

Songs of the Women Troubadours



Matilda Bruckner, Laurie Shepard, and Sarah White

WITH FOREWORD BY W. S. MERWIN

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SONGS OF THE WOMEN TROUBADOURS

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SONGS OF THE WOMEN
TROUBADOURS

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY

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Preface of the General Editors

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The General Editors hope that these volumes will bring the general reader a closer awareness of a richly diversified area that has for too long been closed to everyone except those with precise academic training, an area that is well worth study and reflection.

James J. Wilhelm
Rutgers University
Lowry Nelson, Jr.
Yale University

To Daniel, Louis, Malcolm, Owen, Raphael and Thomas

Tanz salutz e tantas amors e tanz benz e tantas honors e tantas finas
amistaz e tanz gauz com vos volriaz e tanz ris e tant d'alegrier

Azalais d'Altier

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Foreword

Whatever the common image of the troubadour may be at present, it is probably exclusively masculine. Readers not particularly versed in medieval literature often appear surprised when they learn that there were women troubadours. Anyone at all familiar with the tradition of courtly love and the chivalric age, knows that women were addressed and celebrated, admired, pled with, and their love despaired of, within its conventions. Some may be aware that many of the great patrons of that high age of poetry, music, and sculpture were women. Few realize that there were women who wrote poetry themselves within that tradition, probably almost from its beginning. And that their poetry—even the small remnant of it that has survived—has a distinct character within troubadour poetry.

These women poets were not unknown in their own time, to those who heard and remember the songs and poems that began to come in to being some time in the eleventh century and spread rapidly through the region between the Loire and the Pyrenees, in local variations of what most of the troubadours there called the *lengua lemosina*, of Occitan. Women troubadours—*trobairitz* is the word for them in Occitan—were represented in the *razos* or *vidas*, the biographical sketches made up largely of hearsay and extrapolation, that began to circulate during the thirteenth century, transcribed from formulaic introductory comments passed around, along with the poems, among the *jongleurs*, or singers. Most of the *trobairitz* of whom we still have poems are represented in the corpus of *vidas* that were finally published, in the original Occitan, only in the nineteenth century. By then few read the archaic Occitan (though modern Occitan was very much alive) and the figure of the male troubadour was being transformed in to an operatic figment. The *trobairitz* had to be rediscovered.

The decades beginning with Robert Briffault's enthralling resuscitation, "Les Troubadours" in 1945 (published in English in 1948) have seen a gathering wave of something more than interest—an enthusiastic revival of whatever can now be known of that period: the sources, lives, attitudes and music of what some have come to regard as the greatest flowering of lyric poetry in the history of the Western world. This growing excitement is a recognition, among other things, of the awakening freedom and brilliance of that age of poetry. And with the new awareness of that time, the poetry of the *trobairitz* and its place in that surge of new song at last came to notice again.

One of the pioneers in the rediscovery was Meg Bogin, whose work in Montpellier and elsewhere during the 1970's was published in "The Women Troubadours" (1976). By the end of the 70's and during the 80's and 90's studies of the *trobairitz* were multiplying in learned journals, and Angelica Rieger's scholarly editing in that period provided textual benchmarks.

The three collaborators who produced "Songs of the Women Troubadours" in 1995 wanted to make a collection that would represent the principal *trobairitz* canon, insofar as one can be constructed, and to do it in a way that made the poems as accessible as possible to readers in English. The scholarly cooperation has drawn upon all the

researches in the field so far, and Sarah White's translations are faithful and contemporary without tricks, and with the facing text they bring us a long step toward the meanings and the sequence of the original words.

What the collection makes plain is the distinct difference of vantage and often of tone and substance, between the *trobairitz* poems and many of the comparable poems of their masculine contemporaries. Almost all of the *trobairitz* verses are either love poems or on the subject of love, and they invite comparison with the *cansos*, or love poems, that are the typifying if not the only genre of poetry of the male troubadours. The poems of the *trobairitz* are often more intimate and direct, less elaborately conventional than those of the men. One can see this occasionally even in the *tenses* of poems that take the form of a dialogue between a man and a woman, in alternating stanzas, usually on the theme of love. The difference may—indeed it certainly must—have been in itself part convention, part role, part social performance. But the fact that is apparent at all and has been transformed in to a style, an art, sometimes indeed a voice, is admirable and a sign of great vitality.

I believe that we have only begun to realize the beauty and freshness of this whole tradition, and though few of the poems of the *trobairitz* survive, they form a notable part of this rich current of poetry and song. "Songs of the Women Troubadors" represents it lovingly and should add to its new audience.

