DANTE’S CHOICE OF PROVENÇAL EXAMPLES IN THE DE VULGARI ELOQUENTIA

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Interest in the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* grows; editions, some intended for a non-philological audience, multiply. Poets are no longer ashamed to think of verse-making as something that can in part be learned from text-books written by masters.

It might seem axiomatic that discussions of verse depend on examples, and on examples that are looked at closely. It is true that some of the more visible formal elements of verse are simple enough to be discussed out of a verse-context; for instance, elements like organisation of the strophe in subsections, or choice of line-length. Yet even here discussion without examples is empty. Dante’s point about these things is the way that they affect the *success* of verse—that is, that some of these elements have been used by poets to help them make ‘illustrious’ verses; therefore, that they are valuable elements. Now the proof of the assertion that they have been used by poets to help make ‘illustrious’ verses is in the poems themselves; that is, in their interaction in the individual poems with all the other elements therein.

These other elements will be such things as Dante discusses elsewhere in his essay: word-sound (‘combed’ and ‘shaggy’ words), image (partly implied in his discussion of choice of subject-matter), and the rest. Now some of these are a great deal less ‘visible’, much harder to perceive the exact quality of in particular cases, than for example strophic form. Think of word-sound; think also of ‘regulated arrangement of words’ (choice of syntax in conjunction with the ordering of ideas according to their qualities and relative significance, and so on). Further, it is clear that in any one poem a great many such subtly-variable factors are reacting together. They cannot be exhaustively discussed as to their interaction in any one poem, whether in Dante’s *De Vulgari Eloquentia* or in any other treatise. The reader must be asked to experience them for himself. So that if Dante makes such an assertion as that eleven-syllable lines have been used in the past by poets to contribute towards the successful making of illustrious poems, the only way in which he can prove the past coexistence of this line, and this illustriousness, is to thrust under the reader’s nose examples.

The example-poems are the pith and meat of the treatise. To be exact, their inner workings are its meat. Unfortunately, the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* manuscripts give only their first lines (whether because of a tactical decision on Dante’s part, or because of some scribe’s economising). Editors
most usually follow the manuscripts in this; adding, however, translations of these first lines, as if that would advance the reader nearer to Dante's point in citing the particular poems. Some remarks about their authors, and perhaps the poems themselves, may be offered, of a very general nature.

What the reader needs, to read the treatise as I think Dante meant it to be read, is Provençal texts, cribs, and some guiding comments. Chaytor attempted this honourable task of 'vulgarisation' (as he put it) in 1902, but provided only a glossary, with no cribs, and no analysis of poetic means. The reader has been left with the separate editions of the Provençal poets, if he could obtain them, and if he could read the languages in which their editors wrote (the plight of the English reader is now alleviated by Wilhelm's useful edition of Arnaut Daniel, and will be yet further by Padén's forthcoming Bertran de Born). My aim here is simply to provide the reader with materials to help him learn from Dante's remarks as they are exemplified from Provençal.

In parenthesis, here, one may perhaps glance at one curious symptom of an attitude to verse. Those for example who have accepted Santangelo's discussions must presumably have assumed with him that the Provençal poems Dante cites are in fact interchangeable with a hundred others, since Dante chose them for quite external reasons—that they were the ones that were first in order in his Provençal manuscript, and so on. Thus the only reason that Dante cited these particular poems was to give his rhetoric an air of specificity; he was not interested in the bodies of them, as distinct from the bodies of other poems identical in the one formal aspect he was discussing.

It would follow that Dante need not have cited first lines at all; but could simply have said 'various Provençal verses'. Thus also that to him all Provençal verse was more or less equally good. Thus also that he used the term 'illustrious' as something naturally belonging to Provençal verse as a lump, because it was old, because it was not the local product, and so on (though he attacks just such reasons for awe concerning it, in Convivio I. xi). It would follow also that his own precision and fineness in verse had not enabled him to distinguish between qualities in the Provençal material; still less was any evidence of his having learned from that material. These corollaries alone seem to me to demonstrate the absurdity of the premise. And it would also follow, finally, that Dante actually had very little Provençal manuscript in his hands; which is a corollary whose unlikelihood I have tried to show in some detail, in pages 203 ff. of my Provençal and Pound.

I take it that Dante learned from the Provençal poems he cites (and wanted his reader to learn from them) as from wholes, in which the formal elements he names matter in so far as they modulate the total emotion. Dismembering these poems, I wish to find out why he named these poems in particular as clinching, by their 'illustriousness', his arguments about the function of specific formal elements in verse.

The test, indeed the meaning, of a great part of what Dante says is in the intimate joints and
textures of his examples, but, unfortunately, the examples from the troubadours are irrevocably in Provençal. Two kinds of help might be offered here, both valuable, and both limited. One would be 'poetic' translation: the reader might, through it, experience something of the spirit of the original; he must then try to imagine how that spirit might (in the original) have arisen from those formal features of the original (metre, word-sound, syntax) which constitute half of Dante's subject in this treatise — and which would probably have been abandoned by the translation in just such degree as it had captured the original's spirit. The other kind of help would be to offer literal versions as guides to the originals, printed opposite them; and this I have attempted.

Texts in the present article are taken from standard critical editions, with a few emendations. Notes are a synthesis from available scholarship, and concern only those things that have some weight in the denotational, syntactical, 'sonorific' and 'imagic' structures, and that are thus elements a poet might take note of. I pass over troubadour mentions which do not illustrate the craft of verse through specific examples of it (Sordello in XV. i, Peire d'Auvergne in I. x, and Giraut de Borneil — a philosophical point — in I. ix). For the remarks about Arnaut Daniel in II. x and Aimeric de Belenoi in II. xii, see my discussion of Arnaut's Si'm fos Amors as cited in II. xiii and Aimeric's Nulhs hom no pot as cited in II. vi.

I should like, finally, to acknowledge the generous help of Dr. W.M. Hackett with the many problems of translation that I have consulted her about; and to thank Professor Akira Yasukawa for his stimulus towards the writing of this article.

BERTRAN DE BORN: NO PUOSC MUDAR

(D.V.E. II. ii)

In 1187 Bertran tried to fan the trouble between Richard and Henry II (on the one side) and King Philip of France (on the other) about rights in the County of Toulouse; the conflict was then damped by the Church's call for a crusade. But in 1188 war broke out between Richard and the Count of Toulouse, and the King of France entered on the side of Toulouse. Bertran wrote this song, praising Richard and mocking Philip of France, to try to intensify the conflict.

Dante's theme, in D.V.E. II. ii, is that subject-matter matters a great deal: you cannot write great verse about trivia. He decides that Arms, Love and Righteousness are the three most important subjects; and 'the illustrious writers have written poetry in the vulgar tongue on these subjects exclusively; namely, Bertran de Born on Arms, Arnaut Daniel on Love, Giraut de Borneil on Righteousness...’ And he goes on to cite Bertran's No puosc mudar and a poem each by Arnaut and Giraut.

Now Dante's example-poems cannot logically prove that illustrious writers have never written
on other subjects. But to take the one by Bertran as an example: it can at least prove that 'Arms' has been a subject brilliantly treated by a poet, who is therefore illustrious. We must try to show both that the poem is illustrious, and that its subject-matter — Arms — is an important component of it, not trivial but shaping.

It does indeed have the subject of a certain kind of fighting in its fibre; its whole character is informed by it. This kind of fighting is that which knights and lords were privileged to practise in Bertran's time, and its chief characteristic (as it shows here) is vigour in an environment of freshness. The poem has vigour in its verbs: not 'sing a song' but un chantar... esparja, 'scatter a song' (the metaphor is in the verb alone); not 'has begun fighting', but 'has started fires and drawn blood'. The seen physical object adds to this immediacy of scene; for it becomes inextricably involved in the actor's sense of total emotional situation, and (as Eliot said) in turn evokes it; so Bertran does not stop at saying 'the pomp (extravagance) of the kings', but goes on to say 'For now they will need pegs, cords, and tent-caps'. A little of this is enough to make the scene live, if it is the right detail, as Dante's practice shows in the Divine Comedy, and it does not matter whether it originates with the poet, or (as critics now strive to show) with the spoken and written language around him: 'rightness is all'.

No puosc mudar has a good quantity of meat; it does not repeat and thin out one aspect of a situation, or fall to glossy vagueness, but shows quite a different element of the whole complicated situation in each stanza. That the poet is aware of all these things suggests alertness and vigour; that he hurries on from one core of action to another without padding is one plane of this poem's overall delight in energy. It is true that the lack of a cogent, necessitated order of ideas shows a limitation of this emotion: each stanza in effect addresses a major participant in his turn, but it does not really matter who comes next; Bertran is simply enjoying himself. Part of the vigour of the whole is the familiar, therefore half-laughing, directness with which he speaks of great princes his allies and enemies: not 'Richard is not dealing altogether honestly with me', but 'I know Richard is loading me a die'. Visual humour is in the image of poor Philip besieging a park 'so that you couldn't get a letter out of it without a pigeon', and calling himself a Charlemagne on the strength of it. Statements come out straight, with little crabbing inversion of syntax. Within one stanza, at least (the first), the sequence of thought is magnificently developed to the last line.

'Shaggy' word-sounds (esparja, trach sanc) rumble and spit out Bertran's force. The line-endings are generally important words, thus emphasised, and the heaviness and terseness of the 'masculine' endings is drawn attention to by the contrast with the ponderous dance of the 'feminines', so that this sequence attains a bomba (pomp) of its own. When Bertran wishes to inject special attack for scorn, he can use strong stresses — even a vowel — at the usually-weak line-begin-
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ings: *Anta l'adutz... Guerra*, 'war brings shame to him'. And Bertran is enough of an artist to give many lines their own interest of consonant and vowel progression, independently of context:

*De guerra a cor, et aurum puois poder.*

In sum, this poem uses all its means to evoke a certain very specific emotionality, and does so in such a way that we cannot separate that emotionality from the subject, which is war, of a certain kind; however little we (and perhaps the later Dante) might think that kind of war admirable in a wider perspective.

The historical background of the poem is of some interest in relation to Dante’s citing of it, and the following remarks draw on Paden’s important new research to update chapters 2 and 3 in my *Provence and Pound*, where more information will be found.

Paden (1976) shows the detailed knowledge of Bertran’s verse that is reflected in the *Inferno*, and traces the development of the legend of Bertran between the troubadour’s own time and Dante’s. He suggests that Dante may in fact have known only this legend, and little or nothing about the reality of Bertran’s life. He points out that while many of Bertran’s songs are about the 1182–3 rebellion against Henry II and his son Richard, this was only a recurrence of the 1173 revolt of Richard, Geoffrey and the ‘Young King’ against their father, about which no songs by Bertran survive; so that Bertran probably had no influence on the origins of the troubles in the English royal family; which contradicts Dante’s Bertran when he says ‘I made the father and the sons rebels against each other’ (*Inferno* XXVIII. 136). But the point does not seem conclusive. As Paden himself notes (1980, page 201), Bertran must have been an active and effective propagandist before 1181, the date of his earliest surviving song. And though the conflict probably originated in other reasons, its course and recurrence might well have been strongly affected by Bertran’s intervention in verse. (Paden (1980) (b) shows that when Bertran retired to the cloister, his order had to issue disciplinary threats against monks writing verse-polemics — apparently in response to the activities of Bertran and of Hélinant de Froidmont; which suggests that such polemics had considerable impact.)

Paden (1976) also notes that in the present instance (*D.V.E*. II. ii), Dante cites Bertran for prowess in arms, which he says is the most important thing in respect of security (*salus*), yet that Bertran’s activity was certainly not directed towards ‘security’. But Dante, knowing Bertran’s propaganda in verse so well, could hardly have thought that Bertran cared about the security of the commonweal; the image of Bertran in the *Inferno* proves the point. Bertran sang the means, which is Arms; Dante thinks that this means is necessary for the end, which is security (whether he still thinks so when he comes to write the *Inferno* seems doubtful). The distinction fits the language of the *D.V.E.* in II. ii.

A further point raised by Paden’s article is that Dante’s *Convivio* picture of Bertran — Bertran
the generous — is in conflict with historical reality, since Bertran only praised generosity, and had no wealth with which he might be generous himself. But Paden (1980), a very important article, may have modified Paden's own earlier views on this point, since it shows considerable largesse by Bertran, in fact a man of some substance. In any case, relative poverty (by comparison with great lords and princes) is amply testified to in the verse, which Dante knew almost as well as we do. No doubt Dante simply assumed, as we also may, that Bertran was as generous to those below him as his means allowed; this is what the propaganda in his verse implies, and anything less in his actions would have made that propaganda a mockery in the very regions where it was effective.

The verse seems to remain one of the chief sources for our knowledge of Bertran, and it remains uncontradicted in any significant aspect by historical documentation. If, as seems likely, Dante largely followed the verse in creating his images of Bertran, the verse seems not to have misled him.

(Text from Appel, 1932.)

No puosc mudar, un chantar non esparja,
Puois n'Oc-e-No a mes fuoc e trach sanc,

Quar grans guerra fai d'eschars senhor larc,
Per queEm platz be dels reis vezer la bomba,

Que n'aian ops paisso, cordas e pom,
EEn sian trap tendut per fors jazer,
EEns encontrem a millers et a cens,
Si qu'apres nos en chan hom de la gesta.

Anta l'adutz e de pretz lo descharja
Guerra celui cui om no'n troba franc,
Per qu'ieu no cuch, lais Caortz ni Cajarç
Mos Oc-e-No, puois tan sap de trastomba.
Si'l reis li da lo tesauro de Chinom,
De guerra a cor, et aura'n puois poder.

