

JOHN
GOWER

Confessio Amantis

Volume 3

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INTRODUCTION

These olde worldes with the newe
Who that wol take in evidence,
Ther mai he se th'experience,
What thing it is to kepe lawe,
Thurgh which the wronges ben withdrawe
And rihtwisnesse stant commended,
Wherof the regnes ben amended.

— *Confessio Amantis*, 7.2702–08

We all get sucked into history in the end!

— Derek Pearsall¹

In the Introduction to the second volume of this edition of *Confessio Amantis*, I explored Gower's use of dramatic, performative devices in the staging of "the self's effort to claim its own estate" (vol. 2, p. 39), pointing to Derek Pearsall's remark that Book 4, with its wealth of well-wrought Ovidian tales and its vigorous impersonation of Amans, is "much the best book" in the *Confessio*.² But although Book 4 is a high point, the culmination of the first half of the poem, it is a very particular kind of high point, one enlivened by the vivacious characterization of the desire-laden Amans, who is eager to please and be pleased.³

Book 5, which begins the second "half" of the poem, takes the reader in another direction. Gower alters his earlier structural patterns to shift the focus from confession and impersonation to education — education in good rule — with emphasis on the means, rather than the effect. The shift is no great jump. Rather, it is a subtle turning from a lively critique of Amans' lusty "would-be" behavior (he never actually succeeds in much) to a less dramatic, more sobering assessment, especially in Book 7, of what constitutes the laws of right behavior "wherof the regnes ben amended" (7.2708). The mode changes from that of the dramatist to that of the historian. Gower's historiographics have been an ever-present actant⁴ in the voicing

¹ Private correspondence, 18 June 2004.

² Pearsall, *Gower and Lydgate*, p. 17, as cited in the second volume of this edition of Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (hereafter *CA*), p. 31.

³ One of the best discussions of Amans as a literary creation is Burrow's insightful analysis of Amans in terms of the French *Dits amoureux* tradition ("The Portrayal of Amans," pp. 6–24). See also Cowling, "Gower's Ironic Self-Portrait."

⁴ I have borrowed this useful term from Greimas who, in his *Sémantique structurale* (pp. 172–91), attempts to get at the voicing of functions within a narrative or argument by means of reformulation of units of meaning that he thinks of (casts) in terms of *dramatis personae* that act within a morphological matrix. Working from folklorist Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale*, Greimas defines

of his argument, ever since the beginning of the Prologue, where estates theory became a more philological component of the poem's political *sentence*. But now his manipulation of our consciousness of history and how it matters moves quietly toward the forefront, gradually turning what had seemed to be minor digressions on the history of labor (Book 3) and the history of invention (Book 4) into a carefully crafted agenda in estates history marked by a fresh rhetorical strategy. The shift leads to a second, less dramatic, high point than that of Book 4, but a new plateau, nonetheless, in the more cerebral Book 7, a wisdom book on the instruction of the king.

The first three books of the *Confessio* are organized according to a confessional paradigm of one sin (and her brood) per book; the innuendoes of the sin are enlarged upon through a family scheme that Gower had devised in his first major opus, the *Mirour de l'Omme* (c. 1376–79).⁵ Genius, through his exempla, demonstrates how sin and its fivefold progeny eagerly invade territory that once belonged to humankind but which, now that it has been colonized by sin, needs reclamation. Genius attempts to accomplish this amendment by means of his inquisitorial exploration of desires and effects. In the second half of the poem he develops a new proceeding. This change in strategy began with the discussion of labor in Book 3 (Wrath);⁶ then, at the end of Book 4 (Sloth), after Genius has exorcized the five children of Sloth, the coming divergence is made more explicit as Genius adds two additional subcategories — Somnolence and Tristesse (Despondency), as if to break the mold of the *Mirour* to precipitate different structural procedures that will define the second half of the *Confessio*.

Book 5, devoted to Dame Avarice, is by far the longest book in the *Confessio*.⁷ As in the earlier books, Genius begins with a general definition of the sin by means of an exemplum,

the character of an idea through the function of its actants. Actants are akin to motifs, but are more precisely focused on the morphology of voicing.

⁵ The story of Sin in *Mirour de L'Omme* goes like this: The Devil gives birth to Sin (lines 205 ff.), then, enamored of her, enjoys pleasant entertainment whereby she gives birth to a son, Death. Her son incestuously copulates with her, and she gives birth to the Seven Deadly Sins (241 ff.). These seven daughters are then espoused by the Devil (who gives Hell as the dowry) to World (757 ff.). They approach World in a grand processional, with each Sin riding on one animal while holding another: Pride, on a lion, carries an eagle; Envy, on a dog, carries a sparrowhawk; Anger, on a boar, bears a cock on her fist; Sloth, on an ass, holds an owl; Avarice, on a badger, takes a goshawk on one fist and a merlin on the other; Gluttony, with kite on hand, rides a wolf, followed by Drunkenness whose rein she holds; and Lechery, on a goat, carries a tethered dove. Once married to World, each Sin gives birth to five offspring: Pride, to Hypocrisy, Vainglory, Arrogance, Boasting, and Disobedience (949–2616); Envy, to Detraction, Sorrow-at-other's-Joy, Joy-for-other's-Grief, Supplanting, and False-semblance (2617–3852); Anger, to Ill-Temper, Contention, Hatred, Strife, and Homicide (3853–5124); Sloth, to Somnolence, Laziness, Slackness, Idleness, and Negligence (5125–6180); Avarice, to Covetousness, Rapine, Usury, Simony, and Stinginess (6181–7704); Gluttony, to Voracity, Delicacy, Drunkenness, Superfluity, and Prodigality (7705–8616); and Lechery, to Fornication, Rape, Adultery, Incest, and Wantonness (8617–9720). But we are not left hopeless before such an onslaught, for, meanwhile, Reason weds the Seven Virtues (Humility, Charity, Patience, Prowess, Generosity, Measure, and Chastity), each of whom mothers five helpful children, enabling life in the world to seem less desperate.

⁶ We should acknowledge, however, that all the actants of the change are anchored in the Prologue, particularly in the discussion of the three estates and Nebuchadnezzar's dream of history. Gower the historian is present in the poem long before Gower the dramatist makes his presence known.

⁷ Book 5 is 7844 lines long; Book 7 is next with 5438; then Book 4, with 3712. Book 6 is the shortest, with 2440 (not counting the Prologue, with 1088 lines, as a book).

in this instance the story of ill-fated Midas. The tale tells how Midas' sense of kingship (i.e., a kingship that should define the spiritual/political properties of his personal being as well as that of his realm) gets displaced by an avaricious preoccupation with gold. It is normal for the soul to yearn for sufficiency, but Midas, in his myopic greed, confuses wealth with security.⁸ The king becomes a money man, rather than mentor, as avarice destroys all the estates he governs. No longer do "mete and cloth" suffice (5.320); only gold seems to satisfy his tyrannical appetite, a fate that brings disastrous consequences to himself and his kingdom.

But how is it that presumably rational people can become so pathetically ruined by such obvious folly? For Gower, sin is a psychopathic condition. Genius bolsters his story of Midas with an account of Tantalus, thereby shifting the mode from a social effect to a psychological one. Tantalus, who has everything he needs for a good life, imagines he suffers from a deep-seated deprivation. His appetite becomes insatiable and leads to an internally profound sense of need. Genius describes the depravity in terms of uncontrollable appetite:

Lo nou, which a wreche,	<i>what a punishment</i>
That mete and drinke is him so couth,	<i>evident</i>
And yit ther comth non in his mouth!	
Lich to the peines of this flod	
Stant Avarice in worldes good:	
<i>He hath ynowh and yit him nedeth,</i>	
For his skarsnesse it him forbeideth,	<i>stinginess; denies</i>
And evere his hunger after more	
<i>Travailleth him aliche sore,</i>	<i>Afflicts; sorely</i>
So is he <i>peined overal</i> . (5.388–97, emphasis mine)	<i>tormented (made wretched)</i>

Though he has enough, it perpetually *seems* that he needs more, and, because of what amounts to a twisted sense of insufficiency, his labor gives him perpetual pain: "He hath ynowh and yit him nedeth" (5.393). Though he may be "peined overal" (5.397), his torment is self-induced.

As in the first half of the poem, after establishing his general definition of the sin, Genius goes on to the particular applicability of Avarice to lovers, where, in this instance, the lovely equivalent is Jealousy. Jealousy, like Avarice, is an insatiable possessiveness, the guarding of an illusory personal domain that may or may not be one's own. Such a "misease,"⁹ Genius observes, is feverish obsession (5.577 ff.) that alters the vision of the jealous person by means

⁸ On the disruptive in-roads of capitalism as it displaces feudal ideology whereby money, rather than feudal love and loyalty, becomes the new index of social achievement, see Little, "Pride Goes before Avarice." Where Pride had always ranked first of the sins ever since the fall of Lucifer, now, in the fourteenth century, Avarice seems the subtler, more pervasive corruption, the main contender for the number-one ranking among the sins. And, though prominent like newfangledness among all estates, it is especially prominent among churchmen who should be the most wise, self-sacrificing guides to society, but now seem the most debased. Note, for instance, Chaucer's corrupt churchmen like the Friar, Summoner, Pardoner, and Monk, or the prominence of Lady Meed and her magnetism in the Visio section of the B-Text of *Piers Plowman*. See Yunck, *The Lineage of Lady Meed*; Baldwin, "The Medieval Merchant"; and Dean, *Six Ecclesiastical Satires*.

⁹ According to the *OED*, *misease* remains in modern usage into the twentieth century as a term for "distress, affliction; trouble, misery; extreme suffering or discomfort," as well as "uneasiness or disquiet"; with earlier connotations of "need, want, and poverty." It serves Gower well as a psychological term for the fretted anxieties of the soul upon which the chances of the world so persistently play.

of “feigned enformacioun / Of his ymaginacioun” (5.593–94).¹⁰ The example Genius gives of such a self-induced, self-informing Jealousy is the Ovidian Tale of Vulcan and Venus, where Vulcan’s jealousy causes him more pain than the vengeful harm he perpetrates upon his wife. The example leads Amans to question the tenets of pagan theogeny. In response, Genius gives Amans a lesson in the history of religions, the longest digression in the poem (5.747–1970).

Gower places this history of religion in Book 5 for a specific reason, namely, his acute reaction to venality within the Christian Church. We can establish a better understanding of the intensity of his concern by returning to the *Mirour de l’Omme*, where, after describing the seven deadly sins and presenting remedies for each, the protagonist turns his attention to the three estates. Since mankind’s relationship with God should be one’s premier concern, Gower begins his remarks with the second estate, the Church, commencing first with the Court of Rome:

I believe firmly that the rights of the head of Holy Church under God, if that man conducts himself rightly, are placed above all others. But this position is now changed, for what was humility is now pride, and one can see that what used to be liberality has now turned into covetousness. . . . What I intend to write here is not from myself only, but is rather *the murmur, complaint, voice, and cry of all Christian folk*. . . . Simon is now reigning with gold and silver in the court of Rome, so that the case of the poor, despite all clamor, shall not be heard. (*MO*, lines 18433–55, emphasis mine)¹¹

Gower continues his critique, contrasting the venality of modern-day prelates, who would let “everyone perish rather than let a single finger of [their own] hand be injured,” with the pagan king Codrus who “himself suffered martyrdom for the safety of his subjects” (*MO* 20003–12).¹² In *Confessio Amantis* Book 5, the tone of Gower’s religious history is perhaps less angry than it was in the *Mirour*, but, tinged as it is with mockery of the admixture of superstition, piety, and greed, whether among the foolish pagans, with their belief in the incestuous promiscuity and bestiality of the gods, or among Christians who abuse God’s sufferance thinking to make themselves more rich, it is no less bitter.

Just as Gower shifted the governing trope in *Mirour* from the domestic (Sin’s household) to a political arena (the three estates), so in Book 5 of the *Confessio*, instead of moving the confession forward by means of the familial trope of Sin and her offspring, as he had done in the first half of the poem, Gower now shifts to a political configuration — Dame Avarice with her

¹⁰ See Simpson, *Sciences and the Self*, especially his introduction (pp. 1–21) with its discussion of “enformacioun” and “informatio” not as “inert bodies of knowledge,” but rather as “the action of transmitting and receiving knowledge” (p. 2), whereby forms are brought into the mind for effect (p. 8). Simpson sees this instructional process as being for Gower essentially Platonic, akin to the discussion of form and its inception in Alan of Lille’s *Anticlaudianus*, a process shaped by Aristotelian lore, especially in Book 7 of the *Confessio*.

