



Bien me quidai de chanter trop vous comper

(RS 795)

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Gautier de Dargies

I

Bien me quidai de chanter
touz jours tenir,
maiz plus bel ne sai penser
4 ne regehir
mon corage et mon penser,
dont trop m'aïr;
8 de mon cuer m'estuet sevrer
et departir.
Gent cors, vis cler,
trop vous comper;
mout truis amer
12 le souvenir
de vostre aler,
vostre parler,
vostre joer,
16 vostre venir;
or puis plourer
et dementer;
tart vendrai maiz au repentir!

II

20 Sa simple chiere riant
mar acointai,
son cler vis fres et plaisant;
quant l'esguardai,
24 mout la vi tresdoucelement,
si l'aamai.
Or m'a mis en douleur grant;
Dex, qu'en ferai!
28 Tout dolousant,
grant duel faisant,
mout esmaiant,
l'eslongerai
32 d'ore en avant:
la tresvaillant
qui je aim tant
de cuer verai.
36 Petit dormant
et bien veillant
desoremaiz m'i trouverai.

I

I certainly imagined I would refrain from singing forever, but I cannot think of a better way to express my heart and thoughts, which are making me very angry; I am forced to divide and separate myself from my heart. Sweet person, fair of face, I pay too dearly for you; most bitter do I find the memory of your bearing, your speech, your playfulness, your approach; now I can weep and give myself over to sorrow; once I ever repent of this it will be too late!

II

To see her candid laughing countenance – her bright face, fresh and pleasing – was my doom; when I looked on her, I gazed on her most sweetly, and fell in love with her. Now she has plunged me into great affliction; God, what shall I do! Full of sorrow and sore laments, deeply troubled, henceforth I shall take my distance from her: the most worthy lady whom I love so much with a true heart. Hereafter I shall find myself sleeping little and waking much.

III

40 A celi ai pris congié
 qui si m'a mort;
 j'en ai eü grant pitié,
 et si fu tort.
 Bien m'a tenu souz le pié
 44 et sanz deport
 et tous jours m'a eslongié
 de son acort.
 Ele a pechié,
 48 quant si leissié
 m'a engigné
 et de confort
 m'a pou leissié.
 52 Or m'en plaig gié;
 trop m'a chargié,
 grant fais en port.
 J'ai pourchacié
 56 et atirié
 qu'en souspirant m'en vois au port.

IIIb

Dolanz lais ma douce amie (mss. MT)
et mout maris.
 60 *Conment ai u cors la vie,*
quant partis
me sui de sa compaignie
or m'en est pis:
 64 *si m'est ma joie faillie.*
Ce m'est vis
que desservie
n'en ai mie,
 68 *ainz est perie*
ma mercis
qu'ai couvoitié
par folie;
 72 *l'ai laissié*
en son païs,
en la Berrie,
et en Surie
 76 *m'en vois pour li mout pensis.*

III

I have taken leave of the one who has slain me so; I had great suffering for it, but this was wrong. She kept me firmly underfoot, with no pleasure, and she always kept me away from contact with her. She did wrong to deceive me, neglected as I was, and left me little comfort. Now I arraign her: she has burdened me too much, and I bear a heavy load. I have made my preparations and my decision for, sighing, I am on my way to the port (the end?).

IIIb

Sorrowfully I leave my sweet love and in great sadness. Although I still have life in my body, after leaving her company things are now worse for me: my joy has ended. It seems to me that I have in no way deserved this, but rather the pity I foolishly yearned for has perished; I have left it in her land, in Brie (?), and I go off to Syria most downcast because of her.

IV

Bien m'a ma dame mené
 a son talent,
 que j'ai loiaument amé
 80 et longuement;
 maint bel samblant m'a moustré
 et fausement
 que j'ai mout chier achaté.
 84 Encor m'en sent:
 mout m'a grevé
 et empiré
 - s'ai enduré
 88 mout bonement -
 et mout pené,
 maint mal doné;
 de ma santé
 92 petit ament.
 Tant ai erré
 qu'or sunt doublé,
 sachiez de voir, tuit mi tourment.

V

96 En loiauté
 ai mout esté,
 s'ai conquesté
 si povrement;
 100 humilité
 i ai trouvé.
 Je di verté:
 se je ne ment,
 104 guerredouné
 m'a a son gré.
 Folz est qui lor merite atent.

IV

My lady, whom I have loyally loved, and for a long
 time, has certainly strung me along as she wished;
 she gave me many a fair look, but falsely, and I
 have most dearly paid for it. I still feel its effects:
 she has severely wounded and damaged me - I
 have endured this most patiently - and caused me
 great pain and much (love-)sickness; I have little
 help for my health; I have gone so far astray that
 now, be truly aware of this, my torments are all
 doubled.

V

I have long remained loyal, but have gained so
 little; I found humiliation. I tell the truth: unless I
 lie, she has rewarded me to her liking. So a man
 who expects his just deserts is a fool.

