John Gower's *Traitié*

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Edited and translated by Peter Nicholson

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Introduction

The following edition and translation of Gower's *Traitié* is offered as a supplement to my edition and translation of the *Cinkante Balades*, and as in that edition, I welcome comments, suggestions, and corrections: nicholson@hawaii.rr.com.

The Poem and its Glosses

The *Traitié* is Gower's defense of marriage. In form, it is virtually unprecedented, offering its argument in a sequence of eighteen ballades, each consisting of three seven-line stanzas sharing the same rhymes and linked by a refrain. While the ballade was the most popular form of lyric in French during the fourteenth century, the only earlier work that is in any way comparable to the *Traitié* is the *Livre des cent ballades*, in which the included poems are much more varied but which presents, in the voices of two different characters, a debate on the not unrelated question of fidelity in love. Gower folds the argument in favor of fidelity in love into an argument on fidelity in marriage, and love together with fidelity constitute the two most important foundations of marriage as he describes it.

The poem falls into three parts: an opening expository section, five ballades long, defining the institution of marriage both in moral terms and historically; a middle section of nine ballades with exempla describing the consequences suffered by those who violated marriage; and four ballades of conclusion, opposing marriage to wantonness ("foldelit"). Gower thus divides the poem evenly between the carrot and the stick, between the arguments in favor of matrimony and the warnings against its violation.

The argument in the expository sections is consistent and clearly thought out. Despite the title, though, this is a poem rather than a treatise: it often proceeds by inference and association rather than in a strictly logical progression. It begins in the first ballade with what might in medieval terms be considered a scientific approach, with a conventional distinction between the soul and the body. The soul is the domain of conscience and reason; it leads the way to eternal life; and it must have priority over the body. But God created both, each for its separate purpose, and rather than the more ascetic conclusion that the demands of the body be set aside in favor of those of the soul, Gower makes a very different claim. In the second stanza he introduces a third term, the heart, and he declares that the role of the soul is to "strengthen the heart in such a love in which no sinful act of wantonness can put it in servitude to the frail flesh" (1.9-12). In the stanza that follows there are two forms of such a love, for while the soul seeks heaven, "the body, for procreation in accordance with the flesh, will have a virtuous spouse in marriage" (1.17-19). There is some obscurity in the closing lines to the ballade as Gower perhaps tries to say too much in too

few words (see the note to 1.19), but however we read it, the final line asserts that marriage both can and should take place under the supervision of the soul.

That is the central lesson of the poem in brief: that there is a virtuous human love, governed by the heart in alliance with the soul, and that the site in which the heart governed by reason prevails and the body properly submits to the governance of the soul is a virtuous marriage. The second ballade continues the distinction between the soul, here "l'espirit," and the body, acknowledging again the superiority of the soul and its aspiration to remain chaste, but also creating an analogy between the actions of the soul and the body, particularly in "multipliant" and "preignant" in lines 4-5, that sustains the conclusion, that though the soul must rule, God created both and assigned to each its purpose.[1] And rather than argue in favor of chastity, Gower goes on to defend marriage against the stricter claims of chastity, most expressly in the third ballade, in which he asserts that we can be "parfitz"—"fulfilled" in accordace with God's will—without being "plusparfit," "perfect." Gower takes his lead from St Paul here, who defended marriage for those who, unlike himself, were unable to remain chaste (1 Corinthians 7.8-9), but he leaves Paul far behind when he goes to to assert that a married man is also pleasing to God (3.5-6). He then reaches back to the institution of marriage in Eden, whereupon a man and a woman "erunt duo in carne una [will be two in one flesh]" (Genesis 2.24), and he uses the union of two fleshes as a model for the union of two hearts, "a loyal *amie* with a loyal *ami*" (3.17-19). Rather than merely as a concession to human frailty (a view that the Wife of Bath shared with many theologians[2]), marriage is a sacrament instituted by God, and it is under the "guise" of marriage that God himself chose to be born (5.8-14).[3] Love and fidelity are linked to the sacrament as the foundations both of a stable marriage (4.15-18) and of one that is "holy" (4.8) and blessed (5.15). It is fidelity that makes a marriage joyous as well as virtuous (4.2), and to betray one's vow is both unreasonable in the sense of foolish and self-destructive (5.1-6) and a violation of the sacrament (5.15-21).

The exempla that follow constitute the most familiar part of the *Traitié*, to the point of sometimes overshadowing most of what Gower says about marriage itself. There are twelve of these. Each is directed to the same lesson, the harms that befall those who violate marriage, either their own or someone else's, though at no point in the poem does Gower cite what one might think is the most relevant Biblical text, the sixth commandment prohibition of adultery. The exempla range in length from one stanza to three, and to compile them, Gower turned to a readily

[1] See R.F. Yeager, "Twenty-First Century Gower: The Theology of Marriage in John Gower's *Traitié* and the Turn toward French," in *The French of of Medieval England: Essays in Honour of Jocelyn Wogan-Browne,* ed. Thelma Fenster and Carolyn P. Collette (Cambridge: Brewer, 2017), pp. 263-65.

[2] WBP *CT* III.105-14. Like Gower, the Wife associates virginity and continence with "perfeccion" and "hem that wolde lyve parfitly," but she argues rather more defensively than he, and she doesn't claim that marriage too is a way of living "parfitly" in any sense.

[3] Some of this imagery is commonplace, but Gower's selection is his own. Cf. Pars T *CT* X.917-21, but also the rest of what the Parson has to say about "Leccherie," X.922-57.

available source, for all but the last two, on the Pharaoh, Abraham, and Sarah in ballade 13 and on David and Bathsheba in 14, also appear in the *Confessio Amantis*.[4] Gower in fact includes in the *Traitié* all of the tales in the *Confessio* in which adultery is punished.[5] Each is used by Genius, of course, to illustrate the harms of some particular type of sin. In reducing them all to a single lesson, much of what is most memorable about the tales in the *Confessio* gets lost. In the *Traitié* version of Albinus and Rosemund, for instance, in ballade 11, there is no mention of the cup that is fashioned from Rosemund's father's skull or of Albinus' boasting, and all emphasis is placed instead on the illicit relationship between Rosemund and Helmegis. In the *Confessio*, Jason's betrayal of Medea comes only at the end of one of Gower's longest tales, but it is the sole focus in the *Traitié* (ballade 8). Similarly in ballade 10, the stories of Paris and Helen, of Tarquin and Lucretia, and of Mundus and Paulina are each reduced to a single stanza. In each of these, the *Traitié* focuses on the sinful act and its consequences and excludes all but the most relevant facts, providing much less of the real story than even the glosses to the tales in the *Confessio Amantis*.

This narrowing of focus has several consequences. One is that some of the male characters, elsewhere depicted as heroes, appear in rather unusual roles.[6] But there are larger lessons as well. One is that sin will be punished, a point that Gower expresses repeatedly. Another, of perhaps

[4] David and Bathsheba are mentioned in passing in *CA* 6.95-97 and 8.2690; Abraham, Sarah, and the Pharaoh not at all.

[5] Perhaps surprisingly, there are only two other tales in which adultery takes place ("Jupiter and Laar," 3.818-30; and "The King and the Steward's Wife," 5.2463-85), and two in which a wife is raped ("The Marriage of Pirithous," 6.415-529; and "Nero," at 6.1219). In none of these, for different reasons, is the act punished. The overlap in contents betweeen the *Confessio* and the *Traitié* leads inevitably to the question of which came first. Most seem to have tacitly assumed that the shorter versions in the *Traitié* followed the longer tales in the *Confessio*, a view that I share. The glossator's evident knowledge of the *Confessio* (see below) supports that view, as does, in my mind, the adoption of all of the tales in the *Confessio* in which adultery is punished. The *Traitié* contains no good evidence of its own date. Cathy Hume, "Why Did Gower Write the *Traitié?*," in *John Gower, Trilingual Poet: Language, Translation, and Tradition*, ed. Elisabeth Dutton, with John Hines and R. F. Yeager (Cambridge: Brewer, 2010), pp. 263-75, argues that the poem seems to be addressed to Edward III and his relationship with Alice Perrers, which would put its composition closer to that of the *Mirour de l'Omme* than to that of the *Confessio*, but she allows that if there were in fact a particular addressee, it might also have been John of Gaunt instead, which would push its date as late as 1394. The fact that the ballades appear without envoys is equally inconclusive; see note 5 in the Introduction to my edition of the *Cinkante Balades*. For the possible link between the composition of the *Traitié* and Gower's own marriage in 1398, see further below.

[6] Emma Lipton, *Affections of the Mind: The Politics of Sacramental Marriage in Late Medieval England* (Notre Dame, Ind.: Notre Dame University Press, 2007), notes that in their very briefness, the exempla in the *Traitié* challenge some of the most important conventions of their original sources. By placing responsibility for sexual behavior exclusively on the men, Lipton writes, Gower "shifts the terms for evaluating masculine virtue form public to private" (p. 59) and he posits "marriage as a model for male identity and self-control" (p. 65). Much of her argument applies equally well, of course, to some of the tales in the *Confessio Amantis*.

even greater importance, is that God himself takes a direct interest in human affairs.[7] In the *Confessio*, Genius more commonly emphasizes human agency, such as the desire for revenge, or poetic justice, for instance the "beguiler beguiled" in the tale of Ulysses (6.1381). In the *Traitié*, the source of justice is God, though he may act through other agents, and in that respect, despite the vast difference in tone, the exempla complement Gower's repeated assertions of God's sanctioning of matrimony: God not only instituted marriage, he takes a direct hand in making sure it is carried out in accordance with his will. One can question both the wisdom and the success of the combination of these two very different arguments in one poem, but Gower does contrive to steer back to the more encouraging view of God's role in the two final exempla (the only ones that are not from the *Confessio*). Neither ends in punishment like those that precede: the Pharaoh's leads to restitution and the release from the plague, and David's ends in repentance and forgiveness, preparing the way for the final exposition by asserting the need for grace and by reintroducing the protective and merciful God under whose aegis those who love virtuously will enjoy their reward.

When Gower resumes the exposition in the fifteenth ballade, he sets aside the harsh consequences of sin in favor of three related threads: the "sotie," or foolishness (15.2), of men like Lancelot and Tristram who succumb to "folamaour" (15.20) and to the urges of the flesh (ballade 16); the uncertain fortunes of love (15.8-18); and the rewards that await those who love virtuously—all three of which lead him to another endorsement of marriage. Whatever one's luck, "he does wisely who does not take delight in wantonness" (15.19-20), he asserts, echoing Genius' central lesson in the *Confessio Amantis*, that love cannot be controlled, but it must be regulated. And to do so, to conquer and control the flesh, again means to love in accord with reason. In a subtle shift of the argument, it is "the profession of *true* love [that] overcomes nature," that is, the urges of the flesh, and that "makes one live according to the law of reason" (16.16-18). This "true love" finds its "perfeccioun," or culmination, in marriage, the place where both love and reason prevail. Marriage is thus the answer to "folamour"; in the stanzas that follow it provides the stability that answers to the vicissitudes of love; and it finds its reward not just on earth but in heaven.

"'Love' is called an unbreakable union of one man and one woman," Gower declares at the beginning of ballade 17, and he continues, "This the faith pledged with the right hand requires" (17.2), making it clear that in speaking of love, he is also speaking of marriage. In the rest of this ballade and in the next, he continues to employ an argument by definition of a sort that he also uses elsewhere.[8] "It isn't 'love'" when a third person is involved (17.3-4); he who is "common" is not a true "companion" (17.8); and "he isn't a 'lover' who misdirects his love" (18.R). Gower also

[7] Sin is punished: 6.12-13, 8.20, 10.R, 11.R, 12.R, 13.19-20. God's role: 6.20, 7.16, 8.R, 9.3, 11.9, 12.19, 13.12, 14.R. In the analagous tales in the *Confessio*, similar statements occur only with reference to Agamemnon (3.2189), Nectanabus (6.2341-45), and Tereus (5.5936, where, however, it is "the goddes" rather than God).
[8] E.g. *50B* 51.4 (and the note); *MO* 9394, 13777-78; *VC* 7.160; *CA* 8.270 *vv*. 1-2, *et al.*

alludes to the consequences for those who violate their vows, invoking for the first time, after the string of exempla in which the guilty suffer their punishment here on earth, the loss of eternal rewards, but in such a way as to suggest that wantonness itself constitutes its own punishment for the unfaithful. "He who loses his faith finds little benefit," he says (17.6), and hinting even more strongly at the vexations of sustaining two relationships at once, "whoever thus wastes his time in vain must well feel, at the end of his journey, one woman for one man is enough in marriage" (17.19-21). He "afterwards has grief for it without sparing" (18.6), though Gower avoids specifying where. And he must face two different judges. "In private, conscience spells out to the wanton lover the love in which he acts foolishly" (echoing 4.13-14); and "He must also answer for it in the end before the one who reveals what is advised," which is to say, before God (18.15-18). The last ballade ends with a contrast between the faithful and the unfaithful which again can point two different ways: "Oh, how the good husband enjoys his reward when the other wanton one must leave his wanton *amie*" (18.18-20). The rewards for virtue can be found both in this life and hereafter.

After a stanza of leave-taking in which Gower also apologizes for his French, he ends the poem with an emphatic assertion, "Perfect love finds its justification in God" (18.28). This can be read as a kind of palinode, a turning away from earthly love to the perfect love which is love of God, and Gower might not have objected if it were read that way. But it also echoes the "perfeccioun" offered by marriage in 16.19 and God's wish that we be "parfitz"—"perfected" in the sense of "fulfilled"—in 3.2, which Gower makes clear can completely appropriately occur in marriage. In "se justefie," "finds its justification," moreover, the line alludes to the need for each human to answer to God for his or her conduct in love in the immediately preceding stanza. While having no doubt about the superiority of the higher form of love, Gower also believed that loving virtuously here on earth was also a way of fulfilling God's will and purpose and would receive the appropriate reward.

The *Traitié* is also provided with a set of Latin glosses. In the expository sections there is a gloss to each ballade, and in the middle of the poem, a gloss to each exemplum. Like the *Traitié* itself, they have no precise precedent. The only real model for the inclusion of Latin glosses on a vernacular text is Gower's own *Confessio Amantis*.[9] The relationship between the glosses and the poem is not at all straightforward in the *Traitié*, however. They raise some questions that may also be of relevance to those in the *Confessio*, and in a surprising way, they also might help explain better than anything else how the *Traitié* came into being.

The differences between text and gloss are easiest to tabulate in the center of the poem. The glosses to the exempla are of course briefer than their counterparts in the *Confessio*, omitting narrative details and also the typical opening that identifies the sin with which the tale in the

[9] Derek Pearsall, "Gower's Latin in the *Confessio Amantis*," in *Latin and Vernacular: Studies in Late Medieval Texts and Manuscripts*, ed. A.J. Minnis (Cambridge: Brewer, 1989), pp. 14-15.

Confessio is concerned.[10] But however brief they are, the glossator—leaving open for now the question of whether he was the poet himself—also adds some facts and details that are not contained in the poem. In some cases these merely provide more precise identification for the people and places: Alexander is called "the Great" (ballade 6); Ulysses' affair with Circe takes place in "Cilly," of which she is queen (6); Lucretia is the wife of Collatinus, both are Roman, and Tarquin is the king (10). Others add details to the story itself: Telegonus kills his father with a spear with his own hands (6); Agamemnon is slain at night in his own bed (9); when Troy is destroyed, it remains deserted thereafter (10); and the fruit of David's liaison with Bathsheba is a child who later dies (14). In the last case the story is not included in the *Confessio Amantis*, but it would have been well enough known from the Bible. Some of the other additions in the glosses, however, serve to bring the story closer to the version in the *Confessio*. It was not a secret that Troy did not rise again, but Gower makes the same point at the end of the tale of Paris and Helen in the *Confessio* (5.7576). The *Confessio* also notes that Agamemnon was slain "in his bedd" (5.1915, 1919), a detail, as Macaulay points out in his note to these lines that Gower evidently took from Guido rather than Benoit. More remarkably, the *Confessio*, like the *Traitié*, makes Circe the queen of the otherwise unknown island of "Cilly" (6.1424, 6.1398 *mar*.).[11] And like the *Traitié*, the *Confessio* locates the rape of Lucretia in Rome rather than in the separate town of Collatea, perhaps based, as Macaulay suggests (in his note to *Confessio* 7.4805 f.) on the misreading of a line in Ovid's *Fasti*.

None of these additions misrepresents the story, such as it is, in the *Traitié*, and each might be seen merely as a learned supplement, consistent with the air of authority that the glosses contribute to the poem by their very presence. But not all of the additions are so simple. In addition to providing more details about the victims, the gloss to the rape of Lucretia in the *Traitié* introduces both Tarquin and his son Aruns, both of whom are punished by exile, completely confusing the issue of who was responsible for the rape and echoing instead the long tale in the *Confessio* in which Aruns is the rapist and in which Tarquin, the king, is deposed as a consequence

[10] E.g. "Hic ponit Confessor exemplum contra istos qui . . . et narrat qualiter . . . [here the confessor offers an exemplum against those who . . . and he tells how . . .]." There is one similar gloss at ballade 6, serving as an introduction to the whole group of exempla.

[11] As Macaulay observes, in his note to *Confessio* 6.1424 (*Works* 3:517), Benoit places Circe on "les isles d'Eoli" (Benoît de Sainte-Maure, *Roman de Troie*, ed. Léopold Constans, Société des anciens textes francais, 6 vols. [Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1904-12], 28703), and Guido "in Aulidem Insulam (Guido de Columnis, *Historia destructionis Troiae*, ed. Nathaniel Edward Griffin [Cambridge MA; Mediaeval Academy of America, 1936)], p. 258). Where Gower got the name "Cilly" is not at all clear. Macaulay takes it as a form of "Sicily," mentioned in both sources as the site of the immediately preceding episode, in which Ulysses encounters the Cyclops and Polyphemus. Benoit names the island "Secile," however (*Roman de Troie*, 28613), and Guido "Sicilia" (p. 258). The closest to Gower's spelling that I know of is found in one early thirteenth-century manuscript of the *Roman de Troie* (Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, 3342), which has "de celli" rather than "d'Eoli." See *Roman de Troie*, the textual note to line 28703 at 4:301, and for the manuscript, 6:25-27, 93-93.

of his tyranny.[12] That mismatch, and the evident lack of attention to what the poem actually says, is compounded by three other glosses that misrepresent the story as it appears in both the *Traitié* and the *Confessio*. In the gloss to 7, Hercules' death is attributed to Achelons rather than to Nessus, who was the actual source of the poisoned shirt in which Hercules was burnt.[13] The gloss to 8 states that Jason died along with his sons, which is not true of any known version of the story. And in the gloss to 14, Mundus dies along with the two priests, though in the poem itself (as in the *Confessio*), he is merely banished.

In two cases, the glossator strengthens the moral emphasis of the exemplum just by his choice of language. In ballade 8, where Jason merely "prist [took]" Creusa in French, "sibi carnaliter copulavit [he joined her to himself carnally]" in the Latin; and similarly in 13, where the Pharaoh "prist [Sara] a concubine [took Sarah as a concubine]," "ob carnis concupiscenciam impudice tractavit [out of concupiscence of the flesh he dealt with her unchastely]" in the gloss. In that ballade and in the one on David that follows, moreover, the glossator's sterner moral view actually results in some misrepresentation, because he fails to recognize how these two exempla, in their stories of restitution and repentance, differ from those that precede. He sees only two more tales of sin and punishment: the pestilence in the Pharaoh's case, omitting Sarah's return to Abraham and the removal of the plague; and the death of Bathsheba's child in the second, adding the conclusion that is not mentioned in the French.