W.S.Merwin

Preface

We have conceived this anthology of women troubadours or trobairitz as a performance, with all the rich possibilities that term implies. Among the songs that present a woman's voice circulating in the troubadour tradition, we have included all those whose attribution to trobairitz is strongly assured by manuscript or historical evidence. In addition, we offer access to a number of poems that are spoken in the voices of named or anonymous *domnas*, though not verifiably authored by women. Readers may thus come to their own conclusions about the distinction or coincidence of *fémininité génétique* and *textualité féminine* in any particular case.

We have not tried to be exhaustive in scope, an impossible task in any case, given the difficulty of pinning down the trobairitz repertoire (as explained below). We have designed rather a collection that brings together a broad selection of trobairitz songs that may serve general readers, poets, students, teachers, and scholars working in disciplines including medieval literature, social history, women's studies, culture studies, poetry and translation. Our completely re-edited texts are presented with a focused apparatus and a reliable, colloquial translation that may stand on its own or help the reader work with the original language. We have not aimed to replace Angelica Rieger's monumental critical edition for the specialist of Occitan literature, but our texts will interest scholars who want to peel away layers of emendations from previous editors and grapple afresh with the manuscript versions of the poems. Our selection of variants and notes will help situate these songs in their social, literary, and cultural contexts.

As in any concert performance, we have arranged the selection of songs for our own and the public's pleasure. They are divided into categories according to lyric genres recognized by the poets themselves, with the *canço* first as befits its prestige. Within each category the order is subjective and aims to set up a suggestive interplay among the songs. As this edition performs and translates each of the songs, we hope the readers will find themselves enriched by their reception and equipped thereby to go farther in the study and appreciation of an exciting repertoire. Certainly the process of collaboration that produced it has been a great pleasure for the three of us, as we have probed the texts together, learning from them and each other. As the trobairitz' songs have come alive for us through our readings, translations, and discussions, we hope that they may leave the page and enter the minds, ears and hearts of our readers.

Among the many final gestures that bring a work to its conclusion, acknowledging and thanking colleagues and friends is one of the most pleasurable. In some sense, the seeds for this project were first planted in the late seventies, when an NEH Summer Seminar brought to Princeton Don Monson and Sarah White, who were thus able to join Sylvia Huot and myself in a weekly study group on troubadour poetry. I am grateful to all of them for the many hours we spent together in my Gothic-shaped office, reading, translating, and analyzing a series of poems by troubadours and trobairitz. That initial shared acquaintance with the troubadour repertoire led subsequently to my first project on Castelloza and a written correspondence with Angelica Rieger, who has been most

generous over the years in sharing her perspectives, suggestions and extensive work on the trobairitz. My ongoing involvement with the women troubadours through a number of lectures, papers and articles was put in a new light when Don Maddox was kind enough to tell me about Garland's interest in an edition and translation of their songs. With the agreement of my colleagues, Laurie Shepard and Sarah White, whose expertise in textual criticism and translation gave me the courage to respond to that suggestion, we made a proposal that Jim Wilhelm as General Editor of Garland accepted with gratifying rapidity.

The process of extensive collaboration among the three of us has benefitted from the generous input of a number of colleagues. As is customary, we affirm our responsibility for errors that may result from the choices made; nevertheless we would like to acknowledge fully how much we have learned from others and thank them as they deserve: Angelica Rieger for an edition of the trobairitz that has served as our constant guide, Margaret Switten and Fredric Cheyette for sharing unpublished work that helped situate the women troubadours textually and historically, Nat Smith for his expertise in Old Provençal grammar and the puzzles of translating it, Mark Stansbury for technical assistance, and James Morgan of Garland Press for publishing this paperback edition. We are grateful to W.S.Merwin for generously contributing the Foreword. Boston College provided financial assistance in the form of Research Expense Grants.

Since the move to a paperback edition has given us the opportunity for some revision, we gratefully acknowledge the feedback of reviewers and thank William Paden, Beth Wilson Poe and Michel-André Bossy for their critical eyes and ears.

Finally, we would like to thank our families for their love and support, especially our six sons to whom we dedicate this volume.

MTB

Introduction

This collection assembles twenty named women poets and a selection of anonymous *domnas*, names and voices derived from poems, rubrics, *vidas* (biographies) and *razos* (commentaries) recorded in manuscripts of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. If they are only twenty or so among more than four hundred named troubadours of Southern France, these women poets, active from the mid-twelfth to the mid-thirteenth centuries, nevertheless represent an exceptional and exceptionally large group of literary women within medieval tradition. As such, they deserve the attention of a modern public searching for a fuller understanding of the roles men and women have played in the formation of western culture. A modern reader, denied immediate access to the world of the Occitan courts and their live performances of music and song, necessarily meets troubadours, male and female, in the textual world of medieval *chansonniers* in which their songs were written down in anthology form. Among the women troubadours named in the manuscripts—all noblewomen as far as their social status can be determined—only Gaudairenca, the wife of Raimon de Miraval, has left no trace in this collection, since her “coblas e dansas” have not survived (Boutière 380). Among the anonymous *domnas* whose status as women poets remains problematic, our selection gives a wide sample of the different voices attributed to female speakers within the context of troubadour lyric. In order to understand and appreciate the accomplishments of these “trobairitz” (the feminine form of “trobador,” according to the thirteenth-century romance *Flamenca*), we need to situate them and their poems in a variety of contexts, literary and historical, cultural and linguistic.