Tan l'es trebalhs e messios plazens
Que los amics e'ls enemics tempesta;

Qu'ieu n'agra colps receubutz en ma tarja

I can do no otherwise than to send out a song,
now that Sir Yes-and-No has started fires and drawn blood,
for a great war makes a niggardly lord munificent,
so that I am very pleased to see the extravagance of the kings.

For now they will need pegs, cords, and tent-caps,
and tents will be pitched for men to lie a-field,
and we shall meet in thousands and in hundreds,
so that after us they will sing a chanson de geste about it.

To him whom men do not find bold, war brings shame, and strips worth from him,
so that I do not believe that my Yes-and-No will let Cahors and Cajarç go, since he has so much cunning.
If the King gives him the treasure of Chinon,
he has heart for war (now), and then he will have the power.
Exertion and expense delight him so that he takes by storm friends and enemies;
For I would have taken blows on my shield
E fach vermelh de mon gonfano blanc,
Mas per aiss o m'en sofrisc e m'en parc

20 Que n'Oc-e-No conosco qu'un dat mi plomba. 
Mas non ai ges Lizinina ni Rancom, 
Qu'ieu puoscha lonh ostiar ses aver; 
Mas aiudar puosc a mos conoissens, 
Escut al col e chapel en ma testa.

If King Philip had (as much as) burned a ship
before Gisors, or burst a lake
so as to enter the park at Rouen by force,
and had besieged it from the hilltop and the valley
so that one could not get a letter out of it without
a pigeon,

I know that then he would want to seem to be equal to
Charlemagne, who was among the best of his an-
cestors,
by whom Apulia and Saxony were conquered.

Anc naus en mar, quan a perdut sa barja
Et a mal temps e vai urtar al ranc

35 E cor plus fort qu'una saiesta d'arc
E leva en aut e puois aval jos tomba,
No trais anc pieis, e dirai vos be com,
Qu'ieu fatz per lieis que nom vol retener,
Que nom mante jorn, terme ni conven,

Never did a ship on the sea, when it has lost its boat
and is in bad weather and is going to strike on the reef
and is running faster than an arrow from a bow
and lifts up and then falls right down,
suffer worse, — and I shall tell you how, —
than I do for her who will not retain me (as her
admirer),
for she does not keep (agreed) day or time-limit
or promise,
so that my joy, that had flowered, is fading.

Vai, Papiols, ades tost e correns,
A Traînac sias anz de la festa;
Di'm a'n Rotgier et a totz sos parens
Qu'ieu no trop mais "omba" ni "om" ni "esta".

Go, Papiol, now, quick and running,
be at Treignac before the festival;
tell Rogier and all his family
that I can find no more 'omba', 'om' or 'esta'.

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Notes

2. ‘Yes-and-No’ is Bertran’s personal nickname for Richard; its origin is not known.

7. I.e. meet in battle, encounter each other in battle. A strict translation of these lines would read ‘... and (pleased) that they should need... and that tents should be pitched,... and that we should meet...’

8. For the tradition of the chanson de geste suggested by this sentiment, see Makin, *Provence and Pound*, pp. 48 ff.

10. The word *franc*, which I have translated as ‘bold’, has senses of ‘sincere’, ‘straightforward’, ‘noble’, etc.

11. Cahors and Cajarc are in the modern department of Lot.

16. ‘Takes by storm’ is literal; otherwise ‘ruins’, ‘destroys’.

20. ‘Loading a die’ means ‘tricking’; Appel (1931) says that Bertran wants us to understand that Richard has promised him money to help him in the war, but has not kept his promise. Perhaps therefore ‘luring in on false pretences’.

21. Lusignan and Rancon: in the modern Vienne and Haute-Vienne respectively; their lords were leagued against Richard.

25. Appel (1931) points out that since at Gisors there is no water that could take a ship, Bertran is speaking with ironic scorn. The next lines should be read in the same way.

28. Appel (1931) makes ‘it’ refer to the town of Rouen, but given the irony (see previous note) it could well refer to the park.

41. Papiol is Bertran’s *joglar* (itinerant singer).

42. Treignac is in the modern Corrèze.

43. The identity of Rotgier is unknown.

44. In this last line, Bertran makes fun of the immense labour of finding words for the sequence of rhyme-sounds he has chosen to follow. This sequence is borrowed from Arnaut Daniel, *Si m fos Amors de ioi donar tant larga* (discussed below).

ARNAUT DANIEL: L'AURA AMARA

(D.V.E. II. ii)

The Provençal biography tells us that Arnaut ‘took up a manner of composing in hard rhymes, so that his songs are not easy to understand or to learn.’ In his verse, Arnaut describes his verse-making with images from carpentry, suggesting conscious skill and care. But if he is outside the school of *trobar leu* (‘light/easy composition’) it is not especially because his thought is difficult, but because thought and sound together have a compressed and rapid development that demands attention. Arnaut’s sound-qualities (well evoked in Kenner’s *Pound Era*, pp. 86 ff.) communicate an alertness. Linda Paterson, in *Troubadours and Eloquence* p. 203, has described how alliteration, assonance, dense rhyming and rare vocabulary work with these sound-qualities to produce ‘compactness, intensity, concentration.’

In the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* Dante makes Giraut de Borneil the poet of rectitude as Arnaut is of love, and cites these two the most frequently for poetic excellences; thus he seems to rank Giraut equally with Arnaut. But by the time he wrote the *Purgatorio*, Dante had changed his mind: Arnaut was a better craftsman even than Guinicelli, and those who thought Giraut excelled were
fools: 'To voice rather than to truth they turn their faces, and thus fix their opinion before they have listened to art or reason' (XXVI. 121–123).

The context of Dante's citing of L'aura amara in D.V.E. II. ii is as that of his citing of Bertran's No puosc mudar: the importance of writing on a worthy subject: 'the illustrious writers have written poetry in the vulgar tongue on these subjects exclusively; namely, Bertran de Born on Arms, Arnaut Daniel on Love, Giraut de Borneil on Righteousness...' And so it behooves us, again, to see whether the song is indeed illustrious, and whether love is indeed its subject, and its subject in an important sense: a 'matter' truly communicated by it, and an important part of its elements.

Arnaut gives a particular idea of love, one fused with the idea of light, or clarity; but also with lightness of movement (dance) and lightness of sound. The first stanza is literally a 'winter-opening', but in fact dwells equally on what winter has not: thickening (of course bright) leaves, and letz| becs| dels ausels ramencs, 'delighted beaks of branch-dwelling birds', that seem (partly because of the cadence) dotted about gaily like notes on a stave: 'paired and alone'. This (with the cumulative effect of many other factors) reverses the impact of the lightly-touched winter scene: light through airy spaces is the image evoked by 'The bitter breeze makes the branched thickets become clear'.

Light opens the second stanza in an image which is often rather feebly translated by editors: Arnaut says literally 'So clear was my first light in choosing her whose eyes my heart fears [or: 'believes']; and the translation is best left literal. To gloss lutz as 'inspiration' instead of 'light' does not make the meaning clearer, but dulls the image. Arnaut knew his Bible well; thus John 12. 35–6: 'lumen in vobis est. Ambulate dum lucem habetis, ut non vos tenebrae comprehendant; et qui ambulat in tenebris, nescit quo vadat. Dum lucem habetis, credite in lucem, ut filii lucis sitis.' But no specific reference is necessary. Nor is there need to specify, in this poem, where the light comes from: whether from Arnaut's soul, or if so, granted by the lady herself or by a higher source; for Arnaut both here and elsewhere pushes the imagery of his lady towards divinity. Here he says 'I desire you more than those (the monks?) of Dome desire God.'

In stanza four the imagery of trans-illumination is rejected by editors because 'it gives no sense'. But Arnaut combines it with the image of the worshipped one as tower of protection against spiritual enemies (as so often in the Bible): if the lady gives him her protection then his clarified thoughts will be offered up to her: and tralutz, 'trans-illuminates', makes it clear that it is she who has clarified them. Both this light by which he chose her (stanza two) and this trans-illumination that enables him to offer up his clarified thoughts (stanza four) are granted by her, in parallel with that (of course logically circular) process by which the believer asks God to grant grace truly to believe
in Him.

Allusion to the bird-songs of course evokes an acoustic lightness (imagined). And Ezra Pound (see Literary Essays pp. 109, 127) noted that the movement of the sounds of the words themselves also seems to enact this light song; and this is a local effect of the trobar prim of Arnaut, described by Paterson in Troubadours and Eloquence p. 183 as combining images of small and light things with 'tight, small, smooth sounds' to produce a 'finely detailed texture'. Thus:

\[
\begin{align*}
e\text{ls letz} & \quad \text{and the joyful} \\
\text{becs} & \quad \text{beaks} \\
\text{dels auzels ramencs} & \quad \text{of the branch-dwelling birds} \\
\text{ten balps e mutz,} & \quad \text{(it) keeps stammering and mute,} \\
\text{pars} & \quad \text{in couples} \\
\text{e non pars} & \quad \text{and alone}
\end{align*}
\]

—where the very short vowels are clipped off by light plosives and fricatives, making the staccato bird-sounds that Pound imitated in his translation of another Arnaut song (op. cit. p. 135; cf. p. 114):

Sweet cries and cracks

and lays and chants inflected

But the tour de force in this song is the fact that each stanza has seventeen rhyme-sounds. Since none of these is repeated within the stanza, but all are repeated in the same order in the following stanzas, the hearer must listen to the poem for several stanzas (as Pound also noted: Ezra Pound and Music, p. 288) before their pattern (and its repeated light dance through the same 'sound-positions') registers on the auditory imagination. This delayed apparition of its form-secret—which is therefore a light trace, not a heavily obvious armature—is an added beauty.

All these things are added into the intense devotion that the speaker expresses, and they all modify it: it is a very particular love, compounded of lightness in illumination (emanating from Her) and in heard and suggested movement and song. Dante's word diletto, as used in the Paradiso, seems to express it.

The syntax of the last stanza should therefore be taken literally: 'The harmony is made, so that I may gaze in my heart every night on her... for in any other contemplation my heart scarcely reaches its goal.' Having made this 'harmony'—of words and music, but also of all the elements within the song (including those concordant lightnesses on every plane)—he has the means by which he may gaze on her each night: the song which is the enactment of her beauty. It is her, transposed.

(Text based on Toja, 1960)

L'aur' amara  
fa'ls bruoills brancutz  
The bitter air  
makes the (many-) branched thickets
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clarzir
qe’l dous’ espeis’ ab fuoills,
5 e’ls letz
becs
dels auzels ramencs
ten balps e mutz
pars
10 e non pars;
per q’eu m’esfortz
de far e dir
plazers
a mains, per liei
15 que m’a virat bas d’aut,
don tem morir
si-îls afans no m’asoma.

lighten
— that the soft air thickens with leaves—
and the joyful
beaks
of the birds on the branches
it keeps stammering and mute,
in couples
and alone;
wherefore I try
to do and say
pleasing things
to many people, for her
who has brought me to low from high,
so that that I fear I shall die
unless she puts an end to my troubles.

Tant fo clara
ma prima lutz
20 d’eslir
lieis don cre-l cors los huoills,
non pretz
necs
mans dos aguilencs;
25 d’autra s’es dutz
rars
mos preiars:
pero deportz
m’es ad auzir
30 volers,
bos motz ses grei
de liei, don tant m’azaut
q’al sieu servir
sui del pe tro c’al coma.

35 Amors, gara,
sui ben vencutz,
c’auzir

So clear was
my first light
in choosing
her whose eyes my heart believes,
I do not value
secret
messages (as being worth) two dogrose seeds;
by (any) other woman is moved
(but) rarely
my beseeching;
and so it is a pleasure
to me to hear
the wishes
and the good words without reproach
of her, by whom I am so charmed
that I am at her service
from my foot to my hair.

Love, pay attention,
I am well vanquished,
for, if you turn me away, I fear that I shall make
tem far, si'm desacuillo{\textregistered},
tals d'etz
40 pecs
que t'es mieills qe't trenca;

q'ieu soi fis drutz,
cars
e non vars,
45 ma'l cors ferms fortz
mi fai cobrir
mains vers;
c'ab tot lo nei
m'sgr'ops us bais al chaut
50 cor refrezir,
que no'i autra goma.

Si m'ampara
cill que'm tralutz
d'auzir,
55 si q'es de pretz capduillo{\textregistered},
dels qetz
precs
c'ai dedinz a rencs
l'er fors rendutz
60 clars
mos pensars:
q'eu fora mortz,
mas fa'm sofrir
l'espers
65 qe'il pretz qe'm brei,
c'aisso'm ten let e baut;
que d'als iauzir
no'm val iois una poma.

Doussa car', a
70 totz aips volgutz,
sofrir

known
such
sins
that it were better that you tore yourself in pieces
(before letting things go so far);
for I am a faithful lover,
loving
and not changeable,
but my steady, stout heart
makes me cover up
many truths;
so that despite all the snow
I would need a kiss
to cool down the hot heart,
for no other balm is of any use.

If she protects me
—she who trans-illumina{\textregistered}tes me—
from (others') listening,
so that she becomes the stronghold of Worth,
from the silent
prayers
that I have inside me ranked in rows
my thought will be delivered out to her openly;

I would be dead,
but the hope that I beg her to shorten for makes me
endure,
for this keeps me happy and glad;
for the delight of enjoying anything else is not worth
an apple to me.

Beautiful face, with
all desired ways,
I will have to endure for you many an affront,
m'er per vos mainz orguoills,
car etz
decs

de totz mos fadencs,
don ai mains brutz

d e gabars;
d e vos no:m torgt

n i:m fai partir
avers,
c'anc non amei
ren tan ab meins d'ufaut,
anz vos desir

plus que Dieu cill de Doma.

for you are
the goal
of all my follies,
because of which I have many low
companions
and mockings;
wealth does not take me away from you or make me
leave,
because I have never loved
a lady so much with less vainglory,
indeed I desire you
more than those of Doma desire God.

