each one enacts in a different way the lack of communication that the poem itself describes. Here, the envoy expresses both the man's disappointment and his helplessness, and it helps make the poem as a whole less a farewell to the woman than a farewell to love.

2-3 *That is evident . . . that*. Five times in *MO* the verb "piert" (from "pareir" [*AND*]/"paroir" [*DMF*], "to appear") occurs with the subject "ce [this/that]," referring to the immediately preceding statement. In four of these (21099, 21477, 21513, 22194), the verb is followed by a clause beginning with "car [for]; in the other (1816) the clause that follows begins with "q[ue]," which might be either "for" or "that." By that model, this would be "That is evident in you, . . . for . . . ," which makes good sense. But the "Qe" clause here also apparently functions in apposition to "enseigne [sign]," requiring "that." What appears to be excluded by sense is the normal use of "tel . . . que": "from such a sign that you have words that are loving." The appearance of "tiele" here is in any case a bit unusual. *AND* s.v. "tel," 6, provides two citations in which the appropriate translation would be "this, the following," but from Gower we might expect "celle" instead. One would also expect "a" rather than "au" before a feminine noun, even from Gower. The sense is clear, but we might not have solved all of the grammatical puzzles yet.

3 *loving*. The range of meaning of "amiable" is quite broad, depending on context. *AND* s.v. "amiable" offers "friendly," "kind," and "lovable" in addition to "loving."

5-6 Gower treats Helen rather severely. Here she is an example of unfaithfulness, and in *Tr* **10**.3 she is both the most beautiful woman who ever was and a "fole peccheresse [foolish sinner]." Paris does a little better: in *MO* 16700-02 it is his foolishness that is cited, but in **14**.7 he appears as an example of suffering in love. In *CA* 5.7195-7590 their story provides an exemplum on Sacrilege, but Paris

appears with Helen, his "joie sovereine," in the company of famous lovers in Amans' vision in 8.2528-30. Gower's lyric predecessors cite Helen for her beauty rather than for her betrayal. Hassell H23 "Belle comme Hélène" cites Machaut, Lai **1**.307, *Voir Dit* 3482; *100B* **19**.7; Christine de Pizan, *Duc des vrais amans*, 1579; to which add Granson **26**.17.

7 For the use of "maisque" in this context see the note to **17**.27.

12 *in your possession*. The same noun ("demeine") appears in **33**.4 and **39**.14. In both cases, as here, the lover is the lady's "demeine" rather than *vice versa*.

13 *that is not*. "Forein(e)" applies widely to anything that is on the outside. Here it is placed in contrast to "en demeine." There is no one good word in English that means "outside of your possession," but that seems to be the meaning, rather than any more specific sense, e.g. with reference to a foreign country. Gower uses the same rhyme pair for a similar distinction in *MO* 11710-11.

15 Gower labels the refrain a proverb, but it is not recorded in either Hassell or Whiting.

20 Since Gower's "qe" might function as either subject or object, the subject of "meine" might be either "vertu" or "fortune." In **10**.8, Gower refers to "la fortune qui les amantz meine [the fortune that guides lovers]," but "it is not a virtue that Fortune leads" doesn't make much sense. "Vertu" is the more likely subject. On the various possible senses of "vertu" see the note to **21**. Both "force" and "moral virtue" seem to be in play in this line. It may be intended to suggest that the vicissitudes of love, which resemble the unpredictable turns of Fortune, can somehow be regulated or overcome by good moral conduct, an underlying assumption of much of Genius' counsel in *CA* and of the ballades with which *50B* concludes.

21 *exclusively for one.* On this use of "souleine" see the note to **36**.11. One might translate instead "your affection is not for one alone."

26 An echo of **37**.23.

27 *Cupid*. The only other reference to Cupid in *50B* occurs in **27**.2, where he inflicts a wound upon the persona. Here his role is much broader, in guiding the persona's fortunes in love, more like that of Amours in poems by Machaut and his successors.

41

Des fals amantz tantz sont au jour p*re*sent
Dont les amies porront bien doloir.
Cil qui plus jure et fait son serement
De bien amer plus pense a decevoir.
Jeo sui de celles une, a dire voir,
Qui me compleigns d'amour et sa feintise,
P*ar* quoi, des° fals amantz pour peas avoir,
Bon est qe bone dame bien s'avise.

Ascuns y ad qui voet bien amer sent,
Et a chascune il fait bien assavoir
Qu'il l'aime sanz nulle autre soulement.
P*ar* tiel engin destorne le savoir
De l'innocent qe quide recevoir
De ses amours la loialté p*ro*mise.
Mais pour guarder s'onour et son devoir,
Bon est qe bone dame bien s'avise.

Les liev*re*s de la bouche q'ensi ment
Cil tricheour tant beal les° sciet movoir
Q'a peine est nulle qe p*ar*fitement
Sache en ceo point le mal ap*ar*cevoir.
Mais cil q'ensi d'amour son estovoir
Pourchace ad bien deservi la Juise.
Si dis pource q'a tiel mal removoir,
Bon est qe bone dame bien s'avise.

Tu q'es au matin un et autre au soir,
Ceste balade envoie a ta reprise
Pour toi guerpir et mettre a nonchaloir.
Bon est qe bone dame bien s'avise.

7 *Mac* de
18 *MS* le

41

°There are so many false lovers at the present time
whose° *amies* can well be in sorrow.
The one who most swears and makes an oath
to love well most thinks to deceive.
°I am one of those women, to tell the truth,
who complain about love and its deceit,
because of which, to have peace from false lovers,
it is good that a good woman take good care.°

There is a certain one° who wants to love a hundred,°
and to each woman he makes it well known
that he loves her exclusively, without any other.
With such a trick° he deflects the better judgment
of the innocent one° who expects to receive
the promised loyalty in love.°
But in order to protect her honor and her duty,
it is good that a good woman take good care.

The lips of the mouth that lies in such a way°
this deceiver° knows how to move so beautifully
°that there is hardly any woman who perfectly
can detect the harm in this situation.
But he who obtains his needs in love
in such a way well deserves condemnation.°
I say so because in order to expel such evil,
it is good that a good woman take good care.

°You who are one thing in the morning and another at night,°
this ballade I send in your reproach
In order to renounce you and reject you.°
It is good that a good woman take good care.

41 is the first of five ballades in which the persona is a woman. These fall into two groups. In **41**, **42**, and **43**, the women denounce false lovers, while **44** and **46** contain sincere professions of love, set in alternation with similar declarations offered by men. Gower is not the first male poet to assume a woman's voice: one thinks of Ovid's *Heroides*. Closer to Gower's time, Machaut left 41 such poems—ballades, rondeaux, virelais, motets, and *complaintes*— not counting 24 others (mostly rondeaux) attributed to Toute Belle in *Voir Dit*. (On the latter, see the table and discussion in Leech-Wilkinson and Palmer's edition, pp. xl-l.) Deschamps left another

45, not counting those in which a woman participates in a dialogue; Froissart 16; and Granson 5; and another 23 are found among the poems in the Pennsylvania manuscript. (For lists, see my essay on "Gower's Ballades for Women," in *Studies in the Age of Gower: A Festschrift in Honour of Robert F. Yeager*, ed. Susannah Mary Chewning [Cambridge: Brewer, 2020], 79-97. The notes that follow are taken in large part from this essay.) Unless one or more of the latter were in fact written by a female poet, yet unknown, or Toute Belle did compose her own poems, as Leech-Wilkinson and Palmer suggest, the first true voice of a woman comes from Christine de Pizan, who in turn left more than a hundred poems in the voice of a man. Deschamps offers the greatest variety, imagining a wide range of dramatic situations, but among the poems that can be categorized, by Deschamps and the other poets, the most common themes are declarations of love and laments about the pains of separation, employing diction and formulae not altogether different from those of the poems on the same subjects spoken by a man. In distinction to the men's poems, there are only a small number in which a woman complains of unrequited love or blames a man for his "durté [hardness]" (see Machaut **254**, Deschamps **305**, and Mudge **29**). There is a larger number in which a woman claims that her lover has proved disloyal and has turned his attentions to another, the reverse of the situation that Gower treats in **40**, above. Among the poems written by men, however, the smallest category consists of those in which a woman laments not that her lover has abandoned her but that she realizes that he was false from the beginning. I know of only three, Machaut **265** and Deschamps **477** and **478**.

The poets were certainly not unaware that a man might cheat and lie in order to win a woman's love. The elderly knight in Machaut's *Dit dou lyon* gives large space to the tricks and false countenances by which women are deceived (939-88, 1119-1212), and in *100B*, the alternative to "loiauté" that is presented by the woman in the dialogue consists of making multiple promises and deliberately playing the field. In the lyrics, however, only very rarely is this subject treated from the point of view of the female victim. Christine is much more aware of the fragility of love than the male poets are: her woman speakers commonly ask for reassurances of fidelity both in professing their own love and when the lovers must temporarily be apart, and proportionally, she has a greater number of poems on the effects of a change of heart upon the one who is left behind. She also has more to say about "lovers" who are false from the very start. There are two ballades in which she warns other women against being deceived (*100B* **53**, "Autres" **43**; cf. also *100B* **4**.4-5) and three in which a woman expresses hesitation to commit herself because of her fear that her suitor might be less than sincere ("Autres" **23**, *100BD* **4**, **20**). But she has only a single poem in which a woman expresses her belief that the man with whom she was in love has been false to her all along (*100B* **13**).

But that is precisely the theme in Gower's first three poems: not merely that her lover has left her for another but that he has had multiple loves, of which she was only one, and that all of the promises that he made to win her love were lies. In large part Gower treats this as a moral issue rather than an emotional one, an occasion for the denunciation of the man's character and conduct rather than as a source of sorrow and disappointment for the woman who has been betrayed. Gower thus makes little use of the language with which earlier women complain of their deceit, and he draws the language of their denunciation less from earlier lyrics than from the catalogs of sins in two of his own longer poems, the *Mirour de l'Omme* and the *Confessio Amantis*.

This is especially true in **41**. The poem begins with a broad comment on false lovers in general that would not be out of place either in Genius' instruction or in *MO*, and only lines 5-6 refer directly to the experience of the persona (and also serve to identify her as a woman). The rest of the poem not only echoes particular observations about sinful behavior in the two longer poems, but in adopting a very similar moral stance, it also adopts several of their devices and recognizable habits of expression, as detailed in the notes below. The fit is comfortable. The woman is also able to make use of some of the diction of earlier love poetry (see the notes to lines 5-6 and 18 below), in at least one case with a twist (line 27), at the same time that she incorporates other words more familiar from moral poetry and that occur in *50B*, at least, for the very first time. The ostensible address to a single person is also consistent with the rest of *50B*, but in using "tu" instead of "vous," the woman not only displays her contempt, she also adopts another device from *MO*, which also frequently addresses sinners in the singular and as "tu." Combined with other similar devices (see the notes to lines 9 and 18), the effect is to make the poem less about a particular man than about the type of behavior that such an individual represents, and it ends, like so many passages in Gower's more explicitly moral poems, with a warning for other potential victims.

In assessing the relations among Gower's three texts, we can assume the priority of *MO*. Because of the uncertain dating of the poems in *50B*, we cannot be as sure that *CA* came first, but it is more reasonable to think that the experience of denouncing the sins in love in the longer poem influenced the writing of this group of ballades than to think that the influence went the other way. The incorporation of this new moral language into lyric poetry gives the women speakers in these three ballades a much more powerful voice than any of their female predecessors: they are not merely passive victims but active agents in the men's condemnation, and if their feelings emerge, it is through the vigor of their denunciation rather than from the words they use with reference to themselves. At the same time, Gower revivifies that language too. These women are no less earnest than the spokesperson for moral reform in *MO*, but they have much better reason to be, and Gower perhaps realized that in placing it in a setting in which the speaker has so personal a stake, the language that he uses has a much more powerful claim upon our attention than it does in either *CA* or *MO*, and that the ethic that it supports is for that reason all the more compelling.

1-4 The complaint about the evils of the present day is a universal staple of moral literature, and statements about "le temps present [the present time]" or "le jour present [the present day]" occur throughout *MO*, particularly in the discussion of the different professions (18420-26604; e.g., 18660, 18812, 19978) but also earlier (e.g., 7133, 11029, 13749). The behavior that Gower describes in these lines echoes the description of "Fals-Semblant" in *MO*: "Quant l'en meulx quide avoir honour, / De sa parole plus y ment [When one most expects to be treated with honor, the more he lies in his speech]"(MO 3563-64). *MO* does not have a great deal to say about conduct in love, but it does condemn those who use deceit in seduction (8689-92) as it does the man who, guilty of "Foldelit ['Mad delight,' or Wantonness]," "quiert novelle a chescune hure ['seeks a new woman every hour]" (9372); and he condemns the prevalence both of "foldelit" "au jour d'uy [today]" (9269) and of adultery "au temps present [at the present time]" (8797). There are also repeated references to the hidden faces of deception in other contexts, e.g. in 1065-67, 3484-86, 3561-64, 4363-65, 6623-24. Genius too often refers to the prevalence of the sins that he denounces (as in *CA* 1.655, 2.2089,

2.2771, 3.828, *et al*.). He also describes "Falssemblant" in terms very much like those in *MO* (CA 2.1918-19). He denounces falsity in love on multiple occasions (e.g. 1.1198-1204, 5. 3208-17, 5.5168-74) and also those who "love" more than one (5.2453-88, 5.7778-88), as does Amans (2.475-81). And in the passage most like these lines from the ballade, Genius warns against the prevalence of False-Witness in love in his and Amans' own time:

Riht so ther be, who that hem knewe,
Of thes lovers ful many untrewe:
Nou mai a womman finde ynowe,
That ech of hem, whan he schal wowe,
Anon he wole his hand doun lein
Upon a bok, and swere and sein
That he wole feith and trouthe bere;
And thus he profreth him to swere
To serven evere til he die,
And al is verai tricherie.
For whan the sothe himselven trieth,
The more he swerth, the more he lieth.
(CA 5.2885-96)

2 *whose*. In translating, there are three possibilities here. As a relative, "dont" might refer to "amantz," which is how I have translated it, or to the whole preceding clause: "for which their *amies* can well be in sorrow." And because of Gower sometimes uses of "dont" instead of "que" after "tant" (see the note to **4**[1].11), this could also be "so many false lovers . . . that their *amies* can well be in sorrow." Not having to translate, Gower did not need to choose.

5-6 The stance of complaint provides one point of intersection between lyric poetry and moral literature. Lovers frequently complain (**3**.3, **12**.26, **14**.21, **39**.19, **40**.7) or make their "compleignte" (**9**.42; see also **42**.27, **43**.26), as do, for different reasons, those who protest the evils of their times, as in *MO* 23306, 24949-50, 25172-74. When coupled with the refrain, there is also some parallel here to *CA* 1.92 *vv*. 1-8, in which Gower's narrator offers himself as an example of one overcome by love as a warning to others.

8 *take good care.* Gower uses the "bon est qe [it is good that]" formula more than a dozen times in *MO* (e.g. in 14194, 14503, 15725) and twice in combination with "s'aviser," in lines nearly identical to this refrain, but with reference to a king: "bon est que Roy s'avise [it is good that a king think carefully]" (22295) and "De fals Judas l'essamplement / Bon est que chascun Roy s'avise [It is good that every king think carefully about the example of Judas]" (23180-81). In both these cases the context is a warning against misconduct; here the warning is more like those against becoming a victim of another, as in *MO* 9145-47, 21325-27, 25297-99, 26123-24, or *CA* 2.2140-43, 2.2306-08, 3.951-69, 3.1067-83. This is the only such warning in *50B*, and the tone of warning is also nearly unprecedented in earlier love lyrics. I can cite only Deschamps **434** and **497**.19, "Sage dame doit aviser icy [a wise woman should think here]," in a poem about choosing an *ami* wisely. The verb "s'aviser" recurs in **45**.10, **46**.13, and **51**.5. The sense of the reflexive verb ranges from "consider, think about" to "beware, take care." (See *AND* s.v. "aviser," v.refl.; *DMF* s.v. "aviser," II.D.1.b.). Especially in Gower, when one is urged to think about the bad consequences that might ensue from one's actions, whether on earth or in heaven, the injunction to "think about it" contains an implicit warning. When "s'aviser" is modified by "bien," something like "take good care" seems to be the more appropriate translation, as in **46**.13, "Mais pour les gentz tresbien m'aviserai [but because of the people I take good care] ," where the context is the young woman's fear of gossip, or in these passages from *MO*: "Dont falt que l'Alme bien s'avise / Que Resoun ne luy soit divise, / Pour soy

defendre et saulf garder [Therefore the soul should take good care that Reason not be separated from it, to defend it and safeguard it]"(1033-35); and "N'est homme qui tant bien s'avise / Qe Triche ne le triche au fin [There is no man who takes such good care that Fraud does not defraud him in the end]" (26123-24).