Trobairitz Interacting with the Troubadour Poetic System

The trobairitz give precious testimony of the ways aristocratic women in Southern France were able to participate fully in the game and life of poetry, not only as patrons and objects of song but as poets singing and reshaping the art of the troubadours. An art of love that is simultaneously an art of persuasion, troubadour poetry is characterized by a formalization that operates equally at the levels of form and content. If originality and creativity in the Romantic sense are not relevant categories for understanding troubadour lyric, individual invention is no less important here than in other literary forms: the poet “finds” (the normal meaning of *trobar*) within the shared materials of the poetic system new combinations and variations that continually refract the common traits of the system through a changeable lens of particular manifestations. Any trobairitz who begins to compose (the technical sense of *trobar*) enters a lyric world that may strike the modern reader as paradoxically open and confining: the choice of shape for stanza and poem—rhymes, rhyme patterns, meter, number of stanzas—is uncharted by any fixed forms like those introduced in the later Middle Ages. Yet the subject matter of a *canso* (love song) is clearly mapped out by the typical scenarios of *fin'amor*, in which the humble poet/lover

begs for the love of his frequently silent and rejecting lady, describes his pain and suffering through all the ambivalent enjoyment of frustrated desire, and finally expects his service in song to be rewarded by an eventual gift of *joi*, anticipated (sometimes remembered) in the experience of the song itself. Each repetition of vocabulary, motifs, and themes enriches the power of allusion that key words and concepts infuse into the lyric voice.

Does this mean that troubadour poetry is characterized by formal freedom and thematic constraint? Yes and no, since on the one hand, troubadours frequently borrow and adapt each others' formal choices, creating a series of allusions through rhymes or stanza structures that set up, within the larger probabilities of the system as a whole, a game of recognition and play for the public of connoisseurs. On the other hand, the motifs of love that can be adequately expressed and explored in Bernart de Ventadorn's 2400-word vocabulary (Zumthor, "Recherches" 410–11) can upon occasion be interrupted by the unexpected: in the generally more free-wheeling world of the *tenso* (debate poem), Alaisina Yselda raises the uncourtly topic of sagging breasts and stretching bellies; attracted to love and marriage, she worries about the inevitable fruits and their effects on her body (no. 27). In the context of the *sirventes*, where a range of moral and political topics can be explored, the anonymous trobairitz of "Ab greu cossire" (no. 29) rails against the sumptuary laws that have robbed her and other ladies of their gold and silver chains and buttons. Her complaint is no less intensely formulated for all the humorous irony of her tone. Even within the traditional topics of love, the same motifs sung by a troubadour may have a different effect when the lady of lyric begins to sing for herself. If we would join the lyric's public of connoisseurs, it will be equally important to appreciate where the trobairitz do what troubadours do and where they do not, even if sometimes it may be difficult to tell the difference.

Although we are usually reading these poems from a written text with no melody enriching and sustaining the words, we need to keep in mind their intended life in performance and song. We have only a single stanza of one trobairitz melody transcribed in manuscript W, but there is a documented history of women as performers and composers, some professional, others amateur, that covers the whole period of the Middle Ages (Coldwell and Borroff). Until polyphonic music introduced special requirements for training, aristocratic men and women had equal access to composing monophonic music (Coldwell 42–3). How this music was actually performed, with or without musical accompaniment, has long been a subject of speculation. The musical notation of troubadour manuscripts uses notes (neumes) that indicate relative pitch with no measurement of time. However, there is general agreement among scholars and performers that the melodies must be free to adapt themselves to the rhythm of the words, especially as the same melody is repeated from stanza to stanza (Van der Werf). The music in general may be understood to serve the text without obscuring it. Vincent Pollina shows, for example, how the bipartite structure of the musical scheme in the Comtessa de Dia's "A chantar," ABABCDB, typically reinforces the standard division of the stanza into *frons* (head, i.e., the two repeated *pedes* or feet of the opening four verses: here *aaaa*, frequently *abab* or *abba*) and *cauda* (tail: the second half of the stanza which may be of any length, here *bab*). Pollina details the interplay of words and melody to demonstrate how both embody the common medieval aesthetic principle of combining continuity and discontinuity ("Melodic Continuity").