¹¹ Gower, *Mirour de L’Omme* (hereafter *MO*), pp. 253–54. The whole of Gower’s lengthy ethical history on the condition of Holy Church (*MO* 18421–21780) focuses on Avarice that runs throughout the papacy and the whole Court of Rome, infecting cardinals, bishops, archdeacons, deans, priests, annuellers, friars, and students — in short, the whole of the establishment. It must have seemed to Gower that the venality of the Church in the early 1370s had become progressively worse in the later 1380s, despite the efforts towards church reform by the radical Wycliffites, of whom he strongly disapproved.

¹² Compare Gower’s use of the same example in *CA* 7.3163 ff., where Codrus, albeit a pagan king, is his principal exemplum for the fourth point of policy, Pity.

court and “servantz manyon” (5.1971–75). This broadening of the domestic to include political typology culminates in Book 7 with the education of the king, especially in terms of good and false counsel. Dame Avarice, like Lady Meed in *Piers Plowman*, is patroness of all vices. It is as if the account of the religions of the world has launched Gower’s project into estate satire where we examine Avarice’s twelve devious courtiers,¹³ beginning with Covetoise, False Witness, Perjury, and Usury, then continuing with Parsimony (Skarsness), Ingratitude (Unkynde), Ravine, and Robbery, and concluding with Stealth, Michery (Pilfering), Sacrilege, and Prodigality. (With more than twice the number of categories — from five children to twelve courtiers — this book is more than twice the length of most others.) The political trope (the court) fits in with the poet’s overarching criticism of the three estates in the Prologue, where he discussed the State (Prol. 93 ff.), the Church (Prol. 193 ff.), and the Commons (Prol. 499 ff.), but not just the three estates — rather those estates as Gower critiques them at about the time of the Merciless Parliament.¹⁴ Although Book 5 includes several of the finest and most original tales in Gower, there is a significant increase in short exempla that scarcely qualify as tales at all, but are more akin to a homiletic technique that serves Genius well as he turns attention toward social and political concerns rather than love matters or theatrical twists of the psyche.

Book 6, on Gluttony, is the shortest book in the *Confessio*. It discusses only two kinds of the sin, Drunkenness and Delicacy, then speculates on the indulgences of sorcery and witchcraft to conclude with the Tale of Ulysses and Telegonus and the Tale of Nectanabus. This latter tale is one of the pivotal stories in the whole of the *Confessio* in that it sets up Book 7, where Genius explains to Amans, at the lover’s request, how Aristotle taught Alexander. The device enables the poet to shelve his confessional drama in order to focus on ethics, bringing the educational substructure to its culmination. Some readers might feel cheated by Gower at this point, as he puts aside his greatest character creation, Amans. The decision is in a way like Plato’s when he leaves behind the philosophical drama of *The Symposium* and *The Republic* to turn his attention, instead, to the writing of *Laws*.

Book 7, like *Laws*, is, in its quiet way, a triumph. As Gower shifts from playwright to social counselor his mode of rhetoric changes from his usual tale-telling to historical examples based on “real” kings from Roman, Greek, and biblical history, some of whom rule well, some abominably, while others just muddle through for reasons that Genius, armed with the *Secretum Secretorum*, the Bible, Valerius Maximus, Brunetto Latini, Livy, Seneca, and others, explicates.¹⁵ The effect is encyclopedic and of interest in terms of the coherent educational

¹³ Avarice’s court might well be seen as a subversion of the wastrel court surrounding young Richard II. I have noted elsewhere that Amans in his youth-oriented court bears some likeness to young Richard, who is said to have invited the older poet to his barge to talk about poetry (“Politics and Psychology of Governance,” pp. 229–30). It is amusing to imagine what Richard, age 18 or so when the event would have happened, might have looked like in his courtly finery. Or, if we prefer to think of Amans, even at the beginning, as an old man, a “faitour” disguising himself as young, the Court of Avarice, nonetheless, would figure well as Richard’s court, with its preoccupation with fashion and *dit-amoureux* affectations paid for by the labor of the people. On the extravagance of fashion and costly show in Richard’s court, see Eberle, especially her discussion of *Richard the Redeless* (“Politics of Courtly Style,” pp. 170–73).

¹⁴ See Galloway, “The Literature of 1388 and the Politics of Pity.”

¹⁵ The list is long, including Arphaghes, Manachaz, Zorobabel (1 Esdras 3–5), Ahab, Josaphat, Saul, Agag, David, Amalech, Phineas, the evil Rehoboam, and Solomon in his evil days when he foolishly divided the kingdom (from 3 Kings [1 Kings] 11), Julius Caesar, Trajan, Conrad, and lesser Ro-

principles that, although diverse, are brought together by measure of the questions they raise.¹⁶

GOWER THE HISTORIAN

"We all get sucked into history in the end," Derek Pearsall writes. This proposition is true for Gower at all phases of his life. Though he may begin hither and yon, the issue he explores always resolves itself into some form of cultural history, especially as it pertains to law.¹⁷ According to both the *OED* and the *MED*, Gower is the first writer to appropriate the Latin word *historia* into English as the neologism, "history." That borrowing is not surprising, however, since, more than any of his literary contemporaries, Gower thinks and acts like a historian. Chaucer's term for history is "story," which involves for him the reading of the past, usually from books, in an effort to recover models that reflect upon our own lives. Gower uses the same techniques, but goes beyond them to assemble cultural and scientific data in order to get a handle on both past and present. It is perhaps noteworthy that five of the six times he uses the word "histoire" in the *Confessio* he rhymes it with "memoire." The two concepts are, indeed, intimately connected. Memory is first in a trinity of human faculties,¹⁸ providing the Intellect and Will (the other two) with the basic material from which they suppose. Any act of memory is inevitably a kind of storytelling, as thought and imagination use recollected experiences to document and comment on particular historical events, either directly or subversively. History and memory are correlative for Gower, for when a king forgets his office to become courtier, the whole kingdom becomes "faitour" to its honest mission, a situation about which Gower is deeply disturbed, given the expensive waste of money and talent that seems to pervade the royal court.¹⁹

mans like Pompeius, Maximin, Gaius Fabricius, Carmidotirus (from various sources like Brunetto, Seneca, Livy, etc.), others from Greece, Persia, and the East like Cyrus, Cambises, Lycurgus, Codrus, and cruel leaders like Leontius, Siculus, Lichaon, and Spartachus — the list goes on to embody a cameo political history of borders of the Mediterranean region over several hundred years.

¹⁶ On Gower's skill at discovering connections without compromising difference, see Fisher: "The most impressive feature of Gower's moral philosophy that emerges from careful study of the text of his works . . . is not its high idealism, nor its concern over the relations between the individual and society, nor even its progressive views on social justice under the rule of law. It is rather the unity and coherence of Gower's world view and the success with which he managed to infuse into a heterogeneous mass of conventional material a personal vision capable still of commanding our respect" (*John Gower*, p. 203).

¹⁷ One is again reminded of Plato, where, so often, the argument of his dialogue ends, as in *Crito*, with some form of civic law addressing the one who has questions. In Book 7 (the intellectual plateau of the second half of *C4*), there are ninety-two specific references to law, more than twice as many as in any other book, the second being the much longer Book 5, with thirty-five. And, as I hope to demonstrate in my discussion of individual tales, the workings of contracts and agreements constitute the subtext of most plots as the teller shapes the governance of "history" itself.

¹⁸ See St. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, Books 9–11. See Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, ed. Peck, vol. 1, pp. 5, 9–15, for further discussion on Gower's use of the term "history" and his views on brain functions.

¹⁹ Gower uses the term "faitour" repeatedly to get at the falseness at the core of so much civic behavior. From the outset of the poem it is the term with which Venus labels Amans (1.175–79). See Calin on Gower's powerful opposition to the courtly ethos ("John Gower's Continuity," p. 100), as he mocks it through the "luftalking" of "faitours."

Gower is a historian of many sorts, thinking at times like a political analyst, at times like a judge or court of justice, and at other times like a chronicler or compiler of instructive exempla. He thinks of history in terms of “evidence” (7.2703), evidence that enables him to plot the events of time (or of a life) in an effort to assess its meaning. He is a master at taking the long view even as he looks to immediate resonances in “the present time which now is” (8.258). He goes to books of antiquity like a sorcerer seeking out voices he might consult. Always he thinks of such findings as evidence — evidence that might be used in a trial.²⁰

When he gathers lore and strategies from popular sources and attempts to find common echoes that reverberate in ever-present oral traditions — “the murmur, complaint, voice, and cry of all Christian folk,” as he puts it in the *Mirour* passage cited above — Gower the historian behaves like a folklorist. This voice of the people, what Middleton speaks of as a public voice, which so often resonates throughout the *Confessio*, puts a distinctive stamp on Gower’s style and the way in which he utilizes his sources.²¹ He is, indeed, a political analyst, an estates historian, but he is a folk historian, too, as he tallies the voice of the people²² and the public functions that deploy themselves as the actants of folklore. As Middleton observes, “this poetic voice is vernacular, practical, worldly, plain, public-spirited, and peace-loving — in a word, rather than courtly or clerical in its professed values and social allegiances” (p. 98). Such a voice differs from the private, more individual voicing of Chaucerian characters, but rather, like a figure of the folk, is a voicing of diverse cultural strands as if they were components of a communal psyche.

Much has been written about Gower’s use of sources — almost, at times, a custodial use, as the notes to this edition would hope to make clear. This custodial mentality is a key feature of the *Confessio* as historian Gower compiles exemplary materials — his stories — the way a librarian might, to create a cultural repository of what is necessary if the culture is to remain intact and survive. Gower compiles with a purpose — the welfare of his audience. He is a collective mediator of lore and law. But there is a twist to this side of Gower that invites both intellect and heart to break down the walls of his mental repository to open outwardly upon the vistas of nature — meadows, forests, and a vast unexplored and unsecured

²⁰ One might think of the protagonist of Chaucer’s *Book of the Duchess*, who reads the story of Seys and Alcyone, then looks back over its details, wondering “yf it were so” (*BD*, line 233), where one calls upon one’s powers of judgment to validate experience.

²¹ See Middleton’s classic essay “The Idea of Public Poetry in the Reign of Richard II,” where she links Gower’s notion of the “common” or “commune” with Cicero’s *res publica res populi*, where “the public good, or commonwealth, is the people’s affair, in the sense that ‘people’ are considered not as a herd, assembled in any sort of way, but as a *people*, bound by agreement as to law and rights and associated for mutual benefit or expediency” [Cicero, *De re publica* 1.25.39]. “Common” denotes “the commonwealth as a whole, the community or fellowship, the populace or citizenry, as well as the ‘common people’” (p. 100). Middleton defines this public voice as distinctive of Ricardian writers, especially Gower and Langland, emphasizing its situating itself in a medial position, between lust and lore or the nobility and the commons, etc., for a kind of experiential immanence located within history rather than as a transcendent notion. See also David Benson’s expansion of the idea in *Public Piers Plowman*.

²² Ferster, “O Political Gower,” p. 42, is especially useful on this point as she discusses “the people” as counselors to the king. *Vox populi, vox dei* (“The voice of the people is the voice of God”) is a recurrent aphorism in *Vox Clamantis*, which concludes: “What I have set down is the voice of the people [*plebis*], but you will also see that where the people [*populus*] call out, God is often there” (*VC* 7, ch. 25.1.1470, trans. Stockton, p. 288).

space that exceeds his own predilection. That is, Gower is astutely aware that “history,” whether in old texts or folk experience, is constructed out of “memory” by individual writers and readers who plot for particular purposes. He knows that all documents of the past, the written and the oral, are open to trial and judgment and are relative to the times in which they were produced as well as the times in which they are heard once again.