9 *There is a certain one*. "Ascuns" could be a reference to a specific known individual, "a certain one," but the context suggests that the woman persona is describing a general type instead, for certainly there is more than one man who behaves in this way. The indefinite "ascuns" is more often used in the plural, as in **47**.12 or *MO* 14654. But Gower also uses it in the singular, as in *MO* 20246, where clearly more than a single priest is being described, and, closer to the present passage, *MO* 25106-07, where he is discussing those who impede justice. "Ascuns y ad qui point ne vient / A les assisses [there is "ascuns" who does not come at all to the "assises"]," he writes, and the singular referent in this sentence, also clearly describing a general sort of behavior rather than a specific person, becomes plural in the next stanza: "ceste noble gent . . . quident . . . [these noble people believe]" (25117-18). Gower here adopts from *MO* another device used for the condemnation of sins in general, and we wouldn't be unjustified in translating ""Ascuns y ad" as "there is a certain type" or even as "there are some."

who strongly wishes to love a hundred. The man who would love a hundred women recalls Genius' definition of Coveitise in love in *CA* 5.2453-98, especially 5.2462-63: "And thus he set him to coveite, / An hundred though he sihe aday." Amans expresses his fear of just such "comun" lovers, "That wol noght holden hem to thre, / Bot welnyh loven overal" (*CA* 2.474-81). See also Gower's description of the wanton lover in *MO* 9371-72, who "tant est plain de variance / Q'il quiert novelle a chescune hure [is so changeable that he seeks a new woman every hour]."

12 *trick.* This is the only appearance of "engin" in *50B*. It is a common word in *MO*, usually in negative contexts. It is less common in *CA*, but Gower twice uses the verb "enginen," "to trick or deceive," with reference to seduction (1.878, 5.4571).

deflects the better judgment. "Destorner [turn away, divert, deflect]" is perhaps not the verb that we would expect here. The infinitive "savoir [to know]" can be used as a noun in a variety of senses, including "knowledge gained by study," "knowledge gained by experience," "wisdom," and "prudence." (See *DMF* s.v. "savoir," IV.) In this line "better judgment" is suggested by the context.

13 *the innocent one*. This is the only appearance of "innocent" in *50B*. Of the dozen uses in *MO*, only two refer to the guiltless (17153, with reference to Adam and Eve before the fall, and 25070). The rest refer to guileless victims, usually of another's deception, though not in the context of seduction, as in 6235-38, with reference to "Covoitise." See also *MO* 3561, 3537, 6406 *et al.* In *CA* , Gower uses both "ínnocence" and "innocent" with reference both to the guiltless and to the deceived, and in most of the latter instances, the victim is a woman. See, for instance, *CA* 1.852, 4.766 5.3207-10, 5.6341, 6.1978, and 7.4915; and in a passage already cited in the note to line 9 above, Amans expresses his fear of the others who court his lady, "And evere I am adrad of guile / In aunter if with eny wile / Thei mihte hire innocence enchaunte" (*CA* 2. 479-81).

14 *in love.* More precisely, this might be "from his love" or even "from her love." See the note to **2**.5 and compare the use of "ses amours" and "mes amours" in the lines cited there.

17 *The lips of the mouth that lies in such a way.* The mouth, the tongue, and the lips (as in *MO* 2810, 2814, 4506, 4515) are commonly cited as the sources of harmful and deceptive speech, but nowhere else in so graphic and compelling a way. The force of the image derives from the focus on the movement of the lips as a metonymy for the deceptively attractive words of the seducer. There is a distant echo here of *MO* 8677-80, with reference to a seducer:

Ja Tullius, qui plus habonde
Du Rethorique, en sa faconde

Ne parla meiux que cil ne fait,
Ainçois q'il vierge ensi confonde.
[Cicero, who most abounded in rhetoric, never spoke better in his eloquence than he does before he confounds a virgin.]

The rest of the same stanza describes the seducer's promise of marriage. See the note to **42**.14.

18 *this deceiver*. The use of singular "cil [this]" follows from the focus on the singular example in the preceding stanza (see the note to line 9), and it echoes similar references to typical sinners in the singular in *MO*; e.g. "cil glous [this glutton]" (7732), "cil adversier [this adversary]" (7763), "cil pilour [this pillager]" (20167).

This is the first appearance of one of the derivatives of "tricher [to trick, to defraud]" in *50B*. The others occur in **43**.1, another of the ballades spoken by a woman, and **48.**3, the summary of the deceptions of love that prepares the way for the conclusion. It offers another point of intersection between two different worlds of poetry. "Tricherie" (most often in the phrase "sanz tricherie") occurs as the alternative to fidelity in, for instance, Machaut, *Lou.* **47**.31, **65**.3, **220**.6; while the whole group of words derived from "triche [fraud]" is common both in *MO* (see especially 6505-88 and 25237-26436) and *CA*, for instance in 1.828, 1.1033, 1.1218, 5.874, 5.2894, and 7.5287, all of the latter with specific reference to seduction.

19-20 Gower uses similar language in *MO* to describe the helplessness of the victims of sin, with reference to "Tricherie" and its companions, for instance: "Q'au paine ascuns serra si sage, / Qui n'ert deceu par leur menage [Hardly anyone will be so wise who will not be deceived by their confederacy]" (6586-87); with reference to libidinous friars: "Car tant y ad des limitantz / Par les hostealx et visitantz, / Q'au paine nuls s'en poet defendre [For there are so many limiters and visitors throughout the homes that hardly can anyone defend himself from them]" (21328-30); with reference to the power that a woman might have over a king: "Maint Roy en est trop malbailly, / Q'au peine nuls se sciet garder [Many a king is injured by them, for hardly does any know how to protect himself]" (22781-82); and in a passage with several points of contact to **41**, "N'est homme qui tant bien s'avise / Qe Triche ne le triche au fin [There is no man who takes such good care that Fraud does not defraud him in the end]" (*MO* 26123-24). See also *CA* 1.1220-21 (in a passage cited for the reference to "tricherie," 1.1218, in the note to line 18 above), "For feigned semblant is so softe, / Unethes love may be war."

22 *well deserves condemnation*. This is the only appearance of "juise [condemnation or punishment]" in *50B*, but the line as a whole echoes several similar passages in *MO*, for instance with reference to "Orgueil [Pride]" (*MO* 2508) or the incestuous prelate (*MO* 9101-2), each of which is "bien digne de [or "a"] la Juise [well worthy of condemnation]."

25-28 In the envoy to a ballade, the speaker typically turns to address his or her listeners directly—whether real, as when the poet speaks to a particular audience, or fictive, as when the persona addresses his final words to his lady. These lines are consistent with the convention, and also, in the use of "envoie" (26), with the largest number of the poems in *50B* in which the persona sends his or her poem to the addressee in writing. The designation of the addressee, however, in the present tense, "Tu q'es au matin un et autre au soir," seems much less a resumption of the personal voice of lines 5-6 than a continuation of the rebuke of the hypothetical seducer, the "cil tricheour" and the "cil q[e]," of the preceding stanza, both referring to the indefinite "ascuns" of line 9, and the address to "tu" is another of Gower's stylistic habits in *MO*, as he turns to address directly the malefactors that he condemns. "He, pute, q'est ce que tu dis? [Hey, whore, what do you say?]"(*MO* 9238), he writes, in the middle of two stanzas addressed to a prostitute (9229-52). Elsewhere he similarly addresses, among many others, a murderer (5051), a man guilty of Delicacy (8110), a

bishop (19069), a lord (23269), and a knight (23564), all as "tu." The "tu" and "toi" of this envoy appear to be just as hypothetical as the "bone dame" of the refrain, and like the rest of the poem, the envoy appears to be addressed not to a particular man but to the type of man of whom all women must beware.

25 Gower describes Hypocrisy in similar terms in *MO* 1129-35:

> Ipocresie est ensi belle,
> Sicome ly vern que l'en appelle
> Noctiluca, c'est tant a dire
> Luisant de nuit sicomme chandelle,
> Mais du cler jour que riens concelle
> Quant hom le voit et le remire,
> Lors c'est un verm q'om fait despire.
>
> [Thus Hypocrisy is beautiful, like the worm that is called "Noctiluca," which is to say "glowing at night," like a candle, but when one sees it in bright day which conceals nothing, then it's a worm that one despises.]

27 *renounce you and reject you*. Gower upends a traditional motif in this line. Both "guerpir" and "mettre a nonchaloir" are commonly used both in the lyrics and in contemporary *dits*. For "guerpir," see **20**.20; Machaut *Lou.* **53**.19, **56**.6; Deschamps **719**.16; Granson **20**.10, and *DMF* s.v. "guerpir," B, "Domaine amoureux," with numerous citations from Machaut. For "mettre a nonchaloir" (word by word, "to place in indifference"), see Machaut, *Lou.* **267**.15, **270**.17, and *DMF* s.v "nonchaloir," II, again with numerous citations from Machaut. In all such poems, of course, the persona laments being rejected without justification by his or her partner. Here she uses the same expressions with full justification to reject hers.

42

Semblables sont la fortune et les dées
Au fals amant q*a*nt il d'amour s'aqueinte.
Sa loialté pleine est des falsetés.
Plustost deçoit q*a*nt il se fait plusqueinte.
A toi le di q'as trahi femme meinte.
Ceo q'as mespris restorer ne poetz,
Et pourcella, de ta falsine atteinte,
Si tu voldras briser l'estrein, brisetz.

Trop tard conu m'est ceo qe fait avetz,
Qe m'as hosté de toi p*ar* tiele empeinte
Qe ja*m*mais jour ne serrai retournetz
Pour obeïr n'a toi n'a ta constreignte.°
Hé, fals amis, com ta p*ar*ole est feinte!
Les viels p*ro*messes toutes sont quassetz.
Trop as en toi la gentilesce exteinte.
Si tu voldras briser l'estrein, brisetz.

O tu, mirour des mutabilitées,
Des fals amantz en toi l'image est peinte.
Tes sens se muent en subtilitées.
Sil q'ensi fait n'ad pas la vie seinte.
Tu as d'errour° la conscience enceinte,
Dont fraude et malengin sont engendrez.
Tu as vers moi ta loialté si freinte.
Si tu voldras briser l'estrein, brisetz.

En les malvois malice n'est restreignte.
Tu n'en serras de ta part escusez.
As toutz amantz jeo fais ceste compleignte.
Si tu voldras briser l'estrein, brisetz.

12 *MS* constregnte
21 *Mac* derrour. *See the note to this line in the commentary.*

Gower, John. *Cinkante Balades*. Edited and translated by Peter Nicholson, Feb. 2021, *John Gower Society*, www.JohnGower.org.

42

Fortune° and dice are similar
to the false lover when he becomes involved with° love.
His loyalty is full of falsity.°
When he makes himself most amiable,° instead he deceives.
I say this to you who have betrayed many a woman.
What you have stolen you cannot restore,°
and for that reason, convicted° of your falsehood,°
if you want to break it off, go ahead.°

Too late did I realize what you have done,
that you pushed me away from yourself with such a blow°
that never will I be returned°
in order to submit either to you or to your constraint.°
Oh false *ami*, how your word is deceitful!
All the old promises are broken.°
You have fully extinguished nobility in yourself.°
If you want to break it off, go ahead.

Oh you, mirror of mutability,°
in you is painted the image of false lovers.
°Your thoughts turn into plans for deceit.°
He who does so does not have a holy life.
°You have impregnated Conscience with Error,
from which are engendered Fraud and Trickery.
Thus have you broken your loyalty to me.
If you want to break it off, go ahead.

In the wicked evil is not restrained.°
For your part, you will not be excused.°
To all lovers I make this complaint.°
If you want to break it off, go ahead.

42 and **43** take a much more personal view of betrayal than **41**. In each, the woman has much more to say about her own experience and its effect upon her and also more to say in condemnation of her former lover, and the refrain addresses the poem to him rather than to other women. Each, though, also borrows much of her language from moral poetry, placing her personal betrayal into a much broader ethical context. **42**, like **41**, begins with a general moral observation rather than with a personal address, though it very quickly turns to denouncing one particular man. As in **41**, much of the diction is more familiar from *MO* than it is from other

lyrics. "Falsine ['falsehood]" (**42**.7), "atteinte [convicted]" (**42**.7), "subtiltitées [deceit]" (**42**.19) and "malice" (**42**.25) occur nowhere else in *50B*, and "malvois [wicked]" (**42**.25) occurs only here and in two of the final poems (in **49**.1 and **50**.19). None of these forms part of the common vocabulary of the lyrics, but all are very common in *MO*. The woman also adopts some of *MO*'s rhetorical devices. Gower uses an exclamation beginning with "Hé" (line 13) once earlier in *50B*, in **20**.13, but he does so more than 150 times in *MO*, most often introducing an apostrophe and usually expressing impatience and exasperation as the narrator goes on to blame in strongest terms either a sinner or a sin. In addition, when she exclaims, "Trop as en toi la gentilesce exteinte" (**42**.15) or "Tu n'en serras de ta part escusez" (**42**.26), the woman echoes similar passages in *MO* with reference to sinners of many sorts. And when she says "Sil q'ensi fait n'ad pas la vie seinte"(**42**.20), while she doesn't echo any particular passage in *MO*, she expresses the presumption of conduct that underlies all of Gower's observations on his contemporaries in that poem, and she holds the man to a higher moral and ethical standard than in any earlier poetry of love.

The clearest signature of *MO*, however, may be the allegorical passage in lines 21-22, which recalls not just the opening of *MO*, in which the devil engenders Death upon his own daughter, Sin, and Death, in turn, engenders the Seven Deadly Sins upon his mother (205-76), but also a passage in Gower's description of the two-headed monster of the contemporary papacy:

> Mais ore qui voet garde prendre,
> Verra comment Orguil engendre
> D'Envie en fornicacioun
> Le monstre de dampnacioun.
> (*MO* 18820-23)
>
> [But now anyone who wishes to take notice will see how Pride, in fornication, engenders upon Envy the monster of damnation.]

There, the accusation of fornication adds insult to the condemnation of those in the church who are responsible for the schism. In the ballade, the entire image has a rather more literal and more potent resonance in the woman's condemnation of a seducer.

1 *Fortune.* Fortune isn't unknown among earlier lyrics or in *50B*. When not personified, "fortune" most commonly means simply "situation" or "circumstances," for better or for worse (e.g. in **9**.2, 39, **14**.4, **16**.22). Personified, she may be the agent that guides events and determines outcomes (as in **1**.22, **6**.8). This is the first instance in *50B* in which Gower invokes the personification as an image of arbitrariness and deception (the other occurs in **43**.15, also spoken by a woman), and the only time he likens her to dice. In *MO*, Fortune also sometimes appears merely as an agent, but she also commonly represents the instability and impermanence of the world in general, especially in comparison to heaven, one of the sustaining themes of Gower's moral argument. Gower uses dice three times as an image of her arbitrariness (*MO* 11599-601, 22024-25, and 22101-03). *MO* displays no interest, however, in fortunes (or Fortune) in love. *CA* makes greater use of fortune and Fortune in all senses, and the dice image also appears several times to represent the arbitrariness of events (Prol. 584 vv. 3, 4.1778-79, 5.2436-37; see also *VC* 2.347). With reference to love, Fortune and dice are cited in *CA* in discussions of the unpredictability of love's rewards (1.39-57, 3.786-88, 3.1723-24, 4.365-69, 8.2013-15). Only in this ballade is the deceptiveness of Fortune cited in the context of a discussion of love, and only with reference to false lovers, not to love in general.

2 *becomes involved with*. An apt translation, borrowed from Yeager, because "s'aqueinter de" is more commonly used with a personal object, and it can be used in contexts in which it means "to enter into a love relationship with"; *DMF* s.v. "accointer," II.A.1.b.

3 *falsity*. "Falsetés" in one of the moral terms employed in this poem that also occurs in earlier lyrics, sometimes as the opposite to "loiauté" or in the phrase "sans (nulle) fausseté," e.g. in Machaut, *Lou*. **8**.18, **48**.23, **166**.15, *et al.* Among its other uses in *MO*, "Falseté" is personified in line 6508.