Troubadours did not always make up their own melodies and trobairitz too may have borrowed melodies. That is what Rieger suggests for Maria de Ventadorn's *tenso* with Gui d'Ussel "Gui d'Uisel, be.m pesa de vos" (no. 12), since the initiator of the debate is assumed to be responsible for the music as well as the form of the stanza ("La *mala canso*"). Following the suggestion of a *razo* (Boutière 212–13) that links their *tenso* to Gui's song of complaint about a "bad lady," Rieger hypothesizes that Gui's "Si be.m partetz, mala dompna, de vos" plays off against Raimbaut de Vaqueiras's "Ges, si tot ma don'et amors." Raimbaut's and Gui's songs share the same rhyme scheme and two repeated rhyme words. Since Maria uses the metric pattern, as well as the rhyme scheme of Raimbaut's song (a10 b10 b10 a10 c10 c10 d10 d10) and shares two rhyme sounds with Gui's *mala canso* (-os and -en), she may very well have borrowed Raimbaut's melody (now lost) to reinforce the pattern of interaction, playing off against the troubadours' complaints about ladies her own argument that a lady should always maintain her superior status.

These examples have already introduced some of the key elements that characterize *trobar*. Each trobairitz is as free as any troubadour to invent her own shape for the opening stanza (which will set the pattern for the entire song), as Castelloza does in "Amics s'ie.us trobes avinen" (no. 6) and "Ia de chantar" (no. 5) with their unique rhyme schemes and syllabic formulae (Frank I, 33, 159; II, 32, 48). That choice may overlap with patterns already used by other troubadours, as when Castelloza's "Mout avetz faich" (no. 7) shares a rhyme scheme with two other *cansos*, but repeats neither their rhymes nor their metric pattern (Frank I, 85; II, 85). The repetitions that result may serve as a possible allusion, whose status needs to be reinforced by other signs inscribed in the poem to permit and invite recognition.

Once the pattern is set in the first stanza, subsequent stanzas (of varying numbers) may repeat it in a variety of ways. In "A chantar," the Comtessa de Dia uses *coblas singulars*, that is, she repeats the same rhyme scheme in each strophe, but changes the *a* rhyme every time (-ia, -enssa, -uoilla, -ina, -atges). Clara d'Anduza composes "En greu esmay" (no. 9) in the more difficult form of *coblas unissonans*, where the rhyme sounds as well as the pattern must remain the same throughout the song: ababc'ddc' (-en, -or, -ia, -ar). *Coblas doblas* allow the Comtessa de Dia to associate the stanzas of "Ab ioi" (no. 1) two by two: the rhyme scheme remains constant (ab'ab'b'aab'), while the rhymes change every other stanza (except in the *tornada* which always repeats whatever proportion coincides with the previous stanza). The Comtessa reinforces this pattern of two-by-two when she uses derivative rhyme to link the *a* and *b* rhymes through the play of feminine and masculine endings: -ais/-aia in I and II, -en/-ensa in III, IV, and the *tornada* (this kind of rhyme was much appreciated by the troubadours and put to excellent use by the Comtessa de Dia: see Kay, "Derivation"). The Comtessa contributes further to the play set up in the rhymes by using binomial pairs, a frequent stylistic trait of the troubadours (and of medieval writing in general), here repeated in a crisscrossing pattern that further intertwines the two opening verses of the *canso*: "Ab ioi et ab ioven m'apais/e iois e iovens m'apaia." This example notwithstanding, the trobairitz repertoire seems on the whole less marked by the fancy work of metrical variation characteristic of troubadours like Marcabru or Arnaut Daniel. Is this possibly because they arrive later in the tradition and leave fewer *cansos* behind in the manuscripts that record their compositions? We can only speculate on scant evidence.

Troubadours invented various patterns of rhyme to connect the stanzas in a fixed order, despite the general tendency of these songs to allow a good measure of *mouvance*, changeability evident in the variants across manuscripts that record the same song with different stanza orders, stylistic variations, etc. (see Van Vleck). “Per ioi que d’amor m’avegna” (no. 8), for example, consists of five *coblas unissonans capfinidas*; that is, in addition to the repetition of rhyme scheme and rhymes, each stanza is linked to the one that follows it by the reprise of its final word (sometimes in varied form) in the opening verse of the next stanza: “don per mi no.s vol partir./ Partir m’en er...” (I/II); “de leis amar ni servir./Leis serva...” (II/III); “de vos amar ni grasir./Grasisc vos...” (III/IV); “c’altra no.m pot enquir. /Rica soi...” (IV/V). This technical virtuosity is reflected thematically in the opening stanza—the one stanza in the troubadour tradition most likely to remain in place—when the anonymous trobairitz insists on the problematic connections between her love and her song:

Per ioi que d’amor m’avegna
no.m calgra ogan esbaudir,
qu’eu non cre qu’en grat me tegna
cel c’anc non volc hobesir
mos bos motz ni mas chansos;
ni anc no fon lasaz sos
qu’ie.m pogues de lui sofrir. (1–7)

To delight in any joy that love might bring
will not concern me soon,
for I don’t think he holds me dear,
the one who never wishes to obey
my good words or songs;
nor was any music ever woven
that would enable me to do without him.