Era' t para,
chans e condutz,
formir
al rei qui t'er escuills;

car Pretz,
secs
sai, lai es doblencs,
e mantengutz
dars

e maniars:
de ioi la't portz,
son anel mir,
si'ders,
c'anc non estei

Faitz es l'acortz,
q'el cor remir

The harmony is made,
so that in my heart I may contemplate
every evening
her to whom I pay court
ses parsonier, Arnaut, without rival, I Arnaut, q'en autr'albir for in any other thought n'es fort m'entent'a soma. my intention hardly reaches its goal.

Notes

1. For the sharp winter-spring contrast, Toja compares Horace, *Odes*, I. IV. 1, *Solvitur acris hiems grata vice veris et Favoni*.

3. (Line 5 in the original) 'Thickens with leaves', thus 'makes dark', in contrast with the light that shows through the bare branches in winter.

19. Toja says: 'Canello translates "inspiration"'; Bartsch-Koschwitz, "light". Light signifies, poetically, "glance", as Lavaud takes it. It therefore seems to me much better to translate lutz as 'light', and leave this poetic signification to make itself clear to the reader.

21. The MSS. offer cre, 'believes', and cren (cremar), 'fears'.

23. Perugi translates: 'stammering messages'.

24. 'dogrose seeds': many conjectures have been offered here, including angroenecs (coins of Anjou) and agroenes (dog-roses). But Toja notes that aguilen (dog-rose) is often used in similes signifying small value, and offers aguilenecs as a conjectured variant that would fit the rhyme.

35–51. I.e. 'Love (that is, Love personified), I am in a terrible state; so watch out, for if you abandon me in this plight (if you do not soothe my pains with a kiss), I may reveal a lot of secrets (that would harm the good name of Love); I am indeed a true lover, but I know a lot of unpleasant truths that I could reveal to your detriment, though I cover them up because my heart is so steady. I am now in such a parlous state with all this anxiety that the only possible cure is a kiss.'

41. 'tore yourself in pieces': this seems to be the primary sense of trecar; Toja therefore translates: 'killed yourself'.

48. Toja: 'The warm kiss of the lady, says Arnaut, despite the cold of the snow, will bestow freshness on his heart burning with love.' The image would in fact seem to require a cool kiss.

51. 'balm': resin, therefore balm.

52. The following is Toja's text for this passage, together with a possible translation based on it:

Si m'ampara

cill cui'm trahutz, —she to whom I give myself in tribute,—
d'aizir, as to accept
si q'es de pretz capdvoills, (since she is Worth's stronghold)
dels qetz the silent
precs prayers
c'ai dedinz a rencs, that I have inside me ranked in rows,
l'er fors rendutz my thought will be delivered out to her openly
clars mos pensars

53. 'give myself in tribute': perhaps 'declare myself a vassal' (Canello).

59. Toja: 'the hidden prayers of Arnaut will be clearly expressed, when the lady accepts them into herself, she who is the stronghold of virtue.'

72. 'affront': literally, 'pride'.

85. 'those of Doma': it was suggested by Chabaneau that Domme (in the Dordogne) must have had a monastery or hermitage in Arnaut's time; thus 'those of Doma' are the monks or religious of that place. This suggestion is generally taken to have superseded the similar suggestion of Canello, which would have given 'I desire you more than God desires her of Dome', that is, the Virgin, who might have had a sanctuary on the Puy de Dôme or elsewhere. See Makin, *Provence and Pound*, pp. 170–171, 350–351.
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92. I.e. 'Worth, which over here has declined, is at its peak at the court of the King, and the proper customs of courtly life (gift-giving and splendid feasting) are maintained there.'

97–98. Toja: 'gaze on (the King's) ring, my song, (that is, do homage to him), if he raises it towards you, that is, presents it to you for the kiss.'

102. This difficult passage has inspired many suggestions. Toja's, roma ('Stay!'), which is followed here, would be accented on the last syllable, which would not accord properly with the rhyme; but Toja notes a similar stress-shift in rhymes in Rainbaut d'Aurenga, and such a shift here would add to the imperative tone by its unexpectedness. Perugi conjectures a pejorative term, and translates: 'Scum!' Wilhelm reads m’a’n clamat, and translates: 'But here Rome has called to me.' He comments (Textual Notes): 'Holy City is contrasted with rich, secular Aragon.'

GIRAUT DE BORNEIL: PER SOLATZ REVELHAR
(D.V.E. II. ii)

Giraut de Borneil achieved great prominence among the troubadours; as Linda Paterson has observed, the Provençal biographer calls him the best of them all, a large number of his songs have been preserved, and he is given a very noticeable position in Peire d'Auvergne's famous verse-satire on his fellow-troubadours. Dante's characterization of him as poeta rectitudinis seems valid; his moral didacticism was extensive. He was also very consciously concerned with craftsmanship and the aesthetic of verse. In an age in which the borrowing of forms was quite respectable, almost two-thirds of Giraut's rhyme-schemes are unique (among surviving Provençal verses). He enters the controversy over the trobar clus and trobar leu, the 'closed' and 'light' styles of composition, for he dropped the former in favour of the latter, and seems to have been the first to give a theoretical formulation and defence of the leu style. His theory of the clus, while he practised it, seems to have been that a song acquires value when its theme yields itself up slowly; and 'The means of presenting a fine theme by gradually revealing it is to bind it up in menutz mots serratz' (small locked-together words) (Paterson, page 95). Thus difficulty of the thought itself was not an aim. But reacting against this style, apparently because it was unpopular, he practised and defended a trobar leu in which the craftsmanship was to be equally demanding, but the sense should be immediately accessible; the whole should give an appearance of grace and gaiety, coming from a lack of heavi—ness or seriousness in matter, a straightforward ease in movement of thought, and an absence of the sound-shapes associated with serious and complex thought (for example, the trobar brau, a jagged, sometimes rumbustious style). His verse is replete with explanations of these matters.

However, the individual poem must ultimately be judged on its own inner merits.

Per solatz revelhar is the third and last of the Provençal songs cited by Dante in D.V.E. in the context of his argument about the importance of writing on a worthy subject: 'the illustrious writers have written poetry in the vulgar tongue on these subjects exclusively; namely, Bertran de Born
on Arms, Arnaut Daniel on Love, Giraut de Borneil on Righteousness...’ Once more we must consider whether the song is worthy of the description ‘illustrious’ (and by inference its writer likewise); and whether the subject is indeed ‘righteousness’, and indeed a functional part of the poem’s total illustriousness.

Paterson (Troubadours and Eloquence, p. 142) notes that ‘one of Giraut’s main interests was in giving instruction on how to behave according to Christian principles’, and quotes Salverda de Grave: lyrical themes were for Giraut ‘in large part matter for moralization.’

The present poem takes the form (also found in the verse of Sordello, whom Dante uses in the Purgatorio as a moral benchmark) of a lament for the decline from past glories to present squalor. The activities here associated with the ‘fine pleasuring’ (solatz) found in the courts of former days, are knight-service by fit, well-accoutred young men; jousts with fine blows struck; the courting of ladies; the singing of minstrels, done purely for the sake of praising ladies; travel, companionship, and the singing of great chansons de geste. All this will seem, to the modern reader, rather transient and local; hardly ‘moral’ in meaning. But Giraut associates it all with the core of a morality, for the absence of all these things is the cause of the present rise in mere coercion, greed leading to theft, unpleasant tittle-tattle, and general moral confusion. Thus this and many similar troubadour songs make it clear that refinement of sensibility in a general way was at least the declared aim of the courts of Languedoc and Provence frequented by the troubadours, and that this included the moral sensibility along with the aesthetic (in so far as that distinction is possible). One may compare the layers of meaning in the concept of ‘good breeding’ in nineteenth-century aristocracies.

But if these aspects of Giraut’s epoch are a legitimate basis for an argument about morality, it by no means follows that this poem successfully develops them into such an argument. Indeed I feel certain that Dante was wrong to select this poem as an example, and that later he must have realised that his reasons for selecting it (whatever they had been) were based on extrinsics. Dante’s spokesman in Purgatorio XXVI. 118–20 is rather sharp on the difference between Arnaut and Giraut: they are not just mistaken, but stolti, fools, who consider that Giraut, relatively, excels.

The scheme ABBA carries great danger of being pat, trite, nutshell-y; even greater than that in Pope’s favourite, the heroic couplet, when the line is as short as Giraut has it here. For this very rhyme-scheme, with its close rhyme-repeats, makes the line-endings more insistent to the ear, and thus means that the reader can never forget the short length of the lines. (By contrast, a stanza like that of L’aura amara, without internal rhyme, makes line-length much less noticeable.) Giraut makes this insistence worse by repeating the whole ABBA within the same stanza, like a wallpaper with the same cherub appearing every twelve inches; the scheme is, as Pound once said of Samuel
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Daniel's fourteener, 'easier almost to parody than to transcribe', and this, though not a parody, gives some idea of the effect:

To reawake delight  
That was too much in thrall,  
And welcome and recall  
Worth exiled from our sight  
I aimed to make my fight.  
I now abandon all!  
I fall from this high call  
For none could reach this height;  
For when desire and need for it's most pure  
The pain and trouble are too much to endure.

The following eight stanza pick up, not merely the same scheme, but the same rhyme-sounds.

The thought is trimmed and truncated to fit these lines and these lumpy little sections (four lines or final couplet). And because this scheme in general is so visible and rigid, on the rare occasions when thought goes beyond the barrier the extended part seems like a dangling limb, anti-climactic (see lines 25 and 26). And finally, when the tight little pattern, repeated, eventually opens out to a long line at the end, a new expectation is created: that of a climax. Much depends on whether the thought can develop towards living up to this. Here the thought in general is too weak to support the exclamations of the final couplets.

This is the basic fault. Many an aurally crude poem (for instance, by Hardy) has overcome that crudity by sheer strength in the concatenation of thought. But some here is mere padding (lines 7–8, for example). In the rest, generalization is not leavened by particularities seen. If a man is to moralise, one requires that it be well founded in (what is implied of) his own living, his knowledge of things as they have worked out. The quality of his own life (implied perhaps in the most oblique glimpses) is on trial. Here, one is not made to feel the value of Giraut's high positive (*domneiar*, cultural life focussed on homage to women). The associated business of 'fine welcoming, hospitality' is not given the taste it has in Bertran de Born. To attach a favorable emotionality to it, Giraut is forced to a crude antithesis (the courting of women vs. the handling of sheep as a thief) which sets up a group of plaster villains, as when Bolshevik propaganda had top-hatted capitalists armed with whips beating their sweated labour.

The poem is alleged by the Provençal commentator to have been written after 'Guy, Viscount of Limoges, had had Giraut's house robbed of his books and all his gear'; but there are reasons for doubting this story (see Boutière and Schutz, p. 58).

Kolsen speculates, on the basis of lines 6–8, 71–76 and 86, with their resignation and retrospect over his experience, that this song was one of Giraut's last.
(Text from Kolsen, 1910.)
Per solatz revelhar,
Que s’es trop endormitz,
E per pretz, qu’es faiditz,
Acolhir e tornar,
Me cudei trebalhar;
Mas er m’en sui gequitz!
Per so m’en sui falhitz,
Car non es d’achabar;
C’on plus m’en ve volontatz e talans,
Plus creis de lai lo destorbers e’l dans.

To reawaken fine pleasuring,
which is fast asleep,
and to welcome and bring back
Reputation, which is exiled,
I intended to strive.
But now I have abandoned that.
For this reason I have given it up:
it may not be attained;
the more wish and desire for it come to me,
the more trouble and harm grow from that.

Greu es de sofertar;
A vos o dic c’auzitz
Com era jois grazitz
E tuch li benestar.
Mais no podetz jurar
Qu’egas de fust no vitz
Ni vilas, velhs, frontitz
Esters grat chavalgar.
Lachs es l’afars e fers e malestans,
Don om pert Deu e rema malanans!

It is hard to endure;
this I say to you who hear
how joy used to be acclaimed,
and all the decencies.
No longer can you swear
that you do not see wooden horses
or ill-born, old, decrepit people
doing knight-service against their will.
Ugly and rude and unseemly is the business
whereby a man loses God and stays in a sad plight!

Vos vitz torneis mandar
E segre’es gen garnitz
E pois dels melhs feritz
Una sazo parlar;
Er’es pretz de raubar
E d’ebranchar berbitz.
Chavalers si’aunitz
Que’es met en domneiar,
Pos que tocha dels mas moltos belans
Ni que rauba gleizas ni viandans!

You used to see jousts ordered
and the finely-accoutred follow them,
and then you saw people talk for a season
of those most skilfully struck;
now it is considered worthy to steal
and to abduct sheep.
Shame on the knight
who sets himself to courting ladies
after he has been handling bleating sheep
or stealing from churches or wayfarers!