4 *amiable*. *DMF* s.v. "cointe," I.B.1. In his glossary, Macaulay provides "agreeable," but also "cunning," another common usage (*DMF*, *loc. cit*., I.A.1), shading off, in both Anglo-Norman and Middle English, into "devious, deceitful" (*AND* s.v. "cointe," 2; *MED* s.v. "queint(e," 1(c)), as in *MO* 26032 *et al*. The overtones of the latter meaning are perhaps not irrelevant here. (Gower uses the same pair of rhyme words in very much the same context in *CA* 4.2313-14, but without any implication of deceptiveness.)

6 *you cannot restore*. Gower uses similar expressions with reference to the loss of virginity in *MO* 948-90 and *CA* 5.6207-11.

7 *convicted*. Everything about the context suggests that "atteinte" should modify the man who is being denounced, and "convicted" (as supplied by Macaulay in his glossary, 1:482) is well attested in both French and English: *AND* s.v. "atteindre," pp. as a., 2; *MED* s.v. "atteinen," 4. A verb derived from the past participle (*MED* "atteinten") survives in the rare Modern English verb "attaint." The feminine form, "atteinte," where the context demands the masculine is not all that unusual for Gower, and it is required by the rhyme with "meinte." Gower uses the same word in conjunction with "falsine" but in a different sense in *MO* 26029, "Dieus voit bien la falsine atteinte [God sees well the falsehood committed]."

falsehood. This is the only occurrence of "falsine" in *50B*. It occurs 32 times in *MO*, though not with reference to falsehood in love, and in *Tr* **13**.11, with reference to the Pharaoh's seduction of Sarrai.

8 *if you want to break it off, go ahead*. More precisely, "if you want to break the straw, break." The switch to the formal form in "brisetz" is required by the rhyme, and it is quite common in Gower. There must be dozens of examples in *MO*; e.g. "Evesque, par tes faitz primer / Ton poeple duissetz essampler [Bishop, you should teach your people first by your actions]"(19069-70). For the unexpected use of a singular verb form, see **16**.26.

"Estrein" is a straw: *AND* s.v. "estreim"; *DMF* s.v. "estrain." "To break the straw" (in the form "rompre le festu") meant to end a relationship, either friendly or commercial: *DMF* s.v. "fétu," A.2.c, with two citations from Machaut (*Navarre* 3004-05, *Voir Dit* 7578-79); see also Granson, **12**.7, Hassell F61. The modern equivalent, "rompre la paille," occurs in Molière's *Dépit amoureux*, IV.4, 1440-1442, and it is still recognized by older speakers of Modern French with the same meaning.

10 *with such a blow*. This is the common meaning of "empeinte," but here and in *Tr*. **4**.17, Gower may mean no more than "in such a way."

11 *returned*. The passive voice is a bit odd here, and I haven't tried to smooth it out. "Retourner" could have all of the senses of Modern English "return" plus many of those of "turn." See *DMF* s.v. "retourner."

12 *constraint*. Cf. **15**.9 and **27**.8, in which "constreignte" is used with reference to Love's or the lady's "rule" or "governance;" and cf. **45**.11, *MO* 10662-63, 18305, and Machaut *Lou*. **228**.1, in all of which the verb "constreindre" is used with reference to the compulsion to love.

14 *All the old promises are broken*. In combination with line 6, this line may well have been understood as referring to a promise of marriage. See *MO* 8681-88, in which a seducer falsely promises marriage in order to win a young woman's consent.

15 *You have completely extinguished nobility in yourself.* There are two similar passages in *MO*. With regard to "Tendresce," who is too delicate for any labor, "Trop est en luy nature exteinte [Nature is

fully extinguished in her]" (5304); and in praise of the monks of former times who obeyed their rule, "De ceaux envie fuist exteinte [in them envy was extinguished]" (21122).

17 *mirror of mutability*. Cf. "mirour d'onour," **21**.25 and note.

19 This is another case in which the meaning is clearer than the translation. "Sens" here is clearly not "senses" (as in **11**.1) but some aspect of the mental faculty, though the plural is a little puzzling. In the singular, "sens" might mean "mind," "intellect," or "wisdom" (*AND* s.v. "sen[1]," 2, 3; *DMF* s.v. "sens," II.A), all with positive implications, which justifies "se muent." *AND*, loc.cit., gives "thoughts, mind" for the plural, and though it provides only one citation, "thoughts" seems to work best here.

plans for deceit. This is the only appearance of "subtilité" or any of its cognates in *50B*. The word might have either positive or negative connotations; see *DMF* s.v "subtilité." In *MO*, however, Gower uses "soubtil," the adjective, "soubtilement," the adverb, "soubtiler," the verb, and "soubtilité," the noun (which he personifies as one of the servants of "Coveitise" in lines 6373-86), all in completely negative contexts. "Soubtilement" might well be translated as "deviously" or "underhandedly." In the singular, the noun suggests "deviousness" or "clever deceit." In the two uses in the plural (in 3644 and 9801) it refers to plans for or acts of deceit, which I have adopted for the translation here.

21-22 This is not how Macaulay prints this passage. He treats "derrour" as a single word with no capitalization, and in his glossary entry for "derrour" he cross-references "derere," "behind," which makes little sense in context. The form "derrour," moreover, does not occur anywhere else in Gower or in any of the citations in *AND* s.v. "derere" or *DMF* s.v. "derriere." Surely this must be "d'Errour" instead, as I have translated it. While "enceinte" a common adjective for "pregnant," the underlying verb, "enceindre," is evidently rarely used in this sense (*DMF* s.v. "enceindre[2]" gives only a single citation), and more commonly means "to surround or enclose" (*DMF*, loc.cit.; *AND* s.v. "enceindre"); but cf. *MO* 17933-34, distinguishing the married woman from a woman who practices continence, "L'une est de l'omme grosse et pleine, / L'autre est de dieu enceinte au pitz [one is by man pregnant and full, the other is impregnated in the breast by God]"; and 21121, speaking of the monks of former times, "Par ceaux fuist nulle femme enceinte [by them was no woman made pregnant]."In *Tr* **4**.10, "Si l'espousaile est d'avarice enceinte [if the marriage is *enceinte* by avarice]," "surrounded" might possibly be the sense, but "impregnated"(as translated by Yeager) makes the image much more graphic. See also Deschamps **477**.22, a line in which the grammar is clearer than the sense: "Prains de la mort qui m'a pour lui enceinte [Pregnant with death which has impregnated me for him]." Perhaps this should be "l'amor [love]" instead?

25 *the wicked evil is not restrained.* This is the first occurrence of "malvois" in *50B*; it reappears in **49**.1 and **50**.19, in moralizing contexts. It also appears in the refrain to *Tr* ***12***. This is the only occurrence of "malice." Both are very common in *MO*, "malvois" appearing over 100 times and "malice" nearly 50.

26 *you will not be excused*. There are at least a dozen similar expressions in *MO*, e.g. "Serras tu d'orguil excusez, / Qant dois repondre au loy divine? / Je croi que noun [will you be excused of pride when you have to answer to the divine law? I think not]" (20477-79); "Ne sai reson dont excuser / T'en puiss [I don't know any way you can excuse yourself]" (22126-27); "Ne say un soul visconte, qui / Qant a ce point s'escusera [I don't know a single viscount who will be excused on this point]" (24848-49).

27 *complaint*. The betrayed women in both **42** and in **43** (line 26) refer to their "compleignte," which can be either the content of their poem or the poem itself; see the note to **9**.42. Both the betrayed man and the betrayed woman in the two preceding poems employ the related verb (**40**.7, **41**.6).

43

Plustricherous qe Jason a Medée,
A Deianire ou q'ercules estoit,
Plus q'eneas, q'avoit Dido lessée,
Plus qe Theseüs, q'Adriagne amoit,
Ou Demephon q*a*nt° Phillis oublioit,
Te° trieus, helas, q'amer jadis soloie,
Dont chanterai desore en mon endroit,
C'est ma dolour qe fuist ainçois ma joie.

Unqes Ector, q'ama Pantasilée,
En tiele haste a Troie ne s'armoit
Qe tu tout nud n'es deinz le lit couché,
Amis as toutes, quelqe venir doit:
Ne poet chaloir, mais q'une femne y soit.
Si es comun plus qe la halte voie.
Helas, qe la fortune me deçoit:
C'est ma dolour qe fuist ainçois ma joie.

De Lancelot si fuissetz remembré
Et de Tristrans, com il se contenoit,
Generides, Florent, Partonopé° —
Chascun de ceaux sa loialté guardoit.
Mais tu, helas: q'est ceo qe te forsvoit
De moi, q'a toi ja*m*mais null jour falsoie?
Tu es a large et jeo sui en destroit.
C'est ma dolour qe fuist ainçois ma joie.

Des toutz les mals tu q'es le plus maloit,
Ceste compleignte a ton oraille envoie.
Santé me laist et langour me reçoit.
C'est ma dolour qe fuist ainçois ma joie.

5 *MS Erasure after* q*a*nt; *space for two or three letters filled in with a small cross resembling those found in the margins. Very faint cross drawn in the margin.*
6 *Mac* Je
19 *MS* par Tonope

Gower, John. *Cinkante Balades*. Edited and translated by Peter Nicholson, Feb. 2021, *John Gower Society*, www.JohnGower.org.

43

°More treacherous° than Jason to Medea
or than Hercules was to Deianira,
more than Eneas, who abandoned Dido,
more than Theseus, whom Ariadne loved,
or Demophon when he forgot Phyllis,
I find you, alas, whom I used to love,
for which I shall sing from now on with regard to myself,°
it is my grief that formerly was my joy.°

Never did Hector,° whom Penthesilea loved,
arm himself at Troy in such great haste
°as you, completely naked, have lain down in bed,
ami to all women, whoever is to come:
it cannot matter, as long as it's a woman.
Thus you are more common than the highway.°
Alas, that Fortune deceives me:
it is my grief that formerly was my joy.

°If you were mindful of Lancelot
and of Tristram, how he behaved,
Generides, Florent, Partonopé –
each of these preserved his loyalty.
But you, alas: what leads you away°
from me, who was never false to you a single day?°
You are at large and I am in distress.°
It is my grief that formerly was my joy.

You who of all evils are the most accursed,
I send this complaint° to your ear.
Health takes leave of me and languor° takes me in.
It is my grief that formerly was my joy.

In both **40** and **43**, the disappointed lover refers directly to the singing of his or her song (**40**.23, **43**.7), but where in **40** the song trails off into silence and an acknowledgment of its own futility, in **43** it becomes the woman's final weapon in response to her betrayal; and as she expresses both her sorrow and her anger, the lyric and the moral are even more closely intertwined than in **41** and **42.** The formulaic collocation of the refrain, "C'est ma dolour qe fuist ainçois ma joie" (**43**.8), like the blame of Fortune (**43**.15) and the woman's languishing in sickness (**43**.27), is a lyric commonplace, as is, somewhat less typical for Gower, the woman's

reference to her singing (**43**.7) and her allusion to her "compleignte" (**43**.26). Her protest of her own fidelity despite her lover's treachery (**43**.21-22) is a nearly universal motif in earlier poems in which a woman blames her lover for his change of heart. Among the many examples that she cites, those in the first stanza—Jason and Medea, Hercules and Deianira, Aeneas and Dido, Theseus and Ariadne, Demephon and Phyllis—are all of course familiar from *CA*; all also appear in Ovid's *Heroides* and four of the five in Chaucer's *LGW*. Both Medea and Dido, however, are also cited more than once by women in earlier lyrics as fellow victims of betrayal in love, and in the third stanza, Lancelot and Tristram are among the very small number of medieval figures whose names appear in the lyrics of Gower's predecessors.

The most arresting image in the poem, however, is found in the second stanza, in the unflattering comparison to Hector (**43**.9-13). This level of abuse does not occur in any of the earlier contemporary lyrics in a woman's voice, and the closest parallel is to be found in Gower's account of the life of a prostitute in *MO*. In the envoy, when the woman addresses her poem to "De toutz les mals, tu q'es le plus maloit [you who of all evils are the most wicked]" (**43**.25), she uses a word, "maloit" (the opposite of "benoit [blessed]," which appears in **39**.R), that is not found in any earlier lyric that I know of and that Gower himself uses elsewhere only in *MO* (4194, 8925, and 16126). The line with which she dismisses her lover after comparing him to Hector—"Si es comun plus qe la halte voie [Thus you are more common than the highway]"(**43**.14)— is proverbial in character, but it appears in writing only in earlier moral literature, including twice in *MO*, one of these again with reference to a prostitute. And in her final list of examples in stanza three, rather than using the figures from the past to describe how devoted she is or, conversely, how guilty is her betrayer, as in earlier poems by her counterparts, she instead attempts to hold up examples of virtue for her lover's instruction. Hesitantly, and with quick recognition of its very futility, she slips in to the role of Genius here, or of the narrator who attempts to correct the sins of others in *MO*.

But while in this poem and in the two that precede, Gower borrows diction, habits of expression, and the monitory stance of *MO*, he does not also adopt its moral framework. Apart from the one allusion to a "vie seinte [holy life]"(**42**.20), there is nothing in these ballades about sin, about the temptations of the flesh versus the needs of the soul, or about the punishments that await the sinner and the rewards for the virtuous. *MO* is, to say the very least, deeply distrustful of all fleshly desire, and in its treatment of "Foldelit," for instance, it reduces the familiar pose of the devoted lyric lover to mere wantonness (*MO* 9421-32). The remedy that *MO* offers is "Aspre Vie [Harsh Life]," including fasting, sleeping on the ground, and other ways of mortifying the flesh (*MO* 17965-18324). The ballades are even further removed from the ethical perspective of *VC*, which treats the perils of the flesh all but exclusively from a male point of view and sees women rather than men as the deceptive seducers: "Est mundus fallax, mulier fallacior ipso [The world is false, and woman even falser]" (*VC* 5.450; see also *VC* 4.555-76, 5.273-74, 5.333-34, 5.339, 5.353-80). More broadly, the deceptions in love of which the women in Gower's ballades complain are, from the perspective of *VC*, but one aspect of the untrustworthiness and inherent instability of all life in this world (*VC* 7.435-42). Such is not the ethic of *50B*, nor, it is fair to say, of *CA*. We return to Hector. What seems at first like a throwaway at the end of the line that introduces him—"Unqes Ector, q'ama Pantasilée [Never did Hector, whom Penthesilea loved]" (**43**.9)—is actually an affirmation that there are men who

are worthy of a woman's affection, and as the speaker implies a contrast to her own position, there is perhaps even a hint of envy for her more fortunate predecessor. The next two women's poems, numbers **44** and **46**, are very much about the qualities that make a man worthy of love, and Gower introduces two such men in **45** and **47**.

1-6 The first five examples, all of women who were betrayed, all also appear in *CA*: Jason and Medea in 5.3247-4222; Hercules and Deianira in 2.145-2307; Eneus and Dido in 4.77-137; Theseus and Ariadne in 5.5231-5495; and Demophon and Phyllis in 4.731-878. Jason and Medea also appear in *Tr* **8**, Hercules and Deianira in *Tr* **7**, both as examples of falseness in marriage. The use of examples from classical literature and romance is also a common device in the lyrics (see Wimsatt, *French Contemporaries*, 69-76). Jason's betrayal of Medea is cited elsewhere as an example of falsity in love (e.g. in Machaut, *VD*, Letter 40, p. 527; Deschamps **434**.17-21; Granson **20**.1-7); Jason and Eneas are cited together in Mudge **4**.9-10, 17-8 (rpt. Wimsatt, *Poems of 'Ch'*, 47-48) and **60**.4, 26-8 (rpt. Wimsatt, *ibid*., 24-25). In all these poems the speaker is a woman. In another, spoken by a man (Mudge **63**.7 [rpt. Wimsatt, *ibid*., 30-31]), Dido is listed among other great heroines, and Froissart, Bal. **6**.1 and Granson **18**.18 both refer to Jason and Medea in contexts other than that of betrayal. On the possible links between the latter two poems and Gower's ballade, see Butterfield, *Familiar Enemy*, pp. 256-61.

1 *treacherous*. "Tricherous" was evidently not that common in Middle French (cf. the note to **41**.18). *AND* s.v. "tricherus" provides only two citations; *DMF* s.v. "trichereux" only one, from *MO* 213. Gower, however, uses the word six other times in *MO*, in *Tr* **4**.11, and in *50B* **48**.3. *MED* s.v. "trecherŏus" would lead us to believe that it is much more common in Middle English, citing, among many others, *CA* 2.3019, the only appearance of the word, however, in Gower's English works.

7 *with regard to myself*. *DMF* s.v. "endroit," II.B.1.c. Cf. "endroit moi," **20**.23.