Like a good historian, Gower’s powers of invention are often most potent when he takes the kernel of antiquity and reshapes it to a new context. But even his most derivative compilations require us as readers to consider the varieties of derivation from which the compilations evolve — oftentimes from great writers of former times like the “Ovide poete” (who is so often named),²³ or Statius or Benoît (who so seldom are identified); sometimes from non-literary texts such as Brunetto Latini’s *Trésor* or Giles of Rome’s *De regimine principum* (“The Governance of Kings and Princes”); and sometimes as well from non-textual sources, the experiential voice of the people. All such evolutions (whether literary or oral) are insistently cultural, as Gower uses them, but they deliberately include in their historicity elements of what we would now label “folklore.”²⁴

Like a good folklorist, Gower listens to what he thinks the voice of the people might be, the voice of the common people and their common law, a voice “which mai noght lie” (Prol. 124), simply because it is the authentic thing itself, that bundle of shared values beyond the individual, the voice of God — *vox populi, vox dei*. He also looks to the lore of experience, the lessons to be seen through behavior.²⁵ For Gower, folklore is a “science,” the lore (wisdom) counterbalanced against the desires (lust) of the people.²⁶ From the outset of the *Confessio* Gower announces that he would speak “[s]omwhat of lust (desire), somewhat of lore (wisdom)” (Prol. 19). As a writer, he is, most certainly, aware of the cultural relativity of any historian’s views. His sophisticated notion of storytelling is always alert to the politics and

²³ Gower uses the word “poete” seven times in *Confessio*, always in conjunction with Ovid — “Ovide the Poet” (1.386, 5.878, 8.2719) or with Ovid’s poetry (2.121, 5.5231, 5.6713, 5.6804).

²⁴ Or, perhaps, I should say “folklaw.” (N.b., the multiple meanings of “lore” in Middle English.) The term “folklore” is a nineteenth-century invention, coined in 1846 by William Thoms for a discipline he labeled, as he puts it, with “a good Saxon compound, Folklore, — *the Lore of the People*” (*The Athenaeum*, No. 982, August 22, 1846, p. 862), a phrase that sounds like something taken right out of Gower in some *vox-clamantis* mood. Thoms is attempting to establish a discipline for exploring oral tradition. If there were anyone in fourteenth-century England who approximated what Thoms meant by folklorist it would be Gower, a writer who celebrates and legitimates the voices of popular culture. Though he never uses the specific kenning “folk-lore,” the two components of the folklore compound appear hundreds of times in Gower’s poem, as actants within the *vox-populi* paradigm. He looks upon the dicta and sayings of the people (albeit largely through books), their proverbs and commonsense responses as a means of penetrating modes of everyday behavior. The content is not likely to be particularly sophisticated, i.e., what the “comun poeple” say and do provides the illusion of a living text, even as it borrows hand-me-down clothes of the past. Such a record may not be analytic, but it certainly may be analyzed.

²⁵ I’m thinking here of such behavior as the shame Vulcan feels “Which oghte for to ben a lore / For every man that liveth hie, / To reulen him in this matiere” (5.704–06), where experience itself becomes “lore.”

²⁶ See Prol. 19. *Science*, a means of knowing, is a favorite term of Gower (forty-three references in *CA*) to identify the wisdom of a discipline, whereby a people can glue their culture together or think of themselves as a people. It is a function within behavior that fixes the grammatology of being, enabling actants, the acteur, and the audience to interrelate. See Peck, “Folklore and Powerful Women,” p. 17n34.

civic ordinances projecting from all actions. But he is also aware that even the most objective historicizations are relative to the goals and predilections of the historian. That is, Gower knows that history is culturally produced; but, at the same time, especially from his folklorist view, he insists that there *are* universals, and that they are *not* confined to issues of religion, faith, or aesthetics. Within his political vision law supplies humankind with what for him are the universals necessary if life is to be orderly — divine law, to be sure, and natural law, too, but also the very human common law.²⁷ Good laws sustain good lore.

BOOK 5: AVARICE

Perhaps more than any single rhetorical ploy in Gower, it is the folkloric instinct that makes his tales so different from their sources. It is this same instinct that sets him apart from Chaucer, Langland, and the *Gawain/Pearl*-poet.²⁸ I will not be able to talk about many of the tales that appear in Books 5–7, but those that I have singled out I have chosen, in part, because of their diverse forms of historicity — tales that comment on government and the function of law(s) within nature and politics, especially as such detail applies to the reign of Richard II; tales that draw upon sources of past ages, now made current as they address the experiences of Amans (Gower's Everyman) and his audience; and tales that use folkloric techniques that add an immediacy through the ever-present voice of the common people.

²⁷ On the universality of natural law, see Gratian, Dist. 5 ante c.1 (Friedberg I, 1): *Naturale ius inter omnia primatum obtinet et tempore et dignitate. Cepit enim ab exordio rationalis creature, nec variatur tempore sed immutabile permanet* ["Natural law is foremost among other laws in antiquity and dignity. For it has its primary source in the reason of creatures, and does not alter with time but remains immutable"]. Elsewhere in the *Decretals* he relates natural law to customary human practice: *Humanum genus duobus regitur, naturali uidelicet iure et moribus. Ius naturae est quod in lege et in euangelio continetur, quo quisque iubetur alii facere, quod sibi uult fieri, et prohibetur alii inferre, quod sibi nolit fieri* ["Humankind is ruled by two things, that is, natural law and custom. Natural law is what is contained in the law and the Gospels, by which each person is commanded to do to another that he would wish done to himself, and is prohibited from doing to another what he would not wish done to himself"] (Dist.1 ante c.1 [Friedberg, I,1]). Isidore makes a similar differentiation (akin to Gratian's) between natural law and custom: *Ius naturale est commune omnium nationum, et quot ubique instinctu naturae, non constitutione aliqua habetur* ["Natural law is common to all nations and is held everywhere by the instinct of nature, not by some written constitution" — Isidore of Seville, *PL* 82.199.] This "instinct of nature" creates a sense of the universal in the individual. The distinction between the individual and the universal poses a *questio* that pervades all of Gower's writings. One principal difference between divine law and natural or positive law is time. Natural law is more universal than written constitutions, but, nonetheless, its presence is temporal. People perceive natural law by "natural intention" (*instinctu naturae*), but this inborn instinct is expressed primarily through experience, which is individual and temporal. Instinct may be plotted (that is, it is always subject to narrative), and that plot, not the instinct itself, is what we consider ourselves to be. The twelfth-century glossator on the *Decretum Gratiani* explains the matter this way: *Est itaque naturale ius vis quaedam humanae creature a natura insita ad faciendum bonum cavendumque contrarium* ["Natural law is therefore a certain force planted by nature in human beings so that they work towards good and avoid its opposite"]. The functional concept here is *towards*; in the time world, we are always working *towards* something, yearning *towards* some goal. For citation and the translation of the legal texts, see Barr, "Treatment of Natural Law," pp. 50–51. See also Olsson, "Natural Law."

²⁸ I have written about folkloric materials in the Tale of Florent, a tale with no known direct source, but one of Gower's most successful individual stories (see Peck, "Folklore and Powerful Women").

Some of the tales have well-known literary backgrounds; others come from more obscure places. But they all stand as part of the exemplary evidence that Gower assembles in *Confessio*, his cultural treasury, written “in oure English . . . for Engelandes sake” (Prol. 23–24).

The Tale of Adrian and Bardus

The Tale of Adrian and Bardus comes as close as any in the *Confessio* to being a bona fide folktale. It has literary sources, though Gower uses them freely, adding folk touches of his own, especially in the latter part of the tale when the emperor Justinian brings his applicable laws into Bardus’ world of chance to make possible the folktale’s perquisite happy ending. Macaulay (3.502–03) notes with regard to the Tale of Adrian and Bardus,

This story, which is of Eastern origin, is told near the end of the *Speculum Stultorum* (i.e. *Burnellus*), with which Gower was acquainted, as we know from the *Vox Clamantis*. The names there are Bernardus and Dryānus, and the animals are three, a serpent, an ape, and a lion. A similar tale is told by Matthew Paris, under the year 1195, as related by King Richard I in order to recommend liberality in the cause of Christendom. In this the rich man is Vitalis, a Venetian, and the poor man’s name is not given. The animals in the pit are a lion and a serpent. Vitalis thanks his deliverer, and appoints a time for him to come to his palace in Venice and receive the promised reward of half his goods; but when he comes, he is refused with contumely. The magic qualities of the gem which the serpent brings are not mentioned in the story of Vitalis.²⁹

In this folktale of the rich man and the poor man, Gower seems to be working less from a specific source than from a recollection that is modified by actants he knows from other folk stories. This tale, despite all its fantastic components, puts us in the presence of the daily struggles of the poor. Through its lore Gower perpetually reminds us of legal structures that sustain the kingdom despite class inequities.

Like other folktales, the Tale of Adrian and Bardus studies wish-fulfillment — evil wishes as well as harmless and benevolent ones. Bardus works hard as a woodcutter, hoping to survive life’s struggles. His wife shares his goals and aspirations. Adrian, on the other hand, is a loner who imagines himself superior to others. He is incapable of friendship or gratitude. He takes whatever anyone would give, but never returns in kind. He presumes he is a law unto himself and thinks nothing of breaking contracts or committing perjury. He is blind to any benefits that kind deeds to others might offer, and, in his ingratitude, “he fell unwar into a pet [pit] / Wher that it mihte noght be let [made known]” (5.4945–46). His ingratitude is a self-imposed dilemma, like that of Tantalus, from which he will never, in truth, recover, even though Bardus gives him a new start by pulling him out of the pit.

The crux of Gower’s story is “th’emperour Justinian” (5.5127) and his law. He is a just leader, a man who is quite the opposite of Adrian. His concern is with his people and a well-run kingdom. He demonstrates admirably the ideal of kingship that Genius will later explain, namely, “[w]hat thing it is to kepe lawe / Thurgh which the wronges ben withdrawe”

²⁹ It is noteworthy that just as Gower commonly uses tales to exemplify to the people the behavior of kings, real English kings used tales for a comparable purpose: to explain human behavior to the people for ethical purposes. In addition to Macaulay’s reference to Richard I mentioned here, there are accounts of Edward I staging folk stories for political ends at feasts and before his counselors, discussed by Loomis in “Chivalric and Dramatic Imitations of Arthurian Romance,” pp. 91–92, and in his “Edward I, Arthurian Enthusiast.”

(7.2705–07). When Justinian learns of the magic gem that returns to its purse even after it has been sold, “he let sende for the man, / And axede him hou that it was” (5.5128–29). He hears patiently the whole story and indicates that he will himself redress the situation. The emperor works according to law, calling Adrian before his “court of juggement” (5.5143) where “the lawe hath diemed and ordeigned / Be hem [By them] that were avised wel” (5.5152–53). Justinian may be wise as Solomon, but, rather than acting arbitrarily, he works in the English way, through laws and wise judges. The case is one, we are told, that

Stant in the memoire into this day
 Wherof that every wysman may
 Ensamplen him, and take in mynde
 What schame it is to ben unkinde;
 Agein the which reson debateth,
 And every creature it hateth. (5.5157–62)

ungrateful

Gower shows a fine sense of legal precedent, precedent remembered not just by men of law in their law books but by “every wysman,” who looks to such rulings for “ensample.” In Gower’s folktale, rather than some fairy godmother, it is the law, living within cultural “memoire” that guarantees the happy ending — the law administered by a good king and his “court of juggement.” The tale thus becomes a study in good rule that functions through the auspices of a good king, an idea that voices, throughout the *Confessio*, an abiding subtext.

It is indeed remarkable how often the plot of English popular romance hinges upon the integrity of the king and his laws.³⁰ If the king is weak, selfish, or unjust, the future of his kingdom will be bleak indeed. In this regard, the Tale of Adrian and Bardus provides an anatomy of good rule and is an important cog in the mechanism that defines the intellectual climax of the *Confessio*. In folktales, the happiest conclusion of all reintegrates with society at large those marginalized by injustice.

Gower’s tales often validate the political institution and its laws. Richard Kaeuper makes the compelling point that one of the most significant differences between England and the Continent is “the long-term growth of Royal power. Real meaning infused the widespread idea that the king of England was responsible for order and justice in his realm; from an early date this royalist ideal appeared regularly in documents by which officials remembered and acted.”³¹ Repeatedly, a key differentiation between an English retelling of a French popular romance and the original will be, in the English, the felicitous role of the king and his laws which provide order when the going gets rough.³² For Gower, a good folktale emphatically

³⁰ I am indebted on this point to conversations with Richard Kaeuper, who does much with narrative fiction as a mirror documenting contemporary historical concerns.

³¹ See especially ch. 6, “English Kingship, Chivalry and Literature,” in *Chivalry and Violence*, pp. 107–20, as cited on p. 109.

³² Contrast the simpler story of Marie de France’s *Lay of Sir Launfal* with Thomas Chester’s *Sir Launfal*, with its introduction of the mercantile perspective of the mayor and the hero’s populist approval rating as well as the king’s parliament of knights who must try Launfal in opposition to the vindictive queen; or continental versions of the story of Orpheus with the Middle English *Sir Orfeo*, where “Sir Orfewe,” king of Winchester, after the loss of his queen Dame Heurodis to the king of fairy, carefully appoints his deputy, then seeks his queen. When he recovers her from the fairy king, he returns to his court in disguise, carefully establishes his deputy’s loyalty and the truth of their covenants, then reveals

reinscribes political capital for the benefit of the whole community. The best happy ending, for Gowerian folktale, is the political one, when “regnes ben amended” (7.2708).