E vitz per cortz anar
De joglaretz formitz
Gen chaussatz e vestitz

And you saw going from court to court
eager young minstrels
finely shod and clothed,
Sol per domnas lauzar;
with the sole purpose of singing the praise of ladies;  
35 Er no n'auzem parlar,
now we do not hear them spoken of,  
'Tan es lor pretz delitz! —
their reputation is so destroyed! —  
Don es lo tortz issitz
Whence has come this evil  
D'elas malrazonar
of speaking ill of the ladies?  
No sai. —De cals, d'elas o dels amans?
I do not know.—From which, from the ladies  
40 Eu dic de totz, que'l pretz n'a trach
themselves or from the lovers?  
l'engans!
I say from all of them, for trickery has taken away  
On son gandit joglar
Reputation from them.
Que vitz gen acolhitz?
Where have fled the minstrels  
C'a tal a mester guitz
whom you used to see nicely welcomed?  
Que solia guidar,
For such a one as used to guide others  
45 E pero ses reptar
now needs a guide;  
Vai er tals escharitz,
and so, since good reputation has fallen off,  
Pos fo bos pretz falhitz,
without blaming himself for doing so  
Que solia menar
that man now goes alone  
De companhos, e no sai dire cans,
who used to take along  
50 Gen en arnes e bels e benestans.
companions, and I cannot tell you how many,  
Qu'eu eis que solh sonar
well-accoutred and handsome and decent.  
Totz pros, om eisernitz,
For I myself, who used to celebrate  
Estauc tan esbaitz
every valiant man (as a distinguished man myself),  
Que no'm sai conselhar;
am so confounded  
55 Qu'en loc de solassar
that I cannot take counsel with myself as to what to do,  
Auch er'en cortz los critz
for in the place of high pleasuring  
C'aitan leu s'er grazitz
I now hear gossip at court,  
De l'aucha de Bretmar
and it will be as easily accepted and approved  
Lo comtes entre lor com us bos chans
if you tell among the powerful  
Dels rics afars e dels tems e dels ans.
the tale of the goose of Bretmar  
60 Dels rics afars e dels tems e dels ans.
as if you sing a good song of mighty affairs and times  
Mas a cor afranchar,
and years.  
Que s'es trop enduritz,
But to refine a heart  
No deu om los oblitz
that has hardened itself too much,  
Ni'ls velhs fachs remembrar?
should one not  
Ni'ls velhs fachs remembrar?
Que mals es a laissar
Afars, pos es plevitz,
E-l mal don sui garitz
No-m chal ja mezinar;
Mas so c'om ve, volv'e vir e balans

E prend'e lais e forse d'ams los pans!
D'aitan me posc vanar
C'anc mos ostals petitz
No fo d'els envazitz;
Que-l vei per totz doptar
Ni no-m fetz mas onrar
Lo volpils ni l'arditz,
Don mos Senher chauzitz
Se deuria pensar
Que no l'es ges pretz ni laus ni bobans

Qu'eu, que-m laus d'els, sia de lui clamans.

Era no m'aïs! Per que? No m'o demans;
Car planchs sera, s'aissi rema mos chans.

So di-l Dalfis que conois los bos chans.

For it is bad to abandon
a business once it is sworn to,
and there is no point in trying to heal
the sickness from which I am cured;
but what a man sees spinning and turning and
swaying him
he must grasp and let go and seize by both ends!

I can boast of this much,
that my little dwelling
was never invaded by them (these ignoble knights);
for I see that all are afraid of that,
and the cowardly and the bold have never
done other than honour me.
Considering this, my distinguished lord
ought to consider
that it is no matter of reputation or praise or glory for
him
that I, who celebrate those things, should (have to)
complain about him.

I complain no more. Why? Do not ask me;
for it will be a lament (already) if my song stops thus.

That is what the Dauphin, who knows good songs,
says.

Notes

24. feritz, 'struck' (masculine plural), offers a problem; Lewent describes it as a 'perfect participle
with active meaning', which would give 'those who struck most skilfully'.
34. The meaning may be that poets, formerly the moral (and, as travelling-companions, literal?) guides
of knights and lords, are now fallen so low that they cannot even guide themselves; so that great
men prefer to be unaccompanied by these advisers.
51–54. Lewent reads sol, which would give: 'I, whom every valiant, distinguished man used to call
(to counsel him) am now so confounded that I cannot counsel myself.' He takes sonar as 'invite'.
59. The subject of this tale (also referred to by Giraut de Cabrera) is unknown; evidently it was
trivial.
64. If at the end of line 64 one has a semicolon instead of a question-mark, the meaning becomes 'one
should not...'
65–70. The meaning seems to be that one cannot be expected to be responsible for abandoning things
once started, or picking things up again once finished, but one must courageously expose, and
discuss, and stigmatize the abuses that affect one.
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74. I.e. ‘afraid to invade my dwelling’. The meaning seems to be: ‘Considering that even the low refrain from attacking me, it is particularly shameful that you, my distinguished lord, should give me reason to complain.’

82. I.e. ‘I have no reason to complain any more, for even if I stop now, my song is already a lament.’

83. The Dauphin of Auvergne’ (*Dalfin* was in fact a proper name) was Count of Clermont and Montferrand (1168-1234), and welcomed numerous troubadours to his castle.

**GIRAUT DE BORNEIL: ER’ AUZIRETZ ENCHABALITZ CHANTARS**

(*D.V.E. II. v*)

Dante cites this in *D.V.E. II. v* as an example of an illustrious canzone beginning with an eleven-syllable line; it thus behooves us to consider why he calls it illustrious. (It should be noted that there is a dramatic dialogue, or perhaps a self-interrogation; I have used dashes, following Kolsen, to indicate a change of speaker. Since the implied situations may be a little hard to grasp, the following remarks also attempt to clarify them.)

The ‘plot’ of this poem depends on the paradox that love (of course considered a virtue) takes away from the speaker of the poem all control over his utterance, so that he says too much, and causes the lady to fend him off, thus taking all joy of love away from him. (As in Arnaut Daniel and other troubadours, this ‘talking too much’ is vague in nature; it may be talking too much in public about her (thus presumptuously associating himself with her) or hinting to people directly that she has granted him favours in love.) The first stanza opens with a confident boast about singing, but then immediately retracts, and gives us to understand that the speaker has already shown too much confidence vis-à-vis the lady, and therefore is in a parlous situation. The second stanza explains that when his heart delights in something, it forgets all self-control in its desire to babble; and its last two lines make it quite clear that the purer (more single-minded) your love is, the madder you are.

This erratic behaviour, the third stanza says, means that none of his efforts in verse will bring their proper reward.

Here enters a moral paradox, which will be developed: that what his efforts as servitor in love and poetry ‘should’ bring him as reward (kisses, and more) is something that she is essentially too ‘high and noble’ (line 19) to grant. It is ambiguously suggested that the speaker’s cajoling and arranging may be a low thing. By implication this leads to a further paradox: if she were *not* so noble, he would not be paying amorous-and-poetic attention to her.

Love, in any case, is cursed by the speaker (in stanza four) because it has tricked him with this whole mechanism. In stanza five the speaker nonetheless determines to stand on his chief merit: that he is single-mindedly devoted to this one lady. He dreams of drawing her praise to himself with his verse. But again he seems to consider this as a method of earning a specific reward (her love in return), and, in rebuking himself for expecting to ‘get everything’ he seems to suggest that
he should not want 'everything'.

Now in stanza six this moral paradox is brought out clearly. The lady has in fact already granted him a single kiss, we now hear. It is 'by definition' impossible that the finite and humble means of the lover should be able to express adequate gratitude for the infinite gift that she has given him. This concept clearly evokes the relation of fallen mankind to God. But the paradox I speak of shows in the image of the Fire: if the lover were to suffer the infinite pains of Hell, it could not express the gratitude appropriate to such a gift (the kiss is here referred to as a *ben*, a wealth, a goodness). This suggests that the lover, in seeking this thing, sinned. If we then follow Panvini's understanding of the stanza (he translates 'Was it more than a kiss, then?'), we may take it that lines 43–5 show the humble sinner offering his widow's mite of gratitude, which in Christian terms (*Mark* 12.42) becomes adequate. But then the paradox is made most intense: 'And if she conceded to you more than she should,/ what thanks will you bring her?' — which ambiguously suggests that she may have lost her soul by granting to the lover her sexual love (again: what he wants she should not give); as (yet not as) Christ brought himself to suffer the horrors of Hell, and crucifixion, for men.

The seventh stanza opens out to a quietness of melancholy. Again her nobility and fineness is emphasised; these are the qualities that draw forth his poetic and amorous attentions, but they are also the qualities that must deny her to him. The 'low reputation and trickery' seem associated with the lover's own cajoling and arranging in line 23. Some sort of resolution is reached in the last stanza: the thought of her is enough for him; but it does not seem to override the tensions established in the rest of the poem.

Thus the first paradox is that by a cruel trick it is exactly the virtue of strength of love that (by making him talk unguardedly) is taking happiness away; and thus by implication we are asked to pity him. But a stronger paradox overtakes this: that in any case, the happiness he wants (i.e. loving) is something that the lady's own height of refinement makes impossible; or if she grants it, this will (because of that height of refinement) be such an awesome gift that he will become a debtor who cannot pay; and if she were not of the height of refinement that causes these problems, of course he would not pay her his poetic and amorous attentions.

The poem is thus conceptually well-worked. But emotional logic, to be felt as a connecting force, depends on the sense of lived-ness that a poet can infuse into its elements; usually by some oblique method, such as images that are not of merely conceptual value, and that are therefore 'personal'. Such elements can be very slight indeed, and yet have power. But in this poem only once does some such thing appear: *Tals que lai dretz* *Los olhs on bat la mars*, 'So let me turn my eyes to where the sea beats': there is no particular reason for this way of saying 'to the coastal region',
and yet it has suggestive power. At the same time it is the most effective vowel-sequence in the poem. Otherwise we have the merely proverbial image, as in ‘surely he who chips away at a work, gradually improves it’, plus a vast number of conceptual terms. Thus the counters that should make up the emotional logic referred to by these terms, appear false; gilded lead bricks, not gold ingots. In the end there results a discrepancy between the strenuous exclamations and the lack of a felt personal situation.

Dante cites this poem for its use of the eleven-syllable line; for although (in this case) the line ‘appears to be of ten syllables, it is in reality of eleven, for the last two consonants do not belong to the preceding syllable.’ This is a rule incorrectly applied to Provençal by an Italian ear, unaccustomed to final consonants; the troubadours would count this first line as having ten syllables, and would by no means consider that to be a ‘rude’ line-length, as Dante does (II. v).

Dante says ‘the line of eleven syllables seems the stateliest (superbius), as well by reason of the length of time it occupies as of its capacity in regard to subject, construction, and words... And all the teachers seem to have given heed to this, beginning their illustrious canzoni with a line of eleven syllables, as Giraut de Borneil:—

“Ara ausirez encabalitz cantarz.”

He is in effect saying that to begin a song with an eleven-syllable line will add to its illustriousness; and indeed (in my opinion) if anything could have made this song truly illustrius it would have been this opening line. It, and the line I have drawn attention to above, show that there is room for a ‘subject’, a fully-developed thought, in the ‘eleven syllables’. Giraut has well used the room it gives for rhetorical manoeuvre: he does not say ‘The song I am about to sing you is good’, but ‘Now you will hear...’, ‘Now (at last!)’, which dramatises the relationship with the audience by attributing to them a sense of expectation. It then draws attention to the thing waited for, not yet named; and when it is named, Giraut can live up to this expectation with a magnificent polysyllable, encabalitz, ‘outstanding’. (I think the infinitive cantars, ‘singing’, gives the sense ‘(an outstanding example of) the art of singing’, contrasting Giraut with implied practitioners previously heard.)

As for the ‘words’, their sound-patterning reinforces this rhetoric. One alliteration (Ar-au-) leads to the ending -ez; it is almost continued by another which leads to -itz. But on the way it is broken into by a new alliteration, which thus draws great attention to itself: the syllable -ca- (followed by can-), which thus becomes both in sound and in sense the pivot of the line. Its punch is added to by the speed of the three syllables -cabalitz; and then the whole resolves with the same vowel as began the line, a much slower one. (In this analysis I follow the reading that Dante seems to have had before him; see Notes, and Mengaldo’s text.)
Er' auziretz Enchabalitz chantars;
Qu'eu sui amics enchabalitz e pars!
Auiatz! e fon anc mais dicha
Tan grans foli' en chantan?

Greu n' eschapat ses dan;
S' ab leis m' aparei ni m' ec

Cui sui plus liges que sers,
Terra, tu com me sofers?

Ah, tantas vetz M' a trach nescis parlars
Joi d' entrels mas, per qu' esdevenh liars,

E 'l cor, pos en re s' aficha
Don s' alegr' a tan ni can,
Volri' eu chantes gaban;
Qu' era tro que s' esperec,

Tenia 'l drech per envers,
Tan er' en amar esmers!

E qu' en diretz, Si l' esciens es rars
E 'l cor es leus, valra 'm ja sobramars?

No ja, tan es alt' e richa
Cela —c' als remanh' ab tan!—

Ja re laus no m' i valran,
Com c' adesch, e c' o eissec,
Mou mas chansos e mos vers
Com fols de saber esters.

And what will you say of it: if my understanding is small
and my heart is unsteady, will immense loving bring me any reward?
Never, she is so high and noble
—let the other matter (i.e. desire to make love to her) rest, under these circumstances!—
praises will never be of any use to me with her, however much I cajole, and (try to) arrange the matter, I start up my canzoni and my verses like a madman devoid of sense.

Anc nuls esfretz No 'm fo valens ni.chars,
Tro que m’ ac lonh de joì sobregabars,
E pois dic c' Amors me tricha

No fear (that I experienced) was ever important and strong to me
until garrulousness deprived me of joy, and therefore I say that love tricks me
Dante's Choice of Provençal Examples in the *De Vulgari Eloquentia*

Per un petit de semblan
E pert per so que no ·m blan
30 Leu parlar c' us dans m' en crec
Que ·m te pres plus greu qu' en fers
Per te, bocha, que mal mers.