8 On the formulaic collocation of joy and sorrow see the note to **2**.8.

9 *Hector*. Gower uses Hector as an exemplum of warrior-like bravery in *VC* 4.971-72, 6.922, 6.975, 6.1291, as do Deschamps, **308**.288, **432**.12, Christine de Pizan, *100B* **4**.19, **92**.5, and many others. *whom Penthesilea loved*. Cf. *CA* 4.2135-47, 5.2547- 51. Hector also stands with Penthesilea in the procession of lovers in *CA* 8.2525-27. As Macaulay observes in his note to the first of these passages (2:508), Benoit tells the story of Penthesilea in *Roman de Troie*, lines 23357 ff. As in the classical texts in which she is mentioned, she arrives in Troy after Hector has been killed; and on learning of his death, she proclaims to Priam in her grief, "Plus l'amoê que rien vivant [I loved him more than any living thing]" (23405). Guido recounts the same episode more briefly in *Historia*, Book 28. Penthesilea comes to aid of the Greeks with a thousand of her warriors "because of her great love for Hector" (trans. Meeks, p. 204).

11-13 Cf. *MO* 9208-12, with reference to the prostitute:

> Trop vilement son corps y paine
> Qant est a chescun fol compaine,
> Qe riens luy chalt quel ordre il ait;
> Ainz quique voet venir au fait,
> Elle est tout preste en son aguait.
>
> [Very wrongfully does she use her body when she is a foolish companion to every man, so that it doesn't matter to her what rank he has. Instead, whoever wishes to come for the deed, she is fully ready in her waiting place.]

There is also a faint echo of the portrait of the wanton lover in *MO* 9378-80: "Ne chalt si dames ou pucelles, / Nounpas les bonnes mais les belles, / Des quelles poet avoir sa proie [It doesn't matter if they are women or maidens, not the good ones but the fair ones, of whom he can have his prey]."

14 *you are more common than the highway*. Cf. *MO* 8952, where the adulterous wife "est plus comune que la voie [is more common than the street]"; 9229-37, telling the prostitute that her body is "ensi commun . . . comme sont les voies [as common as the roads]"; and *CA* 5.2497, regarding the one who is covetous in love: "Thus is he commun as the Strete," cited as proverbial by Whiting S831. For the use of "comun" in this context, see also *Tr* **17**.8., "N'est pas compaign q'est comun a chascune [He who is common to every woman isn't a 'companion']"; *CA* 5.1425-29, regarding Venus and the women who follow her example; and Amans' expression of his anxiety in *CA* 2.474-75, "Bot for al that myn herte arist, / Whanne I thes comun lovers se." See also Whiting C64, "As common as the Cartway," citing *Piers Plowman* A 3.127, B 3.131.

17-20 The broken syntax of the opening of this stanza is itself expressive of the intensity of the woman's feeling.

17-19 The last set of examples is of men who were loyal. Lancelot and Tristram were of course widely known. Their names appear together Machaut, Lai **10**.166-67, Mudge **49**.1-2, as do those of Guenever and Iseult, along with other heroines, in Deschamps **305**.1-3, Mudge **63**.7. Granson cites Tristram alone in **12**.15, as does Froissart in Bal. **1**.25. . Both men appear with their respective queens in the procession of lovers in *CA* 8.2500-02, but Gower cites them disapprovingly, for their "folie" and presumably for their breach of marriage, in *Tr* **15**.1-4. Generides and Pantonopé are far less familiar. There are two different romances of Generides in Middle English, both from the late 14th century, and though a French source is possible, none survives (see Lillian Herlands Hornstein, "Eustace-Constance-Florence-Griselda Legends," in *A Manual of he Writings in Middle* English, ed. J. Burke Severs, Fasc. 1 [New Haven: Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1967], 148-49). The only surviving Middle English romance of Partonope dates from the fifteenth century, but earlier French analogues also exist (Hornstein 149-50). The stories of both heroes are long and complicated, but both end with a reunion with the beloved. Florent is known only from *CA* 1.1407-1861. (There is an earlier English romance known as *Le Bone Florence de Rome*, but the eponymic figure is a princess.) While Genius offers the tale as a lesson in Obedience (1.1401), it would not ordinarily be thought of as an example of truthfulness in love. Gower's citation of his own story may be relevant to the dating of the composition of at least this ballade.

21 *leads you away*. With the "de moi" in the next line, the verb "forsvoit" suggests a physical or emotional separation, but the verb could also be used, without such a qualifier, to mean "to lead astray" in the moral sense, as in **50**.19 and in *MO* 10874-76: "Ly deable y vient pour essaier, / au fin qu'il par temptacioun / Pourroit la raisoun forsvoier [The devil comes to test, so that by temptation he might lead reason astray]," a meaning that hovers, at least momentarily, as the verb stands without its object at the end of the line. (Gower uses the same verb in a somewhat different sense, with reference to his possibly defective French, in *Tr* **18**.25.)

22 For a woman's similar protests of her own fidelity see Machaut, *Lou.* **224**.2, **265**.9-10, Rond**. 18**.5-6; Deschamps **719**.8-13; Granson **20**.16-17, **34**.9-11; Mudge **68**.19-20; and Penn **64**.14, **280**.9-10.

23 *you are at large and I am in distress*. This line echoes the refrain of **37**, but it contains a play on words not present in that line that cannot easily be captured in translation. A "destroit," most literally, is a confined place (*AND* s.v. "destreit[1]," 1; *DMF* s.v. "destroit[1]," II.A), providing the opposition to "at large" as well as the parallel to **37**.R. Cf. *MO* 18321, and 17923-24, where "destroit" is opposed to "franche [free]." But it was also commonly used figuratively for "distress," "difficulty," and "anguish" (*AND loc.cit.*, 3, 4; *DMF loc.cit.*, II.B), as in **27**.19, "le destroit de ma douleur [the anguish of my sorrow]," the primary operative sense here. One could be tempted to translate "You are at large and I'm in a tight spot."

26 *complaint*. See the notes to **9**.42, **42**.27.

27 *langour*. Surprisingly, this is Gower's only use of this noun, despite his frequent use of the verb "languir." (See the note to **3**.2.) Like the verb, the noun can refer to any kind of illness, but it is the most common word for the type of illness suffered by those who are in love. See *AND* s.v. "langur"; *DMF* s.v. "langueur."

44

Vailant, courtois, gentil, et renomée,
Loial, verrai, certain de vo promesse,
Vous m'avetz v*ost*re corps et coer do*n*né
Qe jeo resçoive et p*re*ns a gr*a*nt leesce.
Si jeo de Rome fuisse l'emp*er*esse,
V*ost*re ameisté refuserai jeo mie,
Q'au tiel ami jeo vuill bien estre amie.

La halte fame qe l'en m'ad recontée
De vo valour et de vo gr*a*nt p*ro*uesse
De joie m'ad l'oreille t*re*sp*er*cée
Et conforté le coer, siq'en destresce
Ne puiss languir; ainz de vo gentilesce
Pour remembrer sui des toutz mals guarie,
Q'au tiel ami jeo vuil bien estre amie.

Et puisq'il est ensi de verité,
Qe l'ameisté de vous vers moi se dresce,
Le coer de moi vers vous s'est adrescée
De bien amer p*ar* droite naturesce.
T*re*sdouls amis, tenetz ma foi exp*re*sse.
Ceo point d'acord tendrai toute ma vie,
Q'au tiel ami jeo vuill bien estre amie.

Par loialté, confort, chierté, tendresce,
Ceste ma l*ett*re, quoiq*ue* nulls en die,°
Ove tout le coer envoie a vo noblesce,
Q'au tiel ami jeo vuill bien estre amie.

23 *MS* endie

44

Valiant, courteous, noble, and renowned,
loyal, true, firm° in your promise,
you have given me your body and your heart°
which I accept and take with great joy.
If I were the empress of Rome,°
I wouldn't at all refuse your affection,
for to such an *ami* I well wish to be the *amie.*°

°The great fame that one has described to me
of your valor and of your great prowess
has pierced my ear with joy
and comforted my heart, so that in distress
I cannot languish; instead, in remembering your gentility,°
I am healed of every ill,
for to such an *ami* I well wish to be the *amie.*

And since it is truly so,
that your affection is directed to me,
my heart has turned towards you
to love well out of true kindliness.°
Gentle *ami*, have here° my expressly stated pledge.°
I will hold to this agreement° all my life,
for to such an *ami* I well wish to be the *amie.*

Out of loyalty, comfort, affection, tenderness,
this my letter, whatever anyone says,
with all my heart I send to your nobleness,°
for to such an *ami* I well wish to be the *amie.*

The four ballades on infidelity in love are followed abruptly by four versions of a faithful and committed love. The first is a woman's declaration of love for a man who sounds very much like the Hector who is cited for contrast to the man described in the immediately preceding ballade. Declarations of love make up the largest category of poems attributed to a woman persona among earlier 14th-century lyricists. In diction, Gower's is most like similar poems by Machaut. Three closely related of Machaut's ballades, *Lou*. **90**, **198**, and **220**, among them provide all of the qualities that the woman praises—"valour," "courtoisie," "prouesse," "gentilesse," "renommée," "loiauté"—as well as the gift of the heart (line 3), the "confort" she receives (11), and her own promise of fidelity (19-20), all motifs that occur repeatedly throughout Machaut's collection. On the other hand, it is a ballade by Deschamps (**497**), in

which a woman lists the qualities that she expects from the man she chooses as a lover, that provides the closest parallel to Gower's refrain, in its own refrain, "De tel ami doit amie estre amée [by such an *ami* should an *amie* be loved]" and in lines 13-14, "Un tel ami doit estre ami clamé, / Et je veuil bien sa dame estre clamée [such an *ami* ought to be called an *ami*, and I well wish to be called his lady]." (This is the same ballade cited for a different reason with regard to **41**.8 above.)

44 also contains echoes of some of the earlier ballades in Gower's own collection. Perhaps the most significant of these are the passages that respond to the immediately preceding poems, praising the man for the reliability of his promises (line 2) rather than decrying his falsity, citing his "gentilesce" (line 4; cf. **42**.15), proclaiming her joy (line 4; cf. **43**.R), and asserting her health instead of languor (lines 11-13; cf. **43**.27). (See also the notes to lines 2, 5, 8-10, 18, and 19, below). It is also a tissue of internal echoes: "vailant," "gentil," "loial," "verrai," "coer," and "ameisté," in the first stanza, are all repeated in some form in stanzas two and three, and the lover's "renomée" (line 1) is explained in greater length in lines 8-10.

2 *firm*. The male persona states that his lady is not "certeine" in **40**.4. Cf. also **4²**.22. Yeager aptly translates "certain" with "unwavering."

3 *you have given me your body and your heart*. The lover gives his heart and body in **17**.11 and **28**.16. For other examples of the collocation of "coer" and "corps" see the note to **5**.26.

5 *If I were empress of Rome*. As the model for this line, Fisher (p. 76) cites Deschamps **417**.8, "Telle dame estre empereis de Romme [such a lady to be empress of Rome]," but the context is very different (Deschamps uses the expression in praise of his lady) and the similarity is very likely accidental. As noted in the Introduction, we ought to see this line instead as a variant of the formula that Gower also uses in **26**.14. See the note to that line.

7 *ami*, *amie*. See the note to **4¹**.7.

8-10 This passage echoes **6**.1-5. On the metaphor of "piercing the ear," see the note to **6**.5.

12 *gentility*. Gower ordinarily uses "gentilesce" as a quality of character, as in **13**.9, rather than a mark of rank, though compare **23**.26. It seems to mark character here, but see the note to line 24 below.

18 *kindliness.* Gower's only other use of "naturesse" occurs in **28**.1 (in which the male persona bewails its absence).

19 *have here*. As in **1**.27, the verb might be indicative rather than imperative: "*you have* my pledge." *expressly stated pledge*. *AND* s.v "exprès." On "pledge" see the note to **1**.27.

20 *agreement*. *AND* s.v "point¹," "point d'accord."

24 *your nobleness*. The context suggests that "noblesce" is used here as an honorific rather than as a moral quality. Cf. the use of "noble" (line 1) and "gentilesce" (line 12), and see the note to **28**.15.

45

Ma dame, jeo vous doi bien comp*ar*er
Au cristall, qe les autres eslumine,
Car celle piere, qui la poet toucher
De sa vertu reçoit sa° medicine;
Si en devient° pluspr*e*ciouse et fine.
Ensi pour vo bo*u*nté considerer
Toutz les amantz se porront amender.

V*ost*re figure auci pour deviser,
La chiere avetz et belle et femeline,
Du quelle, qant jeo me puiss aviser,
Jeo sui constreint, ensi com de famine,
Pour vous amer de tiele discipline
Dont m'est avis qe pour vous essampler,
Toutz les amantz se porront amender.

El Cristall, dame, om porra bien noter
Deux p*ro*pretés, semblable a vo covine.
Le Cristall est de soi et blanc et clier.
Dieus et nature ensi p*ar* double line
Vous ont de l'un et l'autre fait saisine,
P*ar* quoi des biens qe vous avetz pleiner,
Toutz les amantz se porront amender.

Ceste balade, dame, a vous encline,
Envoie pour vos g*ra*ces co*m*mender.
De v*ost*re essample et de v*ost*re doctrine
Toutz les amantz se porront amender.

4 sa. *It appears that an earlier* l *has been overwritten to form an* s.
5 *MS* endevient

45

My lady, well ought I to compare you°
°to the crystal,° which brightens others,
for this stone, whatever can touch it
from its power° receives its beneficial effect.°
Thus it becomes more precious and fine.
°Just so, in thinking about your goodness
all lovers can improve themselves.

Also, to describe your form,
You have a face both fair and womanly,
by which, when I can gaze upon it,
I am compelled,° just as if by hunger,°
to love you with such discipline°
that° it seems to me that in following your example°
all lovers can improve themselves.

In the crystal, lady, one can well observe
two properties, similar to your nature.°
The crystal is in itself both white and clear.°
Just so, God and Nature, by a double lineage,°
have put you in possession° of both one and the other,
because of which, from the good qualities that you have in full,°
all lovers can improve themselves.

This ballade, lady, bowed down° to you,
I send in order to commend your grace.°
By your example and by your teaching,
all lovers can improve themselves.

45 is the last of five ballades on the lady's virtue and its effect upon not just the persona but on others as well (see the note to **21**). It resembles the others in this group not just in theme but also in diction. As in **31**, **38**, and **39**, the persona structures his praise of the lady around her "bonté," "beauté," and "grace" (lines 6, 9, and 23). **45** echoes **21** in its use of "eslumine" (line 2: cf. **21**.1) and two forms of "essample" (lines 13, 24; cf. **21**.25). In its account of the effects of the lady's beauty, in its reference to the "discipline" of love (line 12) and in its refrain, it is most like **31**, and in its use of a stone as the point of comparison and in its citation of God and Nature as the source of the lady's character it does not merely echo **38** but may depend upon it for the referent of "l'un et l'autre" in line 19. **45** offers perhaps the strongest statement of the five

ballades of the beneficial effects of love, without any claim upon reciprocation, and in that way it marks another step towards *50B*'s conclusion.

1 As Butterfield notes (*Familiar Enemy*, 255-56), Machaut uses a similar line, "Je puis trop bien ma dame comparer [I can very well compare my lady]" to begin two different poems, *Lou*. **203** and his *Dit de la Harpe*. Froissart repeats Machaut's line in his Bal. **35**.1 and uses a variant of it, "Je puis moult bien comparer mon desir [I can well compare my desire]," in Bal. **17**.1. Gower follows these only in his use of "comparer": the objects chosen for the comparison differ in each case, and Gower's is unique in being addressed to the lady herself; and if there is a formula here, it ought to include other ballades that begin with a comparison, such as **12** ("La dame a la Chalandre comparer / Porrai [I could compare my lady to the calandra]"), **13**, **15**, *et al.*

2-3 "Les autres [others]" must refer to other stones, and the underlying referent of "qui [whatever]" in line 3 must also be an implicit "piere [stone]," especially if we can rely upon the feminine forms of the adjectives "preciouse" and "fine" in line 5, which otherwise would refer (nonsensically) to the crystal itself. On the use of indefinite "qui" with reference to an inanimate object see *DMF* s.v. "qui," II.B.