As in so many folktales, the Cinderella-like Bardus, a person so minimal that he must cull wood in the wilderness for sustenance, is elevated to a ranking member of society and is thus legitimated. Not all details of the narrative are idealized, however. A practical streak runs through Gower’s story that is as revealing of his folk vision as the fantastic one. Bardus’ kind act is a practical gesture, not an idealistic one. Like the better-established merchants in this proto-capitalist society, Bardus looks out for his means of survival. Self-interest is necessary, but it need not be malevolent. That is, he is a capitalist, but unlike the “unkynde” Adrian, his “kynde” has not been tainted by venality, and thus the benevolence of animal nature comes to his aid when the grateful ape and serpent, whom he first pulled out of the pit when trying to rescue Adrian, assist him with their gifts of gratitude.

Just as animals in the tale assume symbolic characteristics of a gentle nature that resents ingratitude, so does Adrian become their opposite, a mean-spirited man incapable of gratitude. In this tale, the merchants become part of the symbolic mechanism as well. They are good people who behave reasonably when they report to Justinian the odd behavior of the gem that keeps returning to Bardus’ purse. They act more out of curiosity than anger. Their reasonable behavior, combined with the animals’ gratitude, gets Bardus’ case before the king and his court of law.

Like a good folktale, the story is strongly goal-oriented.³³ The goals are always defined by specific situations. The players and their ethics are determined by their actions. At the outset, Bardus struggles in a basically degraded, inferior position; with mercantile enterprise he works hard in hope of achieving enough wealth to find some kind of security and dignity. He looks for compensation that will justify his laborious existence. His story is quite opposite to that of Midas: he is not avaricious, but neither does he scorn material advantage. His story openly acknowledges just payment; class privilege, on the other hand, that abuses fair acquisition of material goods is deconstructed step by step. The plot is simple, transparent, even predictable: what we need, we try to obtain. That is, the plot is sententious in challenging ways as its folk

himself to his court, which welcomes him and his queen with gladness and “gode likeing” (line 599) as the whole kingdom, the royalty and all the people, celebrate together in common profit — “God graunt our *alle* wele to fare! Amen!” (line 604 — emphasis mine). See Laskaya and Salisbury, eds., *The Middle English Breton Lays*, p. 41. Other examples that illustrate Kaeuper’s point might include *King Horn*, in which the title character returns to reestablish good rule in the kingdom of his father, thereby redeeming his mother, who has been hiding under a rock for years; or *Perceval of Galles*, so different from Chrétien, where the rescue of his mother and the reestablishment of good rule at home displaces Chrétien’s grail quest (in both *King Horn* and *Perceval of Galles* the widowed mothers are secured in new marriages that fittingly guarantee their happiness in old age); or several of the Gawain tales, where, for example, without precedent in the Vulgate tales, Gawain brings honor to Arthur’s court by his fulfilling of his quest for the Green Knight; or by dealing with the Carl of Carlisle who, in his conversion to courtesy, joins Arthur’s court; or in his allowing of victory to Gologras in order to maintain honor and good rule in Arthur’s court despite the king’s aggressive ways; or in his saving of the king’s life by marrying Dame Ragnelle, etc. — all tales that reassert the value of good law understood and embodied in good people whereby the kingdom survives by definition and by fact.

³³ On the role of goal-oriented behavior in fairy tale, see Glazer on Adlerian concepts in fairy tales: “Role of Wish Fulfillment in Märchen,” pp. 64 ff. Glazer explicates two Cinderella stories, one from Limousin in France, and the other from Gümüşhane in Turkey (pp. 67–75), to exemplify goal orientation.

symbolism helps us contemplate the social structures surrounding it, whereby, as the story unfolds, details such as the animals and their gracious behavior, the ingratitude of Adrian, the neediness and persistence of Bardus, the wise insights of the king, and the legal structures of the state come to mean more than they did at first.³⁴ It is this cohesion of the folkloric with classical rhetoric that so often sets Gower's style apart from that of Chaucer or Langland.

But before leaving this tale, one further word about its plain style. The Tale of Adrian and Bardus offers excellent examples of Gower's moving back and forth between the Latinate constructions of classical rhetoric and the rhythms of folk syntax. The tale begins with a long sentence that interrupts itself frequently with balanced clauses. Let me write the sentence as prose, to make more evident its hypotactic syntax:

To speke of an unkinde man, I find hou whilom Adrian, of Rome which a gret lord was, upon a day as he per cas to wode in his huntinge wente, it hapneth at a soudein wente, after his chace as he poursuieth, thurgh happ, the which no man eschuieth, he fell unwar into a pet [pit], wher that it mihte noght be let. (5.4937–46)

After this convoluted setting up of the context, the tale moves into a rhythmic double-duple folk meter to describe Adrian's fall:

The pet was dep · and he fell lowe,	<i>pit</i>
That of his men · non myhte knowe	
Wher he becam, · for non was nyh,	<i>Where he had gone</i>
Which of his fall · the meschief syh. (5.4947–50)	<i>Who</i>

This is followed by two long sentences that, like the first sentence, move the plot along with periodic constructions, interspersed clauses, and skillful use of enjambment, after which the narrative moves into dialogue, with paratactic speech rhythms:

And thus, alone ther he lay, clepende and criende al the day for socour and deliverance, til agein even it fel per chance, a while er it began to nyhte, a povere man, which Bardus hihte, cam walkende with his asse and hadde gadred him a tasse of grene stickes and of drie *to selle*,³⁵ who that wolde hem beie, as he whiche hade no liflode, bot whanne he myhte such a lode to tounne with his asse carie. And as it fell him for to tarie that ilke time nyh the pet, and hath the truse faste knet, he herde a vois, which cride dimme, and he his ere to the brimme *hath leid*, and herde it was a man, *which seid*: (5.4951–69)

“Ha, help hier Adrian,	<i>here</i>
And I wol given half mi good.”	
The povere man · this understod,	
<i>As he that wolde · gladly winne,</i>	
And to this lord · which was withinne	

³⁴ See Fisher, *John Gower*, p. 203, as cited in note 16 above.

³⁵ In the first passage (5.4951–69), I have marked instances of enjambment in italic, since by printing the passage as a prose block the run-over effect is likely to be lost. In the verse passage that follows, I have marked in italics those passages that dramatize Bardus' poverty, his just concern about material gain, and his recognition of the need for legal contracts if he is to have any hope of getting on in life. The raised dots in lines 4972 ff. mark strong caesurae, characteristic of folk rhymes in verse.

He spak and seide, · “If I thee save,	
What sikernesse · schal I have	security
Of covenant, · that afterward	agreement
Thou wolt me · give such reward	
As thou behihest · nou tofore?”	promised a moment ago
That other hath · his othes swore	
Be hevene and · be the goddes alle,	
If that it myhte · so befall	
That he out of the · pet him broghte,	
Of all the goodes · whiche he oghte	
He schal have evene · halvendel. (5.4970–85)	equal half

The passages demonstrate Gower’s mastery of dialogue, both direct and indirect, that, along with folk rhythms, moves the story forward and, at the same time, establishes through its folk *metier* the legal issues that become the crux of the tale when, at the end, these contractual details of the “covenant” are rehearsed at Adrian’s trial. The tone is direct and simple, but the issues are more complex: this folktale, set up in terms of legal contracts, engages social commitments that are, in Gower’s view, the very basis of society — the keeping of law through which the wrongs of society may be identified and remedied.

The Tale of Jason and Medea

There are many other quite wonderful tales in Book 5 besides the Tale of Adrian and Bardus — e.g., the Tale of Virgil’s Mirror, the King and the Steward’s Wife, the Tale of Achilles and Deidamia, and several Ovidian tales, especially the Tale of Hercules and Faunus, based on Ovid’s *Fasti*. But one of the best is the Tale of Jason and Medea. As in the Bardus story, Gower draws upon the *métier* of folklore and its subtexts to shape the tone and consequent ethical parameters of his version of the famous story. As in Bardus, natural law and contractual law conjoin with folk components as operative universals in the tale.

Gower’s adaptation is based on two well-known literary sources: 1) Benoît’s *Roman de Troie*, the main plot of which Gower adheres to in the first 680 lines of the poem (the story of the golden fleece, the secret marriage of Jason and Medea, and his victorious return from Colchos to Greece); and 2) the first four hundred lines of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* Book 7, from which Gower takes the basic guidelines for the last three hundred lines of his tale and its concluding events, namely, his account of Medea’s rejuvenation by magic of Jason’s decrepit father Eson at a great price to her own physical beauty, Jason’s subsequent breach of his marriage vow as he abandons Medea for Creusa, and Medea’s erasure of the effects of the broken contract by the murder of his sons in retaliation.

The effect of Gower’s story is quite different from Benoît’s (and utterly different from Ovid’s), largely because of his strongly sympathetic treatment of Medea, a sympathy qualified by astute contractual modifications. Medea’s character is developed not in a novelistic manner, the way Chaucer develops Criseyde’s personality, but rather in a folkloristic way. That is, she is presented not as a “realistic” or self-reflective woman like Criseyde, nor as a schizophrenic witch, as she is in Ovid.³⁶ Rather, she is a configuration of female character functions of the sort

³⁶ Ovid’s account begins with what appears to be a debate between two women, both of whom in their witchcraft can see into the future, but almost immediately we recognize that both of them are

one finds in folk typologies — the yearnings of a pubescent woman, a sense of adventure and fascination with the outside world, a strong desire for emotional commitment, and a fierce loyalty to her beloved. She embodies a young woman's need for independence from her parents, but at the same time she is deeply religious and naturally modest. She is, moreover, presented as having a practical side: she is savvy about money and has a keen sense of the workings of law. In this regard she is like the well-educated Peronelle in the *Tale of the Three Questions* (1.3067 ff.) or Thais in the *Tale of Apollonius* (8.271 ff.), a positive role model for a young aristocratic woman. She is very smart and observant. But, unlike his sources, Gower plays down her skills in witchcraft until, at the command of her husband, she is called upon to use them for what she knows will be to her own detriment, a sacrifice she is willing to make on her husband's behalf. The narrative appears to exonerate her in the end when the unfaithful Jason attempts to retaliate against her for destroying his children, but is unable to touch her; she, leaving Jason in "gret destresse" (5.4222), is given refuge in the court of the goddess Pallas.

Genius is sympathetic to Medea throughout the narrative, even though she does dastardly things: she betrays her father, robs the family treasury, and, ultimately, murders her children. But these horrendous events are the consequence of abuses against Medea, abuses defined by breeches of contract within which she, in keeping with her basically generous nature, has attempted to lead an honorable life. This is a tale about Perjury, and Jason is the perjurer. During the course of the action Medea is defined by several different contracts, contracts that the legal-minded Gower is careful to spell out. We are encouraged always to assess her actions through the situations in which she is placed. This is not to say that she makes no choices. On the contrary, she is quite clear-headed about her decisions (very different from Ovid's Medea, in this regard, who is trapped in a perpetual rant between contradictory positions she both detests and adores).

Gower's Medea is a complex bundle of social and political pressures. Her story is framed in such a way that virtually every action is given a political overtone that qualifies ethical judgment in each situation. For example, Gower develops the role of Oetes, her father, far beyond what it was in Benoît. In his dialogue with Jason when he first arrives from Greece, Oetes does all that he can to discourage the youth, fearing that, should Jason fail, the Greeks might attack Colchos in retaliation. When Jason remains headstrong, the father plays his trump card, bringing out his beautiful daughter Medea in hope of distracting Jason. This use of her virginal beauty as bait exonerates her falling in love with Jason; she does what Oetes intended — and more. She is not some witch who seduces a young man. Nature takes care of the bewitching part. She loves him and would honorably wed him (albeit without her father's blessing, but certainly at his instigation) before any sexual activity takes place. But once she is married to Jason, her life is defined by a different set of contractual expectations: she gives her loyalty to her husband, rather than her father, which is as the law would require. We may feel remorse for Oetes and his wife, after Jason preemptively leaves Colchis, taking Medea and her inheritance with him, but the politics of her decisions are rational, and she is given room to be admired for her choices. She acts knowingly, even though she is young and new at the game of life.