Qu' era no ·m letz, Can me valgra preiars,
Querre merce? Si fai, que mos trobars,
35 Pos tan s' es m' amors africha
C’ altra no volh ni ·n deman,
Clama ·lh merce. Qui que ·l chan
Celeis, cudes: chauzit lecl—
Fols trascuratz e despers,
40 Tot trobaras so que quers?

E ·l be que ·t fetz, Si n’ eras en foc ars,
Potz li grazir? —Fo donc mas us baizars!—
Fola res, e cel que picha
No vai l’obra melhuran
45 Cada pauc? —Saber d’ enfan!—
E si ·t fetz mais que no ·n dec,
Peier que cilh de Bezers,
Tu cals merces I’ en refers?—

Tals que lai dretz Los olhs on bat la mars
50 E ·l cors es dolz e francs e fis e clars
De celeis cui jois s’ abricha
Lonh d’ avol pretz e d’ engan
E de me que vau pensan
Tan qu’ en magrezisc e sec
55 Volven de tort en travers
Plus abruzitz d’ un convers.

E cudatz setz M’ enoi ni dejunars

with the slightest appearance,
and, because she is not kind to me (now),
I lose all communication, so easily, so that a harm to
me has arisen from it
which holds me bound more grievously than in irons
because of you, mouth, who are to blame for it.

And now, when pleading would help me, is it not
permitted to me
to seek grace? Yes, and so my composing
asks her for grace (since my love is so ardent
that is it does not desire another lady, or ask for one).
Whoever sings it to
my lady, may she think: He is reciting a refined thing!
—Rash, turbulent fool,
do you think you will find everything you seek?

Even if you were burned in the fire for it,
could you (thus) thank her for the Good that she
vouchsafed to you? —But it was only a kiss!—
Silly fellow, doesn’t the man who chips away
improve the work
bit by bit (i.e. surely even a kiss is a significant step)?
—Child’s wisdom!—
And if she conceded to you more than she should,
you who are worse than those of Béziers,
what thanks will you bring her?—

So I must direct my eyes to where the sea beats
and where she is sweet and noble and fine and pure,
she whose joy dwells
far from low reputation and trickery,
and from me, who go thinking sadly,
so that I become thin and withered,
aimlessly going astray,
sadder than a lay brother.

Do you think that thirst and fasting will distress
Ni 'm tenha dan? No fai, que 'l dolz pensars
or harm me? No, for the sweet thought (of her)
M' aduri' ab una micha
would make me last, with just a crumb of bread,
San e let al chap de l' an!—
healthy and glad to the end of the year!
Fols, c' as dich? Pauc t' en creiram
—Fool, what have you said? Few will believe you
De so c' anc vers no parec!—
about something that never showed itself to be true!
Si fara be, si l' enquers,
—Yes; my Linhaure, over there beyond Lers,
Mos Linhaure lai part Lers.
will believe it if you ask him about it.

Joios, qui per bon enders
Joios, he who is not joyful
No s' alegra, fols es mers!
even for a good recovery, is a pure idiot!

Notes

1. 'Distinguished': chabal, 'outstanding', 'superior', gives rise to a verb enchabalir, 'to make outstanding', from which comes the past participle used here, enchabalitz, 'distinguished'. Kolsen objects to this reading, enchabalitz, in the first line, on the grounds that it makes the singing plural ('songs'), when in fact Giraut is about to show us only one distinguished song. He prefers to read enchabalir, with the meaning 'Now you will hear the making-wonderful of songs', i.e. 'Now you will hear how songs (in general) are made wonderful'. But it seems to me that the idea 'distinguished singings' is acceptable, though odd in English; it may mean 'As of now, you are going to hear...' (whether in this song or in later songs). The surviving De Vulgari Eloquentia manuscripts suggest that enchabalitz was the reading Dante knew.

20. This reading of als, 'the other thing', i.e. love-making, seems to be supported by Arnaut Daniel in XI. 40 (En breu brisara); compare also the use of lo sobreplus in Sordello's poem Bel m'es ab mots.

22. Or: 'and in my attempts to arrange the matter, I offer my cansos and vers like a senseless fool.'

23. Canso and vers are here considered as separate genres; but the usage of these terms among the troubadours is unclear and shifting.

29. Or (following Lewent): 'And I lose, because I do not moderate a frivolous speech. For a harm to me has arisen from it...'

33-40. For line 38, Lewent reads celeis cui deschausir lec, taking lec as perfect of lexir, to be permitted. Using this suggestion, one may translate: 'And now, when pleading would help me, is it not permitted to me/ to seek grace? Yes, and so my song/(since my love is so ardent/that it does not desire another lady, or ask for one)/—whoever sings it—asks for grace/of her whom I was at liberty to complain of./—Rash, turbulent fool,/you will find all you are seeking.'

48. 'Worse than those of Béziers': Kolsen suggests that 'those of Béziers' are here used as an example of ingratitude because in 1171 Viscount Roger II of Béziers deserted King Alphonse II of Aragon, despite Alphonse's earlier help in avenging the murder of Roger's father.

56. 'The lay brothers (conversi), friars not ordained as priests but merely having taken monastic vows, were devoted solely to worldly affairs. The fact that their services were of a lowly kind must often have affected their mood adversely' (Kolsen).

63. 'This line was crucial for my identification of 'Linhaure' as [the troubadour] Raimbaut d'Orange, because of the location of Lers near Orange' (Kolsen). 'Linhaure' elsewhere exchanges verses with Giraut in a verse-disputation or tenson.

65. 'Joios' is a joglar (minstrel) who crops up in several of Giraut's poems.
GIRAUT DE BORNEIL: SI PER MO SOBRE-TOTZ NO FOS
(D.V.E. II. vi)

This is the first of the ten songs that Dante in D.V.E. II. vi offers as examples of the construction ('regulated arrangement of words') 'that has flavour and grace and also elevation' (est et sapidus et venustus etiam et excelsus), thus being found in 'illustrious writers'. Dante's prose examples show that what he means is the ability to introduce ideas with a certain degree of invention in the form: that is, a slight bending of the form so that the matter (or idea) is introduced at a different angle from the usual. Metaphors introduce things under varied aspects; subordination of clauses prepares a different path to the main point; but it will be seen that this latter also becomes a question of the ordering of ideas (see my discussion of the first line of Er' ausiretz enchabalitz chantars). Thus we arrive at the opposite of a sentence like 'Peter is very fond of Bertha'.

Now Giraut here has chosen a scheme consisting of six lines of eight syllables, followed by ten of six. To take the first six lines only: he can fill their 48 syllables with any sentence-lengths he likes, but a rhyme-word must occur every eight syllables. Now, since the rhyme-word creates an emphasis (and thus is likely to form a divide), the easiest way to fill these 48 syllables is to find a form of syntax that roughly fits eight syllables, and repeat it. Thus in the six lines one would have six sentences, or main clauses, all of roughly the same syntactic pattern. This chronicler shows how a lazy rhymer fills a twelve-syllable line in this way; we believe in God, he says, who keeps us from error,

- and plus main verb plus purpose-clause.

Giraut and the best troubadours scorn such syntactical banality. Giraut has in fact chosen to fill these first six lines with one sentence; and what is more, an interesting one:

Si per mo Sobre-Totz no fos,
If for my Above-All (it) not were,
Que ditz com chan e sia gais,
Who commands that I sing and be gay,
Ja`l suaus tems, can l'erba nais,
Never the sweet season, when the grass springs up,
Ni pratz ni rams ni boscs ni flors
Nor meadow nor bough nor wood nor flower
The first line creates a tension. Something is now happening, that would not be happening if all things were equal. Consider the number of different by-ways of thought that intervene, before that tension is finally resolved: before we are told what that thing is that is happening (in the last of the six lines). The second line tells us what overwhelming force it is that is actually making this thing happen. Then there follow three lines detailing things that ought normally to be able to make it happen: spring, woods, sorrows; yet it seems that even they would, by themselves, be powerless. (The tension between force and counterforce is multiplied.) The first powerless stimulus is the sweet season; and that thought leads to a diversion, a description of spring, given with some delight. It extends, into an intense, hammering list: all the things that would usually make him sing are amassed in a great heap of now-futile stimuli. It seems complete, but takes another turn: fruitless stimuli on quite another plane: hard lord and vain love. And then at last the semantic tension is resolved: we discover what action-under-duress it was, that was implied by the first line.

Thus there is great interest in the movement of thought. And within it Giraut does not repeat his syntax even where most invited to do so. A dozen poets would have had 'nor sweet season nor soft grass nor flowery meadow nor hard lord'; but Giraut has three separate syntactic arrangements within his list of powerless instigations. These things are technical successes in what Dante calls 'construction'. They are comparatively easy to achieve in prose; but it must be remembered that Giraut is living up to other requirements imposed by verse: an interesting rhyme-scheme (ABBCCB; perhaps the sixth line should have had a new rhyme) that fits the movement of thought; a blend of consonant and vowel sound that fits his purposes (here, the delicate trobar prim sounds that fit the troubadour pastoral); and concordant imagery. Nor does Giraut repeat the same sort of construction in the opening six lines of his other stanza, though of course they do not achieve the same excellence.

The poem finds an unusually large number of verbal echoes in the verse of Bertran de Born, who in one of his poems tells the reader that he is borrowing a tune (therefore a metrical scheme) from Giraut.

(Text based on Kolsen, 1910.)

Si per mo Sobre-Totp no fos,
Que ditz com chan e sia gais,
Ja'l suaus terns, can l' erba nais,

If it were not for my 'Superior-to-All',
who tells me to sing and be gay,
neither the delightful season, when the grass springs up,
Dante’s Choice of Provençal Examples in the De Vulgari Eloquentia

Ni pratz ni rams ni bosc ni flors
nor meadow nor bough nor wood nor flower
Ni durs senher ni van’ amors
nor unkind lord nor worthless love
could stir me to action!
No ‘m poirian metr’ en eslaïs!
But I am in accord with him about this:
Mas d’ aixo ‘m tenh ab lui
that, while joy is falling off and fleeing from us,
Que, pos jois falh e fui,
worth and noble behaviour are diminishing;
Merma pretz e barnatz,
and, from that time forwards when the powerful
E, pos las poestatz
estranged themselves from joy,
S’ estranheron de jai,
whatever the worst kind of man does
De can que ‘l peier fai,
has not been praised by me—
No fo per me lauzatz—
for I have decided to
C’ aissi ‘m sui conselhatz
envy no man of power;
Que nulh ric non envei—
the worst kind of man governs too ill.
Qui trop mal senhorei.

Cela vetz era ‘l segles bos,
The world was good
Can per tot er’ acolhitz jais
when joy was welcomed everywhere
E cel grazitz cui n’ era ‘l mais
and the man who had most joy was liked
and worth and power were in accord.
E pretz s’ aveni’ e ricors.
Now people call the worst men worthy,
Qu’ er’ apel’ om pros los peiors
and the man who is bitter is dominant,
E sobra cel que peitz s’ irais
and the man who gets for himself
E cel que mais adui,
the most he possibly can of what belongs to another
C’ onques pot, de l’ altrui,
will be the most courted.
Sera plus enveïatz.
So I feel myself aggrieved
De que ‘m tenh per forsatz
that from a low, wretched business
C’ om d’ avol plach savai
a man should get good, true reputation—
Colha bo pretz verai,
an affair that he should be blamed for;
Don degr’ esser blasmatz;
and you, why do you not consider
E vos car no pensatz
whether it is fitting that one should award reputation
Si ‘s tanh c’ om pretz autrei
to one who acts criminally, in an ugly manner?
Celui que lach felnei?

Mal fo chabelada razos,
Reason was governed ill
Desc’ om per pros tenc los savais,
when the wretched were considered valiant,
E ‘ls francs e ‘ls cortes e ‘ls verais
and the sincere and the courtly and the true
Razonet om per sordeiors,
were accounted the worst,
E moc la colpa dels alsors,
and the guilt of the great men began,
Can devers brezillet ni frais.
when duty shattered and broke.
Qu’era no sai per cui  
 Tol om l’ onor celui  
 Que n’ er’ a drench chazatz,  
 E si ·ls en corelhatz,  
 Diran que be n’ estai;  
 Car cel qu’ eu no dirai  
 Sera melher amatz,  
 E pois, si ·us embargatz  
 De pretz d ni de domnei,  
 Mes avetz el conrei!

For I do not know now for whom  
 they take away the land of the man  
 who was properly established in possession of it.  
 And if you charge them with it,  
 they will say that that is how it should be;  
 for thus he whom I shall not name (i.e. the Devil)  
 will be better loved.  
 Under these circumstances, when you concern yourself  
 with Reputation or with paying court to women  
 you are rewarded by being shunned!

Eu vi c’ om prezava chansos  
 E que plazian tresc e lais.  
 Era vei que, pos om s’ estrais  
 De solatz ni de fachs gensors  
 Ni l’ afars dels fis amadors  
 Se viret de drench en biais,  
 Que totz devers defui.  
 Que ges, s’ om se debli  
 Las chams ni ·ls vis ni ·ls blatz  
 En fol acompanhatz,  
 A pretz non o tenrai—  
 Ni creuzutz no ·n serai?—  
 E no ·m segra ·l perchatz;  
 Que lai val pauc rictatz  
 Qui la men’ a desrei  
 Ni drench no ·i sec ni lei!

I used to see how people liked songs,  
 and that dance-melody and poem pleased them.  
 Now I see that, since men have renounced  
 delight and finer deeds,  
 and the behaviour of the fine lovers  
 has turned from right to crooked,  
 all sense of duty flees away.  
 For certainly, if a man squandcrs  
 meat or wine or grain  
 among foolish companions,  
 I shall never consider it reputable—  
 and won’t people be in agreement with me?—  
 And gain will not attach itself to me;  
 for wealth is worth little  
 when it is managed in a disorderly manner,  
 and neither right nor law is associated with it!