The glossator's inattention to the poem's real lesson is also evident in the expository sections, first of all in what he omits. In the opening ballade, for instance, he cites only the need for the soul to have dominion over the body from the initial stanza, making no mention at all of the ballade's conclusion, that the site in which that dominion properly occurs is in a virtuous marriage. In the second, he again picks up only on the opening lines, distinguishing sharply between the aims of the soul and the body and associating marriage with carnal desire, making no mention of the poem's assertion that both body and soul were put in place and in their proper relation by God. In ballade 3 he catches up a bit, declaring both chastity and marriage to be pleasing to God. The emphasis in the poem is now entirely on the latter, however, and not exclusively on the law, as the gloss implies, but also on the love that binds a man and woman together. The gloss to the fourth ballade has no reference to the ballade to which it is attached. It weaves together bits from the second and the third to create a much narrower view of marriage than in either, insisting that it was instituted "only so that increase to the body of worshippers of God take place according to

[12] The story is told in both Ovid's *Fasti* (2.687-720 and Livy's *Historia*, 1.57-60. In Ovid the rapist is simply "Tarquinius iuvenis [the young Tarquin]" (1.725) and "trium minimus [the least of the three]" (1.691), while Livy identifies him as Sextus, Lucius Tarquinius' third son. As Macaulay notes, in the *Confessio* Gower inserts Sextus' older brother Aruns in Sextus' place, as does the glossator in the *Traitié*.

[13] The accompanying ballade blends together two tales in the *Confessio*, "Hercules and Achelons" (4.2045-2134), describing Hercules' winning of Deianira in battle against Achelons, and "Deianira and Nessus" (2.2145-2307), in which Nessus gets posthumous revenge upon Hercules after being slain when he attempts to abduct Deianira. Achelons is named in the *Traitié* but Nessus is not.

the law."[14] The gloss to 5 picks up on the need to fidelity to one's vow from 4, but only to warn of the punishment that awaits when the vow is broken. The poem offers better reasons for remaining faithful—the irrationality of betrayal, the divine sanction of marriage, the blessings that marriage offers—before turning only in the final lines to the harms that result from the breach of a vow, as the transition to the stories that follow.

At the beginning of the poem, the glossator is hard-pressed to say anything good about marriage. In the return to exposition at the end, he seems to overlook the poem's argument altogether. In 15, which is mainly concerned with the diversity of the experience of love, he sees only the reference to Lancelot and Tristram in the first stanza. He fills in the story with the names of Guenevere and Arthur, of Isolde and Mark, and unlike the poem, which refers only to the bad examples of their "sotie [foolishness]," he insists that they ended their lives unhappily, continuing the pattern of sin and punishment that he introduces in the two preceding ballades, on the Pharaoh and David. In the first stanza of 16, Valentinian is cited as the source for the aphoristic refrain, "He who conquers his flesh over all should be esteemed." The glossator, in a great many more words, reaches back to the *Confessio Amantis* for the scene in which Valentinian compares his victory over his flesh to the many battles he has won, claiming to have extinguished all fleshly desire. The gloss ignores not only the link between love, reason, and marriage with which the ballade concludes but also the main lesson of the entire poem, which argues not for the complete suppression of fleshly desire but for the rational control of desire through marriage. The gloss to 17 invokes a "law of the church" not mentioned in the accompanying ballade, and though it's not precisely inconsistent with the poem's advocacy of monogamy, the basis for its claim is very different; and the glossator co-opts "perfeccioun" in 16.19 for a very different sense: where the poem speaks of true love finding its culmination in marriage, the gloss speaks of sexual union as being legitimate only when it is the culmination—in the translation I use "consummation"—of a marriage. The gloss to 18, on the other hand, which cites "auctours [authorities]" to declare that faithful husbands will have faithful wives, may actually be as close as the glossator ever comes to understanding the poem as a whole, but even so it remains one large step behind, for while it celebrates a happy marriage, the final ballade concludes the *Traitié* by asserting that the faithful and the wanton will have different rewards not just on earth but hereafter.

These glosses present themselves as summaries, but in that respect they are at best incomplete, focusing on the details that happened to catch the glossator's eye, to which he adds his own comments in support of a different and very particular view of marriage. The poem celebrates mutual love and fidelity, and it sees marriage not just as instituted by God but as

[14] Henry Ansgar Kelly notes the disparity. "The ballade itself . . . has nothing whatsoever to say about the cause of procreation; it speaks only about the motives of love and loyalty . . . . As he continues, in fact, it is evident that Gower is not speaking of the motives for marriage but rather of the motives for the love that leads to marriage." *Love and Marriage in the Age of Chaucer* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975). pp. 295-96. See further below.

offering a double blessing, both in this life and in the life to come. The glossator's very different view emerges most clearly in two glosses: that to ballade 16, which cites Valentinian, who "rejoiced more greatly in the victory over the flesh, the seductive impulses of which he had extinguished, than if he subjugated all parts of the world"; and that to ballade 4, which declares that "the virtuous state of marriage takes its origin . . . only so that increase to the body of worshippers of God take place according to the law." At no point in the poem does the glossator make any reference to love. Instead, he sees marriage merely as a way of adhering to the law, a way of making permissible what should otherwise be repressed, solely for the purpose of producing offspring. This was not in fact an uncommon view. It was held by a great many theologians and clerics, all celibate, who were conditioned to believe that there was something morally suspicious in the sex act itself. Sex outside of marriage (including celibate clerics, of course) was held to be a mortal sin, but there was also substantial discussion of the degree of sin attached to sexual intercourse between a husband and a wife. The most conservative view, which can be traced back to Gregory,[15] was that sex within marriage was sinless only when the intention was to produce children. That marriage under that one circumstance made blameless what might otherwise be a sin was easily seen as the sole defining purpose of marriage itself (a view encouraged by St Paul), and among the canonists and theologians cited by Kelly in his chapter 10, there is no mention at all of marriage as a partnership founded on mutual love.[16] Kelly labels this the "theoretical and moralistic" view of sex and marriage, as opposed to the "practical, liturgical, and instinctive" view of marriage based on love held by those who were closer to the actual experience.[17] It too has a history: Lipton traces its roots to twelfth-century theologians such as Hugh of Saint Victor and ultimately back to Augustine.[18] Kelly finds evidence for this other view not just in poets such as Gower but also in the liturgy of the marriage ceremony itself and, somewhat more surprisingly, in the references to love and marriage by, for instance, those who sought to explain the allegorical significance of texts such as the *Song of Songs*.

The glossator will have none of this. Whether consciously or not, he ignores what the poem actually says about marriage, and his insistence on a very different view stands alongside his alterations, his omissions, and the simple errors of fact in his summaries of the tales. Since he is not a reliable guide in either respect, we have every reason to ask whether the glossator to the *Traitié* could really have been the poet himself. If not Gower, then who? In fact any of the scribes who were among the poem's first copyists would have been capable of composing the simple

[15] Kelly, *Love and Marriage*, p. 250. Kelly summarizes this discussion in his chapter 10, pp. 245-61.
[16] Ibid., p. 247.
[17] Ibid., p. 295.
[18] *Affections of the Mind*, pp. 1, 3, 5-6. Lipton makes a similar distinction between competing views of marriage, associating the promotion of marriage based on love in works such as the *Traitié*, which she calls the "sacramental model," with contemporary ideological conflicts in which the laity ranged itself against the clergy and the members of the "middle strata" of society defined themselves against the traditional aristocracy.

Latin prose that the glosses contain. We see evidence of their work in the revisions that were made in the other Latin apparatus in the manuscripts following Gower's death.[19] It is not at all surprising that clerically trained scribes might take so narrow a view of marriage. Nor is it surprising that the glosses indicate familiarity—however imperfect—with the *Confessio Amantis*, since each of the two scribes who were responsible for the four earliest copies of the *Traitié* worked on copies of the *Confessio* and the *Vox Clamantis* as well, though none of the complete manuscripts of either work that survive is in their hand. The glosses to the *Traitié* were first added during Gower's lifetime, almost certainly with his knowledge and probably at his direction. (The question of why he thought that glosses were necessary arises whether he himself was their author or not.) It is certainly not impossible to imagine that Gower might have entrusted the task to the editors and scribes were were responsible for turning the poet's working copy into a carefully laid out and finished book of the sort that we find in the Trentham manuscript.[20] And that brings us back to the *Confessio Amantis*, because if the evidence of the *Traitié* indicates the presence of a different hand in the glosses, we have to be less sure that the glosses in the *Confessio* are from Gower's hand as well. There are some rather large theoretical issues here, but in both

[19] I discuss the significance of some of these revisions in more detail below. For the work of another, later scribe, who replaced the Latin glosses of the *Confessio* with a set of English glosses, see Siân Echard, "Glosing Gower: In Latin, in English, and *in absentia*: The Case of Bodleian Ashmole 35," in *Re-Visioning Gower*, ed. R.F. Yeager (Asheville, NC: Pegasus Press, 1998), 237-56.

[20] The scribes and editors also had a large role in determining how the glosses would be perceived in relation to the text. In the four earliest copies of the *Traitié* (those collated for this edition; see below), the glosses are found in the margin in a smaller hand than the main text (approximately 7 lines of Latin for 6 lines of French, which is enough to make a perceptible difference), and they appear without any decoration. Later copies give them greater prominence. In three copies from the first quarter of the fifteenth century (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 294; Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.2 (581); and Princeton, University Library, Taylor Collection, Medieval MS 5), the glosses are also in a smaller hand, but they are highlighted with a colored paraph. In Bodley 294, moreover, six of the glosses (to ballades 10-14), though still smaller in size, appear not in the margin but in the same column as the text, before the ballade to which they refer, making it necessary for the reader to consider them before reading the French. In Nottingham University Library, Middleton Collection, MS Mi LM 8 (end of the first quarter of the century), all of the glosses are in the text column, in the same size hand but in red. In New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, Osborn MS fa. 1 ("first quarter, perhaps about 1410-20"), all of the glosses are placed in the text column; they are in red with a blue paraph; line for line, they are the same height as the text in French; and while the French text (including the prose heading to the poem) is in a secretary script, the glosses are in the bolder, more upright anglilcana script of the rest of the manuscript and thus appear much more prominently in every respect. A manuscript of the second quarter of the century (London, British Library, MS Harley 3869), adopts a unique arrangement: the glosses are all placed in the right-hand margin, as opposed to the copies in which the glosses appear in the outside margin and thus alternate between left and right. They are not noticeably smaller than the text of the ballades, but they are all in red with a blue initial paraph, making them very difficult to overlook. For the dates of the manuscripts see Derek Pearsall and Linne Mooney, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the English Manuscripts of John Gower's* Confessio Amantis, Publicaitons of the John Gower Society, 15 (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2021).

the *Confessio* and the *Traitié*, what we mean by "the poem" must depend upon how many quite literal voices we distinguish in the surviving texts. In the *Traitié*, at least, there appear to be two, only one of which we can confidently attribute to Gower.

But the glosses are perhaps all the more significant for that very reason. In all of the surviving manuscripts of the poem, the *Traitié* is followed by some Latin verses that end in all but one of the copies, "Thus I, Gower, old in years, in hope of favor, will approach the marriage bed, safe in the order of the betrothed."[21] These lines have long been taken as evidence that the composition of the *Traitié* was somehow linked to the poet's own late marriage in 1398.[22] It does not seem to have occurred to anyone that unless he were as foolish as January, a man about to marry in his sixties would not have claimed that the only legitimate reason for marriage was to produce children. But that is what the glossator claims, and the poem seems instead to be written to counter the very attitude toward marriage that the glosses represent. The glosses thus help situate the poem in the context of the debate about marriage that Kelly and Lipton describe, and might even explain why it was written. In defending marriage for love, Gower offers what to us is an unexceptional, even commonplace view, but one that was contested in his own time. In doing so, he justifies his own marriage. Justifies to whom? To the canons of St Mary Overeys, where he resided, and who were almost certainly inclined to take the side of the glossator? To the public at large? To himself, perhaps? We cannot know, but the glosses help establish the need for such justification, and while the glossator thought to have the final word, he instead put into greater relief both what is most remarkable and also what is most personal about Gower's poem.

The Choice of Manuscript

Except for the heading and the first 29 lines, the text for the following edition of the *Traitié* is from British Library Add. MS 59495, the "Trentham manuscript," ff. 34-39 (hereafter MS T), which along with other works in French, Latin, and English also contains the only surviving copy of the *Cinkante Balades*.[23] Since the manuscript lacks the leaf on which the *Traitié* began, the opening is taken from Glasgow, University Library, MS Hunter 59 (T.2.17), ff. 124^{v}-128 (MS G).

The *Traitié* also appears in two other early manuscripts: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 3 (MS F), ff. 186^{v}-190, and Oxford, All Souls College, MS 98, ff. 132-135 (MS S). F is a copy of the *Confessio Amantis*, and S, like G, is a copy of the *Vox Clamantis*.[24] In all three of these, the *Traitié*,

[21] "Hinc vetus annorum Gower, sub spe meritorum / Ordine sponsor*um* tutus adhibo thorum." These lines are missing in the late, rather undependable Bodley 294 (see below).

[22] Macaulay, *Works*, 1:lxxxiii-lxxxiv; Fisher, *John Gower*, 86.

[23] A complete set of somewhat dusty black and white photos is available at the John Gower Society website: https://johngower.org/ms-add-59495/. For a fuller description of the manuscript see the Introduction to my edition of the *Cinkante Balades*.

[24] Bertolet, Craig E., "Gower's French Manuscripts," in *The Routledge Research Companion to John Gower*, ed. Ana Sáez-Hidalgo, Brian Gastle, and R. F. Yeager (Oxford and New York: Routledge, 2017), p. 99, states

along with other short works in Latin, was added after the completion of the original manuscript; in all three, the additions were made by the very same scribe, the one that Malcolm Parkes labels "Scribe 4" in his study of the early manuscripts of Gower's works;[25] and in S and perhaps in F as well, he evidently made the additions that include the *Traitié* after Gower's death in 1408.

The evidence for dating "Scribe 4's" work comes from allusions to Gower's life in the prose account of his three major works that begins "Quia unusquisque" and in the headings to two of his Latin poems. The version of "Quia unusquisque" that appears in F and G describes Gower composing his works "dum tempus instat . . . inter labores et ocia [while there is time, between work and leisure]" (*Works* 3:479-80). In S, these words have been replaced with "dum vixit [while he lived]" (*Works* 4:360), and if the first version implies that Gower is still living, the second suggests even more strongly that he has died. G contains a heading to the poem in praise of Gower that begins "Eneidos Bucolis" that is unspecific with reference to time (*Works* 4:361), but in F and S, the heading describes the poem as being written "in memoriam [in memory]" of the poet, it is entirely in the past tense, and in Parkes' words, it "implies that Gower has since died."[26] In G, the references to Gower's death come in a later addition by the same scribe,[27] after the section in which the *Traitié* is contained was finished, but they are even more emphatic. Folio 129 contains an illustration of Gower's arms and of a bier, together with the Latin verses that are inscribed on Gower's tomb and a request for prayers for his soul.[28] And a unique heading to "Rex celi deus" on the page that follows describes Gower as having composed the poem "dum adhuc vixit," "while he was still alive."[29]

MS F is a bit of an anomaly, since it contains the earlier version of "Quia unusquisque" but the later, past tense version of the heading to "Eneidos Bucolis." This manuscript also has the most complicated history, for the scribe who added the *Traitié*, "Scribe 4," was the second scribe to make alterations to the original manuscript. The first (Parkes' "Scribe 5") added the revised epilogue to the *Confessio* and very likely other texts as well which were removed when "Scribe 4"

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incorrectly that MS G also contains a copy of the first recension of the *Confessio Amantis*. He confuses G with another manuscript at Glasgow, Hunterian MS 7 (S.1.7).

[25] 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: Essays in Honour of A.I. Doyle*, ed. Richard Beadle and A.J. Piper (London: Scolar, 1995), pp. 81-121; on "Scribe 4," pp. 87-90. See also Macaulay, *Works*, 1:lix-lx.

[26] Parkes, p. 86.

[27] Parkes, p. 88.

[28] *Works* 4:367. Glasgow University Library has posted a color image of this page at https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/library/files/special/images/englangmss/H59_0129rwf.jpg .

[29] Macaulay does not record the heading to "Rex celi deus" in G in either of the two appearances of the poem in his edition, at 2.492 and 4.343, and he quotes it incompletely (omitting "dum adhuc vixit") at 4.lxii. It reads in full: "No*ta* Epistolam quam Johannes Gower dum adhuc vixit in laudem Serenissimi principis sui Henrici quarti statim post coronacionem suam ad modum or*ati*onis forma subsequente deuote composuit [Note the letter which John Gower, while he was still alive, devoutly composed in praise of his most serene prince Henry 4 immediately after his coronation in the manner of an oration, as follows]."

made his additions at the end. Parkes (p. 90) speculates that "Scribe 4" simply recopied the version of "Quia unusquisque" that he found on the leaf written by "Scribe 5" that he cut away when he was adding other texts. That's possible, but whatever the case, if the inference from the heading to "Eneidos Bucolis" is correct, then all of "Scribe 4's" additions, including both "Quia unusquisque" and the *Traitié*, were made after 1408.

In G and S, the history is also a bit complicated because the scribe evidently made his additions at more than a single time. In S, the *Traitié* was added at the same time as what Parkes calls the "posthumous" versions of "Quia unusquisque" and "Eneidos Bucolis," and thus we can place it after 1408. In G, however, though the scribe evidently made other additions after Gower's death, the *Traitié* occurs with the earlier versions of both. The inclusion of the *Cronica Tripertita* in the same stint indicates that the scribe was working after Henry's accession in 1399. The earlier version of "Eneidos Bucolis" does not allow us to be sure how long afterwards, but Parkes speculates that the additions in this stint "may reflect a period of activity on Gower's part in about 1401 or 1402, when he realized that he was going blind" (88).

MS T is in the hand of Parkes' "Scribe 5," who made the first set of revisions in MS F at the end of the *Confessio Amantis*. Both these scribes were evidently very close to Gower. This manuscript too dates from sometime very early in Henry's reign, likely in 1400 or 1401, and it seems to have been prepared under Gower's supervision, as he put together a collection of works, including the *Traitié*, for presentation to his new king.[30] It is thus quite possibly the earliest copy of the *Traitié*, and among the other three it is possible that only the copy in G might also have been written before Gower's death.

If one were going to do a critical edition of the *Traitié*, G would be a defensible choice for the copytext because of its possible early date and because, like F, it is complete. (S, like T, is missing the leaf on which the *Traitié* begins.) Macaulay chose F instead, the same manuscript that he used as the copytext for the *Confessio Amantis*. The biggest difference between F and G is in the heading. (The heading would have appeared on the leaf that is now missing in both S and T.) G merely describes the contents: "This is a treatise that John Gower composed according to authorities concerning the state of matrimony, by which married lovers can learn by example to uphold the vow of their holy wedlock."[31] F links the work specifically to the *Confessio Amantis* that precedes: "Because he has spoken above in English by way of example of the foolishness of one who loves romantically in particular, he will say in what follows in French to the whole world in general a treatise according to authorities in order to teach married lovers by example, so that they might be able to preserve the faith of their holy wedlock through perfect loyalty and hold it securely in

[30] See the Introduction to my edition of the *Cinkante Balades*.

[31] "C'est vn traitié quel Iohan Gower ad fait selonc les auctours touchant l'estat de matrimoine dont les amantz marietz se purront essampler a tenir la foi de lour saintes espousailes."

God's honor."[32] We can't actually be sure that Gower himself composed this heading. As we have seen, the *Traitié* may have been added to MS F after Gower's death. The heading appears along with the "in memoriam" version of the heading to "Eneidos Bucolis," and like that heading, it too may be the product of an editor or scribe, in this case the one who chose to put the *Traitié* and the *Confessio* together.