Gower's Medea has a strong sense of propriety and loyalty to her commitments. When Oetes commands that Jason and Medea meet, all goes exactly as he planned. Nature takes its course, and they almost instantly fall in love. But Gower's presentation of the moment is quite

Medea: one tells about the hateful evils of predatory men who would harm her, and the other of her love of male beauty and masculine company.

different from the comparable scene in Benoît. In the *Roman de Troie* the focus is heavily on Jason's response to Medea's femininity. The poet introduces Medea through an *effictio* of womanly beauty that helps the reader to see what Jason sees — her figure, her encircling hair that sets off her beautiful eyes and lovely face, her mouth and sweet glances, her chin, her beautiful torso and lovely arms, and her rounded hips³⁷ (*Rom. de Troie* 1254–62).

Gower omits the description entirely. Instead, Jason simply “good hiede nam [took]” and finds in her “nothing loth” as she “softe” takes his hand in welcome and seats him publicly at table (5.3370–75). She “gan hir yhe [eye] impresse / Upon his face and his stature,” for she had never seen anyone so “wel farende” as he (5.3378–81). But Genius does not fault her for her courteous behavior or her penetrating glances. She is simply observant and responsive at this naive but informing moment. Rather, it is Jason who seems at fault (if fault is to be found), for he “ne mihte noght withholde his lok” (5.3383). He has no excuse for not knowing enough to guard his eyes.³⁸ Ironically, this womanizing propensity is what will draw him to Creusa at the end and lead to the heedless destruction of his legacy, despite all his concern for his father.

Medea's natural affections are presented affectionately, especially her modesty, as she “with simple chiere and meke . . . wax al aschamed” when she brings Jason into her bedroom where she is “redi to bedde” (5.3476–81). But most striking at this intimate moment is not her devious, youthful passion but rather her ability to deal in awkward situations with a clear head.³⁹ She arranges the bedding of the bride to take place only after a marriage service in the presence of a “figure of Jupiter” (5.3485) has been performed, with her lady-in-waiting as witness. Details of the marriage contract are precisely laid out, including his swearing that while his life lasts “he wolde hire holde for his wif” (5.3492). Then, having given his word, they kiss to seal the contract. As is so often the case, we once again see the legal-minded Gower at work. Although there are many charges of indecorum that could be brought against Medea, she does work within the sufferances of divine and natural law, and common law, too, if her contracts with men are taken into consideration. The final judgment of the tale is against Jason, who swore “an oth which is noght soth” (5.4224).

There is jollity in the consummation, as they, in bed all naked, “hadden bothe what thei wolde” (5.3499). But although the lovemaking seems a mutually happy reward, a more sobering detail lurks in the background, namely the spelling out of a prenuptial agreement which stipulated that Jason would enter into the contract with her, providing that she give him the instruction and equipment necessary to survive the quest for the fleece (5.3443 ff.).

³⁷ I have translated *Large e grant a la forcheüre* (line 1259) as “rounded hips,” though, technically, *forcheüre* is an anatomical term for “crotch” or “groin.”

³⁸ Jason seems to have forgotten the story of Acteon, his fellow Greek from the lands of mythology, who, in Book I of the *Confessio*, learned the hard way that when he looked on Diana as she played “naked al” in the “flod” that disaster would ensue: “Betre is to winke than to loke!” [1.363–84], Genius abjures. If only he had taken time to read that story! But Jason is not a careful reader, nor is he interested in taking time; in his avarice, he is too busy taking anything he can get.

³⁹ Ames' cogent observation is worth citing here: “Surely Gower was not being ironic when he described Medea as a blushing maid who naively believed Jason's oaths of fidelity or Cleopatra as a woman who had suffered for love. His comments suggest rather their acceptance into the Women's Club” (“The Feminist Connections,” p. 69). My point is that Gower's Medea is conscious of her position as woman both in her political awareness and her physiological responses. In this regard she does not object or protest; she recognizes the potency of the Women's Club, which makes her destruction of Creusa at the end of her “story” all the more poignant — for both women in their “sosterhode” (see 7.4196–4209).

That agreement qualifies, at least, the headiness of the romance. Medea keeps her side of the contract. After their pleasures, she gives him precise instructions on how to deal with the fire-breathing oxen, the serpent that never sleeps, the dragon's teeth, the plowing of the teeth into a furrow from which knights will grow and be slain. (One might read the scenario almost as a prophecy of the fate of Jason and his heritage as he plants his own seed in a furrow that produces young knights who, alas, will soon be destroyed.) If he carries out the instructions well, the fleece will be his. Medea makes sure that he can remember details of the charm, then warns him that the new day approaches and he must get up so that she can give him the ring with its magical stone,⁴⁰ the ointment, and the glue that will save his life and honor: "thus Medea for Jason / Ordeigneth, and preith therupon / That he nothing forgete scholde" (5.3623–25). Finally, she leads him in communal prayers to Jupiter.

Gower adds a touching parting scene as she takes her new husband in her arms, weeps, prays again, then faints (5.3634–59). There is little sentiment of this sort in Benoît, and certainly not in Ovid, but such sentiment is an important component of the folk morphology of her sincerity — one of the actants intertwined with the legal ones. Gower's Medea is a complicated woman, not just some headstrong schoolgirl. She governs well in her domain. Gower establishes this aspect of Medea in part by means of her serving maid, who acts as go-between, personal attendant, and witness. The woman is discreet and utterly loyal to her mistress, a confirmation of the integrity of the political domain over which Medea governs so capably. Medea keeps an orderly household; she "ordeigneth" (5.3624) well for everyone in her domain, providing they uphold their end of the agreements.

After Jason sets out, Medea watches from her tower (another Gower addition) with pious, loving prayers; when he carries out her orders and succeeds, Gower rises to the occasion with striking poetic adornment:

Jason Medea noght forgat,
On bothe his knes he gan down falle,
And gaf thonk to the goddes alle.
The flees he tok and goth to bote,
The sonne schyneth bryhte and hote,
The flees of gold schon forth withal,
The water glistreth overal. (5.3728–34)

goes to the boat

This is indeed their shining moment. From her tower Medea knows where to look and catches sight of the glint of the fleece. She is a good reader of signs and finds pleasure in her reading, recognizing his success long before anyone else knows. She sends her heart to her lover by metaphor express, as she imagines how she would help him: "If that sche hadde wynges tuo,⁴¹ / Sche wolde have flowe unto him tho / Strawht ther he was into the bot" (5.3749–51). When Jason returns, the people, who know nothing of the circumstances, cry with one voice, "Ha,

⁴⁰ The ring Medea gives to Jason, with its potent gemstone that protects her beloved, evokes a folk-motif found in many a medieval romance; e.g., Chrétien's *Yvain* and the Middle English *Yvain and Gawain*, *Perceval of Galles*, *William of Palerne*, and *King Horn*. On the magical power of gems in medieval romances, saints' lives, lapidaries, and individual lives (the stones need not necessarily be in rings), see Heather, "Precious Stones," pp. 249–64.

⁴¹ This idea of her attending him on "wynges tuo" is not as idly girlish a thought as it might at first seem. Later, when commanded by her husband to restore Eson, she will indeed fly through the air.

wher was evere under the hevene / So noble a knyht as Jason is?" (5.3766–67). Gower projects a fine instance of common profit as nobles and commons conjoin in their joy at the marvellous folkloric moment (5.3758–59).⁴² They refer to him as "a faie knight" and immediately become folk historians who create a legend within their communal imagination: "For it was nevere of mannes miht / The flees of gold so for to winne, / And thus to taken thei beginne" (5.3769–72).

Medea is, of course, the one who deserves the credit, but her quiet response is appropriate, for according to law husband and wife are one. Though he is her guardian, his praise is her praise.⁴³ Her pleasure in "his" triumph is one further indication of her wifeliness. We know, however, the great debt he owes his wife; we have seen how she is thrilled with all that has transpired, but we also know how casual his concerns for her are. Gower gives us a romance, but he also subverts it. Once again, we are left troubled by the plot's cruel twists.

Both Benoît and Gower give Jason a bath after he returns to Colchus (compare *Rom. de Troie* line 1999 with *CA* 5.3801–11), a comparative detail that exemplifies the differences in Gower's presentation of his heroine and her presence in the source. In Benoît we are *told* it happened; in Gower we *see* it happen, as Jason prepares for his reception at court: he "wyssh him clene as eny bon," takes a "sopp," puts on his best clothes, and "kempde his hed" to come forth "al merie and glad / Riht strawht into the kinges halle" (5.3806–11). Comparable popular romance enhancements beyond the French may be seen in Medea's shy greeting of him after his return, in the assembly where Jason gives his speech and receives praise, in the supper feast followed by their second night in the bridal chamber, and in their planning for an immediate departure after Medea obtains her dowry from the treasury.⁴⁴ Gower is superbly in control of his literary medium in this tale, a master of sentiment in many a touching scene, not just for Medea and her beloved, but for her parents as well — witness the tender weeping of her mother and the wild antics of her father when they find out their daughter has gone (5.3911–26) — sentiment that pleases even as Gower histories ethical issues and personal contracts that will unfold with startling perplexity in the end.

The conclusion of Gower's poem is loosely based on Ovid in one of the most convoluted passages in the *Metamorphoses*. Gower's relatively elaborate account of Jason's hasty nighttime

⁴² Fisher, *John Gower*, p. 196, sees this as a moment of common profit as the people, the powerful and the ordinary, respond "with o voice" (5.3765).

⁴³ See Pollock and Maitland, *The History of English Law before the Time of Edward I*, 1.485, on oneness in marriage despite male guardianship.

⁴⁴ Several critics have commented on the swift departure of Jason and Medea from Colchus and their taking of Medea's dowry with them. See Nicholson, *Annotated Index*, pp. 353–54; Eichinger, *Die Trojasage als Stoffquelle*, p. 70, notes that neither Benoît nor Guido describe the departure, suggesting that Gower uses the passage as a means of transition into his Ovidian source. Schmitz, *Middel Weie*, p. 159, considers Medea's obtaining of her dowry by taking it to be a theft, while Itô, *John Gower*, p. 89, considers it to be, instead, a confirmation of her devotion to her husband, noting her condemnation in Benoît ("Grant folie fist Medea") as she robs her father (line 2030) and also the fact that in Euripides, Seneca, and *Ovide moralisé* (7.655–78), she kills her younger brother Absyrtus, cuts him to pieces, and scatters the fragments at sea so that the pursuers will lose time gathering up the bits. Certainly, Gower gives us a more gentle portrait of Medea than any of the other treatments, where, even in this testy moment, she shows devotion and loyalty to her new guardian, as Itô remarks. We are told that she thinks "her father to beguile" (5.3896), but that could refer more to her marriage and her leaving without letting her father know, rather than simply the fact that she "al prively" (5.3898) took with her "the tresor which hir fader hadde" (5.3897), details that cannot be easily ignored.

departure from Colchos, Medea's effort "hir fader to beguile" (5.3896), the parents' discovery next morning that the two have gone, and their pursuit "with caliphe and with galeie" (5.3915) provides a smooth transition between the sources. So too, Gower's repeated use of a hunting metaphor to describe Jason's triumphal venture. When he returns with the golden fleece we are told "hou Jason broghte his preie" (5.3763) back to Colchos. That night he goes forth "stalkende al prively" (5.3861) into Medea's chamber, takes his "ese" with Medea "naked and al warm" (5.3867), then flees with the treasure before dawn. When he arrives in Greece he comes "with his preie" (5.3927), which could be read as the fleece, Medea, or the treasury. The hunting trope might be understood as a sign of an admirable masculinity, but it also subverts the integrity of his relationship with his new wife, who is already being couched as the victim.

As Gower rewrites the story, with his elaborate account of loyal Medea's effort to restore the youth of Jason's father, he offers his audience some of the most musical and flowing lines in Middle English.⁴⁵ He acknowledges that the effect is mainly a "novellerie" (5.3955) as he takes his reader into a fairy realm where Medea flies by midnight with a wondrous world of stillness on every side, her head bare and her hair flowing as she begins her incantations to the wind, the sea, the land, and to Echates, goddess of sorcerie (5.3982). She rides in a chariot pulled by dragons past the mythic lands of Crete and Othrys and Olympus, as she obtains the potions and prepares for the bloodletting that will restore the youth of Eson, Jason's arthritic father. The scene is one of the most extended accounts of magic in Middle English literature. But, although Medea's effort that begins in gliding poetry succeeds in transforming Eson, it ends in blood-curdling cackling that leaves Medea old, desiccated, and exhausted, whereupon, when Peleus, Jason's uncle, dies, and Jason becomes king, he takes a younger, more beautiful wife, and puts Medea aside. When Medea strikes back she has the reader's sympathy as well as that of Pallas and her divine court that provides refuge to the abandoned woman. As Genius declares, "Lo, what mihte eny man devise, / A womman schewe in eny wise / Mor hertly love in every stede, / Than Medea to Jason dede?" (5.4175–78).⁴⁶ Her "hertly love" is not some irresponsible passion; it is more an affective piety, appropriate to a lady of her position.