Er’ auch del rei qu’ era plus pros  
 E plus valens en mans assais  
 De totz cels que vianda pais,  
 Que sobret mejas e maiors  
 E crec sos pretz e sas onors  
 E no temi’ afan ni fais,  
 Que, si lo planhon dui,  
 Lo tertz lor o destrui,  
 Ni creuzutz no ·n serai;  
 E no ·m segra ·l perchatz;  
 Que lai val pauc rictatz  
 Qui la men’ a desrei  
 Ni drench no ·i sec ni lei!

Now I hear, of the King who used to be the most  
 valiant  
 and noble, in many enterprises,  
 of all those whom meat nourishes;  
 who surpassed the middling and the greater  
 and increased his reputation and possessions  
 and was not afraid of trouble or burden,  
 that, if two men grieve over him,  
 a third man breaks into their grieving
Dante's Choice of Provençal Examples in the *De Vulgari Eloquentia*

Que ·m par mal ensenhatz.

Qu’ eu no cut ç‘ anc fos natz,

De Charlemanh’ en sai,

Reis per tan bel assai

Mentaugutz ni prezatz;

Mas ja leu no crezatz

C’ afars tan mal estei

80

Qu’ ensem lo planhan trei!

E que val donc bela faissos

Ni grans poders ç’ aissi s’ abais?

E ja passava part Roais

Lo noms e ·l pretz e la paors

85

Entrels paiaus galiadors,

C’ anc us sols plus arer no ·ls trais!

Per que falh qui ·s desdui,

Pos aissi leu s’ esdui

So ç’ om plus vol ni ·lh platz,

De que tenh per grevatz

90

Cels que mais podon sai,

Si non adoban lai,

Can chamjara rictatz,

C’ aián cal que solatz

95

De lor gran charlabei

Denan lo maior rei.

Que ·l trafas segles enoiios

Dona pretz celh que plus atrais,

Sonh non a mas que ·l cors s’ engrais

100

E fassa, ç’ onques pot, so cors

E l’ arma pert ses lo socors

De lui cui sos conven la enfrais;

C’ us tan gen no s’ estui

—and that man seems ill-brought-up to me.

For I do not believe that there ever was born

from Charlemagne until now

a king spoken of or thought highly of

for such fine enterprise;

but never believe too easily

that any situation could be so bad

that three men would be in accord in lamenting it!

Then of what value is a fine person

or great power, that declines thus?

And certainly his name, his reputation and the fear

of him

have passed beyond Edessa

among the deceiving pagans;

for no man ever drove them back more than he has!

For that reason a man who rejoices goes wrong,

since what men want the most and what pleases them

the most

so easily departs.

So I consider that those who have most power here

(on earth)

are in a bad situation

if they do not arrange that there (in the next world),

when their power falls away,

they have at least some delight,

out of all their great splendours,

(when they are) before the Greatest King.

For the treacherous, troubling world

gives reputation to him who most grasps,

who has no concern except to fatten his body

and to make his way in the world to the best of his

ability,

and who kills his immortal soul, unless he has the help

of Him to whom he has broken his promises;

for no man shuts himself in
Ni no s serra ni s clui
De bels murs batalhatz,
Can sera la passatz
Al port on no s' eschai
C' om merme son esmai,
Totz no si enserratz.

Per qu' es conseilhs senatz
C' om de sai se chastei
Que sos tortz lai no -l grei.

Lui prec, qu' es sols clamatz
Us Deus e Trinitatz,
Que m gart qu' eu no fo lei
Sai tan que lai me grei.

And may every man watch over his heart
in such a way that his sin shall not trouble him there!

Notes
12. This translation follows Kolsen, but is very awkward. Adapting Lewent, one might suggest: 'whatever the worst kind of man does is not praised by me, for whatever he does; for I have determined on this: that I will court no powerful man who uses his power in an evil way.'
30. 'You', here, as Chaytor suggests, seems to refer to Giraut's audience.
38. 'shattered': this reading (brezillet) is as well-supported by the manuscripts as Kolsen's becilhet ('died'), and seems to me to give a better sequence of thought.
58. I.e. literally 'accompanied like a fool', 'choosing his companions foolishly'. The suggestion is that good lords should keep at their courts the right kind of followers, thus using their wealth to maintain vassals (for territorial stability) and to set proper social standards at the same time.
55. 'The' 'King' is Richard Lionheart; this poem was therefore written after his death, which occurred on the 10th April, 1199' (Kolsen). Kolsen also notes that Gaucelm Faidit extols the dead King in the same manner as lines 65–70 and 74–77 of this poem.
72. As Kolsen notes, Richard was frequently attacked by troubadours and others; 'in particular the ignominious peace concluded on the 1st September 1192 with Saladin made him many enemies.' A literal translation of this line would be: 'a third spoils it for them' (i.e. by disagreeing).

FOLQUET DE MARSEILLA:
TANT M'ABELLIS L'AMOROS PESSAMENS
(D.V.E. II. vi)

Folquet's verses represent something like the general average of troubadour sentiment; but
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Remarks by his political opponents and by fellow troubadours suggest a reputation for amorousness that may account for Dante's having singled him out to be placed in the Heaven of Venus (*Paradiso* ix).

*Tant m'abellis l'amoros pessamens* is mentioned by Dante in *De Vulgari Eloquentia* II. vi as his second example of an illustrious canzone made up entirely of the most excellent degree of construction. A certain satisfaction is given by the way in which a single syntax, with multiple subordinations, fills out the first stanza, involving a series of sub-thoughts each of which seems fully necessitated by the central thought. The 'fit' of metrical scheme and content thus seems complete, and gives the sense of surprise-in-completeness when the final rhyme is reached. Dante appears to have used this song as a model for the only piece of foreign language that is found in the *Divine Comedy*, the speech of Arnaut Daniel in *Purgatorio* xxvi. 140 ff. For Folquet uses the same opening phrase and the same second rhyme:

\begin{quote}
Tant m'abellis l'amoros pessamens  
que s'es vengutz e mon fin cor assire
\end{quote}

The cadence of the first line is certainly impressive; as is the phonetic weaving (vowel-sequence, consonant-sequence) of the fifth line:

\begin{quote}
qu'adonc viu sas quan m'aucizo-l cossire
\end{quote}

Stronski suggests a dating of between 1180 and 1185 for the song. The three ladies to whom it is 'presented' at the end might well be the mother and the wife of Bernard Atho, who held sway at Nîmes, and another woman, unknown. Stronski argues forcefully against attempts to identify Folquet's loves when the references are as vague as in this song.

(Text based on Stronski, 1910.)

*Tant m'abellis l'amoros pessamens*  
que s'es vengutz e mon fin cor assire  
per que no-i pot nuills autre pes caber  
ni mais negus no m'es dous ni plazens,  
\textsuperscript{8} qu'adonc viu sas quan m'aucizo-l cossire  
e fin' amors aleuja'm mo martire  
que m promet joi, mas trop lo'm dona len,  
qu'ap bel semblan m'a trainat longamen.

\begin{quote}
Be sai que tot quan faz es dreiz niens!
\end{quote}

10 *Eu qu'en puesc mais s'Amors mi vol aucire?*

So pleases me the amorous thoughtfulness  
that has come to fix itself in my faithful heart  
that no other thought can find place there,  
and none is sweeter or more delightful to me,  
for at the same time that my sad thoughts kill me, I  
feel quite well,  
and fine love alleviates my martyrdom,  
for it promises me joy, but gives me it too slowly,  
since it has dragged me along at the tail of fair appearances for a long time.

I know quite well that everything I do is nothing!  
But I, what else can I do, if Love wants to kill me?
qu'az escien m'a donat tal voler
que ja non er vencutz ni el no vens;
vencutz si er, qu'aucir m'an li sospire,
tot soavet, quar de liey cui dezire
non ai socors, ni d'allors no l'at'en,
ni d'autr' amor no puec aver talen.

Bona dona, si'us platz, siatz suffrens
del ben qu'ie-us vuel qu'ieu sui del mal
sufrire,
e pueis lo mals no-m poira dan tener
ans m'er semblan que'l partam egalmens;
pero, si'us platz qu'az autra part me vire,
ostatz de vos la beutat e'l doux rire
e'l bel semblan que m'afoillis mon sen:
pueis partir m'ai de vos, mon escien.

A totz jorns m'etz plus bel' e plus plazens;
per qu'ie'n vuel mal als huels ab que-us
remire,
quar a mon pro no-us poirian vezar
et a mon dan vezon trop sotilmens;
mos dans non es, sivals pos no-m n'azire,
ans es mos pros, dona, per qu'ieu m'albire,
si m'aucisetz, que no-us estara gen,
quar lo mieus dans vostres er eissamen.

Per so, dona, no-us am saviamens
qu'a vos sui fis et a mos ops trayre:
e vos cug perdr'e mi no puec aver,
e-us cug nozer et a mi sui nozens;
pero, no-us aus mon mal mostrar ni dire,

For in full knowledge of what he was doing, he has
given me such a desire
that I shall never be defeated, nor does the desire win;
yet I shall be beaten, since sighs will kill me,
quite softly, for from her whom I desire
I have no succour, and expect none from elsewhere,
and cannot have desire of another love.

Good lady, if it please you, suffer with patience
the goodwill that I feel for you, for I suffer the evil
of it,
and then the evil will not be able to do me harm,
but it will seem to me that we share it equally;
but if you want me to go elsewhere,
strip off your beauty and sweet laughter
and the beautiful appearance that makes me lose my
wits;
then I shall leave you, I truly believe.

Each day you are more beautiful and pleasing to me;
and for that reason I feel resentment against the eyes
with which I gaze on you,
for I could not benefit from their seeing you,
and to my harm they see too precisely;
(yet) it is not harm to me, at least since I do not feel
bad about it,
it is indeed my advantage, lady, so that I think
that if you kill me, it will not be well for you,
for harm to me will be harm to you also.

I do not love you wisely, lady, for this reason:
that I am faithful to you and a traitor to my own in-
terests;
and I think I am losing you and I cannot keep myself,
and think I am harming you, and am harmful to
myself.
Still I dare not show or tell of my suffering to you,
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mas a l'esparg podetz mon cor devire, but you can perceive my heart in my look,  
qu'ar lo'us cuich dir et aras m'en repen for I think of telling you of it, and then I repent of  
and in my eyes I bear the shame and the boldness of  
the idea,  

\[40\] et port n'als huelz vergonh' e ardimen. it.

Trop vos am mais, dona, qu'ieu no sai dire,  
e quar anc jorn sic d'autr' amor desire  
I love you far more, lady, than I can say,  
and for having ever had desire for another love  
I feel no regret, but love you a hundred times more,  
for I have experienced the conduct of another.  

\[40\] Vas Nems t'en vai, chanssos, qui qeEs n'azire,  
que gauch n'auran, per lo meu escien,  
Go off to Nîmes, song, whomsoever it displeases,  
for I am certain that the three ladies  
to whom I present you will be pleased.

Notes

8. The sense 'to drag at the tail of a horse' (*for trainar*) seems well attested; the vaguer sense 'to  
attract', offered by Stronski, not so.

12, 13. Stronski: 'a desire which will never be either conquered or conqueror; conquered it cer-  
tainly will be...'

18. The balancing of *ben* and *mal* ('good' and 'evil') in the syntax suggests the sense: 'Please put  
up with the good that I wish you, for I endure the evil (that results from it, that is, from my  
feelings for you).' Chaytor suggests the sense 'be permissive of (i.e. grant) the good which I desire...';  
Stronski, 'permit me to wish you well'.

32. The reasoning here seems obscure.

41. That is, they can be seen in my eyes.

47. Some MSS. give a further line: 'for the three of them are certainly worth a hundred others';  
but Stronski notes that it does not conform to the rhyme-scheme, and argues that it is spurious.

**ARNAUT DANIEL:**

**SOLS SUI QUI SAI LO SOBRAFAN QE-M SORTZ**  
(*D.V.E.* II. vi)

*Sols sui qui sai lo sobrafan qe-m sortz* is cited by Dante in *De Vulgari Eloquentia* II. vi. as his  
third example of an illustrious canzone made up solely of the most excellent degree of construction.  
It is indeed a masterpiece of that kind. The first two lines are a resplendent example of the arrang-  
ing of words: literally, in their original order, they mean this:

Sols sui qui sai lo sobrafan qe-m sortz  
Alone I am who know the overtrouble that me surges  
al cor, d'amor sofren per sobramar  
in the heart, of love sick through overloving
Here two antitheses are intertwined, in the order: over-trouble / love / overloving. The weave is given added splendour by the choice of vowel and consonant.

The rest of the song does not maintain this beauty, but produces variety from the movements of a relatively complex syntax. Thus Arnaut says 'no joy would be brief.../from her whom I beg that she may guess it, /for...’ Here a main thought is stated in a main clause, and then either paralleled or contrasted with something else that could have remained an entirely secondary thought, but instead develops into something of equal importance. Line 24 might have stopped short with 'for by me she will never know it', but does not. All this makes for the rhetorical play that Dante praises in D.V.E. II. vi. Further to which, the thought of the poem has an amplitude and invention that allows it to evolve with full emotional logic while filling the metrical and stanzaic scheme unstrainedly.

There are two emotional poles in the song. One is the lady, who is associated with refinement and education; in a word, with the court as a process of cultural selection. This gives a sense of sobriety. The other is the speaker, and he is all movement: surging, hot words (st. 1), travelling (st. 2), a torrent (st. 3). Especially in the latter part this leads to an originality of image. Ezra Pound noted that Dante’s vividness ‘depends much on his comparison by simile to particular phenomena’, and that Dante followed Arnaut’s image of the Rhône in this poem, when he wrote Si come ad Arli, ove il Rodano stagna in Inferno IX. 112 (The Spirit of Romance p. 159; cf. p. 28).