The longer version in F is, however, the one that has become more familiar because of Macaulay's choice to use F as the basis for his edition. This is also the version of the heading that appears in all eight of the other surviving medieval copies of the *Traitié*, all later than F, in all of which the *Traitié* follows the *Confessio*. This number of copies, compared to two in which the *Traitié* follows *Vox Clamantis* and one in which it follows *Cinkante Balades*, itself has suggested to some that the *Traitié* and the *Confessio* were intended to appear together and were perhaps even composed at about the same time. That the *Traitié* appears attached to the *Confessio* more often than to either of the other works, however, is due only to the fact that the *Confessio* itself was copied more often, and it has nothing to do with Gower's original plan. Of the three earliest and most authoritative copies of the *Confessio* (MS F, and Macaulay's manuscripts A and S[33]) only F also contains the *Traitié*, and alongside the eight other manuscripts of the *Confessio* in which the *Traitié* is included, there are 40 in which it is not.[34] Even the number eight (or nine, if one includes MS F) is misleading. The eight later manuscripts fall into two disctinct groups, and they may derive from no more than two prototypes. Four belong to Macaulay's "recension 3," and at least three of these are directly or indirectly derived from MS F itself.[35] The other four belong to the

[32] "Pu[i]squ'il ad dit ci devant en Englois p*ar* voie d'essample la sotie de cellui qui par amours aime p*ar* especial, dirra ore apres en François a tout le monde en gen*er*al une traitié selonc les auctours pour essampler les amantz marietz, au fin q'ils la foi de lour seintes espousailes pourront p*ar* fine loialté guarder et al honour de dieu salvement tenir." The first use of the verb "dire" in this sentence, in "ad dit," to mean "to speak of," is common enough, but the second, "dirra," before a written text such as a "treatise," is a bit unusual and there is no good parallel in either *AND* or *DMF* s.v. "dire."

[33] Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 902; San Marino, CA, Huntington Library, MS EL 26.A.17.

[34] For the most recent list see Pearsall and Mooney, *Descriptive Catalogue* (note 20 above).

[35] Geneva, Fondation Bodmer, MS Bodmer 178; London, British Library, MS Harley 3869; New Haven, Yale University, Beinicke Library, Osborn Collection, MS fa.1; Oxford, Wadham College, MS 13. On the text of the *Confessio Amantis* in these copies see Macaulay, 2:clx (Harley 3869), 2:clxi-clxii (the Bodmer Library copy, formerly Keswick Hall); and 2:clxiii-clxv (Wadham). Macaulay did not see the MS now at Yale. Macaulay notes that the Bodmer copy corresponds column for column with MS F, though there may have been an intermediary. In the *Traitié*, Yale and Harley 3829 each has variants of its own, but each retains the readings that are unique to MS F in both the poem and the glossses (see notes 42, 45, and 53 below), except for three instances in which the Yale scribe has adopted a more common spelling (6.11, "piere"; 11:20, "juggement"; 13.7, "hault"). None of the three, on the other hand, has any of the unique readings of G, S, or T. The text of the *Confessio* in the Wadham College copy, the latest of the four, appears to be of mixed ancestry. Its precise affilitation is uncertain, but it may be in part derived, most likely indirectly, from MS F. Macaulay reports that its text of the *Traitié* "is late and full of blunders, [and it] may be set down as worthless" (1:lxxxvii).

heterogeneous "recension 2."[36] These copies too are closely related. Three are in whole or in part by the same scribe,[37] and one of them is copied directly from another.[38] They too appear to be derived from a common source, in this case one that was already distant from the poet: in addition to nearly 100 spellings that they share, these four copies also have in common some twenty or so more substantive variants, including the omission of the same five words.[39] All four, moreover, contain the posthumous version of "Quia unusquisque." There is a great deal that is still uncertain about how the text was transmitted and about the relationship between "recension 2" copies of the *Confessio* and those of "recension 3," but with regard to the question at hand, the manuscripts provide no more real evidence to link the origin of the *Traitié* to the *Confessio Amantis* than they do to link it to the *Vox* or *Cinkante Balades*.

In MS T, as already noted, the *Traitié* follows the *Cinkante Balades*.[40] Among many other uncertainties, we cannot be sure about the heading to the *Traitié* in T since that leaf has been lost. There is room for a heading. The manuscript is ruled for 35 lines per page, and 29 lines are missing from the beginning of the *Traitié* with the loss of the leaf. With a blank line at the beginning of

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[36] Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 294; Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.2; Princeton University Library, Firestone Library, Robert H. Taylor Collection, MS 5; and Nottingham University Library, Middleton Collection, MS WLC/LM/8.

[37] "Scribe D," as identified by A.I. Doyle and M.B. Parkes, "The Production of Copies of the *Canterbury Tales* and the *Confessio Amantis* in the Early Fifteenth Century," in *Medieval Scribes, Manuscripts & Libraries: Essays Presented to N.R. Ker*, ed. M.B. Parkes and Andrew G. Watson (London: Scolar Press, 1978), pp. 163-210, esp. 194-95. For the Princeton copy, see Pearsall and Mooney, *Descriptive Catalogue*, p. 324.

[38] Linne Mooney, "The Production of Trinity College, Cambridge MS. R.3.2 Revisited,' *Journal of the Early Book Society* (forthcoming) demonstrates that the Trinity MS is a direct column-for-column copy of the Princeton MS. I can add one bit of evidence to confirm her finding. On f. 151r of the Trinity MS, the scribe accidentally omitted a line (15.12), and he left one line blank at the bottom of the column in order to maintain the column-for-column arrangement on f. 151v exactly as it is in Princeton (ff. 190r and 190v).

[39] 2.4 "dont"; 9.20 "puis"; 10.13 "pité"; 13.3 "sa"; and 16.3 "ou." We can perhaps infer a little more about the history behind these copies. Among the readings that these four share are 15 that distinguish MS G from F, S, and T, including three distinctive readings in the glosses, "regiminis" (following "corpus") in ballade 1 and "coniugali" (following "matrimonio") in 3, both lacking in all other copies, and"filie" for "filia*m*" in ballade 7, suggesting that their prototype, while not G itself, was closely related to it. In addition to the readings that it shares with the other three manuscripts in this group, Bodley 294 has another 50 or so unique spellings and at least half a dozen unique variants (e.g. "governance" for "governage" in 1.4, spoiling the rhyme, "vertuouses" instead of "graciouses" in 4.12, repeating the last word of 4.9), indicating that it is further removed from the prototype than the other three. Macaulay collated Bodley 294 only very selectively and the Princeton, Trinity, and Nottingham manuscripts not at all, and his record of the variants in G is incomplete (see note 43 below). A new complete critical edition of the *Traitié* may not bring us any closer to the poem as it left Gower's hands but it would help to clarify the relations among these later copies in ways that might also be relevant to the history of the transmission of the *Confessio Amantis*.

[40] On the Latin poem inserted at a later date between *Cinkante Balades* and the *Traitié* and the missing leaf at the beginning of the *Traitié*, see the discussion of the manuscript in the Introduction to my edition of *the Cinkante Balades*.

each of the first two ballades as usually appears on the pages that survive,[41] there would have been room for four lines of text at the top of the page. The heading could not have been the one found in F both because it is much too long for the available space and because T does not contain the *Confessio*. It might have been specially composed for this manuscript, and as in F, it may have drawn either a link or a distinction between the *Traitié* and the work that precedes (in this case the *Cinkante Balades*); but the four-line space that is available is also exactly what would have been required in the T-scribe's hand for the heading as it appears in G.

Other differences among the four early manuscripts are, by comparison, slight.[42] As Macaulay notes (1:lxxxv), the text of the *Traitié* is remarkably stable among all four.[43] None of these copies is perfect, of course, and each has some readings that seem to require correction. For instance, all four manuscripts have "en clos" in 8.17 where the context clearly requires "enclos." Other corrections in each can be made from the other copies, sometimes confirmed by the requirements of the meter. In 16.1, where G and S read "Om truist plusours es vieles escriptures," in place of "es" (for "en les"),[44] F reads "de" and T "et," neither of which makes good sense in context. ("Es" also appears in the "recension 2" copies of the *Traitié*.) There are five or six other readings in F

[41] There is no blank line before ballades 5 and 18.

[42] The most substantive differences occur in the Latin marginalia. MS G includes two words that are lacking in the other copies (see note 39 above). MS F has "transformatum" in the gloss to 12 where the other three copies have "transmutatum" and "sepulcro" in the gloss to 14 where they have "sepulture." In the gloss to 10, finally, F and S have "Paulinu*m*" where G has the more correct "Paulina*m*." It appears that T originally had "Paulinu*m*" but that the *u* has been corrected to an *a*.

[43] Macaulay collated these four copies for his edition, and he recorded variants along with a selection of readings from Bodley 294 in his notes. He missed only one variant in S (12.15 vengeison) and five in T (4 *mar*. sed; 7.12 Quelle; 14.8 quil; 18.13 quil; 18.17 qil), all quite insignificant, but in G he missed as many as he listed, some of them quite important. He also failed to provide a complete record of the heading to "Rex Celi Deus" (see note 29 above), and his transcription of the heading to the *Traitié* contains two errors, "pourront" for MS "purront" and "seintes" for "saintes." The following variants in G should be added to his notes: 1 *gloss* corpus regiminis; 1.5 a lalme; 2.9 faillir; 2.11 enserra; 3 *gloss* matrimonio coniugali; 3.21 esglise; 4.6 com; 4.20 sacorde; 6.4 Pilipp; 6.15 pur; 7 *gloss* filie, ammovit; 7.17 autour; 8.10 lor; 8.14 dieus; 8.18 com; 9.10 Troi; 9.12 subgite; 10 *gloss* Menelay; 10.13 ce; 10.21 halt; 11 *gloss* Elmeges; 11.6 non; 11.7 qil; 11.8 Diel (the *D* by the decorator; small t written in margin); 11.9 seintifie; 11.12 sont; 11.19 quot; 12 *gloss* transmutatum; 12.3 non; 12.9 purpensee; 12.19 transforme; 12.20 qil; 13.2 Canaan; 14.1 lumaine; 14.2 null; 14.6 il *omitted*; 14.7 segur; 15.11 pyement; 15.19 toutes; 16.1 plusoures; 16.2 renon; 16.9 endoit; 17.2 a; 17.6 trove; 17.9 a; 17.18 alendemain; 18.4 cil; 18.10 cel; 18.19 sont.

[44] The contraction "es" also occurs frequently in the *Mirour*, e.g. at 3343, 5593, 7790.

that evidently reflect typical and common scribal slips.[45] There are twelve such passages in G[46] and another three to five in S.[47] S also completely omits four words,[48] and of the four manuscripts, it is the one that would have caused us the most head-scratching were it the only one to survive.

There are five passages in MS T that equally demand correction (in addition to "en clos" in 8.17 and "de" for "es" in 16.1), "sa queinte" for "s[']aqueinte" in 4.15, "tresentisme" for "treseintisme" in 5.13, "quoi" for "qui" in 10.4, "qui" for "qu[']il" in 12.20, and "trust" for "truist" in 15.8. It is not a long list, and the differences are obviously very slight. Another evident error, "Ciel" for "Tiel" in 11.8, may well be due to the decorator who provided the initial rather than to the scribe.[49] T's "embastiront" in 10.18 is a special case. Our dictionaries list only "bastir," not "embastir," and "enbastiront," in the other copies, evidently reflects the common scribal habit of attaching adverbial "en" to the following verb.[50] But the labialization of the *n* before *b* is also not

[45] 3.5 "quier" for "quiert"; 9.6 "se" for "ceo"; 13.11 "falsisine" for "falsine'; 14.12 "l[']autre" for "un autre," spoiling the meter; 17.16 "au primere" for "au primer." Macaulay emends all five of these. The sixth is in 14.3, where F uniquely has "le bible," which Macaulay retains, instead of "la bible; elsewhere, "bible" is exclusively feminine. Macaulay makes three emendations of F merely to make consistent the spelling in the refrain: in 3.14 and 3.21 replacing "esglise" with "eglise" as in 3.7 (and as in two or three of the other copies), and in 13.7 replacing "haut" with "halt" as in 13.14, 13.21 and the other copies. His practice here is not completely consistent: he does not regularize the spelling of "dieus" and "dieux" in ballade 8. It is not clear that these require "correction," moreover. The spelling "esglise," though less common, is not otherwise unknown (also appearing for instance in 3.14 in G and 5.16 in S). "Halt" is much more common than "haut"in Anglo-Norman (there are more than 100 instances of "halt" or "hault" in the *Mirour*, but none of "haut"), but "haut" is the spelling that appears in all three instances of the refrain to 10 in F, G, and S. (T has "halt.") Macaulay makes several other emendations in F where the manuscript reading reflects a common scribal spelling practice, introducing a space into "plusparfit" in 3.1, "plusq*ue*" in 15.12, "endoit" in 16.9, "plusfort" in 16.16, and "endie" in 18.27 and replacing "so*u*n" (with a very common, but optional, abbreviation stroke) with "son" in 18.14.

[46] 4.1 "sa queinte" for "s[']aqueinte"; 4.3 "luy" for "li" (the article); 6.4 "Pilipp" for "Philipp"; 11.8 "Diel" for "Tiel" (possibly the decorator's mistake; small *t* written in margin); 11.12 "sont" for "son"; 14.6 "il" omitted; 15.19 "toutes" for "toutz" (spoiling the meter); 16.1 "plusoures" for "plusours"(again spoiling the meter); 16.12 "agardes" for "agardetz" (an imperative; all the other imperatives in the *Traitié* are in the plural form rather than the singular); 18.4 "cil" for "sil"; 18.13 "n[']aid" for "n[']ait"; and 18.19 "sont" for "son." MS G stands apart from the other three early copies in some other ways that can't be counted as "mistakes." The following readings are equally plausible as the alternative: 1.12 "de" for "du"; 10.13 "ce" for "ceo"; 14.2 "null" for "nulls"; 17.2 and 17.9 "a" for "au." G also has the grammatically correct "filie" (genitive, to agree with "Eolen" after "amorem"), instead of "filiam," in the gloss to 7.

[47] 6.18 "de quoy" for "du quoy" (not necessarily a slip, but "du quoy" is not just the reading of the other copies but also the universal usage in the *Mirour*); 6.18 "sont" for "son"; 9.17 "repentace" for "repentance" (a missing abbreviation stroke); 10.3 "estoit" for "c[']estoit" (not in itself incorrect despite the testimony of the other copies); and "18.2 "cil" for "s[']il."

[48] 6.10 "sanz"; 7.4 "de"; 7.19 "tant"; and 10.4 "se."

[49] Similar errors, evidently due to the decorator, occur in *Cinkante Balades* 12.1 and in MS G, *Traitié* 11.8..

[50] "Scribe 5" does so consistently both in the *Traitié* and in *Cinkante Balades*; "Scribe 4's" practice varies.

uncommon,[51] and it is difficult to count this as an "error," especially since the "recension 2" copies of the *Traitié* also have "embastiront." T has "li" where the other copies have "lui" in 12.6, and though "lui" occurs elsewhere in T, "li" is not otherwise unknown in this context; and where T has "la" where the other copies have "sa" in 15.6, it is difficult to tell which one is preferable, or if either is a "mistake."

In addition, "Scribe 5" appears sometimes to have been less than completely attentive to the requirements of meter and gender, especially with regard to unstressed *e*. In "l[']espousails" (5.15) he omitted a needed syllable, and he added an extra one in "toute" (2.13), "quelle" (8.11), "Tarquinus" (10.8), and "Romeines" (16.6) in this last case turning a grammatically masculine form into a feminine. Other of his unique spellings don't affect the meter. In 7.8, he added a feminine *-e* to "cell" before a masculine noun, but it would have been elided in pronunciation. In "seint" (3.7) and "cel" (13.19), he omitted an *-e* that would have been elided before a feminine noun. (MS S does the same with "seint" in 3.7 and again in 3.14, and it has "cell" where the other copies have "celle" in 16.20.) In 18.19, on the other hand, the T-scribe writes "com" where all three other manuscripts have "come." "Com" also appears in 4.6 and 8.18 in T, G, and S where F has "come," and it appears in all copies in 7.17 and 11.3. "Com" is the more common form in the *Cinkante Balades*, but "come" also occurs, and "come" is the only form that appears in the *Mirour*, more than 80 times. But the difference is purely graphic: the *Concordance* lists 102 instances of "come" plus another 220 of "sicome" and "sicomme," and in none of these is the final *-e* counted in the meter, even when found before a consonant. The T-scribe's exclusive use of "com" rather than "come" in the *Traitié* might suggest, in this one case at least, a small effort to match spelling to meter, which he didn't carry out consistently, however, in the *Cinkante Balades.*

Otherwise, the vast majority of the differences among these four copies are also merely orthographic, the presence of different acceptable spellings of the same word, often varying by only a single letter. One way to measure the differences among the copies is to count the number of unique spellings in each—the number of times that each has a spelling that differs from all three of the others.[52] There are seven unique spellings in F. Of these, five are evidently less common than the alternative in the other copies, as judged by the spellings found in the *Mirour*

[51] M.K. Pope, *From Latin to Modern French* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1934), p. 219.

[52] In counting unique spellings, I have omitted proper nouns. I have not included differences in capitalization, differences between *i* and *y*, the omission or inclusion of *u* after *q*, the difference between *-on* and *-oun* (usually just a matter of an abbreviation stroke), or the inclusion or exclusion of a space between "en," "plus," or "tres" and the following verb or adjective. I have also excluded the difference between *-é* and *-ée* since all evidence indicates that this was another instance in which the unstressed *-e* was not pronounced, and the spelling of many such words varies freely. Final *-é* frequently rhymes with *-ée* in our surviving manuscripts, and there is no instance in either the *Traitié* or the *Cinkante Balades* in which the unstressed *-e* in a word ending in *-ée*, whether noun, adjective, or past participle, counts in the meter. See Macaulay, *Works*, 1:xix-xx.

and in the available dictionaries.[53] S has eight unique spellings, four of which appear to be more common in Gower and elsewhere and four less.[54] And G has twelve, of which five are more common and seven less.[55]

T, on the other hand, has 19 unique spellings in all, in addition to the variants listed above. Unsurprisingly, "Scribe 5's" spelling habits differ from those of "Scribe 4" more than "Scribe 4's" spellings differ from one copy to another. MS T's spelling and the alternative in the manuscripts of "Scribe 4" are both plausible, judging from the spellings we find in the *Mirour*, but in ten, T's is less common in the *Mirour*,[56] and in nine either it is more common, sometimes by a wide margin, or the alternative is not found in the *Mirour* at all.[57]

Using the *Mirour* as the basis for these comparisons is not conclusive, of course, since it too is the product of a scribe who may or may not have reproduced Gower's spelling, but the numbers

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[53] The reading in F is listed first: 4.20 "s[']accorde" vs. "s[']acorde"; 6.11 "pere" vs. "piere"; 10.19 and 11.20 "jugement" vs. "juggement"; 11.18 "estoient" vs. "estoiont"; 13.7 "haut" vs. "halt." Two of F's unique spellings are more common than the alternative, though both are fairly uncommon words: 4.3 "guilers" (vs. "guiliers," which is not found elsewhere) and 7.20 "contretaille" (vs. "contretaile"). In one case the evidence is ambiguous: in 18.12 F has "pource," the only spelling found in the *Mirour* (most often written "pour ce") vs. "pourceo," the reading in the other copies, including T, but "pourceo" also occurs four times in the T scribe's copy of the *Cinkante Balades.* In 10.20, "prestres" vs. "prestre" is perhaps a grammatical issue rather than an orthographic one: the correct rendering of the nominative plural form. Both spellings can be found in this position elsewhere.

In citing the spellings in the *Mirour*, I have made good use of R.F. Yeager, Mark West, and Robin L. Hinson, *A Concordance to the French Poetry and Prose of John* Gower (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1997).

[54] More common: 10.12 "coutell" vs. "cotell"; 11.12 "aillours" vs. "ailours"; 11.18 "ars" (which occurs once in this sense in the *Mirour* and once in the *Cinkante Balades*) vs. "arsz" (which does not occur elsewhere in Gower); 14.3 "enseigne" vs. "enseine." Less common: 5.1 "merveile" vs. "mervaile"; 5.15 "beneiceon" vs. "beneico*u*n"; 5.16 "esglise" vs. "eglise"; 16.10 "poeit""poet."