⁴⁵ Gower has often been praised for his melodious verse. See Lewis on the pleasurability of Gower's verse with its singing style and the "beauty of the architectonics," its striking imagery and efficiency as Medea, for example, upon seeing Jason returned safely "sche for joie hire maide kiste" (5.3800), where, as Lewis puts it, the whole scene comes "alive in six words" (*Allegory of Love*, pp. 200–08, n.b.: 204–06); Ricks on Gower's "use of the ordinary" — words like "soft," where Medea welcomes Jason "And softe tok him be the hond, / And doun thei seten bothe same" (5.3374–75), and "thing," when Venus says to the aged lover, "The thing is torned into was" (8.2435) — for effects that are quite extraordinary ("Metamorphosis in Other Words," pp. 26–31); and, especially, Street, whose paean to Gower's lyricism, with its musical, onomatopoeic effects and sensual contrasts, is eloquent confirmation of what Skelton meant when he said that Gower "first garnysshed our English rude" ("John Gower," p. 238).

⁴⁶ It is worth contrasting Gower's sensitive treatment of Medea that is so skillfully set within complex legal and social situations with Chaucer's more satirical and sentimental tale in *Legend of Good Women*. Chaucer draws more upon Guido than Benoît, attacking Jason less through breach of contract than through mockery of his cad-like nature. By combining the story of Hypsipyle with that of Medea, he can amusingly assail Jason for betraying two women where other cads betray one, a circumstance that so angers Geoffrey that he would challenge Jason to a duel — "Have at thee, Jason! Now thy horn is blowe!" (*LGW*, line 1383). Street gets at the difference between the two treatments of the story well when she contrasts Gower's "large tapestry woven after the plan of Benoît" with Chaucer's "wood-block," with its "strong emotional colour" and swift movement ("John Gower," p. 239).

The conclusion of Medea's story is both subversive and liberating. Gower's treatment of Medea's violent revenge upon Jason moves quite beyond the patriarchal laws of his own day, which had difficulty in deciding how to deal with women who murder their children. But it raises legal questions that might well have been of interest to the poet. Salisbury succinctly points to the difficulty that courts had in adjudicating such cases.⁴⁷ Gower seems to appreciate the law's problem in dealing with Medea, who, as a wife, was property under her husband's jurisdiction, when even into the latter part of the sixteenth century, "a wife could not be guilty of stealing her husband's goods, because in law husband and wife were one person."⁴⁸ The same rationale might be applied to Medea, who is both Jason's property and his equal through marriage; she has in her keeping his children, though their status is defined by their father. For Medea the situation has been perplexed by Jason's putting her aside, thereby breaking his marriage oath, an oath blessed by Jupiter, of him being hers and her being his for the rest of their lives. In abandoning Medea, he, in a sense, has killed her; she, by slaying his children before his eyes, simply reenacts his crime. He, as husband and guardian, might attempt to take revenge, though the law, were it invoked, might, given his guilt through perjury, hesitate. Indeed, it is Medea herself who defines the legal point as she tells Jason before she kills the boys, "Oh thou of every lond / The moste untrew creature, / Lo, this schal be thi forfeiture" (5.4212-14).⁴⁹

Hanawalt cites numerous instances in which women who murdered their children or their husbands, for that matter, were judged to be insane and were put in the custody of others.⁵⁰ Certainly Medea would have had ample grounds for such a plea, and, given the provocation, might well have been put in the care of a convent (obviously, she could not be put in her husband's care), which is, in effect, what happens in Gower's tale, as she is received into the court of Pallas.⁵¹

This pagan tale gives the poet opportunity to try Medea in a court of higher justice that looks at evidence that might be overridden or disregarded in an actual court of law. This

⁴⁷ Salisbury notes that although few cases are recorded, "infanticide and child murder [may have been] common practices simply interpreted by certain courts as misdemeanors rather than felonies. Four cases recorded in England demonstrate the presuppositions of jurists regarding women and their children in what appear to be suspect judgments. One woman was brought before a secular court for murdering her two-year-old daughter and forcing her four-year-old son to sit in hot hearth coals. Another woman beat her ten-year-old son to death but was judged to be insane. In another case, the mother tried to commit suicide, but changed her mind and killed her children instead. In a fourth case, a woman killed her two-year-old son and daughter with an axe, but was released on bail and placed under the supervision of twelve of her kin. Women were often presumed to be guilty . . . but [were] assigned only the mildest of penances because of their own status as intellectually inferior creatures. And when they were not treated like children, or considered insane or possessed by demons, the death was determined to be accidental" (*Domestic Violence in Medieval Texts*, p. 11). See also Hanawalt, "Female Felon," and Hurnard, *King's Pardon for Homicide*, p. 162.

⁴⁸ *Oxford History of the Laws of England*, 6.569-70.

⁴⁹ I'm grateful to Yeager for pointing out the legal terminology here (*John Gower's Poetic*, p. 121n18).

⁵⁰ Insanity was the most common plea for a mother killing her children. Hanawalt cites half a dozen cases ("Female Felon," p. 131; notes p. 139).

⁵¹ Hanawalt cites the instance of a woman who killed her husband in bed by cutting his throat with a small scythe and breaking his skull, who, instead of pleading self-defense, "fled to a church and abjured the realm" ("Female Felon," p. 131; citing Hunnisett, *Bedfordshire Coroners' Rolls*, p. 102).

higher court comes down on Medea's side and exonerates her. Her tale does not advocate the slaughter of children. Rather, it presents the dire effects of perjury within the domestic scene, an area which might be overlooked by patriarchal rule, but which can readily be addressed *vox populi, vox dei* as she answers to a higher authority, "unto Pallas the court above" (5.4219). The childless Jason is simply left to his empty rage and lost heritage.

BOOK 6: GLUTTONY

Book 6, less than a third the length of Book 5, is essentially an extension of its great neighbor, with drunkenness and delicacy the only two subforms of gluttony to be discussed. Both are akin to the predations of Avarice. It is no surprise then that Books 5 and 6 share many of the same motifs, especially when Book 6 turns its attention from delicacy to sorcery. Drunkenness and delicacy are, like sorcery, sins of delusion and beguilement, indulgences that lead to self-destruction.

For often he that wol beguile
Is guiled with the same guile,
And thus the guilour is beguiled. (6.1379–81)

Such sins of beguilement are the result of appetite, as is avarice; drunkenness and delicacy make the world seem to be other than it is, whereby one might have "so mochel of mi wille" (6.203) that "withoute blenchinge of myn yhe" he might think to see "of Paradis the moste joie" (6.205–07) and to sleep "in Goddes barm" (6.227). The primary consideration of these sins is self-gratification, like the behavior of Adrian, where the delicate "set hire chiere at no delit, / Bot he have *al his* appetit" (6.685–86 — emphasis mine). Delicacy is largely a predatory feeding of the eye (6.784, 792, 827) or the ear (6.830, 846, 895–96). Often at night (at a "resouper" [late supper]), when Thought is the cook (6.748–49, 913–14) and when his beloved's voice lingers in his dreams as "a blisse of hevene" (6.874), Amans thinks himself at "a cherie feste" that requires "non other fode" (6.889).⁵²

It is easy to see how sorcery factors into both gluttony and avarice. With all its witchcraft toward the end, the Tale of Jason and Medea might fit neatly into Book 6, though it is Jason, not Medea, who is the beguiler beguiled. In his fantasies he is, even more than Medea, who is the real thing, a would-be sorcerer who would eagerly have immediate access to his dreams and desires. Medea, moreover, does not die a victim of her sorcery, the way

⁵² One of the best discussions of Amans' delicacy is Burrow's "The Portrayal of Amans." Burrow's argument is especially fine in explaining Gower's debt to the fourteenth-century French *dits amoureux* such as Machaut's *Voir-Dit* and Froissart's *Espinette Amoureuse*, where the lover encounters his lady not always in dream but through delicate voyeurism as he watches her from afar or as near as he can get, maybe even touching her or being touched by her as she plucks a hair from his clothing. The delicate lover with his "feinte herte" (5.6945 — see also 5.6659–69) has "a distinctly unheroic temper"; such lovers "have to content themselves with winning trifling favours from their mistress by sending her little poems or doing her little services" (p. 6). Burrow contrasts such personifications with the presentation of the lover in the *Roman de la Rose*. It is the later poems of Machaut and Froissart that have the greater influence on Gower. "It is, in fact, hard to imagine this lover facing even the allegorical encounters braved by the lover in the *Roman de la Rose*" (p. 7). He is mainly a "yes" or "no" man with an active imagination filled with trifles that help to hide him (and us) from his old age.

Ulysses and Nectanabus do; rather, she controls her fate and is translated to heaven, over-leaping death. Nonetheless, her tale segues readily into the sorcery tales at the end of Book 6. As Book 7 will make clear, sorcery and good kingship are contradictory concepts.

The Tale of Ulysses and Telegonus

The story of Ulysses and Telegonus illustrates the need for close attendance on rational behavior, and in this respect is a warning to kings, even good kings — a reminder that unheeded acts are often revisited upon the perpetrator. Ulysses is presented as a wise man who has been attentive to education in all areas of living. Even so, his effort is inadequate. His story begins with a catalogue of his worthiness, as knight, king, clerk, rhetorician, astronomer, philosopher, prophet, horticulturalist, physician, and surgeon (6.1396–1411). He has also studied the occult, mainly for purposes of self-defense, which enables him to deal with the two sorceresses in the tale, Calypso and Circe, who would gain power over him but fail: “Thei couthe moche, he couthe more” (6.1441). He does take his pleasures with them, but it is casual, more like a business perk than a commitment. There are no binding agreements.

After he returns to Penelope he governs wisely. His family is loyal to him, and so are his people. He has left behind, however, unbeknownst to him, a pregnant Circe, a deed of delicacy that will come back to haunt him, despite all his wisdom. As he sleeps, he “mette a swe-vene [dreamed a dream]” (6.1523) that “bothe his yhen fedde” (6.1522). An angelic-looking man appears before him with a “pensel” on a staff that depicts three fishes of one color in the manner of a tower. The figure embraces him as a family member might, but warns “that on of ous the deth schal take, / Whan time comth of destiné” (6.1546–47). When Ulysses asks the meaning of the pennon the dream figure says that it is a sign “of an empire” (6.1562), then disappears.

Ulysses awakens and, thinking the figure must represent his son (as it indeed does), attempts to protect himself by confining Telemachus and surrounding himself with strong body guards. But, as the Latin marginal gloss attributed to Bernardus, explains: *Plures plura sciunt et seipsos nesciunt* [“Many know many things and are ignorant of themselves”]. Genius picks up on the gloss with “A man hath knowleching / Save of himself of alle thing” (6.1567–68), a key point, pertaining to the culmination of man’s need to search for self-knowledge, if he would “thenkth to ben a king” (8.2110).

This disastrous tale is filled with admirable behavior: Circe has been a good mother to Telegonus, educating him and teaching him all about his famous father. When the boy comes of age she sends him to Ulysses for training in a man’s world. As Telegonus eagerly approaches the palace the one thing he is not prepared for is his father’s defensiveness. Instead of a loving embrace he meets guards who refuse him entry. When he asks to see his father they, having no clue of who he might be, menace and threaten him. Words lead to blows, and the youth kills the best five of the guards. Ulysses hears the scuffle, approaches, and is pierced by the lance bearing the pennon. When he is struck, every man cries out, “The king! the king!” and Telegonus realizes, “Helas! I have min oghne fader slain” (6.1711–15) and touchingly wishes he were the one dead, instead. The dying Ulysses asks to see the youth and have the pennon’s heraldry explained, whereupon he learns of Telegonus’ story, forgives his new son, and, “al bledende he kest [kissed] him ofte” (6.1746). There has been no malice behind Ulysses’ actions and certainly none by the boy. The fault lies only in their ignorance. With good will Ulysses introduces Telegonus to Telemachus, grants him his heritage, and dies.