2 *crystal*. Butterfield (*Familiar Enemy*, 255-56) cites Chaucer's reference to the "cristal" in "To Rosemounde," line 3, among other less precise resemblances between this poem and Chaucer's as part of her discussion of the sharing of diction and imagery among French and English poets. The context is notably different: Chaucer uses the brightness of the crystal as an image of the lady's beauty and makes no mention either of its restorative effect or its dual properties (line 18). Gower too cites the brightness of the crystal in *CA* 5.5066 and, in lines reminiscent of Chaucer's, in 4.1321-22 as they appear in manuscripts of the "first recension," "The beaute of hire face schon / Wel brytere þan þe Cristall ston," but such comparisons were commonplace, especially, it seems, in English: see the dozens of citations in Whiting, C587-594, and also Hassell C346. The source for the characteristics that Gower attributes to crystal in this poem are much less certain. Marisa Galvez's survey of the appearance of crystals in classical, Biblical, and medieval texts—including a *canso* by Bertrand de Born and the two crystal stones in the fountain of *RR* (1535-68)—finds a wide variety of significances deriving from the stone's physical properties—its hardness, its transparency, its "purity"—but without any reference to its presumed restorative power ("Dark Transparencies: Crystal Poetics in Medieval Texts and Beyond," *PQ* 93 [2015]: 15-42). Yeager (in his note to lines 2-4) finds few references to crystal in the lapidaries. See also the note to line 17 below.

4 *power*. On the various senses of "vertu" see the note to **21**.
beneficial effect. *AND* s.v. "medicine," 3, "medicinal virtue."

6, 8, 13 For "pour" plus infinitive modifying the subject of the main verb, see the note to **14**.1; for its use without reference to a specific subject (as in line 8), see the note to **11**.5.

11-12 *compelled . . . to love*. On the "constraints" of love see the note to **15**.9. When "constreint" precedes an infinitive, one expects "a" (as in *MO* 2030) or "de" (as in *MO* 18043) rather than "pour"; see *DMF* s.v. "contraindre," III.A. Though Macaulay punctuates it differently, Gower may also use "constreigne . . . pour" in *MO* 10663-65. In his note to *MO* 6328 (1:411), Macaulay lists other instances in which Gower uses "pour" for "a" or "de" (including **4²**.4), "representing perhaps the English 'forto'."
just as if by hunger. Cf. *MO* 28542 (with reference to the multiplication of the loaves and fishes), "Et la famine leur constreine [and hunger oppresses them]."

12 *discipline*. Macaulay, in his note to line 13, translates "manner," but something more specific about the woman's effect upon the persona seems to be implied. Cf. **21**.3, **31**.6 and the note to **21**.

13 *that*. For the use of "dont" after "tiele" see the note to **4²**.11.

in following your example. "Essampler" echoes **21**.25. My translation follows Macaulay, who suggests, in his note to this line (1:469), "'by taking you as their example,' . . . but this is not the usual sense of 'essampler'." This sense is not recorded in *AND* (s.v. "essampler[1"]) nor can any other instance be found in Gower, but *DMF* s.v. "exempler," A.2. provides one citation, from Deschamps (**308**.168) , for "imiter l'exemple de [imitate the example of]." Gower does use "essampler *de*" to mean "to take as an example," both to follow and to avoid, e.g. in *MO* 5424, 12422, 15094 (a use not recorded in the dictionaries). Gower also uses "essempler" as a noun (*MO* 2962, 10310, 13661, *et al.*), and if one were disposed to emend, one might consider "par vostre essempler [by your example]". Cf. *AND* s.v. "essamplaire"; *DMF* s.v. "exemplaire," especially the citations under A.2.b.

16 *nature*. On the other uses of "covine" in *50B* see the note to **31**.22. Here, as in **31**.22, the translation is compelled by the context. It is supported by citations in *AND* s.v. "covine," 5 (where the definition provided is "actions, behavior"), and by several of those in *DMF* s.v. "convine," II.A (where the definition is "État, situation (matérielle ou morale) où se trouve une personne, manière d'être [state, condition (material or moral) in which a person is found, manner of being]." See also *MO* 12459 and 14045. In these citations, the word occurs in both positive and negative contexts. Macaulay, in his note (1:469), provides "disposition."

17 *both white and clear*. "Clear" is one of the most common adjectives used to describe the crystal in the passages cited by Whiting (C589) and Hassell (C346). "White" also occurs (Whiting C592, four citations after 1450), and in Whiting C587 we find "Whiit and bright as cristal" from the Wycliffite Bible, Numbers 11.7. This line is still a bit puzzling for "white," if it does not simply mean "bright" (which would not really be a separate quality) suggests that the crystal is translucent or opaque rather than clear. According to Galvez (note to line 2 above, p.17), the two properties of the crystal that were noted by classical authors were its hardness and its transparency. One might well understand the persona's reluctance to imply in his praise of his lady that she is "dur [hard]."

18 *lineage*. *AND* s.v. "line," 3; *DMF* s.v. "ligne," III.A.2.

19 *put you in possession.* "Saisine" is related to the verb "saisir [to seize]," and it has various senses related to "seizure" and "possession," mostly in a feudal or juridical context; see *AND* s.v. "seisine," *DMF* s.v. "saisine." In his glossary, Macaulay gives "possession," which, in the sense of "the act of possessing" rather than "something that is possessed," appears to be the meaning of the 14 instances of "saisine"/ "seisine" in *MO*. There is only a single example of the expression "faire saisine" in either dictionary, in *AND*, *loc.cit.*, 5, where it evidently means "to take possession, to seize," which doesn't work well here. But in *MO* 29741-42 Gower writes, with reference to Mary's ascent to heaven, "mesmes dieu la meine et guie / Et de son ciel l'ad fait saisine," which appears to be "God himself leads and guides her and puts her in possession of heaven." *MED* (s.v. "seisin(e," 2) gives one citation (from *Ayenbite of Inwit*, c. 1340) of the phrase "don into seisine of," meaning "to put (sb.) in possession of (sth.)." If this is the correct sense, "l'un et l'autre" then appears to refer to the "propretés" of the lady, but if so, the properties in question are not at all clear unless they are to be found in **38**.15-18, the only other instance of God and Nature working together in *50B*, and if **39** was originally the last of this group of five ballades (see **39**.23 and the note to **39**), then **45** might very well have followed directly after **38**. Alternatively, "l'un et l'autre" might refer instead to God and Nature. There is one citation in *AND*, loc.cit., 3 to support the definition "possession of a person as a ward," and though the grammatical context is very different, this might possibly be "made you a ward of both one and the other," in which case the direct reference to **38** would be unnecessary. An unsolved puzzle.

20 *in full*. An apt translation from Macaulay's glossary. Cf. *AND* s.v. "plener[1,"] *DMF* s.v. "plenier."

22 *bowed down*. "Encline" is feminine in form, and it thus appears that it ought to modify "ballade," but there is no clear sense in which it can do so. Macaulay, in his glossary (1:505), provides

"addressed," which he has evidently inferred only from the context of this line. *AND* s.v. "enclin," 6, gives "appropriate, suitable," but with only one not very helpful citation. All of the more obvious meanings of "enclin" apply not to the ballade but to the subject "I" of the verb in the next line. The most literal of these is "bowed down"; *AND, loc. cit.*, 1; *DMF* s.v. "enclin," A. By extension, it can also mean "submissive" (*AND*, 9), "attentive" (*AND*, 7), or "well disposed towards" (*DMF*, B.1.a).

23 *your grace*. Though the poem is very much concerned with the lady's gracious qualities, we have to at least consider the possibility that this is instead (or also) the honorific "your grace." See *AND* s.v. "grace," 7; *MED* s.v. "grace," 5.b. For another use of "vos" in the singular see **9**.5. Cf. the notes to **6**.9 and 12.

46

En resemblance d'aigle, qui surmonte
Toute autre oisel pour voler au dessure,
T*re*sdouls amis, v*ost*re amour tant amonte
Sur toutz amantz, p*ar* quoi jeo vous assure
De bien amer, sauf toutdis la mesure
De mon honour, le quell jeo guarderai.
Si parler n'ose, ades jeo penserai.

Par les paiis la fame vole et conte
Coment p*ro*uesce est tout° en v*ost*re cure,
Et q*a*nt jeo puiss oïr si noble conte
De vo valour, jeo met toute ma cure
A mon poair dont v*ost*re honour procure.
Mais pour les gentz t*re*sbien m'aviserai.
Si parler n'ose, ades jeo penserai.

Entre nous dames, q*a*nt mettons a la compte
Vo noble port et vo fiere° estature,
Lors en deviens° un poi rugge pour honte,
Mais jeo le torne ensi p*ar* envoisure
Q'ap*ar*cevoir nulls° poet la cov*er*ture.
P*ar* tiel colour en joie jeo m'esmai.
Si parler n'ose, ades jeo penserai.

A vous, q'avetz d'onour celle aventure
Qe vos valours toutz passont a l'essai,
Droitz est q'amour vous rende sa droiture.
Si parler n'ose, ades jeo penserai.

9 *Mac* toute
16 *MS Larger than normal space after* fiere; *initial* e *of* estature *may be in a later hand. No clear evidence of an erasure, and no cross in margin.*
17 *MS* endeviens
19 *Mac* null

46

°Similar to an eagle, which surmounts
all other birds in flying up above,
sweet friend, your love° rises just as much
above all lovers, because of which I promise you
to love well, saving always the measure
of my honor,° which I will preserve.
If I don't dare speak, I will think constantly.°

Fame flies throughout the lands, and tells
how prowess is entirely in your possession,
and when I can hear so noble a tale
of your valor, I direct all my effort,
within my power, to obtain your honor,
but because of the people, I take very good care.
If I don't dare speak, I will think constantly.

Among us ladies, when we take stock
of your noble bearing and your powerful° stature,
then I become a little red with shame,
But I turn it aside° with jesting in such a way
that no one can perceive the dissembling.
By such a pretense,° in joy I am dismayed.
If I don't dare speak, I will think constantly.

To you, who out of honor have this fate,
that your worth surpasses all at the test,
it is right that love give you its due.°
If I don't dare speak, I will think constantly.

Like her counterpart in **44**, the woman in **46** describes her love for a man of extraordinary worth, but the poem achieves a much greater emotional depth because of the dramatic situation created by the ballade itself. It is one of three ballades in *50B* (with **37** and **40**) that are not explicitly sent to the person that they ostensibly address, and as the refrain insists, it is directly concerned with the woman's inability to express her feelings openly, including to her beloved. In the third stanza, she touchingly describes how she must conceal her pleasure when she hears the other women praise the man whom she addresses in the poem. There is no precedent for her situation in the lyrics that I know of, but it may well recall the scene in which Criseyde secretly smiles as she hears Troilus praised by her dinner companions (*T&C* 2.1583-96). In the first stanza, however, the only contextual reference for her silence is the promise that she makes in

lines 4-6, which evidently therefore goes unspoken; and in stanza two, her silence encompasses all of the admiration for the man that she wishes that she could express but cannot while under the gaze of others. In the envoy, it is her belief that the man deserves so to be loved that, according to the refrain, must go unsaid. Though she does not say so explicitly—and this is consistent with the other constraints upon her expression—it becomes clear that her implicit wish, and thus the entire ballade, is spoken to the man only in the woman's own mind, and the final instance of the refrain thus conveys in powerful terms both her timidity and her resolution.

Such an address has some precedent, though none that is either as engaging or as convincing as in Gower's poem. Machaut's Comp. **2**, spoken by a woman to an impersonal audience, describes how neither she nor the man she loves is able to openly express their love to one another. More pertinently, in Deschamps **589** (a *virelai*), a woman addresses a man who is going abroad, hoping for his quick return because she has never disclosed her love to him; and in Deschamps **768**, a man tells a woman what "a vous n'a nul dire ne l'oseroye [I would not dare tell to you or anyone]." In both of Deschamps' poems, it is clear that the message is not meant actually to be delivered; and in fact, since the circumstances of delivery are always left inexplicit, in the vast majority of earlier poems in which the persona complains of unrequited love, we seem to be overhearing his most private thoughts, even when in the form of an address to his lady. In the vast majority of his ballades, on the other hand, Gower chose to incorporate the dramatic circumstance of the address by means of the envoy. He chose the more purely lyric mode only in poems in which the lack of communication is itself part of the circumstance with which the poem is concerned, but where in **37** and **40**, the woman who is addressed cares not to listen, in **46** the female persona dares not speak. As noted in the Introduction, **46** is the mirror image of a poem like **22**, in which the persona uses the occasion of his written address to tell the lady what he has not been able to say to her in person. Where **22** gives expression to that which cannot be spoken, **46** is a poem about its own silence.

1-2 Cf. *MO* 10789-92: "La vertu q'est en contempler / Gregoire le fait resembler / Al aigle blanc qui s'esvertue / Sur tous oisealx en halt voler [The power that lies in meditation Gregory likens to the white eagle, which strives to fly high above all birds]."

3 *your love*. As pointed out in the note to **7**.11, Gower uses "vostre amour" to mean both "your love [for me]" and "[my] love for you." Clear instances of the latter usage are found in **9**.15, **25**.27, and **38**.10. Here the sense is ambiguous but lines 4-5 suggest that the entire stanza is about the woman's love for the man.

5-6 Cf. **22**.26: "Salvant toutdis l'estat de vostre honour,"as also noted by Macaulay (1:469).

7 The idea is common, if never expressed so succinctly. See Hassell P114, "On se tait, mais on n'y pense pas moins [One is silent, but one doesn't think about it less]," with, among others, five citations from Froissart.

16 *powerful*. *AND* s.v. "fer[2]," 6.

18 *turn it aside*. In this context one expects "destorner," but see the figurative uses listed in *DMF* s.v. "tourner," II.B.

20 *pretense*. "Colour" can commonly mean "pretense" or even "deception," both in French (*AND* s.v. "colur[1]," 8; *DMF* s.v. "couleur," B.II.c) and in Middle English (*MED* s.v. "cŏlŏur," 5b; cf. WBP *CT* III.399, "Under that colour hadde I many a myrthe"), but it also, of course, has a primary literal meaning which is relevant to the woman's blushing in line 17.

24 *its due*. "Droiture" is used broadly for what is right, and more specifically, it can refer to what one is owed or what one is entitled to. See *AND* s.v. "dreiture," 5; *DMF* s.v. "droiture," B, citing Machaut, *Remede* 2021-23, "Amours . . Scet bien paier as amans leur droiture [Love . . . knows well how to pay lovers their due]," and *Lou.* **175**.11-12, "[je] ren toudis à Amours la droiture / Que je li doy: c'est amer loyaument [I pay to Love the duty that I owe it: that is to love loyally]." The "sa [its]" is a bit puzzling, however; one would expect "vo [your]" or perhaps "la {definite article]" instead.

47

Li corps se tient p*ar* manger et p*ar* boire,
Et fin amour le coer fait sustenir,
Mais plus d'assetz est digne la memoire
De vrai amo*ur*, qui le sciet maintenir.
Pourceo, ma dame, a vous me vuill tenir
De tiel amour qe ja ne falsera.
N'est pas oiceus sil qui bien amera.

Des tiels y ad qui sont d'amour en gloire,
P*ar* quoi li coers se poet bien rejoïr;
Des tiels y ad qui sont en purgatoire,
Qe mieulx lour fuist assetz de mort morir.
Ascuns d'espoir ont pris le vein desir,
Dont sanz esploit l'amant souhaidera.
N'est pas oiceus sil qui bien amera.

De fin amour qui voet savoir l'istoire,
Il falt qu'il° sache et bien et mal suffrir.
Plus est divers qe l'en ne porra croire.
Et nepourq*a*nt ne m'en puiss abstenir:
Ainz me covient amer, servir, cherir
La belle en qui mo*u*n coer sojournera.
N'est pas oiceus sil qui bien amera.

Demi parti de joie et de suspir,
Ceste balade a vous, ma dame, irra,
Q'en la santé d'amour m'estoet languir.
N'est pas oiceus sil qui bien amera.

16 *Mac* q'il

Gower, John. *Cinkante Balades*. Edited and translated by Peter Nicholson, Feb. 2021, *John Gower Society*, www.JohnGower.org.

47

The body is sustained by eating and drinking,
and *fin amour* makes the heart endure,°
but more worthy by far is the memory
of true love,° for the one who can maintain it.
Therefore, my lady, I wish to adhere to you
with such a love that never will prove false.°
He who will love well is not idle.

There are some who are in love's glory,
for which the heart can well rejoice;
there are some who are in purgatory
so that it would be much better for them to die.°
Some have taken vain desire from hope,
whereby° the lover will wish without success.
He who will love well is not idle.

Whoever wants to know the story of *fin amour*
must be able to endure both good and ill.
It is more diverse than one can believe.
And nonetheless, I can't abstain from it:
rather must I love, serve, cherish
the fair one in whom my heart will reside.
He who will love well is not idle.