[55] More common: 1.15 "reson" vs. "raison"; 2.9 "faillilr" vs. "failir"; 8.14 "dieus" vs. "dieux"; 14.7 "segur" vs. "segeur"; 18.10 "cel" vs. "cell." Less common: 6.15 "pur" vs. "pour"; 7.17 "l[']autour" vs. "l[']auctour"; 8.10 "lor"' vs. "lors"; 9.12 "subgite" vs. "soubgite"; 12.9 "purpensee" vs. "pourpensee"; 15.11 "pyement" vs. "pyment"; 18.25 "forvoie" vs. "forsvoie."

[56] 6.R "demonstre" vs. "demoustre"; 7.6 "bataile" vs. "bataille"; 7.10 and 11.5 "fille" vs. "file"; 8.3 "loos" vs. "los"; 8.15 "cloos" vs. "clos"; 12.3 "avoient" vs. "avoiont"; 13.8 "moult" vs. "molt"; 13.17 "esfroi" vs. "effroi"; 15.14 "oiseal" vs. "oisel"; and 17.16 "monstre" vs. "moustre." Three of "Scribe 4's" spellings ("file," "molt," and "oisel") also appear elsewhere in "Scribe 5's" copy of *Tr*. In "monstre" and "demonstre," "Scribe 5" does not make as clear a distinction between *n* and *u* as we would wish, and two of the three occurrences of the verb in the *Cinkante Balades* appear to be spelled with an *n*, one with a *u* (see the note to *50B* 12.21). The scribe of the unique manuscript of the *Mirour* (Cambridge, University Library, Add. MS 3035) clearly distinguishes *n* and *u*, and in the *Mirour*, if Macaulay's transcription is correct, there is only a single example of the verb with *n* and more than 40 with a *u*.

[57] 5.3 "puiss" vs. "puis"; 5.20 "vengance" vs. "vengeance"; 7.2 "d[']arrein" vs. "d[']arein"; 8.17 "queux" vs. "quex"; 10.R "halt" vs. "haut"; 10.10 "nul" vs. "null"; 11.9 "seintefie" vs. "seintifie"; 12.18 "devourée" vs. "devorée"; and 18.4 "aillours" vs. "ailours."

do suggest that where they differ, there is no reason to dismiss the spellings in MS T in favor of those in the three other copies, especially since it was prepared in such close proximity to the poet. But the differences among the four early copies, again, are obviously not great. Taken together, they illustrate the extent to which a text could be altered by the choices and preferences of a scribe, but also the limits to such alterations in ordinary practice. The relative unimportance of these differences is itself significant in another respect, for the contrast it suggests to the problems that the scribe faced in copying the *Cinkante Balades*, which precedes in the same manuscript. The *Cinkante Balades* required a careful proofreading and at least a dozen corrections marked in advance by a cross in the margin.[58] The *Traitié* did not get the same degree of attention, evidently because it did not need it, and the detectable corrections are very few.[59] Many of the erasures and corrections in the *Cinkante Balades* involve whole words; all but one of what might be lapses or misspellings in the scribe's version of the *Traitié* involve spaces or single letters. (The exception is the extra syllable in "Tarquinus" in 10.8.) It appears that the scribe's exemplar for the *Traitié* was in much better condition, and much readier for copying, that that of the *Cinkante Balades*, which is relevant to what we understand about the genesis of both works.

"Scribe 5's" version of the *Traitié* thus has more than a single claim upon our attention: as an illustration of common scribal practices in Gower's circle, as a glimpse into the history of the other texts that the manuscript contains, and not least of all, as an independent and possibly the earliest witness to the text of Gower's poem.

The Edition

In the following edition, all departures from MS T are marked with a degree sign ° and are justified with reference to the other copies in the Textual Notes. Additions to the text are enclosed in brackets. The notes list only the the departures from MS T; they contain neither a full list of variants among the four early copies nor a record of every instance in which T varies, for instance in spelling, from the other three, for which (with the additions listed in note 43 above) one may still consult Macaulay.

In editing the French text of the *Traitié*, I have for the most part followed the same principles as in my edition of the *Cinkante Balades*,

- *i* and *j*, *u* and *v* are distinguished according to modern conventions.
- Capitalization is preserved as in the manuscript except for the single capital that

[58] On the proofreader, which we can speculate might have been Gower himself, see the discussion of the corrections in the Introduction to my edition of the *Cinkante Balades*.

[59] There is only a single cross in the *Traitié* like those in the *Cinkante Balades*, on f. 38^{v} at 18.9, where the initial *Q* of "Qau" may be written in a different hand and where "qau" is also written faintly in the margin. There is another cross of a different shape on f. 34^{v}, between 4.8 and 4.9, but no evident correction. On f. 36^{v} in the Latin gloss at 10.16-17, "Paulinū" (the reading in F and S) has been corrected to "Paulinā" (as in G); and on f. 39, "qil" in 18.17 is written in a larger hand, evidently over erasure.

sometimes appears after a decorated initial at the beginning of a stanza. I have regularized capitalization according to modern conventions only in the translation.

- All punctuation, including the accent on stressed final *é*, is editorial.
- Word division is preserved as in the manuscript except where noted.
- Abbreviations are expanded and the expansion indicated with italics. For consistency with my edition of the *Cinkante Balades*, the three instances of the scribe's *qnt* with a superscript open *a* are rendered "q*a*nt," his normal spelling of the word when not abbreviated, rather than "q*ua*nt"; and *qȝ*, when it appears, is rendered as "q*ue*."

In order to preserve the record of the scribe's spelling practices, however, I have not introduced a space after *en-* when it is prefixed to a verb as I did in the *Cinkante Balades*. I have also made the fewest possible emendations. I have left in place the few metrically superfluous final *-e*'s, and where the scribe omitted a final *-e* that would have been elided but that seems to be required by the grammar (and by the example of the other copies), I have placed an apostrophe. I have removed one metrically superfluous internal *e* (in 16.6), however, and added an *e*, in brackets (in 5.15), that is required by the meter.

The Latin glosses are treated a bit differently. *U* and *v* are preserved, and the only punctuation is that present in the manuscript. The glosses in MS T have also suffered some damage: on ff. 35-37 (ballades 6-13), they have lost one or more letters at the beginning or ending of the line because of trimming of the pages. On f. 35, some letters missing on the right have been supplied in a later hand to the left of the following line, and I have supplied the other missing letters from MS G, placing all of these additions in brackets. To help make the pattern of losses clear I have preserved the line breaks as in the manuscript except where, at the bottom of the page, the scribe wrote the gloss across the space at the bottom of the column of French text.

Macaulay chose to number each group of three stanzas and to indicate line numbers only within each group, in imitation of the numbering of the poems in the *Cinkante Balades*. But while in that work the ballades are numbered in the manuscript, there is no such numbering in the *Traitié*. Since the *Traitié* is a single poem in a way that the *Cinkante Balades* is not, if this were an *editio princeps*, I would have separated each group of three stanzas with an extra blank line, as I have done here and as in the manuscript, but I would have numbered the lines of text continuously from beginning to end. After more than a century in which the poem has been cited from Macaulay's edition, however, we are stuck with Macaulay's system, and I have retained it.

The Translation

My purpose in the translation and in the notes has been, as in the *Cinkante Balades*, to lead the reader back to the original rather than to replace it. I have thus preserved some structures that are somewhat awkward in English in order to make clear how the words relate in the French, and the notes are important for explaining the choices involved when an exact equivalent is not

available. Gower's verb forms can sometimes be a bit confusing. We don't find in the *Traitié* the same blurring of distinctions among future, conditional, and subjunctive that we find in the *Cinkante Balades*, but we do find the future tense being used to express command or obligation (e.g. in 1.7 and 1.14), and there is also sometimes a confusing mix of present and past tense forms, which I have maintained in the translation.

As in the *Cinkante Balades*, I have drawn heavily from the on-line *Anglo-Norman Dictionary* and *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français*, and I have made good use of the indispensable *Concordance to the French Poetry and Prose of John Gower*. There have also been occasions when the *Dictionary of Middle English* has helped explain Gower's usage. (For full references for all these, see the list of Abbreviations in the edition of the *Cinkante Balades*.) The principal value of each of these works lies less in the definitions that they provide than in the citations that illustrate the use of the words that they list in contexts similar to Gower's, from which we can infer an appropriate English equivalent, and while I have often adopted the editors' definitions, there are also instances in which I cite a listing in one or more of the dictionaries in support of what I felt to be a more appropriate choice. I have also, of course, referred to R.F. Yeager's translation, and when Yeager came up with a particularly apt equivalent, I have unashamedly borrowed it (and provided a note). Where our translations differ, I sometimes offer a justification in the notes.

Even with all these sources, there are at least three places (at 1.19-20, 10.9, and 16.15) in which Gower's precise meaning remains, for me at least, elusive. There are also several other words for which we have to puzzle out the meaning a bit, either because Gower is using them in a figurative sense or because the sense that we infer from context isn't well supported from other sources.[60] It is notable that with all but one of these ("receust," at 14.8), the problematic word occurs at the end of a line, in rhyme position. There are also three very general words ("estage" in 1.19, "atour" in 2.20, and "devis" in 3.18) that Gower also uses all but exclusively at the end of a line, here and in the *Mirour de l'Omme*, and that serve as little more than filler. Not surprisingly, the need for rhyme appears sometimes to have governed the poet's choice of word, sometimes to the point of stretching a word's normal meaning.

[60] "Droiture" in 1.8; "entendable" in 1.20; "parfitz" in 3.2.; "empeinte" in 4.17; "esguarder" in 14.13; "receust" in 14.8; "se commune" in 17.3; "contretaille" in 7.20; and "mesguie" in 18.7. See the notes to these lines.

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Traitié°

°[C'est un traitié quel Iohan Gower ad fait selonc les auctours touchant l'estat de matrimoine dont les amantz marietz se purront essampler a tenir la foi de lour saintes espousailes.

I Le creatour de toute creature
Qui l'alme d'o*m*me ad fait a son ymage
P*ar* quoi le corps de reson *et* nature
Soit attempré p*ar* jouste governage,
Il done a l'alme assetz plus d'avantage,
Car il l'ad fait discrete *et* resonable.
Dont sur le corps Raison ert Conestable.

Q*ualite*r creator om*nium* rer*um* deus ho*mine*m duplicis nature ex a*nim*a r*aci*onali *et* hu*m*ana carne in p*ri*ncipo nobilem creauit et qual*ite*r a*nim*a ex sue creac*ion*is p*ri*uilegio sup*er* corp*us* regiminis dominiu*m* possidebit.

En dieu amer celle alme ad sa droiture,
Tant soulement pour fermer le corage
En tiel amour u nulle mesprisure
De foldelit la poet mettre en servage
Du frele char, q'est toutdis en passage.
Mais la bone alme est seinte *et* p*er*manable.
Dont sur le corps Raison ert Conestable.

En l'alme gist *et* reson *et* mesure;
Dont elle avera le ciel en heritage;
Li corps, selonc la char pour engendrure
Avera la bone espouse en marriage—
Qui sont tout une chose *et* un estage,
Qe l'un a l'autre soient entendable.
Dont sur le corps Raison ert Conestable.

II De l'espirit, l'amour quiert continence
Et vivre chaste, en soul dieu contemplant.
Li corps p*ar* naturele experience
Quiert femme avoir, dont soit multipliant.
Des bones almes l'un fait le ciel preignant,
Et l'autre emplist la terre de labour.
Si l'un est bon, l'autre est assetz meilour.

Qualiter spiritus, vt celum impleatur, castitatem affectat, et corpus, vt genus humanum in terra multiplicetur, coniugii copulam carnaliter concupiscit.

A l'espirit qui fait la providence]
°Ne poet failir de reguerdon suiant.
Plus est en l'alme celle intelligence
Dont sanz null fin l'o*m*me enserra vivant

Qe n'est le corps en ses fils engendrant.
Et nepourqant toute fist le creatour.
Si l'un est bon, l'autre est assetz meilour.

A l'esp*er*it dieus dona conscience,
P*ar* quelle om ert du bien et mal sachant.
Le corps doit pas avoir la rev*er*ence;
Ainz ert a l'alme et humble et obeissant.
Mais dieus, qui les natures vait creant,
Et l'un et l'autre ad mis en son atour.
Si l'un est bon, l'autre est assetz meilour.

III Au plusp*ar*fit dieus ne nous obligea,
Mais il voet bien qe nous soions p*ar*fitz.
Cist ho*m*me a dieu sa chasteté dona,
Et cist en dieu voet estre bons maritz.
S'il quiert avoir espouse a son avis,
Il plest a dieu de faire honeste issue
Selonc la loi de seint' eglise due.

Qual*it*er virginalis castitas in g*ra*du suo m*at*rimonio p*re*fertur · ambo t*am*en sub sacre conu*er*sac*ion*is disciplina deo creatori placabilia consistunt.

Primerement q*a*nt mesmes dieus crea
Adam et Eve en son saint paradis,
L'o*m*me ove la fe*m*me ensemble maria,
Dont ait la t*er*re en lour semense emplis.
Lors fuist au point celle espousaile empris
Du viele loi, et puis, qant fuist venue,
Selonc la loi de seinte eglise due.

Et puisq*ue* dieus qui la loi ordina
En une char ad deux p*er*sones mis,
Droitz est qe l'o*m*me et femme pourcela
Tout un soul coer eiont p*ar* tiel devis,
Loiale amie avoec loials amis.
C'est en amour trop belle retenue
Selonc la loi de seinte eglise due.

IV Ovesq*ue* amour qant loialté s'aqueinte,
Lors sont les Noeces bones et joiouses,
Mais li guiliers, qant il se fait plusqueinte,
P*ar* falssemblant les fait sovent doubtouses
A l'oill qant plus resemblont amorouses.

Quali*t*er honestas coniugii no*n* ex libidinis aut auaricie causa, sed t*antu*mmodo q*uo*d sub lege generacio ad cultu*m* dei fiat, p*ri*mordia sua susce-

C'est ensi com de stouppes une corde,
Qant le penser a son semblant descorde.

Celle espousaile est assetz forte et seinte
D'amour u sont les causes vertuouses.
Si l'espousaile est d'avarice enceinte
Et qe les causes soient tricherouses,
Ja ne serront les Noeces g*ra*ciouses,
Car conscience toutdis se remorde
Qant le penser a son semblant descorde.

Honest amo*ur* q'ove loialté s'aqueinte°
Fait qe les Noeces serront gloriouses,
Et qui son coer ad mis par tiele empeinte
N'estoet doubter les changes p*er*ilouses.
Om dist qe Noeces sont aventurouses
Car la fortune en tiel lieu ne s'acorde
Qant le penser a son semblant descorde.

V Grant m*er*vaile est et trop contre reso*u*n
Q'om doit du p*ro*pre chois sa fe*m*me eslire
Et puiss confermer celle eleccio*u*n
Par espousaile, et puis ap*re*s desdire
Sa foi q*a*nt il de jour en jour desire
Novell amo*ur* assetz plus qe la beste.
Sa foi mentir n'est pas a l'o*m*me honeste.

De l'espousailes la profession
Valt plus d'assetz qe jeo ne puiss descrire.
Soubtz cell habit prist incarnacion
De la virgine cil q'est n*ost*re sire;
P*ar* quoi, des toutes partz qui bien remire,
En l'ordre de si t*re*sse[i]ntisme° geste,
Sa foi mentir n'est pas a l'o*m*me honeste.

De l'espousail[e]s° celle beneiço*u*n
Le sacrement de seinte eglise enspire.
C'est un liens sanz dissolucio*u*n
Q'om doit guarder, car quiq*ue* voldra lisre
Le temps passé, il av*er*a cause a dire

pit.

Quali*ter* matrimonii sacramentu*m* quod ex duor*um* mutuo consensu sub fidei iuramento firmi*us* astr*in*gitur p*rop*t*er* diuine vindicte offensam evitanda*m* nullatenus dissolui debet.

Pour doubte de vengance et de moleste,
Sa foi mentir n'est pas a l'o*m*me honeste.

VI

Nota hic contra illos qui nu[per]· sponsalia sua viola[ntes] in penam gra*u*is vindict[e] dilapsi sunt · Et primo na[r]-rat qual*it*er Nectanabus [Rex]° Egipti ex Olimpiad[e] vx*o*re Philippi Regis [Ma]-cedonie magnu*m* Alex[an]-dru*m* in adult*er*io genu[it] qui postea pat*r*em suum fortuito casu int*er*fecit.

Nectanab*u*s, qui vint en Macedoine
D'Egipte, u qu'il devant ot Rois esté,
Olimpeas, encontre Matrimoine,
L'espouse au Roi Philipp, ad violé,
Dont Alisandre estoit lors engendré.
Mais quoiq*ue* soit du p*ri*mere envoisure,
Le fin demonstre toute l'aventure.

Cil q'est de pecché p*re*s sa g*ra*ce esloigne.
Ceo parust bien, car tiele destinée
Avint depuis, qe sanz nulle autre essoine
Le fils occist le piere tout de grée.
Ore esgardetz coment fuist revengé
D'avolterie celle forsfaiture.
Le fin demonstre toute l'aventure.

Qual*it*er vluxes Penolo[pe] sponsus in Insula Cill[i] Circen ib*ide*m Regina*m* ad[ul]-*t*erando Thelogonu*m* ge[nuit] qui postea p*ropri*is mani[bus] pat*r*em suu*m* mortali*t*er ia[cu]-lo transfodit.

Rois Uluxes, pour plaire a sa caroigne,
Falsoit sa foi devers Penolopé.
Avoec Circes fist mesme la busoigne
Du quoi son fils Thelogonus fuist née,
Q'ad puis son p*ro*pre piere auci tué.
Q'il n'est plesant a dieu tiele engendrure,
Le fin demonstre toute l'aventure.

VII

Qual*it*er hercules qui D[eia]-nira*m* Regis Calidonie [fi]-lia*m* desponsauit ipsa*m* [post]-[ea]° p*ro*pt*er* amore*m* Eolen Eur[icie] imp*er*atoris filie° a se p[eni]-tus a*m*mouit · vn*de* ipse c[au]-[te]lis° Achelontis ex incen[dio] postea periit.

El g*ra*nt desert d'ynde superiour,
Cil qui d'arrein les deux pilers fichoit,
Danz hercules, prist fe*m*me a son honour
Qe file au Roi de Calidoine estoit.
Contre Achelons en armes conquestoit
La belle Deianire par bataile.
C'est g*ra*nt p*er*il de freindre l'espousaile.

Bien tost ap*re*s tout changea celle amour
Pour Eolen, dont il s'espouse haoit.
Celle Eolen fuist fille a l'emp*er*our
D'eurice, et herculem tant assotoit
Qu'elle ot de lui tout ceo q'avoir voloit.
N'ert pas le fin semblable au comensaile.

C'est g*ra*nt p*er*il de freindre l'espousaile.

Unqes ne fuist ne ja serra null jour,
Qe tiel pecché de dieu vengé ne soit,
Car hercules, ensi com dist l'auctour,
D'une chemise dont il se vestoit
Fuist tant deceu qu'il soi mesmes ardoit.
De son mesfait porta le contretaile.
C'est g*ra*nt p*er*il de freindre l'espousaile.

Qual*iter* Iason vx*or*em [su]am Medeam relinq*ue*ns Creusam Creontis Re- [g]is filia*m* sibi carnali*ter* [co]pulauit · vn*de* ips*e* cu*m* [d]uobus filiis suis postea [in]fortunatus decessit.

VIII

Li prus Jason, q'en l'isle de Colchos
Le toison d'or p*ar* l'aide de Medée
Conquist, dont il d'onour portoit g*ra*nt loos—
P*ar* tout le monde encourt la renomée—
La joefne dame ove soi ad amenée
De son paiis en grece, et l'espousa.
Freinte espousaile, dieus le vengera.