The moral to the Tale of Ulysses and Telegonus defines the limitations of sorcery as a guiding principle and sets up the Tale of Nectanabus, another tale in which the son kills the father:

Lo, wherof sorcerie serveth.	
Thurgh sorcerie his lust he wan,	<i>desire</i>
Thurgh sorcerie his wo began,	<i>woe</i>
Thurgh sorcerie his love he ches,	<i>chose</i>
Thurgh sorcerie his lif he les;	<i>lost</i>
The child was gete in sorcerie,	<i>begotten through</i>
The which ded al this felonie:	
Thing which was agein kynde wrought	
Unkindeliche it was aboght;	
The child his oghne fader slowh,	<i>slew</i>
That was unkindeschipe ynowh. (6.1768–78)	<i>unnaturalness enough</i>

The moral applies equally well to both tales, insofar as sorcery offers a quick fix when the going gets tough. Genius calls it “unkindeschipe” in that the sorcerer alters nature when it does not suit him. In *Vox Clamantis*, Gower sees a connection between fate and sorcery.

Each man shapes for himself his own destiny, incurs his own lot according to his desire, and creates his own fate (*fata*). In fact, a free mind voluntarily claims what it does for its various desserts in the name of fate (*sortis*). In truth, fate (*sors*) ought always to be handmaiden to the mind, from which the name itself which will be its own is chosen. (*VC* II.ii.203–08)⁵³

This is a difficult proposition. As creatures of choice we like to believe that we are not fated, that we can figure out problems and arrive at solutions that have the capacity to carry us to our goals. Indeed, this is the essence of all educational programs. Yet as creatures of will and desire, we often too readily believe what we wish, thereby curtailing our freedom.

⁵³ That Gower sees the matter as one of “desire” (i.e., the will) is crucial to his essentially Augustinian view in which thought negotiates interchanges between Memory, Intellect, and Will, with a component of Imagination (Imaginativa, Ingenium, Genius, or Invention) thrown in. (See *CA*, ed. Peck, vol. 1, pp. 8–13.) In *De Civ. Dei* V.9 Augustine writes: “Our wills have power to do all God wanted them to do and foresaw they could do. Their power, such as it is, is a real power. What they are to do they will most certainly do, because God foresaw both that they could do it and that they would do it. . . . Thus, if I wanted to use the word ‘fate’ for anything at all, I should prefer to say that ‘fate’ is the action of a weak person, while ‘choice’ is the act of the stronger man who holds the weak man in his power, rather than to admit that the choice of our will is taken away in that order of causes . . . called fate.” Or, as Boethius explains, in giving in heedlessly to desire “that man that so dooth hath cast away his scheeld, and is remoeved from his place, and enlaceth hym in the cheyne with whiche he mai ben drawn” (*Consolation of Philosophy*, trans. Chaucer, 1.m.4.19–22). It is within this paradigm that Gower insists that the sorcerer is often trapped by his own beguilings (see 6.1389–91). “The child his oghne fader slowh” (6.1777) might be glossed as “fate,” given that it is the product of choice given over to fantasy. In the Tale of Ulysses and Telegonus, and the Tale of Nectanabus as well, the sorcerer cannot foresee his death and is caught off guard by his beguilings. The philosopher accommodates his thought to accept death; the sorcerer, through his delicate revision of reality, obscures death, which then catches him off guard. See Peck, *Kingship and Common Profit*, pp. 130–32.

The Tale of Nectanabus

The Tale of Nectanabus is the crowning example of a king who, fearful of death, looks for quick fixes to escape bad situations.⁵⁴ He abandons his kingdom and turns to sorcery to effect his wishes. As in the Tale of Ulysses and Telegonus, his solution, though brilliant in its way, is shortsighted, a myopia established by the opening lines of the tale. Genius starts the story with a prayer to God, the High Creator, King of Kings, who “Ful many a wonder worldes chance / Let slyden under His suffrance: / Ther wot no man the cause why / Bot He the which is almyhty” (6.1791–94). God’s “suffrance” of “worldes chance” requires that people show sufferance of their own before they make choices and attempt to impose sense upon the indeterminate. The slippery area (what “slyden under His suffrance”) leaves room for reasonable constructions, but also for sorcery that slips past sufferance by fusing fantasy with reason to achieve an easy solution. The tale is a deconstruction of just such easy solutions to chance wonders of the world as it explores consequences along with choice, thereby helping to set up Book 7.

When King Nectanabus learns that Egypt will be attacked, he disguises himself (6.1807) and flees to Macedonia, taking with him three trusted yeomen “of his chambre” and “part of the beste good he hadde” (6.1811–16).⁵⁵ Wealth and adulation are part of sorcery’s seductive appeal, to the public and to Nectanabus himself, and he uses both to his personal advantage: he has the pleasure of seducing the seductive queen at her birthday party, the thrill of getting to play God, a delicate sense of power through manipulative prophecies, and the glory not only of besting King Philip by means of clever tricks but also of getting Philip to believe his ruse to the applause and amazement of a horde of people. His skits are diverting in the way that good fiction can be as he works within patterns of expectation in people who, as the excitement of chance events mounts (the mysteriously pregnant queen, the marvelous happenings within nature, etc.), willingly suspend disbelief so that they may participate in the implausible fictions.

So it goes for Olympias, too, who is smitten from the moment she first gazes into the hypnotic eye of the sorcerer (6.1864–67). When Nectanabus impregnates her imagination by means of the dream he sends to her (along with his explication), she is receptive, flattered to imagine that a god has singled her out and wants to copulate with her so that she might give

⁵⁴ Gower’s principal source for the Tale of Nectanabus is Thomas of Kent’s Anglo-Norman *Roman de toute Chevalerie*. For the account of Philip’s vision of the conceiving of Alexander and for the account of Nectanabus’ death Gower draws in part on a Latin source, the *Historia de Preliis*. A Middle English adaptation of Thomas of Kent’s poem may be found in the metrical *Kyng Alisaunder* (early fourteenth century), and portions of the *Historia de Preliis* are translated in the Middle English Alliterative Alexander Fragments (c. 1340–70); these Middle English poems share many specific details with the plotting of Gower’s poem, but it is evident that Gower worked with the Anglo-Norman and Latin versions, rather than an English translation. See Macaulay 3.519 on Gower’s relationship with earlier English Alexander stories: “It would be quite contrary to [Gower’s] practice to follow an English authority.” See Lumiansky for accounts and editions of the Middle English Alexander poems.

⁵⁵ In Gower’s source Nectanabus travels alone. Gower makes it clear that the man values privilege and the means to make a good showing, sufficient, for example, to impress a queen who is herself given to extravagance and exhibition. We might contrast Chaucer’s canon and his yeoman who cannot get by Harry Bailly’s astute surveillance because of their “sluttish” appearance (*CT* VIII[G]636). Nectanabus’ disguise, of which his three chamberlains are a part, is designed to make a good impression in the world’s opinion, the way Chaucer’s Merchant does, “sownynge alwey th’encrees of his wynnyng” to advance his “chevyssaunce” (*CT* I[A]275, 282). Nectanabus has become more a PR man than a king.

birth to the greatest king yet born.⁵⁶ The fantastic idea seems reasonable, in its way, because she has done much at her birthday feast to make herself beautiful and is eager to attract attention, “for hire list to be beholde / And preised of the poeple aboute” (6.1828–29). Her seductive appearance (her sorcery, one might say) is part of what makes her so seduceable, a fact Nectanabus is quick to assay. She thrives on adulation and, when she “schop hir for to riden oute” (6.1830), is ready to believe any flattery Nectanabus might bestow upon her.

Philip likewise is easily taken in by comparable mind tricks as he, fresh from his fantastic conquests, witnesses aberrations of nature — a dragon turning into an eagle, a flying pheasant who lays an egg mid-flight which, when it drops to earth, cracks open to release a serpent, the earthquake and eclipse and tempest at the baby’s birth, and so forth. Philip, an amazing man who expects wondrous events to enhance his importance, takes such wonders in stride, as confirmation of his own fantastic triumphs.

Gower’s focus on details of impregnation and mysterious birthing establishes the very rituals of magic, beguilement, and wish fulfillment. Nectanabus is the perpetrator, but, almost inevitably, he will be the victim as well, as his amazing child kills him by thrusting him from the tower wall: “Ly down there apart. / Whereof nou serveth al thin art?” (6.2311–12). Such “lying apart” is indeed a fit end for the sorcerer (a still birth, so to speak), who, in his disguises, has set himself apart with his own special rules to play god. But he is no “king of kings,” despite his gulling of Philip. (The “see foul” [6.2129] in this instance is *not* some form of the Holy Spirit at an Annunciation or an angel sent from God to inform Joseph of Mary’s child, but, rather, it is an actual gull.) When the child of the sorcerer once again destroys its parent, we see into the strange workings of the High Creator, who permits weird things to happen in the first place.⁵⁷ The child may be a trope of “fate” (i.e., *sortis*), but, if so, Nectanabus’ death is merely a figure of “consequence,” not tragedy.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Olympias offers a thought-provoking contrast to Paulina in the Tale of Mundus and Paulina (*CA* 1.761–1059), a tale exemplifying hypocrisy. A chivalrous duke named Mundus desires Paulina and bribes two priests of the temple of Isis, “the godesse of childinge” (1.805), to inform her that the god Anubus desires to mate with her. She takes counsel of her husband, and they, being pious people, agree to the demands of the god. Mundus plays god, and with his “blinde tales . . . alle his wille of here he hadde” (1.927–28). The next day he boasts to her of his achievement. She goes to her chamber to weep at his “derke ypocrisie” but then tells her husband of the dissimulation. They take counsel of the emperor, who executes the priests and exiles Mundus. Mundus and Nectanabus have much in common: both are sorcerers with words who blind people to accomplish their sexual desire but also as a demonstration of their power; both are chivalrous and use religion as a means toward accomplishing their ends. The biggest difference in the stories is between Paulina and Olympias. Olympias is seduced because she wants to be; Paulina seems to be victimized by her piety, though in truth it is her piety and honest relationship with her husband and the state that saves her and her household. Comparison of the two tales establishes astute differences between true kingship and sorcery. Paulina and her husband govern themselves well and benefit from the emperor and the laws of Rome. The kingdom, as mirrored in the emperor and his people, remains intact. The fates of Mundus and Nectanabus are similar: Nectanabus abandons his kingdom and goes into exile, where he dies; Mundus abandons self rule and is sentenced to exile. We are not told of his death, but it seems inevitable that it will be in exile too.

⁵⁷ The tale is filled with spurious religious implications, such as the divine impregnation of the Virgin Mary, the mysterious son becoming the King of Kings, etc. But the sorcerer is more like a Dr. Frankenstein, whose creation, despite all his cleverness, comes back to haunt him within the realm of nature, which the sorcerer does not, in fact, control, but only manipulates.

⁵⁸ Or, if it is tragedy, it is *de casibus* tragedy, what Boethius calls tragedy of fortune in *The Conso-*

princes that Simon Burley may have used for the instruction of Richard II, just as his father had done in his education of Richard's father, the Black Prince),⁶⁰ Higden's *Polichronicon* (a massive encyclopedia — a history of the world — that Trevisa translated), Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* (which Gower drew upon widely throughout the *Confessio* for lore), various mythographers (Fulgentius, Hyginus, and the Vatican Mythographers), and Jerome's Vulgate Bible, to name but a few of the gems in Gower's cultural treasury. Chaucer claims to have had sixty books at his bed's head; Gower cites them, sometimes word for word!

Genius begins his instruction with discussion of the tools of analysis. Like Aristotle, he knows that the individual needs equipment for research even as much as answers. He divides his pedagogical task into three general categories (again, an evident Aristotelian influence): Theory, Rhetoric, and Practice. Theory includes such topics as the arts, with discussion of mathematics, physics, astronomy (what it is, and how to read [use] it), music, human history, and the earth in general. His section on Rhetoric is quite short, but pithy in its observations on word power, problems of interpretation and communication, and eloquence. But the heart of his instruction is devoted to discussion of Practice in its three parts: Ethics (7.1649–68), Economics (7.1668–78), and Policy (7.1679–98). And it is this last category, Policy, with its five points, that has strongest bearing on kingship and thus receives the most attention. The five points of Policy are: 1) Truth (with its memorable adaptation of 1 Esdras 3 on “The King, Wine, Woman, and Truth”); 2) Liberality (marked by a host of short exempla from the Bible and moral treatises); 3) Justice (the heart of the heart of Book 7, with its discussion of law, common profit, the story of Lycurgus and his laws, and a list of lawgivers from the Hebrew and Egyptian to the Trojan and the Greek and then the Roman); 4) Pity (with its story of Codrus, but also observations on war, where sometimes pity is inappropriate, though usually not, and problems of finding good counsel);⁶¹ and 5) Chastity (with its brief account of numerous

more encyclopedic *Liber universalis* (*Book of All*), itself the basis for three successive versions of the final *Pantheon*.” Godfrey includes in his chronicle such delights as the Tale of Apollonius of Tyre, stories of Alexander, and a version of the *Prophecy of the Tiburtine Sibyl*. His work was a source for numerous medieval writings including Brunetto Latini's *Trésor*.