Notes

Raugei, no doubt rightly, considers stanza IIIb as an inauthentic interpolation. (She did not include this stanza in her line numbering but for technical reasons this has not been possible here, so the lines of stanzas IV-V have been renumbered.) She observes that here the poet rebukes himself and not the lady for the estrangement, in striking contrast to the rest of the song and notably the two stanzas surrounding it, both of which clearly blame the lady's conduct; that its mention of the specific geographical locations *berrie* and *syrie* are not found in the rest of Gautier's production, the poet avoiding any mention of the lady's name or origin according to the courtly requirements of secrecy; that its versification is uncharacteristically highly careless (see p. 180), and moreover the 'a' rhyme is feminine whereas it is masculine in the other stanzas; and that it is pedestrian in its development of the motif of separation and, possibly, departure for a distant land, which may or may not be evoked in the preceding stanza (*qu'en souspirant m'en vois au port*, v. 57). In her note to v. 57 she comments that the port to which the poet refers here may be literal, but may alternatively be figurative in the sense of 'end, point of arrival, conclusion', and argues that nothing here authorises us to assume that the distance created from the lady implies a sea voyage; the sense could therefore, she argues, be 'I have prepared and decided to journey sighing to the end (of my sorrowful state?)'. She does however note that when other trouvères use the noun *port* figuratively it is never determined by the definite article, which it is here, and that the anonymous interpolater interprets *port* literally. We have included the piece in our corpus partly because of this last point, partly because Gautier states in RS 1575 that he has been abroad for a long time (v. 1) and because even though that song contains no direct allusions to a crusade it forms part of a fairly uniform group of texts on the distance of the lady (see for example the introductory notes to RS 1204 and RS 421), some of which refer to crusading explicitly. Raugei does not include stanza IIIb in her text but gives it in the critical apparatus following M's graphy. For full details, particularly of stylistic analogies with other OF and Occitan lyrics, and a sensitive literary analysis of the text, see Raugei, p. 179 ff. For *berrie* as a geographical reference in v. 74, perhaps 'Brie', whose precision is uncharacteristic of Gautier de Dargies, see Raugei, p. 180.

- 19 The expression is formulaic, and it does not seem possible to translate in any other way, but it is difficult to understand the sense within the context of the stanza.
- 41 As Raugei notes, *pitié* here means 'suffering, pain': cf TL, VII, 985, 'Jammer, Elend'.
- 55-56 Raugei observes that *atirier* can mean either 'arrange, prepare' or 'decide, establish', giving either a synonymous repetition or a hysteron-proteron (a figure of speech in which the natural or rational order of its terms is reversed).
- 57 See the introductory note above.
- 86 Raugei takes M's *empiré* as *difficilior* with respect to T's more obvious *tormenté*.
- 91-92 Raugei takes *santé* here to refer specifically to the condition affected by Ovidian love-sickness, translating *petit ament* as 'ho poco giovamento'.
- 100 Raugei interprets *humilité* in this context as the affability with which the capricious lady briefly gratified the poet, but compare v. 43 and FEW, IV, 511, II.

Text

Anna Maria Raugei, 1981, with a few punctuation changes.

Mss.

(2). M 88r-88v (~*Me s(ire) Gautiers dargies*), T 143r (*Me sire gautiers dargies*).

Versification and music

7a4b7a4b7a4b7a4b4a4a4a4b4a4a4a4b4a4a8b (MW 693,1); 4 *coblas singulares* and an 11-line *envoi* a4a4a4b4a4a4a4b4a4a8b; rhyme a = -er, -ant, -ié, -é ; rhyme b = -ir, -ai, -ort, -ent ; between stanzas III and IV the two mss. also transmit a probably interpolated stanza distinguished by the alternation of m. and f. rhymes (rhyme a' = -ie ; rhyme b = - is). Unicum. For further details see Raugei, pp. 175-176. The melody is transmitted in both mss. with the structure ABCD ABCD EFGH IKG'L MNO (T 467).

Previous editions

Huet 1912, p. 29; Vaillant 1913, p. 28; Raugei 1981, p. 175.

Analysis of the manuscript tradition

Apart from a few minor variants the two mss. transmit the same text, including st. IIIb, though T has an inferior (erroneous?) reading in v. 42 and errors in 60 and 61, as well as a lacuna from v. 17 to v. 33; a modern hand has filled in the missing lines from the text of M. Graphy M.

Historical context and dating

Gautier de Dargies (now a small village c. 6 km. from Grandvilliers, Oise, arr. Beauvais) was a contemporary of Gace Brulé, with whom he appears to have had strong ties of friendship, and whom he regarded as his poetic master and model. He exchanged *tensos* with a certain Richart, probably Richart de Fournival, of younger generation. Gautier lived between c. 1170-1175 and 1236 (see Raugei, pp. 30-33). For the issue of whether he went on crusade or not, see the introduction to our notes.