Half in joy and half in sighs,
this ballade will go to you, my lady,
for I must languish in the health of love.°
He who will love well is not idle.

47 is the last ballade in *50B* in the voice of one who is in love. It professes a commitment to love, consistent with the three preceding ballades with which it is grouped, but it mixes the personal with the prescriptive, juxtaposing "fin amour" with "vrai amour" and "loving well," pulling together motifs that have run throughout *50B* and preparing the way for the four ballades that make up the conclusion. "Fin amour," here as in **37**.1, is used in its most literary sense, not just "pure love" (see the note to **7**.1) but the particular sort of love that is represented in earlier poetry, the love that sustains the heart (lines 1-2) and that is characterized by the extremes of glory and purgatory, "bien" and "mal," "joie" and "suspir," and "languor" and "santé," all of the elements of a purely emotional experience as felt by one who has succumbed to a power quite beyond his or her control. "Vrai amour" (line 4) is not inconsistent with "fin

amour" nor is it a different kind of love; it is the commitment to truth, fidelity, and service that is added to "fin amour" and that serves to make it "plus digne [more worthy]" (3), as evidenced by the fact that the persona remains subject to one at the same time that he expresses his commitment to the other. And it requires work as well as commitment. To practice "vrai amour" is "bien amer," "to love well." The refrain expresses Gower's commentary on "fin amour" in the form of an allusion to the *Roman de la rose*, in which the porter who admits the lover to the garden in which all of his experiences take place is called "Oiseuse [Idleness]." We might not be unjustified in reading the refrain, especially in its final instance, with some added emphasis: "He who will love *well* is not idle."

The terms that Gower sets up here in **47** anticipate the more extended statement on love that he offers in **49**-**51**. "Bien amer" anticipates the "amer bonement [to love in a good manner]" and "bon amour [good love]" of **49**. Both "bon amour" and true, authentic love are distinguished from other kinds, and they are offered not only as the only kind of love that is worthy of commitment but also itself a source of virtue for those who practice it.

2 *makes the heart endure*. Macaulay, in his note to this line (1:469), gives "doth support," choosing the best attested meaning for "sustenir" but presuming a very unusual use of "fait." If "fait" has its most common function before an infinitive (as I have translated it), then "sustenir" must be intransitive, which is also unusual but for which there are some attested examples in French (*DMF* s.v. "soutenir," A.1.a ["Empl. intrans. ou pronom.], C ["Empl. abs.]) and Middle English (*MED* s.v. "sustēnen," 5c.(a)).

4 *true love.* Except when referring to a person, "vrai" means "true" in the sense of "authentic, genuine" or, with reference to statements, "truthful": see *AND* s.v. "verai"; *DMF* s.v. "vrai," esp. II. But with reference to persons, it can also mean "true" in the sense of "faithful, loyal": *AND*, loc.cit, 4; *DMF*, loc.cit, I.A.3. Middle English "true" is used similarly; see *MED* s.v. "treu(e," 1a, 9. The latter sense was no doubt included by implication within the notion of a "genuine" or "authentic" love. Both senses seem to be implied in Gower's only other use of the phrase, in *Tr* **16**.17. Cf. his use of "droit amour," **4**[1].3.

6 *prove false*. "Falsera" answers to "vrai" in line 3, but the primary sense in this case has to do with infidelity rather than lack of authenticity. See *AND* s.v. "fauser," v.n., 2; *DMF* s.v. "fausser," I.A.3. See also *MED* s.v. "falsen," 1. In combination with "vrai," however, it is difficult not to hear as well the implication of a love that is not genuine.
for the one who can maintain it. Or "if one can maintain it" (Macaulay [1:469]: "If a man can preserve it"). For the construction, see the note to ***26***.9.

11 *to die.* More precisely, "to die in death." One might hope that instead of "de mort morir," Gower wrote "d'amour morir [to die of love]." When "mourir" and "mort" appear together, one expects to find a modifier, as in Deschamps' "je mourray de mort dure et amer [I will die a hard and bitter death]" (**768**.21).

13 *whereby*. Since "souhaiter" is not ordinarily followed by "de," "dont" cannot be the object of the verb in this line, but instead serves as a relative ("by which") or more loosely as a conjunction. For intransitive use of "souhaiter" see *AND* s.v. "suhaider," *DMF* s.v. "souhaiter," A, "Empl. abs."

24 This a third variation on a very common collocation. Cf. **43**.27and **44**.11-13.

48

Amour est une chose merveilouse
Dont nulls porra savoir le droit c*er*tein.
Amour de soi est la foi tricherouse
Qe plus promette et meinz apporte au mein.
Le riche est pov*er*e *et*° le courtois vilein,
L'espine est molle et la rose est urtie.
En toutz errours amour se justefie.

L'amier° est douls et la doulçour merdouse,
Labour est ease et le repos grievein,
Le doel plesant, la seurté p*er*ilouse,
Le° halt est bass, si est le bass haltein.
Qant l'en mieulx quide avoir, tout est en vein.
Le ris en plour, le sens torne en folie.
En toutz errours amour se justefie.

Amour est une voie dangerouse.
Le p*re*s est loign, et loign remaint p*ro*schein.
Amour est chose odible et g*ra*ciouse.
Orguil est humble et service est desdeign;
L'aignelle est fiere et le leon humein;
L'oue est en cage, la merle est forsbanie.°
En toutz errours amour se justifie.

Ore est amour salvage, ore est soulein.
N'est qui d'amour poet dire la sotie.
Amour est serf; amour est sov*er*ein.
En touz° errours amour se justifie.

5 et. *Tironian* et*, the only instance in* 50B. *Mac's textual note to line 4 evidently refers instead to this line, but he reads* e *instead of the common Tironian symbol.*
8 *MS* La mier
11 *MS* La
20 *MS* fors banie
25 touz. *Mac emends to* toutz.

48

Love is a wonderful thing
about which no one could know the true certainty.°
Love is in itself a treacherous° faith°
that promises more and delivers less to hand.
The rich one is poor° and the courtly boorish,°
the thorn is soft and the rose is nettle.°
In all errors love finds justification.°

The bitter is sweet and sweetness foul,°
labor is ease and rest difficult,°
grief pleasant,° safety perilous,°
the high is low and the low is lofty.°
When one most expects° to have it, all is in vain.
Laughter into tears,° sense turns into folly.°
In all errors love finds justification.

Love is a dangerous path;°
the near is far° and far remains close by.
Love is a thing hateful and gracious.°
Pride is humble and service is contempt;
the lamb is fierce and the lion humane;°
the goose is in the cage, the blackbird is ousted. °
In all errors love finds justification.

°Now is love wanton,° now is it single.
There is no one who can tell the foolishness of love.
Love is a serf; love is sovereign.°
In all errors love finds justification.

48 is the first of the four poems with which *50B* concludes, which offer general reflections on the nature of love without reference to the persona's own experience. In another abrupt shift, it offers a starkly different view of love from the four ballades that precede, and it invites a particularly close comparison to **47**: where **47** proclaims the diversity of the experience of love (lines 15-17), **48** agrees that love is without any "droit certain," any fixedness or certainty, and echoing the "joie" and "suspir [sighing]," the "santé [health]" in which the persona languishes with which **47** concludes, it proceeds to list the many other contradictions and irrationalities of love. But where **47**, written from the point of view of one who experiences love, reaffirms the persona's commitment, despite love's uncertainty, to love well, **48** views love from the outside and sees only its "errours" and its "sotie [foolishness]."

Poems presenting general reflections on love make up a small but important category among Gower's predecessors. One may cite Machaut, *Lou*. **96**, and Granson **23**, **33**, **44**, **56**, **58**, and **68**, his "Dit de Loiauté." The most common theme of such poems, however, is more like that of **47** than of **48**, the need for loyalty and virtuous conduct in love, offered as advice to those who seek happiness in love. **48** borrows its imagery elsewhere. The *loci classici* for the description of love in terms of contradictions are Meter 5 of Alanus de Insulis' *De Planctu Naturae* and Reason's speech in Guillaume de Lorris' portion of *RR* (4263-4300). Gower himself draws upon the same imagery elsewhere, in *VC* 5.53-78, in the 15 lines of hexameters beginning "Est Amor" that appear among other Latin verses appended to *Tr* and to *VC*, and in *CA* 1.*vv.* 7-8. (He also uses very similar language, not with reference to love at all but to the effects of various sins, in *MO*, e.g. in 1355-56, 1487, 6820-28, 8317-20.) Most of the specific observations about love in **48** have some reflex in one or more of these sources (see the notes below). In *DPN*, *RR*, and *VC*, such observations are offered as part of a general warning against the dangers of love. Removed from its moralizing context, similar language also appears in a great many lyrics to express the helplessness and emotional turmoil associated with love. The few instances of such oxymora earlier in *50B* are typical of what Gower would have found among his predecessors: **3**.1-3 ("me fait languir en joie"); **9**.20-22, 25-29 ("je ris en plours et en santé languis"); **13**.2, 24 ("les douls mals que j'endure"), and the two passages at the conclusion of **47** (lines 22, 24). (One recalls also Amans' reference to his "jolif wo" in *CA* 1.88; cf. "le jolif mal,"**13**.24. See also *CA* 5.5993-95.) In **36**.15 and **37**.22-24, Gower also uses some of the same imagery to express the gap between the persona's wishes and what he has achieved. But none of the preceding poems in *50B* presume to comment upon love itself, being occupied as they are with the persona's private experience with the person to whom they are sent. In addressing itself to an impersonal audience—it is the only poem in the collection without an explicit "I" or an explicit addressee—**48** has clearer links to the moralizing mode than to the lyric.

That said, it is nonetheless remarkably free of the harshest language of its more moralizing predecessors. Its strongest terms, "folie," "errour," "sotie," fall far short of the warnings against the evils that love incites in *DPN* (M5.37-44, 59-60) or the threat of blind self-destruction invoked in *VC* (5.139-40, 225-30) or "Ecce patet tensus," the Latin verses that follow *50B* in the Trentham manuscript. Love in **48** is "mervelouse"; it is full of contradictions, but these are mostly the confusing emotional effects of love upon the one who experiences it, as in the lyrics; and while love deceives with hope (as many of the speakers in earlier ballades will attest), and while the refrain is certainly discouraging, both ethically and emotionally, there is no suggestion either that love is the cause of evil conduct or that it can in any way be avoided by one who tries. Rather than condemning love, **48** shakes its head in wonderment at its foolishness, but in doing so, it offers a kind of challenge. Inconclusive in itself, it is certainly not the final word. Instead, it opens the way for the three ballades that follow, which introduce a different, wiser "I" into the collection, and each of which responds directly to some portion of **48**, using its own language to resolve the dilemmas that it poses, following a path that is anticipated in **47** in the commitment to "bien aimer [love well]."

2 *true certainty*. There is more than one possibility for "droit certein." The translation offered here follows Macaulay (in his note to this line, 1:469), who takes "certein" as a noun meaning

"certainty," a use confirmed in *AND* s.v. "certein," 1, and *DMF* s.v. "certain," I.A.4, and that works well in contrast to the many contradictions and "errours" of love that the poem goes on to list. (Cf. also **9**.21 and the use of "nouncertein" in **24**.17.) But of the eight uses of the noun "certein" in *MO*, this sense applies only in 28331. The most common use in *MO* (e.g. in 23792, 24068-69) is "obligation, duty, what is owed," and thus instead, or in addition, we might possibly translate "droit certein" as "the true cost" of love. In *MO* 10893-94, the noun occurs in the lines "Car le certain pourra nully / Savoir du fin [for no one can know *le certain* of the outcome or end]," where it apparently means "the truth, the true nature," a sense that also works well in this line (in which case "droit" merely adds emphasis). "Droit," as an adjective, normally precedes the noun it modifies, e.g. in **4**[1].3, **8**.6, *et al*. "Droit" is also a very common noun, however, and "certein" is more commonly used as an adjective than as a noun, and when it is, it normally follows the noun, as in **33**.9, opening up a different way of construing the phrase. The noun "droit" also has a very wide range of meanings. One possibility comes from **7**.1, "De fin amour c'est le droit et nature," where I translated "droit" as "law." This line similarly might mean "No one can know the fixed law of love," that is, since there is none, as the poem goes on to explain. All of these senses might be present at some level as we proceed.

3 *treacherous faith*. Cf. *DPN* M5.1, "fraudique fides . . . iuncta [and loyalty joined to trickery]"; M5.62, "fides non habuisse fidem [faith not to have faith]"; *VC* 5.62, "dubitata fides [uncertain faith]"; "Est Amor" 15, "fides . . . dolosa [deceitful faith]."

treacherous. I.e., not merely "dangerous" but "deceptive, unreliable." See the note to **43**.1.

5 *The rich one is poor*. Cf. *DPN* M5.31, "dives eget Cressus [the rich Croesus is needy]"; *VC* 5.71 "prosperitas pauper [poverty-stricken wealth]."

the courtly boorish. Cf. *MO* 16795-97, "fole compaignie . . . des courtois les fait vilains [foolish company . . . makes boors of the courteous]."

6 *the rose is nettle*. Cf. *VC* 5.58 and "Est Amor" 15, "urticata rosa [nettled rose]"; also **36**.15, **37**.24.

7 *In all errors love finds justification.* This is the only use of "errour" in *50B*. Where the word occurs in *MO*, it most commonly designates a moral failing (e.g. 1492, 27308). See also the "pius error [pious sin]" of *VC* 5.53, *CA* 1 *vv.* 7. Here its sense must emerge from the surrounding lines, which do not describe sins so much as intellectual confusions brought to life. For a Latinate author such as Gower (as for Milton; *Paradise Lost* 4.239), "errour" probably also retained some of its literal etymological meaning of "wandering, going astray"; cf. *DMF* s.v. "erreur[1]," A.1; "Est Amor," line 17, "Fixus in ambiguis motibus errat amor [immovable, love wanders in uncertain motions]"; and "Ecce patet tensus," line 3, "cecus tamen errat ubique [the blind one wanders everywhere]." "Se justefie" might be an active verb with a reflexive object (as in *MO* 20982, 25952), "justifies or defends itself," personifying "love"; or it might have passive sense, as in *MO* 23325, 24624, "le tort se justefie [wrong is defended or becomes justified]." Gower does not use "se justefie," here or in *MO*, to mean "is justified" as a way of asserting the correctness of something that might otherwise not be excused. This line invites comparison to the final line of *Tr (***18**.27), "L'amour parfit en dieu se justifie [perfect love finds justification in God]." AND s.v. "justifier," cites both lines from Gower (and only these lines) for the reflexive use of the verb, meaning "to justify oneself." My translation of both lines tries to bridge all the possibilities while avoiding the possible ambiguity.

8 *the bitter is sweet and sweetness foul*. Cf. *DPN* M5.7-8, "sibi dulcor amarus / cuius odor sapidus insipidusque sapor [sweetness bitter to itself, whose odor is savory and whose savor is insipid]"; M5.63, "dulcia proponit, assumit amara [it offers what is sweet, it takes what is bitter]"; *RR* 4284 "douce saveur mal savoreuse [an ill-tasting sweet taste]"; *VC* 5.49 "dulcescit amarum [bitterness turns sweet]."

9 *rest difficult*. Cf. *DPN* M5.16, "egra quies [troubled peace];" *RR* 4271, "repos travaillant [laborious rest]"; *VC* 5.54 and *CA* 1.*vv*. 7, "vexata quies [disturbed peace]"; "Est Amor" 14, "quies operosa [busy peace]."

10 *grief pleasant*. Cf. **9**.25; *DPN* M5.6, "tristicies leta [happy sadness]; M5.10 and *CA* 1.*vv.* 8, "suave malum [pleasant pain]."
safety perilous. Cf. **9**.27; and (for contrast) *RR* 4271, "douz perilz [sweet danger]."

11 *low is lofty.* Cf. **9**.21; Whiting L530, "Love makes low things high" (with one citation), and in a different context, *CA* 8.2262, "And thing which nou is lowe is eft alofte."

12 *most expects*. Gower commonly uses "mieux quide" for illusions or for disappointed expectations. See the note to **16**.15.

13 *laughter into tears*. Cf. **9**.26; *DPN* M5.16, "risus flebilis [tearful laughter]"; *RR* 4295, "ris plains de pleurs et de lermes [laughter full of crying and tears]"; Granson **40**.4, "Rire en plorant [laughing while crying]"; *VC* 5.59 and "Est Amor" 6, "flens risus [weeping laughter]."
sense turns into folly. Cf. *DPN* M5.2, "mixtus cum ratione furor [madness mixes with reason]"; M5.15, "Insipiens ratio, demens prudentia [foolish reason, mad wisdom]"; M5.61, "ratio rationis egere [reason to lack reason]"; *RR* 4293, "fos sans [foolish sense]"; *VC* 5.65, "irracionalis racio [unreasonable reason]."