Qant Medea meulx quide estre en repos
Ove son mari, et q'elle avoit porté
Deux fils de luy, lors changea le purpos
El quelle Jason p*ri*mer fuist obligé.
Il ad del tout Medeam refusé;
si prist la file au Roi Creon, Creusa.
Freinte espousaile, dieux le vengera.

Medea, q'ot le coer de dolour cloos,
En son corous, et ceo fuist g*ra*nt pité,
Ses joefnes fils, queux ot jadis enclos°
Deinz ses costées, ensi com forsenée
Devant les oels Jason ele ad tué.
Ceo q'en fuist fait, pecché le fortuna.
Freinte espousaile, dieus le vengera.

Q*ua*li*ter* Egistus Clemest[ram] Regis Agamenontis [vx]- ore*m* adulte*r*ando · ip*su*m R[e]- gem in lecto noctan*ter* [dor]- miente*m* p*ro*ditorie int*er*fe[cit] Cui*us* morte*m* Orestes fil[ius] eius crudelissime vin[di]- cauit.

IX

Cil avoltiers qui fait continuance
En ses pecchés et toutdis se delite
Poi crient de dieu et l'ire et la vengeance,
Du quoi jeo trieus une Croniq*ue* escrite
Pour essampler, et si jeo le recite,
L'en poet noter p*ar* ceo q'il signifie,
Horribles sont les mals d'avolterie.

Agamenon, q'ot soubtz sa gov*er*nance
De les gregois toute la flour eslite,
A Troie qant plus fuist en sa puissance,
S'espouse, quelle estoit Climestre dite,
Egistus l'ot de fol amour soubgite,
Dont puis avint meinte g*ra*nt felonie.
Horribles sont les mals d'avolterie.

Agamenon de mort suffrist penance
Par treson qe sa fe*m*me avoit confite,
Dont elle ap*re*s morust sanz repentance.
Son p*ro*pre fils Orestes l'ad despite,
Dont de sa main receust la mort subite.
Egiste as fourches puis rendist sa vie.
Horribles sont les mals d'avolterie.

X

La t*re*splus belle q'unqes fuist humeine,
L'espouse a Roi de grece Menelai,
C'estoit la fole peccheresse heleine,
Pour qui° Paris p*ri*mer se faisoit gai,
Mais puis tornoit toute sa joie en way
Q*a*nt Troie fuist destruite et mis en cendre.
Si halt pecché covient en bass descendre.

Tarquins° auci, q'ot la pensée vileine,
Q'avoit pourgeu lucrece a son essai,
Sanz nul retour d'exil receust la peine,
Et la dolente estoit en tiel esmai
Qe d'un cotell s'occist sanz null deslai.
Ceo fuist pité, mais l'en doit bien entendre,
Si halt pecché covient en bass descendre.

Mundus fuist p*ri*nce de la court Romeine
Qui deinz le temple ysis el Mois de Maii
Pourgeust Pauline, espouse et Citezeine.
Deux prestres embastiront tout le plai.
Bani fuist Munde en juggement verai,
Ysis destruit; li p*re*stre vont au pendre.
Si halt pecché covient en bass descendre.

XI

Qual*iter* ex adult*er*io hel[ene]
vx*or*is Menelai Regis [Tro]-
ia magna in cin*er*es co*n*u[ersa]
p*ro* p*er*petuo desolata p*er*ma[n]
sit.

Q*ualiter* ob hoc q*uod* Lucrecia [Ro]-
me Collatini sponsa v[i]
opp*re*ssa p*re* dolore interiit
Tarquin*us* ib*ide*m Rex vna [cum]
Arronte filio suo qui sceleris
auctores extit*er*ant p*ro* p*er*petuo
exheredati exilium subieru*n*[t].

Qual*iter* Mundus Ro*ma*ne mi-
[l]icie p*ri*nceps nobile*m* Pau-
[l]ina*m*° in templo ysis dece-
[p]it, vn*de* ipse cu*m* duob*us* p*res*-
[b]it*er*is sibi confederatis
[i]udicialiter p*er*ierunt.

Qual*iter* Helmeges Miles
[R]osemu*n*dam Regis Gur-
[m]ondi filia*m* Albiniq*ue* p*ri*-

Albins, q'estoit un p*ri*nce bataillous
Et fuist le p*ri*mer Roi de lombardie
Occist, com cil qui fuist victorious,
Le Roi Gurmond p*ar* sa chivalerie.
Si espousa sa fille et tint cherie,
La quelle ot no*u*n la belle Rosemonde.
Cil qui mal fait, falt qu'il au mal responde.

Tiel° espousaile ja n'ert g*ra*cious
U dieus les Noeces point ne seintefie.
La dame, q'estoit pleine de corous
A cause de son piere, n'ama mie
Son droit mari; ainz est ailours amie.
Elmeges la pourgeust et fist inmonde.
Cil qui mal fait, falt qu'il au mal responde.

Du pecché naist le fin malicious.
Par grief poison Albins p*er*dist la vie.
Elmeges ove sa dame lecherous
Estoiont arsz pour lour g*ra*nt felonie.
Le duc qu'ot lors Ravenne en sa baillie
En son paleis lour juggement exponde.
Cil qui mal fait, falt qu'il au mal responde.

[m]i Regis longobardor*um*
[v]x*or*em adult*er*auit · vnde
[ip]so Rege mortali*t*er intox-
[i]cato · dicta*m* vx*or*em cu*m* suo
[a]dult*er*o dux Rauenne con-
[u]ictos pene mortis adiu-
[d]icauit.

XII

Le noble Roi D'athenes Pandeon
Deux files ot de son corps engendré
Qe Progne et Philomene avoient no*u*n.
A Tereüs fuist P*ro*gne mariée.
Cil fuist de Trace Roi; mais la bealté
De l'autre soer li fist sa foi falser.
Malvois amant rep*re*nt malvois loer.

De foldelit, contraire a sa reso*u*n,
Cil Tereüs, par treson pourpensée,
De Philomene en sa proteccion
Ravist la flour de sa virginité,
Contre sa foi qu'il avoit espousée
P*ro*gne sa soer, qui puis se fist venger.
Malvois amant rep*re*nt malvois loer.

Qual*it*er Tereus Rex T*ra*ci[e]
P*ro*gne*m* filia*m* Pandeon
Regis Athenar*um* in vxore[m]
duxit · et postea Philo-
mena*m* dicte vx*or*is sue
sorore*m* v*ir*gine*m* vi opp*re*s[sit]
vnde d*ic*te sorores in p*ecca*ti
vindicta*m* filiu*m* suu*m* infa[n]-
te*m* ex P*ro*gne genitu*m* v[a]-
riis decocionib*us* i*n* cibo[s]
t*ra*nsmutatu*m* comedere
fecerunt.

Trop fuist cruele celle vengeisoun.
Un joefne fils qu'il ot, de Progne née,
La miere occist, et en decoccioun
Tant fist qe Tereüs l'ad devourée.
Dont dieus lui ad en hupe transformé
En signe qu'i[l]° fuist fals et avoltier.
XIII Malvois amant reprent malvois loer.

Qualiter pro eo quod Phar[ao] Rex Egipti Sarrai v[x]-orem Abrahe ob carnis concupiscenciam impudi[ce] tractauit · pestilencia p[er] vniuersum Egiptum peccatum vindicauit.

Seint Abraham, chief de la viele loi,
De Chanaan, pour fuïr la famine,
Mena Sarrai sa femme ovesque soi
Tanq'en Egipte, u doubta la covine
De Pharao, qui prist a concubine
Sarrai s'espouse, et enfist son voloir.
En halt estat falt temprer le pooir.

Cist Abraham, qui moult doubta le Roy,
N'osa desdire; ainz suffrist la ravine
Pour pes avoir et se tenoit tout coy.
Dont il fuist bien; du Roi mais la falsine
De son pecché par tiele discipline
Dieus chastioit, dont il poait veoir
En halt estat falt temprer le pooir.

Soubdeinement, ainz qe l'en scieust pour quoi,
Par toute Egipte espandist la morine.
Dont Pharao, q'estoit en grant esfroi,
Rendist l'espouse, et ceo fuist medicine.
A tiel pecché cel' alme q'est encline
Pour son delit covient au fin doloir.
XIV En halt estat falt temprer le pooir.

Qualiter ob peccatum Regis Dauid de eo quod ipse Bersabee sponsam vrie ex adulterio impregnauit : [sum]mus Iudex infantem na-[t]um patre penitente sepul-[t]ure defunctum tradidit.

Trop est l'umaine char frele et vileine.
Sanz grace nulls se poet contretenir.
Ceo parust bien, sicom la bible enseine,
Qant Roi David urie fist moertrir
Pour Bersabée, dont il ot son plesir.
Espouse estoit, mais il n'en avoit guarde.
N'ert pas segeur de soi qui dieus ne guarde.

La bealté qu'il veoit ensi lui meine

Qu'il n'ot poair de son corps abstenir
Maisqu'il chaoit d'amour en celle peine
Dont chastes ne se poait contenir.
L'un mal causoit un autre mal venir:
L'avolterie a l'omicide esguarde.
N'ert pas segeur de soi qui dieus ne guarde.

Mais cil qui dieus de sa pité remeine,
David, se prist si fort a repentir
Q'unqes null ho*m*me en ceste vie humeine
Ne receust tant de pleindre et de ghemir.
Merci prioit; m*er*ci fuist son desir;
Merci troevoit; merci son point ne tarde.
XV N'ert pas segeur de soi qui dieus ne guarde.

Comunes sont la croniq*ue* et l'istoire
De lancelot et Tristrans ensement.
Enqore maint lour sotie en memoire
Pour essampler les autres du p*re*sent.
Cil q'est guarni et nulle garde p*re*nt,
Droitz est qu'il porte mesmes la folie,
Car beal oisel p*ar* autre se chastie.

Tout temps del an om tru[i]st° d'amo*ur* la Foire
Uq*ue* les coers cupide done et vent.
Deux tonealx ad dont il les gentz fait boire.
L'un est assetz plusdouls qe n'est Pyment,
L'autre est amier plus q*ue* null arrement.
P*ar*entre deux falt q'om se modefie,
Car beal oiseal p*ar* autre se chastie.

As uns est blanche, as uns fortune est noire.
Amour se torne trop div*er*sement.
Ore est en joie, ore est en purgatoire,
Sanz point, sanz reule et sanz gov*er*nement.
Mais sur toutz autres, il fait sagement
Q'en folamour ne se delite mie,
XVI Car beal Oisel p*ar* autre se chastie.

Om truist plusours es° vieles esc*ri*ptures
Prus et vailantz q'ont d'armes le reno*u*n,

Q*ua*lit*er* ob hoc q*uo*d Lanceolo-
[t]us Miles p*ro*batissim*us* Gun-
[n]ora*m* Regis Arthuri vxo-
[r]e*m* fatue p*er*amauit · eciam
[e]t quia Tristra*m* s*im*ili modo
[I]solda*m* Regis marci Auun-
[c]uli sui vx*or*em violare no*n*
*[*t]imuit Amantes ambo
[pre]d*ic*ti magno infortunii dolore
dies suos extremos clauserunt.

Qual*it*er P*ri*nceps qui sue
carnis concupiscencia*m*
exup*er*at : p*re* cet*er*is lauda-
bilior existit · Narrat
eni*m* q*uo*d cu*m* p*ro*bus valen-
tinian*us* imp*er*ator octo-
genari*us* in armis floru-
it et suor*um* p*re*lior*um* gesta
cora*m* eo publice decanta-
bant*ur* : asseruit se de vic-

Mais poi furont q'entre les envoisures
Guarderont chaste lour condicio*u*n.
Cil Rois qui valentinians ot no*u*n
As les Romeins° ceo dist en son avis:
Qui sa char veint sur toutz doit porter pris.

Qui d'armes veint les fieres aventures
Du siecle endoit avoir le reguerdo*u*n,
Mais qui du char poet veintre les pointures
Le ciel av*er*a t*re*stout a sa bando*u*n.
Agardetz ore la comp*ar*iso*u*n:
Le quell valt plus, le monde ou Paradis?
Qui sa char veint sur toutz doit porter pris.

toria sue carnis cui*us* ips*e*
motus illecebros extinx-
erat magis letari : q*ua*m
si ipse vniu*er*sas mu*n*di p*ar*tes
in gladio belliger sub-
iugasset.

Amour les armes tient en ses droitures,
Et est plusfort, car la p*ro*fession
De vrai amour surmonte les natures
Et fait om vivre au loi de sa reso*u*n.
En mariage est la p*er*fecio*u*n.
Guardent lour foi cils q'ont celle ordre p*ri*s.
XVII Qui sa char veint sur toutz doit porter p*ri*s.

No*ta* hic q*uo*d s*ecundu*m iura ec-
cl*es*ie vt sint duo i*n* carne
vna t*antu*m ad sacri co*n*iugii
p*er*feccione*m* et no*n* aliter
expediens est.

Amour est dit sanz p*ar*tir d'un et une.
Ceo voet la foi plevie au destre main.
Mais q*a*nt li tierce d'amour se comune,
Non est amour; ainz serra dit barguain.°
Trop se descroist q'ensi quiert avoir guain;
Qui sa foi pert poy trove d'avantage.
A un est une assetz en mariage.

N'est pas compaigns q'est comun a chascune.
Au soule amie ert un ami soulain.
Mais cil qui toutdis change sa fortune
Et ne voet estre en un soul lieu c*er*tain,
Om le poet bien resembler a Gawain:
Courtois d'amour, mais il fuist trop volage.
A un est une assetz en mariage.

Semblables est au descroiscante lune,
Cil q'au p*ri*mer se monstre entier et plain,
Q*a*nt p*re*nt espouse, ou soit ceo blanche ou brune,

No*ta* hic s*ecundu*m auctores

Et quiert eschange avoir a l'endemain.
Mais qui q'ensi son temps deguaste en vain
Doit bien sentir, au fin de son passage,
XVIII A un est une assetz en mariage.

quod sponsi fideles ex sui regiminis discreta bonitate vxores sibi fidissimas conseruant · vnde ipsi ad invicem° congaudentes felicius in domino convalescunt.

En propreté cil qui del or habonde
Molt fait grant tort s'il emble autri monoie.
Cil q'ad s'espouse propre deinz sa bonde
Grant pecché fait s'il quiert aillours sa proie.
Tiels chante "c'est ma sovereine joie"
Qui puis enad dolour sanz departie.
N'est pas amant qui son amour mesguie.

Des trois estatz benoitz c'est le seconde,
Q'au° mariage en droit amour se ploie,
Et qui cell ordre en foldelit confonde
Trop poet doubter s'il ne se reconvoie.
Pourceo bon est qe chascun se pourvoie
D'amer ensi qu'il n'ait sa foi blemie.
N'est pas amant qui son amour mesguie.

Deinz son recoi la conscience exponde
A fol amant l'amour dont il foloie.
Si lui covient au fin q'il° en responde
Devant celui qui les consals desploie.
O com li bons maritz son bien emploie
Qant l'autre fol lerra sa fole amie.
N'est pas amant qui son amour mesguie.

Hic in fine Gower qui Anglicus est : sua verba Gallica si que incongrua fuerint excusat.

Al université de tout le monde
Johan Gower ceste balade envoie,
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; mais quoique nulls endie,
L'amour parfit en dieu se justifie.

Textual Notes

Abbreviations

F Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 3
G Glasgow, University Library, Hunterian MS 29 (T.2.17)
S Oxford, All Souls College, MS 98
T London, British Library, Additional MS 59495

Title The title by which this work is commonly known, "Traitié pour essampler les amantz marietz," is extracted from the heading that appears in F, the only other of the four earliest manuscripts (with G) in which the opening page is preserved.

Heading The heading and the text as far as 2.8 are from G.

2.9 The text of T begins.

4.15 *saqueinte* FGS; *sa queinte* T

5.13 *treseintisme* FGS; *tresentisme* T

5.15 *espousailes* FGS; *espousails* T (cf. 5.8)

6 *mar*. Here and below, except where noted, the Latin text in brackets is lost in the trimming of T and supplied from G.
Rex added to left of column in different hand.

7 *mar*. *ea* added to left of column in different hand.
filie G; *filia*m FST
telis: *te* added to left of column in different hand.

8.17 *enclos*: *en clos* FGST

10.4 *qui* FGS; *quoi* T

10.8 *Tarquins* FGS; *Tarquinus* T

10 *mar*. *Paulina*m by correction of *u* to *a*; *Paulina*m G; *Paulinu*m F S

11.8 *Tiel* FS; *Ciel* T; *Diel* G (the large capital provided by the decorator)

12.20 *quil* FGS; *qui* T

15.8 *truist* FGS; *trust* T

16.1 *es* GS; *et* T; *de* F

16.6 *Romeins* FGS; *Romeines* T

18 *mar*. *ad invicem* FGS; *adinvicem* T

18.9 *Qau*. Cross and "qau" in margin. Both the *Q* in the text and the "qau" in the margin possibly in a different hand.

18.17 *qil*. Written in a slightly larger hand, evidently over an erasure.

Traitié

This is a treatise that John Gower composed according to the authorities concerning the state of matrimony, by which married lovers can learn by example to uphold the vow° of their holy nuptials.

I The creator of every created thing
who made the soul of man in his own image
so that the body by reason and nature
might be restrained through lawful governance,
he° gives to the soul much higher precedence,
for he made it wise and rational.
Thus reason should be° constable over the body.

How God, the creator of all things, in the beginning created man noble, of a dual nature, with a rational soul and human flesh, and how the soul, because of the privilege of its creation, should have power of governance over the body.

The soul has its rightful place° in loving God,
solely in order to strengthen the heart
in such a love in which° no sinful act
of wantonness° can put it in servitude
to the frail flesh, which is ever transient.
But the virtuous soul is holy and eternal.
Thus reason should be constable over the body.

In the soul lies both reason and moderation;
thus it will have heaven as its inheritance.
The body, for procreation in accordance with the flesh,
will have a virtuous spouse in marriage—
Who° are together one thing and one condition,°
so that they may they be attentive° to one another.
Then reason will be constable over the body.

II The love from the spirit° seeks continence
and to live chaste, contemplating God alone.
The body out of natural experience°
seeks to have a wife so that it might multiply.
One makes heaven pregnant° with virtuous souls,
and the other fills the world with labor.°
If one is good, the other is much better.°

How the spirit, in order that heaven be made full, strives for chastity, and the body, so that humankind be increased on earth, desires carnally the bond of marriage.

He who makes provision° for the spirit
cannot lack the subsequent reward.
Greater in the soul is that knowledge
with which man will live eternally

than is° the body in engendering its offspring.
And nonetheless the creator made all.
If one is good, the other is much better.

To the spirit God gave conscience,
by which one will have knowledge of good and evil.
The body should not have reverence;
instead it should be humble and obedient to the soul.
But God, who creates all natural things,°
has set both one and the other in its place.°
If one is good, the other is much better.

III

How maidenly chastity is preferred in status to matrimony; both, however, under the discipline of a holy way of life, remain pleasing to God the creator.

God did not bind us to perfection,
but he strongly wishes that we be fulfilled.°
This man gave his chastity to God,
and this one wishes to be a good husband, according to God.
If in his judgment° he seeks to have a wife,
it pleases God to bring about worthy offspring°
according to due° law of holy church.

In the beginning when God himself created
Adam and Eve in his holy paradise,
he married the man and the woman together,
by which to fill° the earth with their descendants.°
Then was marriage established fittingly° according to
the old law, and then, when it° had come to pass,
according to due law of holy church.

And since God who ordained the law
set two persons in one flesh,
it is right that man and woman for that reason
should have one single heart in such a way,°
a loyal *amie* with a loyal *ami*.°
It is in love a very beautiful form of service°
according to due law of holy church.