Troubadours typically link the action of singing to that of loving. The two actions become synonymous, as Bernart de Ventadorn explains in “Non es maravilha s’eu chan,” when he attributes his superiority in song to his superior attraction and obedience to love. The Comtessa de Dia sings likewise: “Fin ioi me dona alegrianssa/per qu’eu chan plus gaiamen” (no. 4, 1–2: “Happiness brings me pure joy/which makes me sing more cheerfully”). Just as typically, a troubadour may refuse to stop singing even if his love is not returned, as Gui d’Ussel does in the *mala canso* just described. In “Per ioi” the anonymous trobairitz uses the technical vocabulary of troubadour lyric to designate the two components, words and song (“mos bos motz ni mas chanssos”), that are laced together (“lasaz”) by her expertise in *trobar*. What should be produced by the “natural” congruence of joy in love and song is here produced in the negative mode as a complaint against the loved one who refuses to obey her songs and show gratitude for her singing. If

he will not respond as he should, she will at least praise her own service in song (“mos bos motz”) and continue to affirm her loyalty even if no joy comes to her from love.

The link between singing and loving is often expressed by troubadours, especially those of the early generations, in the topos of the “springtime opening,” in which the happiness or sadness of the poet responds with particular congruence or opposition to the season and its weather. In a world dominated by the antithesis of joy and suffering (Bec, “L’antithèse”), reversals along positive and negative polarities typically channel the path of variation as much as the individual choice of particular details. In “Ar em al freg temps vengut” (no. 11), one of only two poems by trobairitz that use the springtime opening (see also “Quan vei los praz verdesir” in Rieger), Azalais de Porcairagues describes her disorientation and loss of solace (st. II), negative feelings that accord with the wintry scene she paints in the opening stanza:

Ar em al freg temps vengut
que.l gells e.l neus e la faingna
e.l auçellet estan mut
c’us de cantar non s’afraigna;
e son sec li ram pels plais
que flors ni foilla no.i nais
ni rossignols no i crida
que l’am’ en mai me rreissida.

Now we are come to the cold time
when there’s snow and ice and sludge
and the little birds are mute;
not one attempts to sing,
and the boughs are bare in hedges;
neither flower nor leaf is sprouting there,
nor, calling there, the nightingale
who wakes my soul in May.

The last verse evokes the normal setting for springtime, when birdsong and new growth typically parallel the urge to sing felt by the troubadour poet. Here the birds remain silent on dried out branches, when ice and snow and mud replace flowers and leaves: Azalais’s description evokes both the positive and negative images of spring, seen through the eyes of winter. She recalls a moment in the past when she has been awakened to love by the call of the nightingale, but now in the “freg temps” a new correspondence appears in the opposite mode: just as winter has reversed the movement of spring, something coming from Aurenga (14) has made her heart fall into disarray and grief.

The use of *coblas doblas* that appears in stanzas I–IV is itself disrupted by irregularities in the pairing of V and VI (the *a* and *b* rhymes do not match, while the *c* and *d* rhymes do). Aimo Sakari has speculated that the irregularities result from Azalais’s

effort to transform a previously written *canço* (st. III–V) into a *planh* (lament) for the death of Raimbaut d’Aurenga, with whom she exchanged poems, each designating the other by the *senhal* (secret name) Joglar (“Azalais” and “Azalais Interlocutrice”). Whether or not this furnishes a convincing motive for the poem’s apparent discontinuities, Sakari’s analysis does call our attention to the way Azalais establishes multiple links with fellow troubadours, Raimbaut as well as Guilhem de Saint-Leidier (see the discussion of the *ric ome* debate below), locating her poem within the places and society that enjoyed its pleasures.

In addition to the enumeration of specific places associated with Orange (“Aurenga”) in st. VI, this characteristic is most noteworthy in the *tornada*, the *envoi* where troubadours and trobairitz frequently address the beloved, their patrons, other poets, and even the performer (*joglar*) who will sing their song.

Joglar que aves cor gai,
ves Narbona portas lai
ma chanson a la fenida
lei cui iois e iovenz guida. (53–6)

Jongleur, whose heart is gay,
carry out toward Narbonne
my song with these final verses
to her whose guides are youth and joy.