15 *dangerous path*. Cf. *VC* 5.55, "via devia [devious path]." In **11**.23, its only other appearance in *50B*, Gower uses "dangerouse" to mean "disdainful," echoing the most common use of "danger" in the lyrics. Here it appears to draw from the more modern sense of "peril." Gower plays with the juxtaposition of the two senses in **30**, and he may be doing so in this line as well.

16 *near is far*. Cf. **9**.22.

17 *hateful and gracious*. Cf. *RR* 4274, "desagraable et gracieuse [disagreeable and gracious]."

19 *the lamb is fierce and the lion humane*. Cf. *VC* 5.75, "agna ferox, leo mitis [a fierce lamb, a gentle lion]."
humane. *AND* s.v. "humain," a., 2; *DMF* s.v. "humain," B.

20 Yeager: "I.e., the bird kept for its melodious song is replaced by a goose." For the "merle" as songbird cf. **36**.3.

22-25 In **48**-**50**, the last four lines function not as an "envoy," addressing the intended audience of the poem, but instead as a concluding short stanza. **[51]** omits the final stanza entirely.

22 *wanton.* Cf. *MO* 9159-60, "Mais trop devient sa char salvage / Qant son corps a luxure meine [But her flesh becomes too wanton when she leads her body to lust]."
single. That is, "exclusively for one." On the range of meaning of "soulein," see the note to **36**.11. For a usage very close to that in this line (but with somewhat better contextual clues) see **40**.21. The precise sense of both these adjectives emerges from their opposition.

24 *a serf . . . sovereign*. Cf. *VC* 5.71-72, "princeps servus [a servile prince]."

49

As bons est bon et a les° mals malvois
Amour, qui des natures est regent,
Mais l'o*m*me, qui de reson ad le pois,
Cil p*ar* reson doit amer bonement,
Car qui deinz soi sanz mal penser comp*re*nt
De bon amour la verité pleinere,
Lors est amour d'onour la droite miere.

Bon amour doit son dieu amer ainçois.
Qui son dieu aime il aime verraiment.
Si ad de trois amours le p*ri*mer chois.
Et ap*re*s dieu, il doit secondement
Amer son p*ro*esme a soi semblablement.
Car cil q'ensi voet guarder la maniere,
Lors est amour d'onour la droite miere.

Le tierce point dont amour ad la vois,
Amour en son endroit ceo nous ap*re*nt:
Soubtz mat*ri*moine de les seintes lois,
Par vie honeste et nonpas autrement.
En ces° trois pointz gist tout l'exp*er*iment
De bo*u*n amour, et si j'ensi le quiere,
Lors e*st* amo*ur* d'onour la droite miere.

De bon amour pour prendre avisement,
Jeo vous ai dit la forme et la matiere,
Car quiq*ue* voet amer honestement,
Lors est amour d'onour la droite miere.

1 *MS* ales
19 *MS* cest

49

°Good for the good and bad for the wicked
is love, which of natures° is regent,
but man, who has the weight° of reason,
°ought by reason to love properly,
°because whoever in himself, without evil thought,° understands
the full truth about good love,
then is love the true mother of honor.

Good love should love his God first.
He who loves his God, loves truly.
Thus he has of three loves the first choice.
And after God, he ought secondly
to love his neighbor similarly to himself.
Because for the one who wishes thus to preserve propriety,°
then is love the true mother of honor.

The third point on which love has a voice,°
love teaches us this with regard to itself:°
beneath matrimony according to holy laws,
by virtuous° life, and not otherwise.
In these three points lies all the experience
of good love, and if I seek it thus,
then is love the true mother of honor.

In taking account of good love,°
I have told you the form and the matter,°
because for the one who wishes to love virtuously,
then is love the true mother of honor.

The final three ballades all echo and respond to **48**, offering a corrective, alternative view of love, and they do so in the voice of the poet, the "jeo" or "moi" of **49**.23 and **50**.26 who turns to a different sort of love in **[51]**, speaking to the "vous" in **49**.23 who is the reader rather than the beloved.

49 begins with a simple ethical proposition that sweeps away all of the contradictions in **48**: "As bons est bon et a les mals malvois / Amours"; and in response to the "errours" of the refrain in **48**, in its own refrain it affirms that, for those who know the "la verité pleinere [the full truth]" (6), love is the true mother of "onour," the rhyme making emphatic the distinction. Not all love, however: the refrain is qualified in each case, restricted to "bon amour [good love]," echoing the "bien amer" of the refrain of **47**, and to loving "bonement [properly]" (4) and

"honestement [virtuously]"(24). "Good love" is virtuous if and when it is governed by reason (lines 3-4), the quality that sets humans apart from other creatures who also experience "love," and the way in which "bon amour" escapes the "folie" and "sotie" of love of **48**.13 and 23.

This is also the central moral doctrine of both *CA* and *Tr*, though the source of the impulse to love is formulated in slightly different terms in each case. Here in **49**, love rules the "natures," that is, all sentient beings, but humans must also be ruled by reason, and when they are, theirs will be a "good love." In *CA*, instead of "love" governing "natures," it is Nature that is the source of the impulse to love (as also in **34** and **35**), and humans, as opposed to other creatures, must obey both Nature and Reason. As Genius put it near the end of Book 7:

For God the lawes hath assised
Als wel to Reson as to Kinde.
Bot he the bestes wolde binde
Only to lawes of Nature.
Bot to the mannes creature,
God yaf him Reson forth withal,
Wherof that he Nature schal
Upon the causes modefie
That he schal do no lecherie,
And yit he schal hise lustes have.
So ben the lawes bothe save,
And every thing put out of sclandre.
(7.5372-83)

(See also 3.1194-99.) *Tr* posits instead a distinction between the body and the soul. The body "par naturele experience [by natural experience; i.e. 'naturally']" seeks to engender offspring (**2**.3-4), while reason is the property of the soul (**1**.5-6), and according to the hierarchy established by God, "sur le corps raison ert conestable [reason will be constable over the body]." A poet rather than a philosopher, Gower would probably have felt that these were all just different ways of saying the same thing. In both *CA* and *Tr*, the "love" that is shared by all creatures is provided directly by God; it cannot be avoided, even by humans, but it also retains the dignity that stems from its source, a point on which *Tr* is especially clear (e.g. **2**.13, 19-20, **3**.4-7). Yet it must also be directed according to God's law consistent with reason: Genius acknowledges to Amans throughout the confession that love cannot be controlled, either in its onset or in its outcome, but he also affirms repeatedly that it must be regulated, that is, that the lover's conduct must be governed by reason and moral law. Near the end of *Tr*, Gower offers a slightly different formulation, somewhat closer to that of **49**: "la profession / De vrai amour surmonte les natures / Et fait om vivre au loi de sa reson [the practice of true love overcomes natural inclinations (see the note to line 2 below) and makes man live according to the law of his reason]" (*Tr* **16**.16-18). This "vrai amour" (the same expression occurs in **47**.4) is the "bon amour" of **49**, and in both *Tr* and **49**, it finds its only true expression among humans in virtuous marriage.

The ballade describes three forms of "good love." The first two derive from Jesus' response to his interrogation in the temple (Matt. 22:37-39, Mark 12:29-31, Luke 10:27). In *MO* 13537-620, Gower cites Augustine on the "three loves," but these are love of God, love of one's neighbor,

and love of self. The inclusion of virtuous marriage as the third love is evidently unique to Gower, and to this passage. As in *Tr*, Gower attributes the institution of marriage to divine law (a claim that Genius, for all his praise of the benefits of a happy and fruitful marriage in *CA*, never makes). This is the only direct allusion to marriage in *50B*. **4**[1], **4**[2], and **5** all use language that is appropriate to marriage, but they do not refer to marriage by name. Like the four ballades on infidelity (**40**-**43**), indeed like all the poems in the collection, they focus on the personal relationship between the partners rather than on institutions and laws. **49** thus offers the most explicitly moralizing passage in the entire *50B*, but it is also worth noting that, like the more critical view of love in **48**, it has its limits. There is no reference to the sins (such as fornication and adultery) that constitute a breach of the laws of marriage nor to the eschatological framework that underlies both *Tr* and *MO*: the body and soul, the judgment that awaits after death. Rather than a warning against sin, it instead offers an affirmation of love (in its proper form) as a source of good.

1-2 The expression is almost formulaic for Gower. Cf. *MO* 11530: fear of God "As bons est joye, as mals hidour [is joy to the good, horror to the wicked]"; 11827-28: "Car trestous biens qui sont mondeins / Bon sont as bons, mals as vileins [for all possessions that are of this world are good for the good and evil for the base]"; *MO* 15925, also with reference to the proper use of worldly possessions: "As bons est bonne toute chose [everything is good for the good]"; *VC* 7.976, "Est nam leta bonis mors et amara malis [for death is joyful for the good and bitter for the wicked]"; and for a somewhat different proposition, *MO* 25225, with reference to lawyers and judges, "Les bons sont bons, les mals sont mals [the good are good, the wicked are wicked]."

2 *natures*. The plural "natures" is unusual in this context, but it evidently means "created things" (see *DMF* s.v. "nature," B.3.a, "Au plur. . . . choses créées"), viewed for the properties that all creatures have in common, more specifically, without regard to reason, which is the property of humans alone. Gower also uses the word in this sense in *MO* 19909 and *Tr* **2**.19. Cf. also *VC* 5.147 (repeated in "Ecce patet tensus," 15), "Sic amor omne domat, quicquid natura creavit [Thus love overcomes everything that Nature created]." In *Tr* **16**.17, on the other hand, in which "true" love "surmonte les natures," it is tempting to understand "natures" as "natural" characteristics, in this case "natural inclinations." Elsewhere the plural "natures" can refer to humans' two natures, that is, having both body and soul, as in *MO* 11810.

3 *weight*. The use of "pois" to mean a weight as used in a balance scale (*DMF* s.v. "poids," B.III.a) might suggest the image of reason acting as a counterbalance to the force of love.

4, 9 For another example of a redundant subject pronoun see **28**.19.

5, 13, 24 *for the one who*. Three times in this ballade, Gower introduces a conditional clause with an indefinite pronoun. Cf. **47**.4 and see the note to **26**.9 above and Macaulay's note to this line (who translates "when a man within himself," 1:469).

5 *without evil thought*. This formula or some variant of it is used repeatedly in the lyric tradition on which Gower draws. See the note to **21**.8.

13 *propriety*. "Manere" refers to the general way in which one conducts oneself, but most often with favorable connotations, in both French and English. For the range of senses, see the note to **6**.2. For "propriety," which works best here, see *AND* s.v. "manere," 4; *MED* s.v. "maner(e," 5.(b).

15 *voice*. For this figurative use of "voice" see the citations in *DMF* s.v "voix," D; *AND* s.v. "voiz," 6.

16 *with regard to itself*. So Macaulay (glossary s.v. "endroit," 1:504), *DMF* s.v. "endroit," II.B.1.c., "en ce qui concerne qqn." *AND* s.v. "endreit" offers the equally possible "for one's part." Cf. "endroit de," **12**.2.

18, 24 *virtuous, virtuously*. The range of "honeste" is much broader than merely "truthful." See the note to **21**.23.

22 *in taking account of good love*. For the phrase with "pour," see the note to **14**.1; for the word order, see the note to **6**.6-7. Gower uses "avisement" only once elsewhere in French, in *MO* 22772, where those charged with coming up with an answer are given three days "d'avisement." He uses it five times in English; e.g. *CA* 1.3120-21, "The knyht of his ansuere / Goth hom to take avisement." "Avisement" can mean "advice," but Gower also evidently uses it to mean "thought" or "consideration," and that seems to be the sense too in the citations in *AND* s.v. avisement," "prendre avisement de, sur," which offers the definition "to take advice concerning" instead. Other passages listed in *MED* s.v. "avisement," 2.(c) indicate that "taken avisement" could be used without a prepositional modifier, but in this line, especially given Gower's common practice of inverting word order, reading "de bon amour" after "avisement" is completely natural, and doing so doesn't prevent reading the phrase with reference to "la forme et la matiere" as well.

23 *form and matter*. The distinction (and the pairing of the terms) can be traced through medieval philosophy back to Aristotle. Gower also cites it at least five times in *CA*, but without any philosophical precision. Here he means little more than the nature or characteristics of true love.

50

De vrai honour est amour tout le chief,
Qui le corage et le memorial
Des bones mours° fait guarder sanz meschief.
De l'averous il fait franc et loial,
Et de vilein courtois et liberal,
Et de couard plusfiers qe n'est leo*u*n.
De l'envious il hoste tout le mal.
Amour s'acorde a nature et reso*u*n.

Ceo q'ainz fuist aspre, amour le tempre suef;
Si fait du guerre pes, et est causal
Dont toute vie honeste ad so*u*n relief.
Sibien les choses qe sont natural
Com celles qe sont d'o*m*me resonal,
Amour p*ar* tout sa jurediccio*u*n
Claime a tenir, et p*ar* especial,
Amour s'acorde a nature et reso*u*n.

Au droit amant riens est pesant ne grief
Dont conscience en so*u*n judicial
Forsvoit; mais li malvois plus qe la Nief
Est en tempeste, et ad son gov*er*nal
D'onour p*er*du, siq*ue* du pois egual
La fortune est et la condicio*u*n
De l'o*m*me; et sur tout le plus cordial
Amour s'acorde a nature et reso*u*n.

N'est qui d'amour poet dire le final,
Mais en droit° moi c'est la conclusio*u*n:
Qui voet d'onour sercher l'original,
Amour s'acorde a nature et reson.

3 *MS* bonesmours: es *possibly in a different hand, filling up the space before* mours. *Cross drawn in margin. See the note to this line in the commentary.*
26 en droit. *See the note to* ***12****.2.*

50

Of true honor the whole source° is love,
which causes the disposition° and memory
of virtuous conduct° to be preserved without harm.°
°It makes the miser generous and loyal,
and the villein courteous and free,°
and the coward fiercer than a lion.
From the envious it takes away all evil.
Love is in accord with Nature and Reason.°

What was formerly bitter love sweetly tempers;
thus it makes peace from war,° and is the cause°
that every virtuous life has its relief.
°Just as much the things that pertain to nature
as those that belong to reasonable man,
Love claims to have jurisdiction° everywhere,
and in particular,
love is in accord with Nature and Reason.

For a true lover° nothing is difficult or grievous
such that° conscience in its judgment
goes astray. But the wicked one more than a ship
is tempest-tossed° and has lost
his rudder of honor, °so that of equal weight
are fortune and the condition
of the man. And above all, the most heartfelt°
love is in accord with Nature and Reason.

There is no one who can have the last word° on love,
But as for me, this is the conclusion:
For the one who wishes to seek the origin of honor,
love is in accord with Nature and Reason.

The first line of **50** echoes the refrain (and final line) of **49**, affirming love as the source of honor, but without qualification now. It is love alone, not "good" love, as experienced by the "true" lover (line 17); those who do not experience its benefits are not lovers at all but merely "li malvois [the wicked]" (19), for whom honor provides no rudder. **50** thus continues the response to **48**, but in different and more specific terms. Using some of the same imagery as **48**, it substitutes a wholly different definition of "love," accepted as virtuous by its very nature, whose effects are not evidence of its "errours" but of its benefits: it makes the villein courteous

(line 5; cf. **48**.5), it gives bravery to the coward (line 6; cf. **48**.19), it makes the bitter sweet (line 9; cf. **48**.8), and rather than encouraging "wandering" (see the note to **48**.7), it prevents the conscience from going astray (lines 17-19). Where **48** declares, "N'est qui d'amour poet dire la sotie" (line 23), **50** replies, conceding the diversity of love, "N'est qui d'amour poet dire le final" (line 25), but it concludes by affirming love's power to reconcile the two opposing parts of human nature, "Amour s'accorde a Nature et Resoun."