IV

How the virtuous state of marriage takes its origin not because of lust or avarice but only so that increase to the body of worshippers of God may take place according to the law.

When loyalty becomes allied° with love,
then are the nuptials virtuous and joyous,
but the deceiver, when he makes himself most cunning,
often makes them uncertain by dissembling
when to the eye they seem most loving.

It is thus like a cord of tow°
when thought is not in accord with appearance.

That marriage is quite strong and holy
when the grounds of love are strong and virtuous.°
If the marriage is impregnated° by avarice
and if the grounds be deceitful,°
never will the nuptials be favorable,°
for conscience always feels remorse
when thought is not in accord with appearance.

Virtuous love that is allied to loyalty
assures that the nuptials will be glorious,
and whoever has set his heart by such an impulse°
need not fear dangerous changes.°
They say that marriages are risky
for Fortune is not in accord in such a place
when thought is not in accord with appearance.

V It is a great marvel and quite contrary to reason°
that a man should select a wife of his own choice
and then confirm that selection
by marriage, and then afterwards betray
his vow when he as days go by desires
a new love rather more than a beast.
To breach his oath° does not befit° an honest man.

How the sacrament of marriage, which by the mutual consent of two people is very firmly bound under a pledge of fidelity, in order to avoid an offense of divine retribution ought by no means be broken.

The vow that one makes° upon marriage
is worth much more than I can describe.
Under that guise° assumed incarnation
of the virgin he who is our lord;
wherefore, if one looks at it from every angle,
in the order° of so very sacred an act,
to breach his oath does not befit an honest man.

The blessing from marriage
the sacrament of holy church inspires.°
It is a bond without dissolution
that one must keep, for whoever wishes to read about°
the times past, he will have cause to say
out of fear of vengeance and of harm,

to breach his oath does not befit an honest man.

VI Nectanabus, who came to Macedonia
from Egypt, where formerly he had been king,
in violation of marriage raped Olympias,
the wife of King Philip,
from which Alexander was then conceived.
But whatever joy there might be at first,°
the end reveals the full story.°

Note here against those who having violated their marriage fell into a punishment of harsh retribution. And first it tells how Nectanabus, the king of Egypt, begot in adultery upon Olympias, the wife of Philip, king of Macedonia, Alexander the Great, who later by chance killed his father.

He who is near to sin sets his grace afar.°
This was fully evident, for such a destiny
occurred afterwards that without any other reason°
the son deliberately killed the father.
Now behold how was avenged
the sin of adultery.
The end reveals the full story.

King Ulysses, is order to please his flesh,
betrayed his oath with regard to Penelope.
He carried out the same business° with Circe
from which his son Telegonus was born,
who then also killed his own father.
That such engendering is not pleasing to God,
the end reveals the full story.

How Ulysses, the husband of Penelope, on the island of Cilly, in adultery with Circe, the queen thereof, begot Telegonus, who later mortally impaled his father with a spear with his own hands.

VII In the great desert of northern° India,
he who set up the two pillars of brass,
Lord Hercules, honorably took a wife
who was the daughter of the king of Caledonia.
In arms against Achelons he won
the beautiful Deianira in battle.
It's a great peril to violate a marriage.

How Hercules, who married Deianira, the daughter of the king of Caledonia, later completely rejected her because of love for Iole, daughter of the emperor of Eurice, as a consequence of which by the trickery of Achelons he later perished in flames.

Very soon thereafter this love completely changed
in favor of Iole, because of which he hated his wife.
This Iole was the daughter of the emperor
of Eurice,° and she so besotted Hercules
that she had everything that she wanted from him.
The end was not similar to the beginning.
It's a great peril to violate a marriage.

Never has it been nor ever will it be
that such a sin is not avenged by God,
for Hercules, just as the author says,
with a shirt that he put on
was so deceived that he burned himself up.
For his misdeed he bore the reckoning.°
It's a great peril to violate a marriage.

VIII The valiant° Jason, who on the isle of Colchis
won the golden fleece by means of° Medea's aid,
for which he was renowned for honor—
the fame of it runs° throughout the world—
brought the young woman with him
from her country to Greece, and married her.
A marriage violated, God will take revenge.

How Jason, forsaking his wife Medea, joined Creusa, the daughter on King Creon, to himself carnally, as a consequence of which the unfortunate one later died with his two sons.

When Medea most thinks to be at peace
with her husband, and when° she had borne
two sons by him, then changed the intent
by which Jason was first bound.
He completely rejected Medea
and he took Creusa, the daughter of King Creon.
A marriage violated, God will take revenge.

Medea, whose heart was locked in grief,
in her wrath—and this was a great pity—
her young sons, whom formerly she had enclosed
within her flanks, like a woman gone mad
she killed before Jason's eyes.
That which was done, sin brought it about.°
A marriage violated, God will take revenge.

IX The adulterer who persists
in his sin and constantly takes delight
little fears both wrath and vengeance from God,
concerning which I find a chronicle written
to teach by example, and if I retell it,
one can note by what it reveals,
horrible are the evils of adultery.

How Aegistus, having committed adultery with Clytemnestra, the wife of King Agamemnon, treacherously killed the king himself, sleeping in bed at night, whose death his son Orestes most cruelly avenged.

Agamemnon, who had under his governance
all of the elite of knighthood of the Greeks
at Troy, when he was at his greatest power,°
His wife, who was called Clytemnestra,
Aegistus subjected to a mad love
from which afterwards arose many a great crime.
Horrible are the evils of adultery.

Agamemnon suffered the penalty° of death
through the treachery° that his wife had concocted,
for which she afterwards died without repentance.
Her own son Orestes held her in contempt.°
Thus from his hand she received sudden death.°
Aegistus then gave up his life on the gallows.
Horrible are the evils of adultery.

How because of the adultery of Helen, wife of King Menelaus, great Troy, turned to ashes, remained deserted forever afterwards.

X The most beautiful one who ever was human,
the wife of Menelaus, the king of Greece,
it was the mad sinner Helen
for whom Paris was at first made happy,
but afterwards turned all his joy to woe°
when Troy was destroyed and reduced to ashes.
So high a sin it is necessary to bring down.°

How because Lucretia, the wife of Collatinus, of Rome, overcome by force, died of sorrow, Tarquin, king thereof, together with Arruns, his son, who were found to be the perpetrators of the crime, disinherited, underwent exile forever afterwards.

Tarquin too, who had base intent,°
who had raped° Lucretia upon his assault,°
received the punishment of exile without return,
and the grieving woman was in such dismay
that she killed herself with a knife without delay.
That was a pity, but one must well understand,
so high a sin it is necessary to bring down.

How Mundus, commander of the Roman army, beguiled the noble Paulina in the temple of Isis, as a consequence of which he along with two priests allied to him were sentenced to death.°

Mundus was a prince of the Roman court
who within the temple of Isis in the month of May
ravished Paulina, wife and citizen.
Two priests arranged° the whole affair.°
Mundus was banished in a rightful° judgment,
Isis destroyed. The priests go to their hanging.
So high a sin it is necessary to bring down.

How the knight Helmegis committed adultery with Rosemund, the daughter of King

XI Albinus, who was a warlike prince

and was the first king of Lombardy
killed, as the one who was victorious,
the king Gurmond by his chivalry.
Then he married and held dear his daughter
who was called the fair Rosemund.
He who does evil must answer for evil.°

Gurmond and the wife of Albinus, the first king of the Lombards, as a consequence of which, the king himself having been mortally poisoned, the Duke of Ravenna imposed the penalty of death upon said wife and her adulterer, [who had been] found guilty.

Such a marriage will never be favorable°
where God does not bless the nuptials.
The lady, who was full of wrath
because of her father, did not love at all
her rightful husband; instead is she elsewhere° the *amie*.
Helmegis lay with her and made her unchaste.°
He who does evil must answer for evil.

From sin is born the baleful conclusion.
By harsh poison Albinus lost his life.
Helmegis with his lecherous lady
were burnt for their great felony.
The duke who then had Ravenna under his command
pronounces their sentence in his palace.
He who does evil must answer for evil.

XII The noble king of Athens Pandion
had two daughters begotten of his body
who were called Procne and Philomela.
Procne was married to Tereus.
He was king of Thrace. But the beauty
of the other sister made him betray his vow.
A wicked lover receives a bad° reward.

How Tereus, the king of Thrace, took Procne, daughter of Pandion, king of the Athenians, as a wife, and afterwards overcame by force Philomela, the virgin sister of his said wife, as a consequence of which the said sisters, in revenge for the sin, made [him] eat his infant son, born of Procne, transformed by preparations of different sorts into food.

Out of wantonness, contrary to his reason,
this Tereus, in deliberate betrayal,°
from Philomela, [while] in his protection,
ravished the flower of her virginity,
contrary to his vow that he had married°
Procne her sister, who then took revenge.
A wicked lover receives a bad reward.

Too cruel was this vengeance.
A young son that he had, born of Procne,

the mother killed, and in a stew
so brought it about that Tereus consumed him.
Then God turned him into a hoopoe
as a sign that he was false and an adulterer.
A wicked lover receives a bad reward.

How because Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, out of concupiscence of the flesh dealt unchastely with Sarah, the wife of Abraham, a pestilence avenged the sin throughout all Egypt.

XIII Holy Abraham, head of the Old Law,
from Canaan, in order to flee the famine,
led Sarah his wife with him
into Egypt, where he feared the designs°
of Pharaoh,° who took as a concubine
Sarah his wife, and did his will with her.
In high estate power must be restrained.°

This Abraham, who greatly feared the king,
dared not refuse. Instead, he endured the theft
in order to have peace, and he kept silent.°
Thus he was okay. But the falseness of the king
God chastised by such punishment of his sin°
that° he was able to see,
in high estate power must be restrained.

Suddenly, before anyone knew why,
throughout all Egypt spread the plague.°
Then Pharaoh, who was in great fright,
returned the wife, and that was the remedy.
The soul that is inclined to such a sin
for its delight must suffer in the end.
In high estate power must be restrained.

How because of the sin of King David, in that he adulterously impregnated Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, the highest judge consigned the child born to the penitent father° dead to the grave.

XIV Human flesh is extremely frail and corrupt.
Without grace, no one can restrain himself.
This was quite evident, as the Bible teaches,
when King David had Uriah killed
for the sake of Bathsheba, with whom he had his pleasure.
She was a wife, but of that he took no heed.
He will not be secure whom God does not protect.

The beauty that he sees so leads him
that he had not strength to restrain his body
but that he fell° into the pain of love

because of which° he could not remain chaste.
One evil caused another to ensue:
Adultery looks to° Murder.
He will not be secure whom God does not protect.

But he whom God restores out of his pity,
David, undertook to repent so strongly
that never did any man in this human life
receive° so much lamentation and moaning.
He prayed for mercy; mercy was his desire;
mercy he found; mercy does not delay.°
He will not be secure whom God does not protect.

How because Lancelot, a most worthy knight, foolishly doted on Guenevere, the wife of King Arthur, and also because Tristram in similar fashion did not fear to violate Isolde, the wife of his uncle King Mark, both the aforesaid lovers ended their final days in great pain of misfortune.

XV Well known are the chronicle and story
of both Lancelot and Tristram.
Their foolishness° still endures in memory
to provide an example for others in the present.
He who is warned and takes no heed,
it is fitting that he himself bear the folly,°
for a lovely bird is taught by another.°

At all times of the year, one finds the marketplace of love
where Cupid bestows and sells hearts.
He has two casks from which he makes people drink.
One is quite sweeter than spiced wine,
the other is more bitter than any ink.
Between the two one must find the mean,°
for a lovely bird is taught by another.

To some it's white, to some Fortune is black.
Love turns about in quite various ways.
Now it's in joy, now it's in purgatory,
without limit,° without rule, and without governance.
But above all others, he does wisely
who does not take delight in wanton love,
for a lovely bird is taught by another.

How the prince who overcomes the concupiscence of his flesh stands out as more praiseworthy than others. For it tells that when the worthy octogenarian Emperor Valentinian flourished in arms and the deeds of his battles were sung about publicly in his presence, he asserted that he rejoiced more greatly in the victory over his flesh,

XVI In ancient writings, one finds many
worthy and valiant ones who have renown for deeds of arms,
but few there were who among enticements°
kept their condition chaste.

The king who was called Valentinian
said this to the Romans in his counsel:°
he who conquers his flesh over all should be esteemed.

He who in arms overcomes great dangers°
should have the reward for it in the world,
but he who can overcome the urges° of the flesh
will have heaven entirely at his disposal.
Behold now the comparison:
which is worth more, the world or paradise?
He who conquers his flesh over all should be esteemed.

Love keeps arms within its rights,°
and it is stronger, for the profession°
of true love overcomes nature
and makes one live according to the law of reason.
In marriage is the culmination.
May those who have entered this order° uphold their vow.
He who conquers his flesh over all should be esteemed.

the seductive impulses of which he had extinguished, than if he subjugated all parts of the world waging war with a sword.

Note here that according to the laws of the church it is suitable that two be one in flesh only for the consummation of holy matrimony and not otherwise.

XVII Love is called an unbreakable union° of a man and a woman.
This the faith pledged with the right hand requires.°
But when a third one gets involved° with love,
it isn't love. Instead it will be called bargaining.°
He greatly degrades himself who seeks thus to have gain.
He who loses his faith finds little benefit.
One woman for one man is enough in marriage.°

He is not a companion who is common to every woman.
For each *amie*° there should be a single *ami*.°
But he who constantly changes his fortune
and doesn't want to be in just one certain place,
one can well compare him to Gawain:
courteous in love, but he was too fickle.
One woman for one man is enough in marriage.

He is similar to the waning moon,
he who at first appears complete and full/loyal and sincere,°
when he takes a wife, be she fair or dark,
and seeks to have a change the following day.
But whoever thus wastes his time in vain

must well feel, at the end of his journey,
one woman for one man is enough in marriage.

Note here according to authorities that faithful husbands, because of the wise virtue of their behavior, maintain wives most faithful to them, as a consequence of which they grow strong in the Lord in order to enjoy one another fruitfully.

XVIII In property, he who abounds in gold
does great wrong if he steals another's money.
He who has his own wife in his domain°
commits a great sin if he seeks elsewhere his prey.°
Such a one sings "it is my sovereign joy"
who afterwards has grief for it without sparing.
He isn't a lover who misdirects his love.°

Of the three estates,° blessed is the second
which in true love° submits to marriage,
and he who overthrows that order in wantonness
can greatly fear if he does not reform.
Therefore it's good that everyone take care
to love in such a way that he not tarnish his vow.
He isn't a lover who misdirects his love.

In private, conscience° spells out
to the wanton lover the love in which he acts foolishly.
He must also answer for it° in the end
before the one who reveals what is advised.°
Oh, how the good husband enjoys his reward°
when the other wanton one must leave his wanton *amie*.
He isn't a lover who misdirects his love.

Here in conclusion Gower, who is English, apologizes for his words in French if any were unfitting.°

To the community of the entire world
John Gower sends this ballade,
and if I don't have eloquence in French,
forgive me that I err in this regard.
I'm English, and I seek in such a way
to be excused. But whatever anyone says about it,
Perfect love finds its justification in God.

Notes to the Translation

Heading *vow*. Gower uses "foi" to mean "vow," "oath," or "pledge," here and in 5.5, 5.7, 6.16, 12.6, 12.12, 16.20, and 18.13, and in *50B* 1.27, 44.19. In this context, of course,"foi" also embraces "faithfulness, fidelity, honesty" with reference to marriage, evidently the primary sense in 17.2 and 17.6. See *DMF* s.v. "foi[1]," B.2.

1.5 *he.* For the redundant pronoun, see also 8.19, 10.3. 17.12.

1.7 *should be*. To make his argument in the first ballade, Gower takes advantage of the flexibility of the conjunction "dont" and of the future tense form to give two slightly different meanings to the refrain, which we can put into greater relief in translation. As Macaulay points out, in his note to 17.9, Gower frequently uses the future in *Tr* to express duty or obligation, as he does here and in the refrain to the second stanza, but in the third stanza the refrain takes on a different force, offering a prediction on the effect of a virtuous marriage rather than a logical conclusion on the superiority of the soul.

1.8 *rightful place*. "Droiture" is used broadly for "what is right" in a wide variety of situations. See *AND* s.v "dreiture"; *DMF* s.v. "droiture"; and for a rather specific use, signifying "what is owed," *50B* 46.24. The precise implication must be inferred from context. In *MO* 15228, "sa droiture" suggests something like "its rightful duty," while in *MO* 28315 and 28875, both with reference to Christ, it appears to mean something more like "his rightful nature." Either implication works well here in place of this more general translation. Cf. 16.15.

1.10 *such a love in which*. "Tiel . . . ou" is a little unusual, but cf. "tiel . . . qant" in 4.20-21.

1.11 *wantonness*. From Macaulay's glossary; more precisely, "mad delight." Cf/ 12.8, 18.10. In *MO* 9193-9636 "Foldelit" is the fifth daughter of "Leccherie," and of the five it gets the fullest treatment. The compound may be of Gower's invention: it does not appear in *DMF*, and all four citations in *AND* are from *MO* and *Tr*. Macaulay's glossary lists some twenty other compounds with "fol," all pejorative, and most implying a sinful loss of rationality. "Fol" is more commonly used simply for "foolish," but for an equally strong moral implication, especially in the case of love, see *DMF* s.v. "fou[1]," D, and "fol amour" in 9.12 and 15.20 below.

1.19 *Who*. The first puzzle for the translator occurs here in the first ballade: what is the antecedant of "Qui [who]"? The soul and the body, which are united in one person? Or the "body" as a metonymy for the husband and his virtuous wife, who in marriage are one flesh (see 3.16 below)? Or perhaps Gower is cleverly trying to suggest that each union is a reflection of the other. Perhaps less likely, the "Qui" could be an indefinite pronoun rather than a relative, "Those who." Similar use of "qui" occurs 9 other times in *Tr* (e.g. at 2.8 and 4.17), all in the singular, which is by far the most common construction. *AND* s.v. "qui," pr.rel.abs., 1, however, provides a good example of the plural use from the twelfth-century *Romance of Horn*, "Ki vus furent seignur lors vus fussent al pé [Those who were your lords were then at your feet]," and Henri Bonnard and Claude Régnier, *Petite Grammaire de l'Ancien Français*, 5th

ed. (n.p.: Magnard, 1997), p.149, notes that other rare examples occur from the twelfth century on. That would give us "Those who are together one thing and one condition, may they be attentive to one another" (optative subjunctive).

condition. "Estage" (from the verb "ester," "to stand") is another very broad term. Gower uses it in *MO* (often as a mere filler; of its 28 appearances, all but two are in rhyme position) to mean "state, condition, situation" and by extension "rank, level." See *DMF* s.v. "estage," C.2.

1.20 *attentive.* "Entendable" is from the verb "entendre," "to hear," "to understand," as in Modern French, and by extension, "to pay attention to," "to obey"; see *DMF* s.v. "entendre"; *AND* s.v "entendre[1]." The usual sense of "entendable,"therefore, was the passive "audible, understandable"("able to be heard"), but Gower uses it here and in *MO* 16847, 17588, and 29817 (his only other uses of the word, also in rhyme position) in an active sense, "attentive, responsive" and even "obedient" ("able to hear"), for which *DMF* s.v. "entendable," C.1, provides only one other citation, from Deschamps.