(Text based on Toja, 1960.)

Sols sui qui sai lo sobrafan qe-m sortz
al cor, d’amor sofren per sobramar,
car mos volers es tant fersms et entiers
c’anc no s’esdus de celliei ni s’estors
cui encubic al prim vezex e puois;
c’ades ses lieis dic a lieis cochos motz,
puois qan la vei non sai, tant l’ai, que dire.

D’autras vezex sui secs e d’auzir sortz,
q’en sola lieis vei et aug et esgar;
e iez d’aisso no-ill sui fals plazentiers
que mais la vol non ditz la boca-l cors;

I am the only one who knows the excess of trouble that wells up in my heart, suffering with love through loving too much, for my will is so steady and integral that it never separated itself nor turned aside from her whom I coveted at first sight and have coveted since; so that now, without her, I speak hot words to her, and then when I see her, I do not know what to say, I have so much to say.

To see other women I am blind, and to hear them deaf, for in her alone I see and hear and am alert; and in this I am in no way a tricking flatterer, for my heart wants her more than my mouth says;
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for I do not cover fields, valleys, plains or hills so widely

that I can find in one person such goodly ways;

for God wanted to refine and establish them in her.

I have certainly been at many good courts

but here with her I find much more to praise:

moderation and wisdom and other good qualities,

beauty, youth, good actions and fine delights;

courtliness instructed her so that she is noble, and
educated her;

she has so far removed herself from all unpleasing deeds

that I believe nothing good is lacking in her.

No pleasure would be brief or of short measure

from her, whom I pray to be so good as to guess this fact,

for by me she will never know it

unless my heart, wordless, presents itself outside my body;

for the Rhône, whatever quantity of water swells it,

never has such impetus that the lake of love does not make

a fuller current in my heart, when I gaze on her.

Joy and delight from another seems base-born to me,

for no woman can be her equal in worth,

for pleasure from her is superior to other pleasures.

Ah! if I do not possess her, alas! how grievously she has taken hold of me!

And yet this trouble is gaiety, laughter and joy to me,

for in thinking of her I am avid and greedy for her:

ah God, if I can ever have joy of her in another way!

Never, I pledge you my word for this, did dance or tourney please me,
nor could anything give me so much joy in my heart,
as did that delight which false flatterer
never noised abroad, for to me alone it is a treasure.

Do I say too much? Not I, provided it be not an annoyance to her.

Fair lady, for God's sake, my speech and my voice
I wish to lose, before I say anything that will cause you pain.

I pray that my song be no pain to you,
for if you are willing to approve the melody and the words
Arnaut cares little whom it pleases or pains.

Notes
22. 'brief or of short measure': Canello makes this distinction between *breus* (of time) and *cortz* (of quantity).
27. 'impetus': thus Toja; Canello translates 'current'. Toja cites the gloss in MS. H, which says: 'Dats is the (underground) stream from which comes the water into the spring; wherefore we say, we drink the water from the dots.'
28. Toja cites the gloss in MS. H: 'This means that the Rhône when it is swollen with waters does not run so strongly and spread itself everywhere. That I [make] a broader stream of love, that is, in my heart, when I gaze on her.'
29. 'base-born': *bortz* has a primary sense of 'bastard'.
34. 'avid': *lec* has a primary sense of 'gluttonous'.
38. 'that': it is not clear to what *aquel* refers grammatically. Toja takes it to be 'joy' in the previous line, while Lavaud takes it to be 'game or tourney'. But it is clear enough that it concerns some favour that the lady granted the speaker secretly.

AIMERIC DE BELENOI:

**NULHS HOM NO POT COMPLIR ADRECHAMEN**

*(D.V.E. II. vi)*

Dante first mentions Aimeric's *Nulhs hom no pot complir adrechamen* in *De Vulgari Eloquentia* II. vi, as a fourth example of an illustrious canzone made up entirely of the most excellent arrangement of words. As usual, he does not say why. The chief rhetorical beauty of the poem is a system of opposites, of two kinds: possibilities that are stated and then negated; and paradoxes, such as that the man who thinks he is a fine lover is too arrogant to be a fine lover, or that great suffering incurred in failure to do great deeds for love must itself be counted as a great deed. The
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opposites are developed in such a way that key words recur, but never in the same way twice—except on occasions intended to defeat that expectation. This can only be illustrated with an interlinear translation, in which the key-words are underlined:

Little her love I, judged by what I intend;
Petit l'am ieu, segon so qu'ieu enten:

For honour nor wealth, except as much as her I love, not I have;
C'onor ni be, mas tan quan l'am non ai,

And, if I her loved as much as to her is due,
E, s'ieu l'ames tan cum a lieys s'eschai,

I should be king of love and of youth
Ieu fora reys d'amor e de yoven

And of fine deeds, (but one not gets honouring
E de ricx fagz, (mas hom non a honransa

Equal to his worth); but such great woe
Par a'l sieu pretz); pero, tan gran pezansa

I have in my heart, because deeds not I can do,
N'ai e mon cor, car los fagz non puesc far,

That the trouble that I suffer should for deeds count.
Que'ls mals qu'ieu trai degra per faitz contar.

With this recurrence of words are interwoven alliteration on key stresses (*pretz, pezansa, fagz, far*), internal half-rhymes (*cor, far*) and sound-permutation (*l'ames, a lieys*), and of course the rhyme-scheme itself. Dante's praise for this song does not seem at all out of place, though Marigo can only find in it certain personifications (of which one is not there), some (unspecified) images 'not devoid of finesse', and an authoritative development of the thought (not further described).

Dante's second mention of the song is in *De Vulgari Eloquentia* II. 12, as an example of a stanza that 'rejoices in being made up of lines of eleven syllables alone'. (Dante of course wrongly assimilates ten-syllable lines in Provençal to eleven-syllable lines in Italian; Aimeric's are of ten syllables.) 'This the Spaniards also used; and I mean the Spaniards who wrote poetry in the vulgar tongue of oc [i.e. what we call Provençal]. [In it] Aimeric de Belenoi wrote *Nulhs hom no pot*...'. Aimeric's connections with Catalonia and Castile are no reason for thinking that Dante intended to distinguish him from other troubadours of Gascony, Languedoc or Provence by calling him a 'Spaniard'; elsewhere (I. 8) he refers to all Provençal-speakers by that name. He appears to have considered the significant part of the Iberian peninsula to be Aragon and Catalonia, where a dialect closely related to Provençal was spoken; and hence to have transferred the term 'Spaniard' to all Provençal-speakers (see *De Vulgari Eloquentia* translated by A.G. Ferrers Howell, pp. 23–24).
But Marigo suggests that the wording of *D.V.E.* II. 12 shows that Dante was aware that there were ‘Spaniards’ who did not speak Provençal or any close relative of it.

(Text based on Dumitrescu, 1935.)

No man can accomplish properly what he has in his heart, unless everything that he himself does seems to him trivial; and a man does not love with a true heart when he thinks he loves very faithfully, for such a belief abases, while the other raises a man up.

But I do not love in that way at all; indeed, I swear by her whom I hold dearest in my heart that when I love her the most, I feel I love her very little.

I love her very little, judged by what I intend: for I have neither honour nor wealth except in so far as I love her; and, if I loved her as much as is due to her, I should be king of love, youth and fine actions—but men are not honoured equally with their merits. But I have such a great woe in my heart because I cannot do such deeds, that the suffering I endure ought to count as deeds.

For the man who wishes to, and cannot, endures suffering a hundred times worse than he who can and does: for capacity to do overcomes timorousness so that it takes away the cares of love from the man of worth.

But the lady in whom all my hope is placed is of so much worth,—she knows how to win honour and how to be circumspect, with such fine behaviour,—that she never did too little or too much in anything.
Quant e mon cor remir son belh cors gen,
When within my heart I gaze on her beautiful,
Lo dous pessars m'abelhis tant, e ·m plai,
the sweet pondering delights and pleases me so much
Qu'ab joy languisc; e quar hieu non l'am mai,
that I languish with joy; and because I do not love
Muer de dezir, on plus l'am coralmen:
hers even more,
Que tan volgra que ·m cregues s'amistansa,
I die of desire when I love her most deeply.
Tro qu’ieu muris, ho qu’ylh n’agues pitansa;
For I should like my love for her to grow so much
Que ·l joys d'amor, quan dona ·l vol donar,
that I would die, or that she would have pity for it;
Non pot, mas tan quant hom l’ama, pujar.
for the joy of love, when a lady wishes to grant it,

Ni ·l dos no val a sselluy que lo pren
Nor is a gift worth anything other, to him who
Re, mas aitan quan s’en dona de jai;
than as much as he gives himself joy of it (delights in

Doncx, si ·s penssa midons lo joy qu’aurai
therefore, if my Lord (i.e. my lady) considers the joy
De ·l sieu ric do, s’en lieys Merces diisen
that I shall have
(Qu’estiers non ai de re nulha fiansa),
from her great gift, if pity takes up its abode in her
Ylh e Merces faran bon’ acordansa;
(for otherwise I have no confidence in anything),
Car Merces fai ric dur cor acordar
she and pity will come to a complete understanding;

Ab lial cor, vencut per sobramar.
for pity makes a fine but hard heart come to an

Vas la bella N’Elionor t’enansa
understanding
Chansos, qu’en lieys pren bos pretz
with a faithful heart, conquered by over-loving.
meilluransa;

Qu’eu te tramet a lieys per meillurar,
Step forward to the beautiful Lady Eleanor,
E se t’aiisz, poiras segur anar.
song, for in her, high merit becomes higher;

And if she gives you any glance in passing,
(——-), go, and don’t trouble yourself with fears.

Notes
18. Another MS. reading, no fai instead of e fai, would give the meaning 'endures suffering a hun-
dred times worse than he who can endures it.'
35. 'my Lord': this is a perhaps over-literal translation of midons, an anomalous and interesting word. It is used almost exclusively by the troubadours, of their ladies (though never for direct address). 'Its etymology is ('mi-) dominus, 'my master, lord', but since it is used only of women—its pronoun is 'she'—glossarists have difficulty in giving it a gender.' Though 'my quasi-feudal lord' was not its primary sense, some feudal and even some religious connotation must have attached to it. See Makin, Provence and Pound, pp. 101–102, 323–324.

41. Eleanor of Aragon, fifth wife of Raimon VI, Count of Toulouse. Three other manuscripts give three different versions of another tornada (envoi). Here is one of them:

Lord Sancho, all your friendship is towards
worth, towards God and towards honour,
so that one can praise you justly
with a true praise that you cause to rise very high.

This Sancho may be Sancho of Aragon, guardian of Jacme I, King of Aragon; and as Dumitrescu suggests, the alternative tornada may be a proof that the song was addressed successively to several patrons.

44. 'if she welcomes you': the MS. readings are obscure. One suggestion has been si t'a dis, 'if she has recited you', but dis is incorrect for a past participle. Troubadours did, however, as Dumitrescu points out, sometimes ask the lady to recite their songs. Another suggestion (Dumitrescu's) is se Et grazis, 'if she approves of you'.

46. Dumitrescu gives a reading (E nom de fol) which she admits to not understanding, and tentatively suggests an alternative: e no m defail, 'and do not fail me'.

AIMERIC DE PEGUILLAN:

SI CUM L'ARBRES QUE, PER SOBRECARGAR
(D.V.E. II. vi)

_Si cum l'arbres que, per sobrecargar_ is Dante's fifth example in _D.V.E. II. vi_ of a poem made up solely of the most excellent degree of construction. Aimeric's 'matter' in this song contains paradox, or antithesis of ideas; his rhetorical skill consists in never introducing such antithesis in the same way twice. There is also care to vary the _type_ of antithesis, that is, the types of ideas being contrasted; and to interweave them conceptually wherever possible. For example, the first quatrain contains the paradox that over-fulfilment of the tree's (or lover's) function defeats that function. The next two lines move to a type of antithesis that provides the meat for most of the poem: loss of wits _vs._ self-awareness. That is developed in the next two lines with a further antithesis to double it: 'I think' _vs._ 'I know'. And then in the second stanza the underlying sense _vs._ folly antithesis is paralleled with another, the mixture _vs._ the half on its own.

Translation can to some degree convey the way in which syntax is constantly varied so that the antitheses are not dulled. But it cannot carry the shifts of word-order or of rhyme within that syntax; nor can it carry the careful shifting of key consonant, so that essential consonants are not repeated at the same point in the line:

_E non es bo qu'om sia tan senatz_  
_Que a sazo no sega son talen_
An expectation of repeated sequence is aroused, then defeated.

The poem does, however, lack sharp image, and almost every line contains some phrase typical of predecessors.

(Text based on Shepard and Chambers, 1950.)

Si cum l’arbres que, per sobrecargar,  
Frang se meteys e pert son frug e se,  
Ai perduda ma belha dona e me  
E mon entier sen frag, per sobramar.

Like the tree that, through being too heavily laden,  
breaks itself and loses its fruit and itself,  
I have lost my beautiful lady and myself  
and cracked all my wits, through over-loving.

But, though I am overwhelmed,  
never did I wittingly do harm to myself;  
rather, I think I do everything that I do with sense,  
but now I know that folly is dominating it too much.

E non es bo qu’om sia tan senatz

And it is not good that a man should be so sensible  
that he should not follow his desire from time to time;  
and if there is not a mixture of both (sense and desire),  
one half (of this combination) is not good alone.