In placing Nature in conjunction with Reason, **50** recalls the moral formulation underlying much of Genius' advice to Amans in *CA* (see the note to **49**), which in turn derive from the discussion of the relation between Nature and Reason among Gower's predecessors in works such as *RR* and *DPN*. In these works, there is disagreement over Nature's moral status, a vexing question that recurs in *CA*, where Nature sometimes appears to encourage immoral conduct (e.g. in 3.169-81) and elsewhere to forbid it (7.4297-99), and in *MO*, where Nature leads young women to fornication, the "pecché de nature" (8636-37; cf. also 9113 with regard to incest), yet she also joins God in condemning "Foldelit [Wantonness]"(9504-05, 9515). Gower avoids these more difficult questions in his ballade. In emphasizing the reconciling power of love, he doesn't pause to consider what effect Nature might have without the balancing force of Reason. Instead, he affirms that one may lead a virtuous life and yet follow the demands of Nature too, echoing the most optimistic of Genius' moral counsel for Amans (e.g. 7.5372-83, quoted in the note to **49** above). He also offers, as the poet's "final word," his most optimistic view of the power of human love.

1 *source*. A common use of "chief" (*AND* s.v "chef[1]," 4; *DMF* s.v. "chef," II.2.c), echoing "miere" in **49**.25 and anticipating "original" in **50**.27. Cf. *CA* 4.2326-27: "For love above alle othre is hed, / Which hath the vertus forto lede."

2 *disposition*. "Corage" is not the heart as physical organ but as the seat of thought or emotion (*DMF* s.v. "courage," A.1). Here it suggests the disposition to good conduct that is embedded in one's character (*DMF*, loc.cit, A.3.b).

3 *virtuous conduct*. "Bones mours" (together with its opposite, "males mours") is a common phrase in *MO*, e.g. at 1752, 8671. It also occurs in **38**.18. One has to wonder if a distracted scribe might originally have written "bon(s) amours," requiring the correction (see the textual note).
harm. The range of meaning of "meschief" is rather broad in both French and English, but the context here may suggest the rather specialized meaning of "offense" or "wrong." *AND* s.v. "meschief," 3; *DMF* s.v. "méchef," I.A.3; *MED* s.v. "mischef," 4.

4-7 Cf. *CA* 4.2296-2304:

> For evere yit it hath be so
> That love honeste in sondri weie
> Profiteth, for it doth aweie
> The vice, and as the bokes sein,
> It makth curteis of the vilein,
> And to the couard hardiesce
> It yifth, so that verrai prouesse
> Is caused upon loves reule
> To him that can manhode reule.

5 Whiting L531, "Love makes the villain (*churl*) courteous, *etc*.," citing *CA* 4.2300 (quoted in the preceding note).

All three of the key words in this line can have both a social and a moral sense. "Vilein" can be "serf" or "base, uncouth"; "courtois" can be "courtly" or "courteous"; and "liberal" can be "free" in the senses both of "not in bondage" and "generous." See *AND* s.v. "vilein," a. 1, 2; *DMF* s.v. "vilain," I.A, B; *AND* s.v. "corteis"; *DMF* s.v "courtois"; *AND* s.v "liberal," 1, 2; *DMF* s.v. "liberal," A, B.

8 *Love is in accord with Nature and Reason.* One wants this to mean "Love brings Nature and Reason into accord," but such, alas, is not the case. That would be "Amour acorde Nature a Raison" or "od Raison." See *AND* s.v. "acorder," v.a., 2; *DMF* s.v. "accorder," I.A.3. As written, there is an implicit "both" before "Nature and Reason." M. Dominica Legge, *Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 360, translates the refrain, at least in its final instance in line 28, in the subjunctive: "let Love agree with Nature and with Reason," but "acorde" is Gower's normal indicative form (e.g. in *MO* 3810 *et al.*), and the wish is less consistent with the rest of the poem than an affirmation.

10 *makes peace from war.* Love is a "bellica pax [warlike peace]" in *VC* 5.54, *CA* 1.*vv.* 7, "Est Amor" 1. Cf. *DPN* M5.1, "pax odio . . . iuncta [peace joined to hate]"; *RR* 4263 "pez haïneuse [hateful peace]."

the cause. *AND* has no entry for "causal"; *DMF* lists it only as an adjective, and only with two later citations; but see *MED* s.v. "causāl," n. (one citation from Trevisa, dated "a1398"), and *MO* 17009, 26665. Merrilees and Pagan, p. 131, suggest that Gower's is the first known use of the word.

12-13 Not attached syntactically either to the clause that precedes or to the one that follows, these two lines seem to serve as a proleptic appositive to "par tout" in line 14.

14-15 *have jurisdiction*. For "tenir juredicciоun" see *DMF* s.v. "juridiction," A.

17 *true lover*. "Droit amant" echoes "droit amour." See the note to **4**[1].3.

18 *such that*. Or "for which."

20 *tempest-tossed*. From Yeager; more precisely, "in tempest." Cf. *MO* 8623-25, with reference to the five daughters of "Luxure [Lechery]": "Sicomme la mer plain de tempestes / Les niefs assorbe, ensi font cestes / A quique soit leur dru ou drue [Just as the sea full of tempests engulfs ships, so do these to whoever (male or female) is their lover]"; or for a different use of the image, **30**.1-4.

21-23 *so that . . . .* I take this to mean that love, for the "wicked" man, is subject to all of the unpredictable vagaries of fortune. Gower conjoins "weight" and "fortune" in a very different way in **13**.4-6.

23 *heartfelt*. From the root of "cordial" in "coeur [heart]."*AND* s.v. "cordial," and *DMF* s.v. "cordial," B, both translate as "sincere." Gower uses "cordial" in a similar way in *MO* 13533, with reference to love of God, and 27351, with reference to the speaker's song. The enjambment here, with the adjective modifying the noun in the next line, is a bit unusual for Gower, but there is another example in [**51**].7-8.

25 *last word*. So translated by Legge (note to line 8 above), 360. Though it is persuasive in context, I can find no other examples of "final" in this sense. As a noun, "final" appears almost exclusively in the common phrase "au final [in the end, in conclusion]," as in *MO* 9, 3321, *et al*. Cf. *CA* 8.3106, "And now to speke, as in final," cited in *MED* s.v. "finăl," 1.(d), "**in final,** in conclusion."

[51]

Amour de soi est bon en toute guise,
Si reso*u*n le gov*er*ne et justifie,
Mais autrement, s'il naist de fole emprise,
N'est pas amour, ainz serra dit sotie.
Avise soi chascuns de sa partie,
Car ma reso*u*n de novell acqueintance
M'ad fait amer d'amour la pluscherie
Virgine et miere, en qui gist ma creance.

As toutes dames jeo doi mo*u*n servise
Abandoner p*ar* droite courtasie
Mais a ma dame pleine de franchise
Pour comparer n'est une en ceste vie.
Qui voet amer ne poet faillir d'amie,
Car p*er*durable amour sanz variance
Remaint en luy, com celle° q'est florie
De bien, d'onour, de joie, et de plesance.

De tout mon coer jeo l'aime et serve et prise,
Et amerai sanz nulle departie,
P*ar* quoi j'espoir d'avoir ma rewardise
Pour quelle jeo ma dame ades supplie:
C'est, qant mon corps lerra la compaignie
De m'alme, lors lui deigne en rememb*ra*nce
D'amour doner a moi le pourpartie
Dont puiss avoir le ciel en heritance.

O gentile Engle*ter*re, a toi j'escrits
Pour remembrer ta joie q'est novelle
Qe te survient du noble Roi Henris,
Par qui dieus ad redrescé ta querele.
A dieu purceo prient et cil et celle,
Q'il de sa g*ra*ce au fort Roi coroné
Doignt peas, honour, joie, et prosperité.

Expliciunt carmina Ioh*ann*is Gower que Gallice composita Balades dicuntur.

15 celle. *See the note to* **2**.17.

[51]

Love in itself is good in every guise
if Reason governs and controls° it,
but otherwise, if it is born of foolish intent,
it is not love;° rather will it be called folly.
Let everyone take counsel for himself,
for my reason, out of a new attachment,°
has made me love° the most cherished
virgin and mother, in whom lies all my faith.°

°My service to all ladies I must
abandon out of true courtesy,
but to my lady, full of noble generosity,°
there is no woman in this life who can compare.°
Whoever wishes to love cannot lack an *amie*,
for everlasting love without inconstancy
abides in her, as the one who is adorned
with good, with honor, with joy, and with delight.

With all my heart I love and serve and esteem her,
And I will love her undividedly,°
because of which I hope to have my reward°
for which I pray to my lady constantly.
°It is, when my body leaves the company
of my soul, may she then deign° in remembrance
of love to give to me the bequest°
by which I can have heaven as inheritance.°

Oh noble England, to you I write
in calling to mind° your newly arrived joy
which comes to you from the noble King Henry,
by whom God has redressed your grievance.°
Therefore let everyone, male and female,° pray to God
that He of His grace to the great crowned king
give peace, honor, joy, and prosperity.

Here end the songs of John Gower which, written in French, are called ballades.

The final ballade begins by summarizing the lessons of the two preceding poems: love that is governed by reason is good "en toute guise," and if it is not governed by reason, then it is not love at all, but rather "sotie," the condition described in **48**. There is some equivocation here: if love by its nature is consistent with reason (the argument of **50** and the basis for the claim in line 4), then it can't be "born of a foolish intent" (line 3) and the condition expressed in line 2 is redundant. That condition is the foundation of all of Gower's moral counsel, however (as in **49**), and the necessity of repeating it does not diminish the final affirmation of the possibility of a virtuous human love.

The rest of the poem turns to a different sort of love, one not counted among the "three loves" in **49**.8-21 and that is expressly personal for the poet. It is thus not meant to cancel out or even supplant either the moral advice of the two preceding ballades or the exploration of the diversity of experience of love in the main body of the collection. In content, it recalls the final 2500 lines of *MO*, in which the poet, confronting his own sinfulness, turns to Mary for her pity and her aid. In that passage, as he recounts her life with a humble and sincere affection, he uses the language of secular love (including "ami" and "amie") not for his own relation with Mary but for Mary's with her son (see especially lines 29341-508). Here, the gentle echoes of the earlier ballades sustain the parallelism between the poet's choice and the choice made by more secular lovers. suggesting that his adoration of the Virgin is very much like amatory affection in the ordinary sense, though (stanza 2) much more dependable. Gower is of course not the first poet of his time to write both secular lyrics and devotional poems. See, for just one very notable example, Machaut's vast output of liturgical music and among his lyric poems, Lais **15** and **16**, in praise of the Virgin.

Unlike the ballades that precede, this final poem bears no number in the manuscript. Whether *50B* ever existed as a finished work without it is impossible to say. As it is, so closely tied to those that immediately precede, it was clearly written for the position that it now occupies, and Gower may have thought of it as a kind of signature and epilogue, containing his leave-taking, like the passages with which both *MO* and *CA* conclude, rather than as one of the fifty poems that provide the title contained in the headnote to the collection.

The poem has no envoy because it is itself a conclusion. It is followed in the manuscript by one additional stanza addressed to "gentile Engleterre," seeking a prayer for their new king. This stanza is separated from the ballade by a space of two blank lines; it is in a different stanza form (seven lines instead of eight); and it uses different rhymes. As Macaulay points out in his note (1:470), it functions as an envoy not to this poem but to the entire collection. Together with the headnote, which also very likely mentioned Henry IV by name, it is the only part of *50B* that we can be sure was written after Henry's accession and perhaps even specifically for this manuscript, as Gower gathered together works in honor of the king.

2 *controls*. This is a different sense of "justifier" from the reflexive use in **48**.R. See *AND* s.v. "justifier," 3. One might also translate "keeps it just." The verb might also mean something like "authorize"; *DMF* s.v "justifier," II.A.2, "Légitimer."

4 *it is not love*. Gower uses a similar rhetorical strategy, claiming a particular narrowly restricted meaning for authentic "love," in *Tr* ***17***.3-4, with reference to a man taking a mistress: "Mais qant li tierce d'amour se comune, / Non est amour; ainz serra dit barguain [but when a third one shares in love, it isn't love; rather it will be called bargaining]"; and *Tr* **18**.7, "N'est pas amant qui son amour

mesguie [he isn't a lover who misgoverns his love]." See also *MO* 9394, with reference to a man who pursues women indiscriminately, "Ne sciet q'amour plus signefie [he no longer knows what love means]"; and *VC* 7.160, with reference to the prevalence of adultery among the nobility, "dicitur illud 'amor' [*that* is called 'love']."

6 *attachment*. "Acqueintance" is something less casual than Modern English "acquaintance." See *AND* s.v. "acuintance," *DMF* s.v. "accointance." On the related verb see the note to **42**.2.

7 *love*. More precisely, "love with *amour*." Yeager instead attaches "d'amour" to "la plus cherie," and he translates, "the one most cherished by love." He may be right. Preserving the word order, I read "aimer d'amour," though I have not found any other examples of this phrase in Middle French that don't also have a modifier for "amour." See *DMF* s.v. "amour," A.1.a, A.2.a, B.1.d, B.2.a, B.3.a, which provides examples such as "aimer d'amour parfaicte [to love with a complete love]" or "aimer de grant amour [to love with a great love]," but cf. Froissart, Rond. **11**.1-2, "Plus liement ne poet le temps passer / Coers . . . que d'amer par amours [The heart cannot pass the time more happily than to love *par amours*]." In the Modern French expression "aimer d'amour," "d'amour" can mark the distinction, when such a distinction is necessary, between "being in love" with someone and merely "loving" him or her. Here Gower may be implying instead a different choice, that between *agape* and *eros*, between the type of love that is shared between God and his creation (and that would be appropriate for Mary) and that shared between a man and a woman, and to be invoking the latter in order to characterize his love for the Virgin. It is a daring move, but consistent with his use of language borrowed from the lyrics in the lines that follow.

8 *faith*. "Creance" might be "faith" or "belief," and to reserve such to the Virgin might seem to exclude other more important objects of Christian worship. Gower uses the same word with reference to "creance d'amour" in **4**^{1}.22-23.

9-10 This is a common way of expressing devotion to a single lady. Cf. **5**.2, **34**.6-7.

11 *generosity*. Like the ladies in **23**.22 and **28**.8, among many others.

12 *there is no woman in this life who can compare*. More precisely, "there is no woman in this life to be compared to my lady." This is evidently another instance in which Gower uses "pour" rather than "a" where in English one might find "forto"; see the note to **4**^{2}.4. For the use of "comparer" in negative sentences in a passive sense or in the sense of "measure up to," see *DMF* s.v. "comparer^{1}," B.2.b and *AND* s.v. "comparer^{1}**,"** v.n., with one 12th-century citation, "As baruns de la vile ne pot nul cumparer [none can be compared to the barons of the city]." The uniqueness of the lady is a common claim. See for example **21**.17-19.

18 *undividedly*. This might also be "unceasingly" or "unreservedly." On the range of meanings of "sanz departie" see the note to **4**^{2}. In all of its senses, it is another common expression of devotion in earlier lyrics, just as all of the key words in the preceding 5 lines are commonly used in the lyrics to express either the persona's praise of his lady or his own wish.

19 *reward*. This is Gower's only use of "rewardise," though he also uses "reward" and "rewardi" in *MO* 16313 and 15611. The "w" marks it as an Anglo-Norman form, though it gets no listing in *AND*. The closest is "rewerdoner," listed as an alternate spelling of the verb "reguerduner [to reward, repay]." Lyric lovers often plea for the reward that they feel that they have deserved, but the more common terms are "guardon" (as in **17**.5) and "guardoner" (**33**.6).

21-22 One might expect the soul to leave the body rather than *vice versa*.

22 *may she then deign*. On the impersonal use of the verb see the note to **33**.18.

23 *the bequest*. Gower uses "pourpartie" in its more general sense of "share, portion" or even "possession" (perhaps under the influence of "propriété") in *MO* 16034, 22308, *CA* 1.406, 5.7000, 7.1072; *AND* s.v. "purpartie"; *MED* s.v. "purpartī(e," (b). But *MED* also lists as definition (a) "A share or division of property, esp. land, due to a person by inheritance; a portion of inherited

property," citing *CA* 5.1691. This is evidently an English legal term; it does not appear in *DMF* or Godefroy, and I have chosen it for the translation based on the reference to inheritance in the next line. The choice of words is interesting, of course, because the person who dies normally makes the bequest (and passes on the inheritance) rather than receives it. The line can still be read in two ways. The word order creates a strong bond between "remembrance" and "d'amour," but because of Gower's common inversions of word order, this might also be "pourpartie d'amour," "bequest (or share) of love." Perhaps this is another case in which we should be aware of both possibilities.

24 In *Tr* **1**.15-16, the soul " avera le ciel en heritage [will inherit heaven]."

26 *in calling to mind*. On the construction, see the note to **11**.5. The alternative, "in order to call to mind," makes rather less sense in context.

28 *grievance. AND* s.v "querele," 2; *DMF* s.v. "querelle," B.1.

29 *everyone, male and female*. More precisely, "both he and she." Yeager: "one and all."

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