2.1 *From the spirit*. Yeager ("Twenty-First Century Gower," pp. 263-65), suggests that "espirit" refers to the Holy Spirit, echoing Romans 8.14-16, in which "Those who are led by the spirit of God are the sons of God," and thus invoking a metaphorical "engendering" that complements "preignant" in line 5 and strengthens the parallel to the literal engendering performed by the body. It is an attractive argument, but "spirit" seems never to have been used unmodified to refer to the Holy Spirit in this way, either in Latin (even in Romans 8:14 it is "spiritu[s] Dei [the spirit of God]," not "spiritus" alone) or in Middle French. Instead, as in ten instances in *MO*, "espirit" occurs in this sense only in such phrases as "l'esprit saint" (*MO* 4447) or "l'esprit de dieu" (27939) or in contexts in which the modifer is clearly implicit. (See also the citations for "Seint Espirit" in *AND* s.v. "espirit" and *DMF* s.v. "esprit," II.A.1.) That precision is necessary because "esprit/espirit" embraced a wide range of meanings. In *MO*, the most common uses are "the soul" in opposition to the body (18 examples) and "disposition, character" in expressions such as "d'humble espirit" (*MO* 12456; 15 examples). "Espirit" is also used twice (in *MO* 14797 and 15029) to refer to earthly manifestations of Satan. Given that range, context must rule, and all contextual evidence in this line points to "espirit" simply as a synonym for "alme," the soul, continuing the distinction from the body in the preceding ballade, as also in each of the two following stanzas and in the reference to "spiritus" in the accompanying Latin gloss.

2.3 *out of natural experience*. "Par experience" is commonly used in Middle French in combination with verbs such as "to see" and "to know" to describe the way in which knowledge is obtained. *DMF* s.v. "experience," A. Yeager, "Twenty-First Century Gower," p. 266, suggests that the collocation of "contemplant" in line 2 and "experience" in line 3 invokes the distinction between the contemplative and the active lives.

2.5 *pregnant*. Macaulay, in his glossary, chooses "fruitful," *AND* s.v. "prendre[1]," p.pr. as a., chooses "receptive of," both on the basis of this line, but though Gower is obviously using the word metaphorically, "pregnant" is the ordinary and common sense in Middle French (*DMF* s.v. "pregnant") as in Latin (Lewis/Short s.v. "praegnans"). Gower uses a similarly daring metaphor in *MO* 17933-34; see the note to *CB* 42.21-22.

2.6 *with labor*. The preposition "with" is suggested by the parallelism to "des bones almes" in the preceding line, but this might also be "the world of labor," taking "terre de labour" as an epithet for the fallen world in opposition to heaven. What appears much less likely is a reference to the "labor" of childbirth (echoing "preignant"). "Labour" has never had that specific sense in French. "Travail" was the ordinary term in that context, in both Middle French and Middle English (*DMF* s.v "travail," A.2; *MED* s.v. "travail," 3.(f)). The *MED* has one citation of the phrase "labour of birth" from "?a1425" and another of "labowr sche had in chyldyng" from "a1438" (s.v. "lā̆bŏur ," 4.b), but the earliest citations in the *OED* in which "labor" takes on this sense without modification dates from 1472 (s.v. "labour," 8.a).

2.7 *If one is good, the other is much better*. This refrain comes as a bit of a surprise, but in the two immediately preceding lines, "l'un" refers to the spirit and "l'autre" to the body. Macaulay (in his note to this line) insists that Gower means the opposite of what he apparently says; Yeager (in his notes to this line and 2.17-18) refers to a perhaps intentional ambiguity, preparing the way for the next ballade. As Macaulay notes, the next two stanzas clearly give priority to the soul; at the same time, Gower preserves the order in which he discusses first the soul (implicitly the "l'un") and then the body ("l'autre"). I don't see any real alternative to taking Gower at his word, or at least, as Yeager implies, being deliberately noncommittal.

2.8 *provision*. "Providence" retains its etymological sense of "foresight," especially "prudential foresight," in both Middle French and Middle English, and refers specifically to God's Providence, with the implication of beneficence, only when so modified. (See *DMF* s.v. "providence," B; *MED* s.v. "providence," (f), (g).) The earliest citation in the *OED* (s.v. "providence," 6) in which "Providence," unmodified, is used as a metonymy for God himself dates from 1602, and Rey, *Dict.Hist.* s.v "providence" suggests that such a use in French also arises only in the seventeenth century. In *MO*, Gower uses "faire providence" in a couple of different ways. In 14922, Contrition "fait du plour sa providence," "makes provision of tears," that is, "provides tears." Closer to the present passage, in 25889, one who acquires riches honestly "molt fait honeste providence," "makes very worthy provision," in contrast to those on whom God will take vengeance; and even closer, in 25031-32, perjurers "Mal font de soy la providence / Contre la mort que vient suiant," "Badly make provision for themselves in face of death which approaches." Neither *AND* nor *DMF* provide citations for "faire providence," but *AND* s.v. "purveance" (from the same Latin root) has three fourteenth-century citations for "faire purveance," "make provision, collect (or seize) of supplies" (the "of" in that definition appears to be misplaced).

2 .12 *is*. Anacoluthon. For parallelism, this should be "in." "Qe n'en le corps"?

2.19 *all natural things*. "Natures" in the plural more commonly refers to "properties, characteristics," but for a similar use, cf. *50B* 49.2, "Amour, qui des natures est regent," "Love, which of natural things is regent." Cf. also *Tr* 16.17.

2.20 *place*. "Atour" is another very general word which can refer to condition, appearance, state, situation, surroundings, or behavior, among other possibilities (see *DMF* s.v. "atour"), and which Gower always uses in rhyme position (15 times in *MO* and in *50B* 35.17). Macaulay (in his note to this line) chooses "condition."

3.2 *fulfilled*. It is easier to follow Gower's argument here than it is to find a translation that conveys the precise distinction that he intended between "plusparfit" and "parfitz." For the first we can infer "perfection," both because of the "plus" and because of the negative. Both "parfit/parfait" and the underlying verb "parfaire" have a broader range of meaning, however. The most general sense of the verb is "to complete," the sense that survives in the "perfect tense," which describes action that has been completed. The adjective and past participle can have different implications in different contexts. *AND* (s.v. "parfit"), for instance, offers "competent, skilled" (i.e., "fully formed"?) as well as "complete, entire" and "perfect" in the sense of "flawless." "Flawless" appears to be ruled out in the present line 2. The lines that follow suggest that there are different ways in which one might be "parfitz," according to the path that one chooses, and Gower turns to defend the worthiness of the second. ""Fulfilled" perhaps serves to keep open the choice while also suggesting, in the second case in particular, an aspiration that should be carried out according to God's direction.

3.5 *judgment*. "Avis," most broadly, is "view," encompassing both "sight, vision" and "opinion, judgment," shading over into "counsel, advice." If "a son avis" (a common expression for "in his opinion") is not merely a filler here, it emphasizes the choice not to seek to be chaste..

3.6 *offspring*. There is perhaps a double meaning here, for while "issue" is used, in Anglo-Norman at least, to mean "offspring, descendant" (*AND* s.v. "issue," 4; there is no equivalent sense in *DMF*), it can also be used more broadly for "result, outcome" (*AND*, loc.cit., 5).

3.7 *due*. Though it creates an awkwardness in the translation, this is the "due" meaning "proper, appropriate, pertinent" that survives in the Modern English expression "with all due respect." See *AND* s.v. "deveir," p.p. as a., 2; *DMF* s.v. "devoir[2]," III.

3.11 *to fill*. "Dont" wouldn't ordinarily introduce a purpose clause, but the subjunctive "ait" suggests that that is what Gower intends here. For another similar example cf. 2.4.
descendants. "Semence" is in its origin "seed," but it is used by extension for "offspring, descendants" (*AND* s.v. "semence," 4; *DMF* s.v. "semence," B.1.c), precisely as is Latin "semen" in the Vulgate (e.g. Genesis 13.16, Psalm 24.13, *et al*.).

3.12 *fittingly*. Though "a/au point," unmodified, can have a temporal use in Middle French (*AND* s.v. point[1]," "at exactly the right moment"; *DMF* s.v. "point[1]," II.B.1.c, "Au moment voulu, favorable [at the desired or favorable time"), it usually appears with a restrictive modifier in such a sense ("at the time *of* or *when* . . .). "A/au point" by itself much more commonly means "exactly right," "completely, fully" (*AND*, loc. cit.), "comme il convient [as is fitting]" (*DMF*, loc. cit., II.B.2.b, II.B.2.d, II.B.2.e).

3.13 *it*. Proleptic: the "new law," not marriage.

3.18 *in such a way*. That is, in the same way. "Devis" is another common and expandable word. Gower uses it 35 times, all but once in rhyme position, and seven times with "tiel" or "tieu," as in *50B* 36.16.

3.19 *amie*, *ami*. On the range of meaning of these two words see the note to *50B* 4[1].7. There, as here, Gower adopts language from the courtly lyrics to his notion of a loving marriage.

3.20 *form of service*. All of the relevant senses of "retenue" in both Middle French (*AND* s.v. "retenue," 3; *DMF* s.v. "retenue," C). and Middle English (*MED* s.v. "retenūe) have to do with

entering into someone's service, being a "retainer" or of someone's "retinue." Compare Gower's use, also with reference to love, in *50B* 8.17, 15.14, and 32.20.

4.2 *becomes allied*. "S'aqueinter" covers a wide range of possible interactions, from mere acquaintance to carnal relations, depending on context (*AND* s.v. "acuinter"; *DMF* s.v. "accointer"), but it is normally constructed with "a" or "de" rather than with "avec." In Middle English, however, one becomes acquainted "with" (*MED* s.v "aqueinten," 1(a)).

4.6 *cord of tow*. "Tow" is "The fibre of flax, hemp, or jute" (*OED* s.v. "tow, n.1," 2.a). Being particularly inflammable, it was sometimes used as kindling (*DMF* s.v "estoupe," A; *MED* s.v. "tou," 1.(b)). It is in that sense that Gower uses the word in his account of how Tereus "sette his oghne herte on fyre" in *CA* 5.5622-26. Here it seems to be instead a cord of unspun fiber, which is to say, of no strength. We'd say "a rope of sand."

4.9 *strong and virtuous*. Both these senses are present in "vertuouses," and both are relevant and appropriate here. *AND* s.v "vertuus"; *DMF* s.v. "vertueux."

4.10 *impregnated*. See *50B* 42.21 and the note. Though this is the sense of all four appearances of this word in *MO*, here it might also be the past participle of the verb meaning "to surround" (*AND* s.v "enceindre"; *DMF* s.v. "enceindre[1]").

4.11 *and if the grounds be deceitful*. Another anacoluthon. Both the "qe" and the subjunctive are difficult to explain (more precisely, this would be "let the grounds be deceitful"), but the general sense is clear. For another use of "qe" where we might expect a different conjunction (i.e., "qant") see 8.9.

4.12 *favorable*. The range of "gracieux" is broad, but while notions having to do with God's grace are not the primary sense, they are not irrelevant here. See *AND* s.v. "gracius"; *DMF* s.v. "gracieux."

4.17 *by such an impulse*. An "empeinte" is a blow or an attack (*AND*, *DMF*), and Gower uses it in that sense five times, spelled "enpeinte," in *MO*. Here and in *50B* 42.10 he uses the phrase "par tiele empeinte" (with an *m*). (All seven uses are in rhyme position.) In *50B* one can imagine "blow" in a figurative sense, but here, Gower is apparently using it even more figuratively as in the phrase "empeinte de folie" ("*empeinte* of madness") recorded in two thirteenth-century citations in *AND* s.v. "empeinte," 3.

4.18 *changes*. "Change" is used in both Middle French and Middle English with specific reference to infidelity in love. See 17.18 and the note to *50B* 1.20.

5.1 *contrary to reason*. Reason is one of the attributes of the soul or spirit in 1.15 and thus a protection against acting like a beast (line 6), but the primary violation of reason in this stanza seems to be mere foolishness, lack of sense, in its own way a harsher condemnation.

5.7 *breach his oath*. For the idiom see *AND* s.v. "fei[1]," "mentir sa fei."

does not befit. The sense is clearer than the grammar here. Cf. *CA* 7.4227-30: "in mariage / His trouthe plight lith in morgage, / Which if he breke, it is falshode, / And that discordeth to manhode." The alternative is perhaps something like "to breach one's oath is not worthy of a man."

5.8 *the vow that one makes*. One could preserve "profession of marriage" in the translation if it couldn't so easily be confused with "occupation." "Profession" is one of three words in this stanza, with "habit" and "ordre," that commonly occur in monastic contexts. See *AND* s.v. "profession"; *DMF* s.v."profession." Cf. 16.16-17.

5.10 *guise*. "Habit" would literally be one's dress or costume, as in *MO* 20947, where it is used, as commonly elsewhere, for the habit of a monk. For the metaphorical use in the phrase "soubtz cell habit," *AND* s.v. "habit" cites only this line. Gower uses the word in precisely the same context in *MO* 17165, where, however, Christ assumes the "habit" of marriage in order to be born without Satan noticing.

5.13 *order*. "Ordre" here might be either a community, as in "monastic order" (*AND* s.v. "ordre," 2; *DMF* s.v. "ordre," II.C.1) or, perhaps less likely, "rite, ritual," used specifically with reference to the sacrament of marriage (*DMF*, loc.cit., II.C.4). Cf. 16.20 and the "sacer ordo connubialis [holy order of matrimony]" of the first line of the Latin verses that follow *Tr.*

5.16 *inspires*. Not just "encourages" or "emboldens" but "breathes life into" or even "fills with divine spirit." See the range of citations (especially those in which God or Christ is the subject of the verb) in *AND* s.v. "inspirer"; *DMF* s.v. "inspirer"; *MED* s.v. "enspīren v.(2)." "Sacrament" is the more likely subject here, "blessing" the object. OSV order is not that uncommon in Gower, but if there are any examples of SOV in which the object is not a pronoun, they are very rare.

5.18 *read about*. The normal object of the transitive verb "lire" in Middle French is a written text; there is no example in either *AND* s.v. "lire[3]" or *DMF* s.v. "lire" in which the object is instead the matter about which one might read, as Gower evidently uses the verb here. But such a use was not uncommon for the verb that meaning "to read" in Middle English. See *MED* s.v. "rēden," 3a.(a), with citations from, among others, Chaucer, MkT *CT* VII.3509, PhysT *CT* VI.107.

6.6 *whatever joy there might be at first*. Perhaps more precisely, "whatever there might be of initial joy." For "envoisure," see *AND* s.v. "enveisure," *DMF* s.v. "envoisure." The general sense is "joy, pleasure," and I can find no support, either in the dictionaries (Godefroy included) or in *MO*, for Macaulay's "trickery, deceit" (in his note to this line) or "concealment, device, snare" (in his Glossary). For a slightly different use of the word see 16.3.

6.7 *the full story*. An apt translation, borrowed from Yeager.

6.8 *sets his grace afar*. There is no really good English translation for "esloigner," "to place at a distance," particularly not one that preserves the contrast between "près [near]" and "loin [far]," the root of "esloigner." For the many figurative uses of the verb in context see *DMF* s.v "esloigner," B.

6.10 *reason*. "Essoine" was commonly used in judicial contexts for "excuse" or "justification." *AND* s.v. "essoine," 1; *DMF* s.v. "essoigne," B. The use of "sanz autre essoine" to mean "without further delay" (*AND*, loc.cit.) doesn't work well here.

6.17 *business*. *AND* s.v. "bosoigne[1]," 4; *DMF* s.v. "besogne," B.1.

7.1 *northern*. *DMF* s.v. "superieur," I.A.2.

7.11 *Eurice*. Cf. *CA* 2.2267. Iole was the daughter of Eurytus of Oechalia. At some point the emperor's name was mistaken for the name of his country. See Macaulay's note to this line.

7.20 *reckoning*. A "contretaille," in both Middle French and Middle English, is "The other half of a tally; usually, the part of the stick kept by the creditor and presented for payment; also, a duplicate tally" (*MED* s.v. "cŏuntretaille," 1.(a); cf. *AND* s.v. "contretaille"; *DMF* s.v. "contretaille," A; see also *OED* s.v. "tally, n.1"). Such a stick (on which the sum involved was represented by a series of notches) could be used either as a receipt or as acknowledgment of a debt, in which case it could be transferred to someone else who would then be responsible for collection (*MED* s.v. "taille," 3). *MED*, loc.cit., also gives a more figurative sense, "a reckoning," and it lists as its first citation *CA* 8.3102*, in a passage that describes the higher love as opposed to love between a man and a woman:

> That love is of no repentaille;
> For it ne berth no contretaile,
> Which mai the conscience charge.

In two of the other four citations, as here, the "countretaille" is clearly a summary of offenses rather than a literal notched stick, a "reckoning," and that sense works well in this line in *Tr* as well. *MED* loc.cit.,1.(b) lists as a second definition "a counter blow, reprisal, retribution; **at the ≈**, in reply," but all the included citations (the earliest of which is from the Clerk's Tale, *CT* IV.1190) seem to refer to a verbal reply or response, not an action. *DMF*, loc.cit., B, offers "'Châtiment [punishment]' (d'apr.Éd. [according to the editor, i.e. Macaulay]" based only on this line in *Tr*. In his glossary, Macaulay indeed lists "retribution" as the only definition, and he also offers it as his translation of "contretaile" in his note to *CA* 8.3102*, where it works less well, and though "retribution" would make sense in this line in *Tr*, it is less well supported than the more neutral "reckoning."

8.1 *valiant*. *AND* s.v. "pru," 1: "a generic term used to express the idealized positive characteristics of an individual, frequently a knight."

8.2 *by means of*. One might say "with," but "par" makes Medea rather more instrumental than mere "ove" or "avoec."

8.4 *runs*. The verb in this line is "court": *AND*, *DMF* s.v. "courir."

8.9 *when*. The "q[e]" is a bit unusual; cf. 4.11. Here it might possibly be a reflex of the common Middle English conjunction "whan that."

8.20 *brought it about*. "Fortuna" is a verb here: *DMF* s.v. "fortuner," A.

9.9 *elite of knighthood*. More precisely, "select or chosen flower.""Eslite," from the verb "eslire," "to choose, to select," the root of Modern English "elect," is also the root of Modern English "elite," Modern French "élite"; see *AND* s.v. "eslire, pp. as a.," 2, "well-chosen, excellent, elite." In addition to its botanical sense, "flour" was used to refer to the best of any group, and it frequently occurred with particular reference to chivalry. See *AND* s.v. "flur," 4; *DMF* s.v. "fleur[1]," B.2.c. For its use in the lyrics see the note to *50B* 4[1].22.

9.10 *at his greatest power*. More precisely, "most in his power."

at Troy. Perhaps belongs at the end of the line instead. The placement of a prepositional phrase or an object before the conjunction that introduces the clause to which it correctly belongs is quite typical of Gower. See the note to *50B* 6.6-7, or for another equally ambiguous example, 13.10 below.

9.15 *penalty*. *AND* s.v. "penance," 1.

9.16 *treachery*. "Treson" had a much broader application that its Modern English reflex. See *DMF* s.v "trahison," "Domaine de l'amour [realm of love]," with three citations from Machaut; and 12.9 below.

9.18 *held her in contempt*. *AND* s.v. "despire," 1.

9.19 *sudden death.* "Mort subite" appears to have been a common phrase for a sudden and unexpected death, not necessarily by execution. See *DMF* s.v "subit," A; *MO* 8615, and *CA* 6.1028..

10.5 *woe*. The rhyme of "gai" and "way" would appear to be irresistible, but "wai/way" was actually an available alternative spelling for "gai" in Anglo-Norman (see *AND* s.v. "gai[1]"; there are no citations with this spelling in *DMF* s.v. "gai"). "Wai/way" meaning "woe, misfortune," was also evidently an Anglo-Norman word (there is no listing in *DMF*), and Gower uses "way" some two dozen times in *MO* in this sense.

10.7 *it is necessary to bring down*. Or to put it in the passive, "must be brought down." For the transitive use of "descendre" see *AND* s.v. "descendre"; *DMF* s.v "descendre," I.C.

10.8 *base intent*. "Pensée," very broadly, can be either the faculty or the content of thought, but something like "evil mind" seems much less likely here.