For a man truly becomes foolish through being too wise,  
and often goes about committing follies,  
wherefore it is right that a man should go about  
sometimes mixing  
sense with folly, if he is wise enough to remember this.

Nescis, e’n vai maintasvetz folhejan,

Per que s’eschai qu’om an en loc mesclan

Sens ab foudatz, qui o sap retener.

Alas! I do not have myself under my control,  
but instead go about seeking for, searching out my own harm;  
and I wish much more to lose and do harm to myself  
with you, lady, than to conquer with another;  
for always I think I shall do myself good with this harm  
and that I am wise in this folly;  
but, as happens with the mad faithful lover,  
where you treat me worse, you hold me more securely always.

No sai nulh “oc” per qu’ieu des vostre “no”,  
I know of no ‘Yes’ for which I would give your ‘No’,
Per que soven tornon mei ris en plor;  
Et ieu cum folhs ai gaug de ma dolor  
E de ma mort, quan vey vostra faisso.  
Quo' l bazalesc qu'ab joy s'anet aucir,  
so that my laughs often become weeping;  
and, like a madman, I have joy from my grief  
and from my death, when I see your person.  
Like the basilisk that, with joy, brought about its own  
death

Quant el miralh se remiret e's vi,  
Tot atressi etz vos miralhs de mi,  
Que m'auc1etz quan vos ve1 ruEus renur.  
when it gazed on itself and saw itself in the mirror,  
just in the same way you are a mirror of me,  
for you kill me when I see you or gaze on you.

A vos no'n cal quan me vezetz morir;  
Abans o faitz de mi tot enaissi  
Cum de l'enfan qu'ab un maraboti  
Fai hom del plor laissar e departir,  
E pueys quant es tornatz en alegrier  
Et hom l'estrai so que' l donet e'l tol,  
Et el adoncs plora e fai maior dol  
It does not touch you when you see me die;  
rather, you treat me just  
like the child that with a coin  
one makes abandon and give up its crying,  
and then when it has returned to happiness  
and one takes away what one gave it, and removes it,  
it then weeps and makes twice as much fuss  
as it did the first time.

Reys Castellas, ges vostre pretz no col  
De melhurar, c'uey val pro mais que hier.  
Castilian King, may your worth, which is far greater  
today  
than yesterday, never fail to improve.

Notes
15. Cf. Horace Odes IV. 12. 28, Dulce est desipere loco, 'It is sweet at the fitting moment to act  
foolishly.'
16. The reading of Bartsch-Koschwitz, quils sap gen, would give 'if one knows how to keep them both  
(i.e. sense and folly) in check.'
23. 'the mad faithful lover': there is an element of verbal play, since fin amador, 'faithful lover',  
is something like a fixed phrase; here Aimeric has in fact 'fi fol amador, 'faithful mad lover',  
if Shepard and Chambers' choice of reading is correct (some MSS. have fol fin).
25. In another poem, Aimeric has 'I know of no joy for which I would give my psin.'
41. Shepard and Chambers choose the reading 'Castilian King' (Reys Castellas) though it is given only  
by four MSS. out of twenty-one. Some MSS. give Tiriaca, but this person is unknown. (Shep-

ARDNAT DANIEL:
SI-M FOS AMORS DE IOI DONAR TANT LARGA  
(D.V.E. II. xiii)
In D.V.E. II. x and II. xiii Dante refers to Arnaut's frequent use of a stanza without melodic
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division or internal rhymes, but only to exclude this kind of stanza from his elaborate discussions (which then follow) of stanzas that, by contrast, do have these features.

Arnaut did indeed use such undivided stanzas often: ten times out of eighteen in his surviving verses. But Dante’s comparison with his own *Al poco giorno* could mislead. Though that poem has indeed an unrhymed and undivided stanza, being a sestina (and following the form of Arnaut’s celebrated *Lo ferm voler*, which may be the first sestina ever written), the sestina is rather different in its effect from the main body of Arnaut’s poem with undivided stanzas — such as *Si-m fos Amors*, which is Dante’s example here. The sestina has no rhymes at all in the usual sense, but rather, repetition of final words in the succeeding stanzas, in a changing order. Its sense of limited permutation is very strict, since the repeated words make themselves immediately visible, and remain always the same seven units. Hence the total effect is more obsessive, more ritual, more like an incantation to remorseless forces embodied in the talismanic key-words that forever return. Dante no doubt intended to go on to discuss later the effect of the unrhymed stanza as Arnaut most commonly uses it. We have already discussed one example of this effect, in *L’aura amara* (II. ii); and the reader may compare for himself *Sols sui* (II. vi). Let us then consider the case of the poem cited here at II. xiii, *Si-m fos Amors*.

Though there is no repetition of rhymes within the stanza, the successive final sounds in the stanza are by no means unrelated: *arga, anc, arc, omba, om, er, ens, esta*. This is in itself an interesting sound-progression: there is a sort of angular development of the vowel-sounds, very un-smooth and unclassical in feeling, rather like West African decorative patterns; it is made more angular by the variation between stressed and unstressed final syllables. It is a series of almost-repeats, which somehow seems to reach a triumphant conclusion with the *esta*. This almost-repeating is then actually repeated in its entirety in the following stanza, and in the rest. Sound-arrangement of course, irrespective of denotation, has its own attraction and its own ‘meaning’; and the attraction of this one for Dante is shown in his picking out Bertran de Born’s use of the same sound-series in *No puosc mudar*, *D.V.E.* II. ii, one of the most remarkable borrowings in literary history, but which seems to transform the effect of this formal element.

Arnaut here uses it as an apt vessel for a telling-over of his emotions concerning the lady in a series of half-fused and therefore semi-mystical images. The song does not have that spare touch of specific image (frog, de-leafed tree) that draws all to itself in his other verses. Instead it states a thought-sequence, and proceeds to re-state it over and over again on several parallel planes of image, none of them very exactly visualised, but because of that more suggestive of a man who has internalised all his experience, brooding over it like a monk telling over his rosary-beads.

The thought-sequence is: she is so high that (a) he experiences great suffering, but (b) at the
same time, steadiness in her case becomes a virtue and reward in itself, and (c) anyway, for the same reason, the final expectations are immense. The following table suggests how, in its many re-state-
ments, this sequence of thought may be separated onto the different planes of image, though it is not at all so separated in the poem.

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
& (a) he suffers & (b) steadiness is itself a virtue & (c) final expectations are immense \\
\hline
\text{WEALTH} & \text{debt} & \text{her words make him rich} & \text{‘rich’ (also ‘noble’)} \\
\hline
\text{MORAL LEVEL} & \text{yawing low} & \text{contemplates the heights} & \\
\hline
\text{FEUDAL INVESTITURE} & \text{he is obedient} & \text{she will invest him (with a kiss) with her love} & \\
\hline
\text{PHYSICAL} & \text{pain in flanks} & \text{hope solaces him} & \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

(\text{Text based on Toja, 1960.})

\begin{align*}
\text{Si m fos Amors de ioi donar tant larga} & \quad \text{If Love were as generous in giving joy to me} \\
\text{cum ieu vas lieis d'aver fin cor e franc,} & \quad \text{as I (am) towards Love in having a true and open heart,} \\
\text{ia per gran ben no mâm calgra far embarc,} & \quad \text{I should not be anxious about contracting a debt for a great good,} \\
\text{q'er am tant aut qe-l pes mi poi' e mâm tomba,} & \quad \text{for now I love in such an exalted place that the thought of it both raises me and brings me down;} \\
\text{mas qand m'albir cum es de pretz al som mout m'en am mais car anc l'ausiei voler,} & \quad \text{but when I consider how she is at the summit of worth} \\
\text{c'aras sai ieu que mos cors e mos sens mi farant far, lor grat, rica conquesta.} & \quad \text{I love myself much more for having dared to desire her,} \\
\text{Pero s'ieu fatz lonc esper, no m'embarga,} & \quad \text{because I know now that my heart and my intelligence will cause me to make, to their delight, a rich conquest.} \\
\text{q'en tant ric luoc me sui mes e m'estanc} & \quad \text{But if I wait a long time, it does not hold me back,} \\
\end{align*}
that she would keep me rich with joy with her fine sayings, and I shall persevere until I am carried to my tomb, for I am certainly not such a man as would abandon gold for lead; and since in her nothing ought to be improved, I shall be loyal and obedient to her until she invests me, kissing, with her love, if it pleases her.

A good hope restores me and discharges me of a sweet desire that pains my sides, for I take the sorrow patiently, put up with it, and endure it, since the other ladies are far below, as far as beauty is concerned, for even the finest lady appears to have dropped below this one, if one sees her; and it is true; for all good ways, worth, wisdom and sense reign with her, and not one is inferior (in her) or remains excluded.

And since she is worth so much, do not imagine that my firm desire will disperse, or split, or branch off, for I shall be neither hers nor my own if I leave her, —by that Lord who showed Himself as a dove,— for there is no man of any reputation in the world who desires as much to have great well-being as I desire her, and I care nothing for the hateful people to whom (others’) trouble in love is a delight.

Lady Better-than-Good, do not be hostile to me, for in my love for you will find me quite free of trickery,
for I have neither heart nor power to divest myself of the firm desire that is not a (fragile) glass vessel; for I have neither heart nor power to divest myself of the firm desire that is not a (fragile) glass vessel; for when I wake up or close my eyes in sleep I dedicate myself to you; and when I get up or go to bed; and do not imagine that my desire will weaken, it never will; I fell it now (burning) in my mind.

false enemies of love, may fire burn your tongue, and may you lose both eyes with an evil canker, since, because of you, (gifts of) horses and money have gone; you take away love, that is almost disappearing altogether;

may God confound you in such a way that you never know how He does it, since you get yourselves cursed and despised by lovers;

it is evil luck that sustains you, ignorant people, for you are the worse for it, when one reproves you the most.

Arnaut has waited a long time, and will continue to do so, for by waiting a man of worth makes a rich conquest.

Notes

5. Wilhelm notes the interesting shift from Love to the beloved (Amors is feminine).
18. Toja: ‘The metaphor is of Arnaut’s style in its vivid expressiveness, condensed in the semantic value of the verb descarga [unloads, discharges]: the desire of love, sweet in itself, weighs on the soul like a burden, that presses on the shoulders and hurts the flanks...’ But the image is not clear.
25–26. Chaytor would translate: ‘that my love will be scattered, or will fork, or will branch’, thus taking the metaphor through seed, plant and tree.
26. ‘firm desire’: this ferms volers occurs with particular frequency in the songs of Arnaut; it may conceivably have something to do with Dante’s characterisation of Arnaut in the Purgatorio, where he is among the lustful.
33. This song, like one other by Arnaut, is addressed to a ‘Lady Better-than-Good’, who may or may not be the wife of William of Bouvila, mentioned in the Provençal biography. If she is that lady, then two more songs by Arnaut are also addressed to her, to judge by the indications given by
the biography and by the sixteenth-century scholar Barbieri. Bertran de Born, in the famous song of the borrowed lady, also addresses a 'Better-than-Good'; for the controversy as to whether she is the same as Arnaut's 'Better-than-Good', see especially Le troubadour Folquet de Marseille, ed. Stronski, pp. 32* and 33*, note, and Appel, Bertran von Born, p. 16, note, who also discusses Gaucelm Faidit's use of the same name. (Stronski, in Le troubadour Folquet..., p. 28*, note, points out that the idea that Folquet also uses the same name arises from a misreading.)

43. Toja: 'Arnaut laments the end of the generous gifts (horses and silver marks) made to troubadours and joglars; an end that has come about because of the enemies of 'fùn' ('faithful', etc.) love: the fals lausengier (the deceiving flatterers).'

48. I.e. 'the more you are reproved, the worse you get.'

50. Wilhelm notes the sense of awaiting, waiting upon, and being attentive.

References

Appel, Carl, Bertran von Born, Halle, 1931.
Appel: see also Bertran de Born.
Arnaut Daniel, La vita e le opere del trovatore Arnaldo Danerello, ed. U.A. Cannello, Halle, 1883.
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Folquet de Marseilla, Le Troubadour Folquet de Marseille, ed. Stanislaw Stronski, Cracow, 1910.
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Perugi: see Arnaut Daniel.


Santangelo, Salvatore, Dante e i trovatori provenzali, 2nd edn., Catania, 1959.

Shepard and Chambers: see Aimeric de Peguillan.

Stronski: see Folquet de Marseillia.

Toja: see Arnaut Daniel.

Wilhelm: see Arnaut Daniel.

（付記） エズラ・パウンドの詩と詩論にはダンテの影響が随所に見られる。パウンドは中世プロヴァンスの吟遊詩人の研究と翻訳をもって詩人としての第一歩を踏み出したと言っても言い過ぎにならないであろう。そしてパウンドをプロヴァンス詩に誘ったのはダンテであった。

ダンテの『俗語論』は、ラテン語で書かれたロマンス語とロマンス語の詩人論である。神秘主義研究派の文学・芸術における東西神秘主義研究グループは、その戦後の一つとしてエズラ・パウンドの研究を行っているが、その研究の一環として、ダンテの『俗語論』の研究とその翻訳・注釈に従事している。ところがダンテのプロヴァンス語・プロヴァンス詩の引照に関しては専門家の協力が必要である。そこでわれわれは広島大学のメイキン氏に依頼を求める。

ピーター・メイキン氏は中世プロヴァンス語を専門的に学ばれたパウンド学者で、Provence and Pound (1978) の名著がある。メイキン氏には『俗語論』にあらわれるすべてのプロヴァンス語とプロヴァンス詩について詳細なノートを作成していただいたが、その仕事から生まれたのが貴重な本論考である。特別寄稿とした理由である。

（安川 大）