



Lan quant voi esclarcir

(RS 1404)

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Gontier de Soignies

I

Lan quant voi esclarcir
Le tans et raverdir,
Ne me puis esbaudir,
4 Car d'un grant duel m'air.
Hé, amer!
Assai fas de chanter
Pour moi reconforter,
8 Car la m'estuet penser
Ou ne puis recovrer.
D'amors chascun jour
Crois et doble ma dolor.

II

12 Celi doit on haïr
Et de s'amor partir;
Molt est griés a soffrir
Grans amors sans joïr.
16 [Las, por quoi m'en consir,
Quant tot faic som plaisir?]
Hé, amer!
Ki porroit endurer
20 Que tant convient pener?
Bien puet l'ome afoier
Longement consirrer.
D'amors chascun jour
24 *Crois et doble ma dolor.*

III

Tant le voi[l] et desir
K'aillors ne puis guencir,
Mais ce me fait faillir
28 Ke ne m'en sai covrir.
Hé, amer!
Bien me doi trespenser,
Car hom ne set penser
32 Si belle ne sa per,
N'ainc ne li vic fauser.
D'amors chascun jour
Crois et doble ma dolor.

I

Now that I see the season turning light and green, I cannot be merry, for I am tormented by a great sorrow. *Alas, the bitterness!* I make an attempt to sing to comfort myself, for I am forced to think of a place where I cannot recover. *Each day my pain grows and doubles.*

II

That lady should be abhorred and love of her abandoned; it is most grievous to suffer great love without satisfaction. [Alas, why am I deprived of it, when I entirely do its bidding?] *Alas, the bitterness!* Who could endure having to suffer so much? Such long abstinence may well drive a man mad. *Each day my pain grows and doubles.*

III

I desire and yearn for it so much that I cannot turn elsewhere, but this ruins me, for I have no protection against it. *Alas, the bitterness!* I cannot but be tormented, for it is impossible to think of another as beautiful as her, nor did I ever see her commit any fault. *Each day my pain grows and doubles.*

IV

³⁶ Mex aim ensi languir
 Entre vivre et morir,
 Kë une autre acoillir
 Ki m'aint sans repentir.
⁴⁰ *Hé, amer!*
 Por grant bien esperer
 Doit on molt endurer;
 Las! ne m'en puis torner
⁴⁴ Ne men duel oublier.
D'amors chascun jour
Crois et doble ma dolor.

V

Onques ne seuç mentir
⁴⁸ Vers Amors ne traïr;
 Quoi qu'en doie avenir
 Ne puis sans li garir.
Hé, amer!
⁵² Ne puis par el passer
 Mais mon grant duel mener,
 Et ens merchi ester,
 Soffrir et sospirer.
⁵⁶ *D'amors chascun jour*
Crois et doble ma dolor.

VI

Gontiers au defenir,
 S'a plus [n'] em puet venir,
⁶⁰ De tos maus velt issir
 Et cest siecle guerpir.
Hé, amer!
 Pour Dieu passerai mer
⁶⁴ Au Temple converser,
 Car la m'en voill aler
 Ou je n'oie parler.
D'amors chascun jour
⁶⁸ *Crois et doble ma dolor.*

IV

I prefer to languish thus between life and death
 than to welcome another who loves me steadfastly.
Alas, the bitterness! To hope for a great reward one
 must endure much; alas! I cannot abandon her or
 forget my pain. *Each day pain grows and doubles.*

V

I was never able to lie to Love or betray it;
 whatever may befall I cannot be cured without it.
Alas, the bitterness! I can do no other but [must]
 endure my great torment and remain at its (Love's)
 mercy, suffer and sigh. *Each day my pain grows*
and doubles.

VI

In the end, Gontier, if he cannot attain more,
 wishes to leave all torments behind and abandon
 this world. *Alas, the bitterness!* I shall voyage
 across the sea for the sake of God and become a
 Templar, for I wish to go away to where I hear no
 [idle] talk. *Each day my pain grows and doubles.*

Notes

60-66 Gontier's song was included in the crusades corpus because of these lines, though as Formisano observes (pp. lx-lxi, n. 2), this implied allusion to a crusade may be pure fantasy.

Text

Luciano Formisano, 1980.

Mss.

(1). T 115v-116r (*Gontiers* ; empty stave).

Versification and music

6 a a a a B 3 6 b b b b C 5 C 7 ; rhyme a = *-ir* ; rhyme b = *-er* ; rhyme c = *-our* ; six *coblas unissonans* .
Equivocal rhymes: *penser* 8 (intransitive) / 31 (transitive), *endurer* 19 and 42 (used absolutely);
derivative rhymes 30 / 31, 62 / 63.

Previous editions

Luciano Formisano, 1980.

Analysis of the manuscript tradition

The single ms. T, adopted as base by Formisano for his whole edition of Gontier de Soignies' songs (see p. lxiii), contains a number of errors, particularly in stanza II where Scheler and Formisano consider vv. 16-17 to have been interpolated by a different author.

Historical context and dating

Little is known of Gontier de Soignies, a trouvère from the region near Mons, now in Belgian Hainault, whose activity Formisano dates to approximately the first two decades of the 13th c. (pp. lx-lxii). It is impossible to know whether he took part in a crusade. RS 1404 contains his sole reference to the East (vv. 63-64). The author does not mention crusading, but claims he wishes to become a Templar, and the mention of a sea crossing relates this to a crusading context.