10.9 *raped*. "Pourgeu" can occur in different contexts with slightly different implications, none of them approving. Cf. 10.17, 11.13, and *MO* 9063, 16772; and see *AND* s.v. "purgisir."
upon his assault. "Essai" is another word with a wide range of meaning, embracing tests of many different sorts. It is also a word that Gower uses exclusively in rhyme position, some 20 times in French (spelled either "essai" or "essay") and another seven times in English ("assay"). In most of these the notion of testing or trial is clear, if sometimes seemingly redundant in context. That sense is certainly much less clear in this line: certainly not "in order to test her," but perhaps "to her trial, i.e. ordeal or affliction," though there is no similar use in any of the citations in *AND* s.v. "assai," *DMF* s.v. "assai"and "essai," or *MED* s.v. "assai." One of several special contexts in which the word is found is "trial by strength." *DMF* s.v "assai," B, provides a small number of citations for its definition "affrontement, assaut [clash, assault]," and *MED*, loc.cit, 3.(a) offers "A test of arms, combat; an attack or sally," all of the citations for which, however, are from 1425 or later. It is equally a stretch, but "assault" is supported by the Latin gloss, "vi oppressa [overcome by force]." Godefroy, s.v. "essai," "essaie," offers "danger," but his definition is not compelled by either of his two citations and there is no support for such a use in any of our other sources.

10.18 *arranged.* "-Ont" often appears where we expect "-ent," as in "estoiont" in 11.18 (see also 16.3-4), here creating a possible confusion between the future tense and the past which we have to resolve from context.

affair. A "plai" is much more commonly a speech, a pleading in a court of law, or a lawsuit, as in the two citations for "bastir un plait" in *DMF* s.v. "bastir," D.2 or the citation from Christine de Pizan in *DMF* s.v. "plaid," II.B. See also *AND* s.v. "plai[1]." For the unusual extended sense evidently applicable here see *DMF* s.v. "plaid," I.c., "affaire, dessein [affair, plan]." Macaulay offers "contrived the whole matter"; see his note to this line.

10.19 *rightful*. *AND* s.v. "verai," 3.

10.19 *mar.* *were sentenced to death*. More precisely, if you wish, "perished judicially."

11.7 *answer for evil.* The primary sense of "respondre," in both Middle French and Middle English, is "to say in reply": see *AND* s.v. "respondre[1]"; *DMF* s.v. "respondre": *MED* s.v. "respǒunden." That sense won't work here, and there is no support for "act in response" (which might in this context suggest "suffer evil to which one must react") in either language at this date. The sense here seems to be instead "to answer for," that is, "to take responsibility [note the root word] for." That sense, while well attested, was more commonly expressed with "de" or "pour" rather than "a," as in 18.17 below, but Gower clearly uses "respondre a" in precisely that sense in *MO* 10846-48, "Paour repense . . q'a ses fais falt qu'il responde," "Fear thinks instead that he must answer for his deeds."

11.8 *favorable*. See 4.12 and the note.

11.12 *elsewhere*. This is an awkward but not uncommon expression for Gower. In *50B* 1.14 he uses "en autre place [in another place]" and in *CA* 1.1314, 2249, *et al*. "in other place" with reference to love to mean to love someone else.

11.13 *unchaste*. *AND* s.v. "immounde," citing this line.

12.7 *bad*. "Malvois" (Modern French "mauvais") can mean "wicked, evil," but in the second instance in this line it seems to refer instead to the quality of the "reward" rather than to its sinfulness. "Bad lover" would preserve the repetition, but it doesn't seem strong enough.

12.9 *betrayal*. Cf. 9.16 and the note, and *50B* 42.5, "Toi, . . . q'as trahi femme meinte [you who have betrayed many a woman]."

12.12-13 *contrary to his vow that he had married Procne her sister*. One wants very much to translate "q[e]" as "with which" instead of "that," but it would be very hard to find another case in which the preposition gets absorbed into the relative pronoun in that way. The sense is clearer than Gower's expression of it.

13.4 *designs*. An apt translation, borrowed from Yeager. On the range of meaning of ""covine" see the note to *50B* 31.22.

13.5 *Pharaoh*. Evidently understood as a name rather than as a title, here and in the gloss.

13.7 *power must be restrained*. More precisely, "it is necessary to restrain the power."

13.10 Macaulay places the comma after "ravine," and he would translate "and he remained silent in order to have peace" (see his note to this line). On this type of inversion of conjunction and modifier see the note to 9.10 above, and for another example, 13.11.

13.12 *punishment of his sin*. Where to put "du Roy" and "De son pecché" is a bit problematic. This might be instead, "With regard to the king, God God chastised the falseness of his sin by such a punishment . . ."

13.13 *that*. On Gower's use of "dont" where one might expect "que" see Macaulay's note to *MO* 217, and for another similar example, *50B* 45.13.

13.16 *plague*. Not necessarily murrain, which is specific to animals. Cf. *AND* s.v. "morine," 2; Genesis 21.17, "plagis maximis," in which the plague is inflicted on the Pharaoh and on his household; and in the Latin gloss, "pestilencia."

14 *mar.* *born to the penitent father.* Lewis and Short s.v. "nascor," I.3, provides several examples of "natus" is followed by an ablative to mean "born to."

14.10 *but that he fell*. This is not an unusual structure for Gower, but it doesn't translate well. Macaulay paraphrases (in his note to this line): "He had not power to keep his body from falling into the pains of love."

14.11 *because of which*. A somewhat unusual use of "dont." The whole passage would be a little less awkward if the "celle" of line 10 were "telle" instead (not Gower's usual spelling, but there are four examples in *MO*): "into *such* a love *that* he could not remain chaste." On "telle . . . dont," cf. 13.12-13.

14.13 *Adultery looks to Murder*. "Esguarde" is another rhyme word that strains interpretation. The primary sense of the verb is "to see," used in context to mean "to observe," "to consider," and by extension "to judge" (*AND* s.v. "agarder"; *DMF* s.v. "esgarder"). Gower uses it in the sense of seeing or beholding several times in *MO* (spelling it variously "agar-," "aguar-," "esgar-," and "esguar-"). "Esguarder a," however, is not common. There are no citations of such in *DMF*. *AND* has three, which it translates as "to look on (at); to examine; to award, grant, permit." In the two instances in which the "a" appears after the verb in *MO* (in 2157 and 2265), the expression as a whole seems to mean "to pay attention to." None of these works particularly well in this line. If there is no help in French, we might find a better explanation in English. We still use the expression "look to" in the sense of "turn to for assistance." *MED* s.v. "lōken, v.(2)," 8(a) b. provides " **~ to (til)**, to pay attention to (sth.), give heed to (sth.), turn to (sb.) for help or guidance." The first definition explains the two uses of "agarder a" in *MO.* For the last definition, the best citation is from a thirteenth-century *Dialogue on Vices and Virtues*, " Alle hie..to ðe lokið, all hwat ðu send hem sume aliesendnesse [they all look to you, that you send them some relief]." If this is the sense, then Gower has resorted to a kind of semi-allegory of the sort one finds throughout *MO*, and I consequently (and in order to avoid confusion with an infinitive construction) capitalize "Adultery" and "Murder."

14.18 *receive*. One wants to write "undertake" or "perform" here, but neither would be an ordinary use of "receust." The verb can mean "to undergo, suffer, sustain" (*AND* s.v. "receivre," 5; see also *DMF* s.v. "recevoir," II.B.2), but normally only in contexts in which the subject is the recipient rather than the actor as in this line.

14.20 *delay*. "Point" is the bane of the translator, its range of uses being so broad (cf. 15.18). Most likely here is a temporal sense, "moment, favorable moment" (*DMF* s.v. "point[1]," II.B), which

can thus be absorbed into the intransitive "tarde [delay]," rather than the sense reflected in *CA* 3:1560-61, "Bot for no merci that I crave, / Of merci nevere a point I hadde."

15.3 *foolishness*. On "sotie," see *50B* 22.5 and the note.

15.6 *bear the folly*. The sense seems to be to endure the consequences of his foolishness.

15.7 *for a lovely bird is taught by another.* Macaulay cites *MO* 7969, "Oisel par autre se chastie [a bird is chastised by another]." Haskell O45, "Oiseus par autre se chastie," cites only these two passages in Gower, but it cross-reference C101, "Bien se châtie (corrige) qui par autre se châtie (corrige)," with nearly 20 examples from the 14th and 15th centuries. *DMF* s.v. "chastier," under the "Proverbes" tab, provides another set of contemporaneous examples with more of the surrounding context, which make it clear that the sense is "he learns well who learns from the example of others." Gower's brief paraphrase seems to count on familiarity with the longer version. Putting it as briefly in English is a challenge. In particular, "taught" doesn't capture all of the force of "se chastie," which embraces both "is corrected" and "is reproved."

15.13 *find the mean.* More precisely perhaps, "moderate oneself." In AND s.v. "modifier," Gower's only two uses of this verb, here and in *MO* 13632, are the only citations for the definition "to moderate, alter oneself." This sense is more commonly expressed by the verb "moderer" (cf. *DMF* s.v "moderer," I.B, II), and it is not recorded in *DMF* s.v. "modifier" at all. Chaucer uses "modifie" in the sense of "alter" in KnT *CT* I.2542. Otherwise, the earliest citations in *MED* are from Gower, and in the sense of "To set limits to (sth.), keep within bounds of reason, control; also, be moderate, choose a middle course between two things" (*MED* s.v. "modifīen," 1.(a)). Gower uses the verb in English three times, only in this sense, in *CA* 7.2153, 4210, and 5379. This was evidently not that common a word, and the sense in which Gower uses it is perhaps not only distinctly English but also distinctly Gowerian.

15.18 *limit*. Gower uses a very similar line in *50B* 13.5 and *MO* 948 and 9453, ending in "mesure" rather than "governement," but suggesting in all three cases, as here, a lack of restraint and disorderliness. Finding a good equivalent for "point" is the only difficulty. I can find no justification for taking it to mean either "main idea" (as in "What's your point?") or "purpose," and as in *50B* 13.5 (see the note), the best that I can offer is "without (measurable) limit."

16.3 *enticements*. *AND* s.v. "enveisure," 5. Cf. 6.6 and the note.

16.6 *in his counsel*. This might be instead "in his view," with an implicit colon after "dist" in French, "Romans" in English.

16.8 *dangers*. *AND* s.v. "aventure," 2; *DMF* s.v. "aventure," III. The sense is compelled by the verb "veint."

16.10 *urges*. *AND* s.v. "pointure," 2.

16.15 *Love keeps arms within its rights*. This is the most puzzling line in *Tr*, and it is all the more troubling since the rest of the stanza is so clear. I take the opening of the stanza as Gower's attempt to continue the comparison between military conquest and the metaphorical conquest of the flesh. Love is stronger than "armes" because it "makes one live according to the law of reason," which is a greater accomplishment than mere feats of valor. The problem is fitting in "tient en ses droitures." I offer without conviction my best attempt at a solution.

16.16 *profession*. As in 5.8, not "occupation," but the act of professing one's adherence to duties and obligations, often used with reference to religious vows, preparing line 20 below. See *AND* s.v. "profession"; *DMF* s.v."profession."

16.20 *may those who have entered this order*. *AND* s.v. "ordre," "prendre l'ordre (de): to take monastic vows, enter the order (of)"; cf. *DMF* s.v. "ordre," II.C.3, "Prendre ordre de prestre. 'Entrer dans les ordres, être ordonné prêtre.' [enter holy orders, be ordained as priest]" In form, this might be indicative, "those who have entered this order uphold their vow"; but the word order and the sense suggest the subjunctive instead.

17.1 *an unbreakable union*. A line in which the sense is clearer than the grammar. I take "sanz-partir" (which is spelled as two words in all copies) as a nonce compound, similar to the names that Gower invents for some of the sins and virtues in *MO*, in order to preserve the parallelism to "ainz serra dit barguain" in line 4. "Dit" for "called" is not unusual: see *MO* 5203, 7991, 17174, 25987; *50B* 51.4.

17.2 This entire line is borrowed from Macaulay's note.

17.3 The general sense here is clear, but precisely how to translate it is less certain. In his glossary, for "se communer," here and in *MO* 6638, Macaulay gives "associate with, share." "Share" certainly works in this line (and not in *MO* 6638), and it is easy to see how this sense of the verb might derive from the ordinary use of the adjective "commun." It is difficult to find any other instance in which the reflexive form is used in this way, however. *DMF* s.v. "communier" lists two general senses for the verb, the second having to do with the sacrament of communion, the first with communication, and for "Se communier à qqn." it gives "Entrer en communication avec qqn [enter into communication with someone]" (loc.cit., I.B); see also Godefroy s.v. "communier." *AND* s.v. "communer[3]," 1, does list "share" as its first definition for the verb, but only as used transitively. The range of contexts in which the verb appears in Anglo-Norman is evidently wider than is recorded in *DMF*, but for the reflexive use, *AND* lists only a single citation, providing the definition "to associate (with), have relations (with)." That is clearly the sense in *MO* 6638, where the construction is "se commune . . . a," and also in 13634, where the verb appears alone. Gower's only other use of "se commune de" (which is also his only other use of the verb) is in *MO* 8171-72: "Quant il se volra communer / D'Yvresce, falt q'il le compiere," "When he wants to *se communer* with Drunkenness, he has to pay the price." "Gets involved with" works in both these passages, and it isn't that far from the other uses of the reflexive form of the verb.

17.4 *bargaining*. In *MO* 17269-70, Gower denounces marriages that are made for money rather than for love, using much the same words as in these lines: "Mais tiel contract q'est fait pour gain / N'est mariage, ainz est bargain [but such a contract that is made for gain isn't marriage; instead it's bargaining]." Genius also denounces those who "love" for money in *CA* 5.2514-2640, under the heading of "Coveitise." That doesn't seem to be a central issue in the *Traitié*, but Gower does express a similar concern in 4.10.

17.7 Cf. *CA* 5.4657: "O wif schal wel to the suffise."

17.9 *each* amie. Like "soulain" (see the next note), "soule" could indicate uniqueness (hence "each") as well as solitariness. It was also used, like modern English "single," in contexts referring to an

unmarried state, but that sense seems rather less relevant here. See *AND* s.v. "sul," 1' *DMF* s.v. "seul," 1.

a single ami. That is, one lover alone. "Soulain" was evidently uncommon: it has no listing in *AND*, and *DMF* s.v. "solain" has only a single citation, from *MO* 74. Gower uses the word some three dozen times in *MO* and *50B*, however, spelled either "sol-" or "soul-," usually to mean unaccompanied but also, as here, to emphasize uniqueness, as in *50B* 10.1, "mon coer avetz souleine," "you alone have my heart."

17.16 *complete and full/loyal and sincere*. Gower's play on words here can't be translated directly into English. Both "entier" and "plein" can apply both to the moon and to the insincere lover, but in different senses. With reference to the moon, both words take their most literal sense, "complete" and "full"; see in particular *DMF* s.v. "plein," I.B.1.d. "Entier" is also used in Middle French with reference to humans to mean "loyal, sincere" (*AND* s.v. "enter[1]," 4), "fidèle, loyal [faithful, loyal]," "vertueux, sincère, intègre [virtuous, sincere, honest]" (*DMF* s.v. "entier," C.1.a, C.1.b). For "plain" we have to look a bit further. There is no good equivalent in either *AND* or *DMF*, but *MED* s.v "plain(e," 4a.(e) gives "of persons, the heart, the will: candid, honest, sincere, truthful," with two citations from Gower: *CA* 1.734-36, "I have . . . Be plein withoute Ypocrisie"; and "IPP" 308, "Bot wher the herte is plein withoute guyle."

18.3 *domain*. A "bonde" could be a boundary, a boudary marker, or an "area, land within boundaries" (*AND* s.v. "bounde[1]," 2), which is clearly the sense in which Gower uses the word in *MO* 22197, 22236, and 22309, and with reference to a figurative "territory" or "domain" in 8202. (In his only other use, in *MO* 4053, it signifies "limit." In 8202 and 22309, as he does here, Gower rhymes "bonde" with "habonde.) This is evidently an Anglo-Norman form. It has no entry in *DMF*, which instead lists "borne" with a similar range of meanings. Middle English "bound" has the same range; see *MED* s.v. "bŏund(e," 3.(b), citing *CA* 7.3024. "Bond" in the sense of "binding" is a completely different word, exclusively English rather than French (*MED* s.v. "bo͞nd," "from ON 'band,' akin to OE 'bend'"), but it is not impossible that it lurks in the background of Gower's choice here.

18.4 *prey*. This common meaning of "proie" (*AND* s.v. "preie[1]"; *DMF* s.v. "proie," A), used figuratively here, extends the metaphor implied in "bonde" in the preceding line, but "proie" is also used elsewhere in contexts in which the "prey" is an object of seduction (*DMF*, loc.cit., C).

18.7 *who misdirects his love*. The word order could give us either "who misdirects his love" (perhaps more consistent with the idea of sticking to one's own spouse) or "whom his love misguides" (the more general moral reflection). For "qui" as object, cf. 14.7, 14.15. "Mesguie" was evidently fairly uncommon. *AND* s.v. "mesguier" lists only two citations, one of them this line. It translates "to mislead, to deceive," which works in the first citation (a king deceives his followers and himself) but not well in this line ("who deceives his love"?) unless we take "amour" to mean "beloved," a sense that does not occur elsewhere in either *50B* or *Tr*. *DMF* s.v "mesguyer" offers "mal diriger [misdirect]" as translation, but it lists no citations, referring only to the entry in *AND*. Gower uses the verb only once in *MO*, in 16732, "C'est par les oils qui l'en mesguie," where the sense is evidently intransitive, "goes astray." "Misguide" is used in Middle English, but evidently equally rarely. *MED* s.v. "misguīden" lists only three citations,

CA 8.2920 (Gower's only use of the word), MkT *CT* VII.2533 ("mysgyed," Chaucer's only use of the word), and one other from the late fourteenth century, in all three of which it is used in the reflexive to mean "To direct oneself badly, go astray, deceive oneself; also, conduct oneself badly, misbehave." *AND* also lists "malguier," "to misdirect, misguide," with a single citation from 1312. There is no conclusive answer here, and there is actually no requirement that the refrain have precisely the same sense in all three stanzas.

18.8 *three estates*. The three "estates"—widowhood, marriage, and virginity—like so much else in medieval discussions of marriage, derive ultimately from Paul's advice in 1 Corinthians 7. It is not clear that they were listed in any fixed order, but the second, temporally, is marriage, whichever other came first. Gower says only that it is "blessed," not "most blessed."

18.9 *true love.* On "droit amour" see the note to *50B* 4[1].3.

18.17 *answer for it*. A well attested idiom. See *AND* s.v. "respondre[1]," v.intrans., "respondre de, pur," "to answer for, render account of"; "respondre de, pur ses faits," "to be responsible, accountable for one's actions"; also *DMF* s.v. "respondre," I.A.2.b. Cf. 11.7 and the note.

18.18 *reveals what is advised*. More precisely, "discloses the counsels." I take the line as a whole to mean, somewhat more colloquially, "before the one who makes the rules." *DMF* s.v. "conseil," I.B.2, provides four citations from the mid- to late-fifteenth century in which divine "conseils" are described as a milder form of commandment.

18.19 *enjoys his reward*. "Makes use of his good," if you wish, which can mean several things, but the sense seems to be determined by the opposition to the following line, and it is supported by the Latin gloss. The noun "bien" can be the opposite of "mal [evil]," but it is also commonly used for other "goods": see *AND* s.v.. "bien," s., 2, "advantage, good fortune"; 3, "well-being, prosperity," and 4, "wealth, property, possession"; and *DMF* s.v. "bien," III.C., "Ce qui appartient à qqn [what belongs to someone]."

18 gloss *unfitting*. Or "unsuitable." Gower might use "incongruus" to refer either to to his faulty diction or to his claimed lack of eloquence, and the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* provides a citiation from Ockham in which it ckearly means "ungrammatical" (s.v. "incongruus," 1.e).