Azalais asks Joglar to carry her song to Narbonne to the one guided by “iois e iovenz”—the popular binomial pair suggests again the essence of a society espousing the ethic of *fin’amor*. This allusion undoubtedly designates Ermengarde of Narbonne, given the time frame in which Azalais is placed by her *vida* and research on her literary references. Just as the lov-ers of troubadour lyric are frequently identified by their placement in space—the poet here (*sai*), the beloved there (*lai*)—the people in Azalais’s *canço* are placed along two geographical axes that coincide with the polarization of emotions: the negative ones oriented toward Orange (and particularly valorized in the rhyme position: Belesgar, Aurenga, Proenza, ll. 41, 42, 44), the positive ones toward Veillai and Narbonne. The wintry time of the “springtime opening” is thus articulated in space through the layering of stanzas that combine to form Azalais’s *canço*.

Among the Comtessa de Dia’s songs, she sends two to her beloved, “Ab ioi” (no. 1) and “Estat ai en greu cossirer” (no. 3). As is typical in woman’s song, she addresses him as *amics* or *bels amics* (fair friend), although interestingly in some manuscripts of “Ab ioi” he appears in the *tornada* as Floris, the name of the hero from a well-known medieval romance, *Floris and Blanchaflor*. Castelloza’s *tornada* in “Amics, s’ie.us trobes” (no. 6) expresses her desire not to send words, but to speak them herself: “E no.us man, q’ieu mezeussa.us o dic” (44). Here she echoes with variation Guilhem IX’s fear to send a message to his lady through someone else (Goldin, ed. no. 44: “Mout jauzens” 43). This motif not only expresses the desire for direct contact between lovers, but relates as well to the theme of secrecy, one of the key ideas of *fin’amor* as it operates in the

public arena of the court. The use of a *senhal* (literally a sign, or in this context a secret code name) typically reflects this theme in troubadour lyric, as it preserves a mask of secrecy for the lover's open declarations of love and hides the name of the beloved from gossips and scandalmongers, the *lauzengiers*.

In "A chantar," the Comtessa addresses her song itself as messenger and in "Fin ioi" she teasingly flouts "vos, gelos mal parlan" (no. 4, 17), the figure of the evil-speaking jealous one also frequently evoked in woman's song. The two *tornadas* of "Ia de chantar" name Castelloza's beloved—again with a *senhal*, "Bels Noms" (no. 5, 59: "beautiful name")—and another trobairitz, Almuc de Castelnou (55), recognizable in the variants of "Dompna n' Almurs (N), n'Almirs (IK), and n'Almir (d)" (Paden, ed. "Poems" 162). Both Rofin and Lady H close their *tornadas* by calling upon Lady Agnesina to judge the opposing arguments of their *partimen* (no. 23, 65–6, 70–2), a typical gesture in the *tensos* that reminds us how real people and poetry interact in the context of Occitan society.

To grasp further the mixture of images thus combined, we need to examine more specifically the dramatis personae placed on the stage of troubadour lyric and their incarnations in the songs of the trobairitz. In so do-ing, we can explore the nature of *fin' amor* as received and articulated by the women troubadours. A brief analysis of the major characters—the lyric voice of the self, its love object, and third parties—as they pass from troubadour lyric into the poems of the trobairitz, reveals an important series of shifts and reversals, even as the basic types are maintained. Marianne Shapiro has pointed out the asymmetrical polarity between courting men and courting ladies: in the troubadour's poem, the lady represents the apex of courtly values and the poet lover, though he may be a great lord, assumes the position of humble vassal. When a woman takes the position of the lover and begins to sing, the male beloved cannot simply move into her vacated position "without exciting a polemic that would attack the core of the *humilis/sublimis* paradox as it pertains to the hierarchy of courtly love" ("The Provençal Trobairitz" 562).

In corroboration of such a dissymmetry, Pierre Bec's analysis of the modes of address and reciprocal designations used by troubadours and trobairitz ("Trobairitz" 243–4) points out that in the *tensos*, for example, the trobairitz designate their male partners by their full names (with or without a title) or by a first name, more rarely by *amics* or *amics* plus a first name, while the troubadour always uses the respectful title of *domna*. Bec sees this practice as maintaining the functional distance between high-born lady and lover of lower rank, indispensable to the ideal of *fin' amor*. The *domna* imitates the troubadour (without addressing him as such) and implies that she will never love anyone but a knight or lord. Always referring to herself as *domna*, she enters the system less as a woman than as a lady, "c'est-à-dire, encore et toujours, comme protectrice et dominatrice" (244). If this is generally valid in terms of the vocabulary Bec has analyzed, we also need to explore other aspects of the trobairitz' self-representation to nuance and modify his overview for particular women poets and poems (on Castelloza's double reversal of the troubadour's stance, for example, see Bruckner, "Na Castelloza").

If the lady who begins to sing does not completely vacate her position in the asymmetrical balance of power between *domna* and lover, it should not surprise us that some of the trobairitz speak exactly as *midons* (the lady as lord) is pictured by the male troubadours in their complaints, dreams, hopes, and fears. In the *tenso* initiated by "Na donzela," "Bona domna, tan vos ay fin coratge," the lady who is asked to forgive "the

one who loves you more than he's loved anyone" (no. 26, 4) corresponds exactly to the troubadours' *domna*. She knows how a lady should honorably behave when she sees her lover boasting about her and acting foolishly:

...be.m deu esser salvatge
can el gaba ni se vana de me;...
non m'en reptetz si la foldat l'en ve,
q'aysi o aug dir que dretz es onratge. (9–10, 15–16)

...he really must be cruel to me
to make fun and boast about me;
don't scold me if it brings him folly,
for straight, I hear, is the path of honor.

Concerned that his failure or betrayal may lower her own worth, she withdraws her love: "car ia per el non vuelh mon pretz dissendre" (32). The *donzela* in the meantime paints a picture of the lover that likewise recalls the troubadours' self-presentation: he is dying for love of her, a single kiss could make his heart revive, no other woman has power over him ("poder ni senhoratge," 8); his sighs should make her take pity on him. The feudal language retains the usual reversal of hierarchy: the *domna* is invested with power and a proud heart, the lover offers—through the *donzela*'s intercession—his humble heart ("sos cors humil," 36) to win her forgiveness. The advice for future behavior the lady gives her lover, if he wants her permission to continue loving her, recalls Guilhem IX's description of an obedient lover in "Pus vezem de novel florir": he should be happy and worthy, humble and generous, courteous with all, neither evil nor too proud, but true and loving and discreet (41–8).

In general, the women poets do not respond directly to the male poets' request for love, initiating their own, parallel requests instead, as in the spirited exchange between Lombarda and Bernart Arnaut, no. 21 (see Sankovitch). If such a lady corresponds to the troubadours' expectations of difficulty, high standards, and increased worth, the idealized, but demanding *domna* who ennobles the man who rises in merit to deserve her love, other trobairitz recall the more obliging lady of the troubadours' hopes and dreams. Some trobairitz do answer their lovers' pleas with the kind of confirmation so long desired in the troubadours' *cansos*. Consider the *tenso*, "Si.m fos graziz" (no. 24). The first part, addressed to *bella domna*, contains the typical complaints of the poet lover, separated from joy and enjoyment, thrown into "not-caring" (*non chaler*, 3) by his lady. But when she speaks to him in the second part, we hear just the humble voice wished for ("degues humilitatz/venir en vos," 18–19: "humility should find you"). She, too, is improved by love and, far from placing him in *non chaler* (29), she gives herself to him loyally, without deceit: "car gauz entier non puesc senz vos aver,/a cui m'autrei leialmen senz engan;/e.us lais mon cor en gauge on qu'eu m'an" (30–2: "for without you I can have no total joy./I give myself to you with loyalty, without deception;/wherever I go, I leave you my heart as pledge").

The language of political obligation, as used here by the lady, reverses the conventionally reversed hierarchy, places the lady at the mercy of her lover—who affirmed earlier his own loss of power over his eyes and himself (13–14) in the face of the lady’s power over love (22). The echoes of metaphor and language thus affirm the mutuality of their love, the mutuality of their submission to the other’s power, while the obstacles to such easy reciprocity are identified by the lady as a subterfuge, a deceitful appearance that masks the lovers’ reality from those cruel, troublesome people who do not like the lovers’ joy (33–5).

Clara d’ Anduza blames such *lauzengiers* for driving away her lover, and the Comtessa de Dia laughingly dismisses them in “Fin ioi” (cf. the *domna* of no. 25, “Amics, en gran cosirier,” who is less concerned than Raimbaut about the effect of *lauzengiers*). They are the ubiquitous rivals and gossips in love, conventional characters among the third parties of troubadour lyric and part of its setting within the context of seigneurial courts. The husband only occasionally puts in an appearance, usually as the jealous figure represented in the popularizing lyric types, but he is evoked as well in Castelloza’s “Mout avetz faich” in a less conventional role, when he is presented as grateful to her *ami* for creating his wife’s suffering in love. The public of lovers is often called upon to verify or criticize a lover’s conduct. Consider Azalais d’Altier’s advice to a lady whose pardon she seeks for an offending lover. If she does not forgive him, she will be less esteemed (“meinz prezada,” no. 32, 53) by all courtly lovers (“totz los finz amanz,” 52). Castelloza fears to set a bad example for other women who love, “las autras amairitz” (no. 7, 21–2), but also maintains that her beloved is judged harshly by lovers: “qe l’ amador/vos tenon per salvatge” (no. 5, 13–14). The trobairitz, like the troubadours, are aware that their songs exist in the paradox of private feelings publicly performed. Intimate emotions are directly tied to outer behavior, whether in love or in song, which inevitably connects the individual lovers to the courtly society in which they circulate.

Although we might expect the cultural model of the passive woman to make it difficult for the lady to speak out, in fact very few trobairitz mention such a constraint. Anticipating criticism from those who do not understand that courting in song does her good, Castelloza parries any possible attack in a defensively polemical way that affirms the personal benefit she feels from her singing (no. 6, st. III and IV), the same healing effect also claimed by troubadours for themselves. The Comtessa de Dia exuberantly defends a woman’s right to speak openly of her love, once she has chosen an appropriately worthy lover, and expects right-thinking people (“li pro ni.ll’ avinen,” no. 1, 23) to have only good things to say about such a lady. In analyzing the lady’s decision to court openly in song, Laurie A. Finke proposes the model of patron and client to describe what is at stake for the lady who decides to offer her love (58–9). Consider in that light Garsenda de Forcalquier’s initiative in the exchange of *coblas* with Gui de Cavaillon: although she herself has just declared her love (4) and encouraged Gui to be less timid, she attributes a lady’s hesitation to disclose all her desires to fear of failure (no. 16, 8–9). Hesitation to speak of their love appears elsewhere as a common motif for troubadour lovers (and is particularly developed by the trouvères of Northern France in the image of the cowardly lover). Other trobairitz remain silent on the issue of a woman speaking out, which may not in fact be perceived as a problem by ladies so closely integrated into the world of troubadour song (cf. the historical arguments offered below for the relatively favorable position of aristocratic women in Occitan society, especially

during the period when the trobairitz were singing). On the other hand, the relatively limited participation of women poets in a poetic system clearly designed from the male lover's point of view remains an important factor to consider when approaching the trobairitz corpus (cf. Gravidal's analysis of the way trobairitz grapple with the difficulty of occupying the place of the subject in troubadour lyric by changing the metaphorical stance typical of the troubadour—"I sing like a woman"—to a metonymic one—"I sing as a woman"; see also Kay, *Subjectivity* Ch. 3).

To continue the analysis of how lovers are represented by the trobairitz, we may fruitfully compare how the male and female troubadours' complaints and accusations line up against each other. F.R.P. Akehurst has summarized the male poets' list of grievances: ladies show *orgolh* (pride); they neither believe nor trust nor remember the lover, and even love other, worthless men; ladies are capricious and irrational, fail to reward proper service and cannot distinguish false lovers from true ones, who thus suffer and die. The trobairitz, too, accuse their lovers of pride and unfaithfulness. They often complain further of trust betrayed. As William Paden points out in his comments on gender difference in lyric, given a cultural context that generally calls for men to be active and women passive, trobairitz tend to speak of a love already initiated, while troubadours still hope to get theirs accepted ("Utrum" 79–80; cf. the narrative structure based on the model of the abandoned woman that Merritt Blakeslee [71–3] finds common to all the trobairitz' *cansos*, except for "Ab ioi" and "Fin ioi"). Accordingly, the trobairitz complain that their lovers are indiscreet and hurt their ladies' reputations, desert them and claim to be their equals, act cowardly and unpleasantly. The complaints of troubadours and trobairitz occasionally correspond, but they just as frequently open a gap: the trobairitz do not really respond directly to the troubadours' accusations; they insist rather on their own fidelity in love, their readiness to forgive, and the force of their desire, which makes them regret or reject any show of pride.

Both Akehurst and Kittye Delle Robbins have pointed out how important a role the theme of trust plays in the trobairitz corpus, as indicated by the vocabulary used most frequently. With a computer concordance, Akehurst has compared the twenty most frequently used nouns in the twenty-three poems of Meg Bogin's edition with the top twenty nouns of twenty troubadours (558 poems). Of the ten nouns that appear only in the women poets' list, three in particular suggest the trobairitz' concern with fidelity and infidelity between lovers: *falhimen* (offense), *drut* (lover), and *fe* (faithfulness) (see Bruckner, "Na Castelloza" 251–2 n 20). The semantic field of fidelity/infidelity is richly represented among the nouns of the trobairitz corpus, including in addition to the three on the "top twenty list": *faillensa*, *faillida*, *faillir*, *traïr*, *traïtor*, *plevir*, *fiansa*, *acordamen*, *acord*, *jurar*, *covinen*, *recrezens*, *recrezamen*, *camjar*, *camjairitz* (Robbins also adds *fegnedor* and *trichador*). While Akehurst relates this vocabulary group to the major complaints directed by the trobairitz against their lovers, Robbins suggests that it leads, on the one hand, to the women's desire to prove themselves worthy (while at the same time deploring the lover's unworthy betrayal) and, on the other, to the concern for reputation and the woman's particular vulnerability to the *gelos* and the *lauzengiers* ("Love's Martyrdoms"; see also Kay, *Subjectivity* 107–8). These thematic avenues suggest further useful work to be done based on vocabulary studies, especially if they are expanded to include trobairitz poems left out of Bogin's edition, as well as comparisons