⁶⁰ “Though a soldier of irascible disposition who fought alongside the Black Prince at Najera, Simon Burley, young Richard's tutor, came from a distinguished intellectual background. His kinsman Walter Burley, one of Archbishop Bradwardine's circle, a student of William of Ockham, and close friend of Richard de Bury, had been tutor to young Edward the Black Prince when he was twelve. Author of *De Deo Natura et Arte* (see Shapiro, pp. 86 ff.), Walter was doubtless an influence on young Simon's intellectual interests and a factor in Edward's naming of Simon to tutor his son and heir, Richard (see Jones, *The Royal Policy of Richard II*, pp. 160–61). Both Walter and Simon had copies of Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum* in their libraries, a book upon which Richard seems to have modelled his theory, if not his practice, of good rule.” Quoted, with modifications, from Peck, “Politics and Psychology of Governance in Gower,” p. 231n43. See also Walker, “Richard II's Views on Kingship.”

⁶¹ On “the menacing and unreliable nature of pity as a political and legal instrument,” see Galoway's superb discussion of “the Merciless Parliament” in 1388 and the politics of pity in the *Confessio* (“Literature of 1388,” pp. 68 ff. and 90–104). Gower's position here is in keeping with the ideals of royal policy. Regularly English kings insisted that their interest and that of the people is peace, but that those who oppose the peace will be crushed. Rebellion against the king is rebellion against peace itself. Kaeuper cites Richard FitzNigel's *Dialogue of the Exchequer*, “the first administrative treatise written in Western European history (c. 1179),” which insists that “nobody must venture to oppose the king's ordinance, made as it is in the interest of peace” (*Dialogus de Scaccario*, where the king is again identified with the interests of peace, — see Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence*, p. 108. In *War, Justice, and Public Order*,

violators of chastity, including a fascinating discussion of Solomon's shortcomings). Then the book concludes with three stories that exemplify the value of chaste restraint: the Tale of Tarquin and Aruns that culminates in the rape of Lucrece, where we are moved by the destructive effects upon the very heart of the community of powerful men who disregard chastity; the Tale of Virginia and Virginius, which again demonstrates abuse of the flower of virtue by an evil ruler, one who is subsequently overthrown by the people — "thus th'unchaste was chastised" (7.5301);⁶² and, finally, the Tale of Tobias and Sara, where domestic virtue answers to whatever complications the fiend Asmod might use to oppose chastity.

In the *Mirour*, Chastity is the remedy against the seventh sin, Lechery. Although no single book in the *Confessio* is devoted to Lechery (one might argue that when Genius applies a love component to each of the other deadly sins, every book of the lover's confession deals this sin, thus obviating the need of a separate book for it), the three chastity tales at the end of Book 7 and the one great tale of Apollonius of Tyre in Book 8 do, in fact, explore the five children of Lechery as presented in the *Mirour*: the first daughter, Fornicioun, is the subject of the Tale of Virginia; the second and third, Stupre and Avoulterie, are featured in the story of Aruns and his assault on his friend Collatin's wife, Lucrece. The fourth, Incest, is explored in great detail at the beginning of Book 8 and then in the Tale of Apollonius;⁶³ and the fifth, Foldelit, is the subject of the Tale of Tobias and Sara. All four of these tales celebrate Chastity, the remedy against Lechery. The five daughters of Chastity outlined in the *Mirour* are likewise represented in these tales, namely, Bonnegarde, Virginité, Matri-moigne, Contenance, and Aspre (Hard Life), especially in the virtuous women like Sara (who keeps watch so well), Virginia, Lucrece, Thais and her mother, but also in men like Brutus (in the story of Lucrece), Tobias, and Apollonius.

The first two books of the *Confessio* and the last two conclude with very positive tales: Book 1, with the Tale of the Three Questions (exemplifying humility), and Book 2, with the Tale of Constantine and Sylvester (exemplifying chastity); then Book 7, with the Tale of Tobias and Sara (emphasizing chastity), and Book 8, with the Tale of Apollonius (emphasizing humility). But like Books 2 and 8, Book 7 ends on a downturn as Amans, despite all the good instruction and chaste counsel, puts aside reason as a remedy for his unrest, and falls back into his funk:

Do wey, mi father, I you preie!
Of that ye have unto me told

Kaeuper notes that Edward I "characterized law and order measures he had taken in 1305 as efforts 'to suppress the disorders, tumults, and outrages of the past which were like the start of war and which flouted the lordship of the king.' The royal sense of responsibility for the public peace could scarcely be more plain" (pp. 139–40, citing PRO King's Remembrancer Memoranda Roll 79, Trinity Record, m.41d; rp.: CCR 1302–1307, 454–55). See also ch. 3, "Growth of Royal Peace Jurisdiction," pp. 143–69.

⁶² Ferster makes the important point with regard to this tale's proximity to concerns of the latter part of the fourteenth century: "To bring the story of a Roman uprising closer to the fourteenth century by turning it into the story of the deposition of a king — in a poem supposedly requested and written for Richard II — suggests that Gower was willing to be less than friendly to Richard even before he switched the dedication to Henry" ("O Political Gower," p. 36). Ferster's point is especially poignant, given the placement of the story near the end of Book 7.

⁶³ Incest is a major theme throughout the *Confessio* (n.b. especially the Tale of Canace and Machaire [3.147 ff.]). For detailed discussion of the motif see Donavin, *Incest Narratives*, Bullón-Fernández, *Fathers and Daughters*, and Scanlon, "The Riddle of Incest."

I thonke you a thousandfold.
 The tales sounen in myn ere,
 Bot yit myn herte is elleswhere,
 I mai miselve noght restreigne
 That I nam evere in loves peine. (7.5408–14)

resound; ear

am not

Even while Genius' tales still "sounen in myn ere," Amans regresses into the chaos of "worldes chance" (6.1791), so to speak, which can be exciting, but after too many beguilements may seem depressingly fated. Here, as at the end of Book 8, where Gower turns away from the realm of fiction to speak in his own voice to pray for the state of England, there may still be recollections of the education of the king with its celebration of the redemptive propositions of law. The rapacious nature of which Hugh White speaks "fatally compromises any attempt to celebrate the things of this world as if they are not at root irreconcilable with the things of heaven," a circumstance that leads to renunciation and "a proclamation of its own failure."⁶⁴ This renunciation is not too different from the disenchantment with sorcery at the end of Book 6, given the emptiness of its consequences. With the ideas of kingship and law, that center so many of Gower's poems, still sounding "in myn ere" without touching his heart, Amans' forgetfulness leaves him in an insupportable position. He falls once again into that realm of fantasy and fiction that had left him prostrate in the woods in Book 1, wishing he were dead (1.110–50). Amans remains, like a victim of sorcery, caught up in a "love which is unavised" (7.5433). He believes he has no choices, and thus has no choices, slain, in effect, by the child of his own fantasy.

GOWER AND THE LAW

John Leland, named King's Antiquary by Henry VIII, claimed that Gower was trained at the Inns of Court, which could well be true, given the prominence of legal terminology, legal history, and legal concerns throughout Gower's writings. Although no records survive of his involvement in specific legal training or practice, he appears to have had some sort of legal connection throughout his professional life. John Fisher, Gower's modern biographer,⁶⁵ cites as evidence the poet's "description of the training of the lawyer, the degree of coif, and the privileges of serjeancy" in the *Mirour* (lines 24373ff), along with his technical descriptions of the functions of legal terms such as *plaidour*, *client*, *tort*, *deslayment*, *cas*, *advocat*, *president*, *apprentis*, *attourné*, and *pourchas*, which accord well with precise training in the profession.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ White, *Nature, Sex, and Goodness*, p. 219. See the discussion of this passage in *Confessio Amantis*, ed. Peck, vol. 2, p. 16.

⁶⁵ See Fisher, *John Gower*, p. 57. Macaulay (4.xxvi) suggests the "possibility that Gower was bred to the law, though he may not have practised it for a living." Macaulay argues from the assumption that the poet had sufficient wealth that a legal practice, such as being a pleader, would not have been necessary. Fisher's argument is more sophisticated, based on historical details and the prevailing concerns of Gower's three major works.

⁶⁶ A "Gower" appears several times in Tottil's 1585 publication of the legal yearbooks for 1355 and 1356, though that may not be the same Gower. The legal records of property transactions that are almost certainly the poet's, however, are carefully prepared, suggesting to Fisher, at least, that when the poet had writs and charters drawn up he knew what he was doing. In the *Mirour* he speaks

Good laws stand behind and beyond the events of momentary crises. Again and again, as we have seen, when a tale is over its meaning — its stability — is linked to the benefits of long-standing civil rule. That, when all is said and done, remains a constant (if not quite a universal) that offers reassuring guidance amidst “worldes chance.” In his introduction of the third point of policy, Justice, after celebrating the importance of “a kinges governance . . . in his ligance” (7.2697–98), Gower observes:

What is a lond wher men ben none?
 What ben the men whiche are alone
 Withoute a kinges governance?
 What is a king in his ligance,
 Wher there is no lawe in londe?
 What is to take lawe on honde,
 Bot if the jugges weren trewe?
 These olde worldes with the newe
 Who that wol take in evidence,
 There mai he se th'experience,
 What thing it is to kepe lawe,
 Thurgh which the wronges ben withdrawe
 And rihtwisnesse stant commended,
 Wherof the regnes ben amended. (7.2695–2708) *kingdoms; restored (reformed)*

What is a king if there is no law in the land? Gower's exemplary stories supply “evidence” in its historied form that helps people experience the value of law for purposes of guidance. Such laws, monitored by the king, cut across generations; they cut across social divisions as well, linking lords and commons, helping each to understand “propre dуетé” (7.2711). The evidence of law enables a king to perceive how he must “himself ferst justefie / Towardes God in his degré” (7.2730–31) — God, the King of Kings, who alone may chastise kings (7.2735). The righteous king, under God, works through law:

If lawe stonde with the riht,
 The poeple is glad and stant upriht.
 Where as the lawe is resonable,
 The comun poeple stant menable, *compliant (in agreement)*
 And if the lawe torne amis,
 The poeple also mistorned is. (7.2759–64) *are skewed*

Gower articulates admirably a point of English history, namely, a widespread trust in the virtues of English law. As Kaeuper explains, “Law was a tough and flexible bond joining power and authority in kingship. Royal power was expressed through jurisdiction which expanded steadily and brought the king's government ‘over the horizon’ into the localities.”⁶⁷ The proud expansion of the virtues of law was promulgated by the king's court, but espe-

of wearing a garment with rayed (striped) sleeves, which suggests a professional involvement in the law. (See Fisher, *John Gower*, p. 57.) That Chaucer gave Gower power of attorney in 1378, when Chaucer went to Italy, is further evidence that Gower was at least competent in legal matters. But one undeniable fact is the prominence of legal interests in his greatest poem, the *Confessio Amantis*.

⁶⁷ Kaeuper, *War, Justice, and Public Order*, p. 140.

cially by the folk mythology surrounding good rule that Gower (and dozens of other English romance writers) arrive at in the catharsis of a good ending. The role of kingship is a central feature in public consciousness, and, when a king and his laws fail, the voice of the people cries out vociferously.⁶⁸

Gower caps his remarks on the centrality of law to a good life with the Tale of Lycurgus. Lycurgus studied society and the welfare of its citizens to develop laws of equity and common profit (7.2956–57), which, once codified, become the laws of Athens. As he introduces his code to the Athenians, Lycurgus insists that “The lawe which I tok on honde, / Was altogether of Goddes sonde / And nothing of myn oghne wit” (7.2961–63). That is, the laws that he posits are divine in origin, but come to him through natural law. Lycurgus gives credit to the god Mercurius for his concept of law. But to assure his people that the laws are maintained, not just imposed, he tells them that he must go away and makes them agree to adhere to the law and let it be their guide in his absence. That is, they must learn to maintain the law for themselves, not because of some king. Lycurgus establishes his law by disappearing. Words stand in his place as superior mediators. As long as the compact (forward, bond, that which is knit — see line 3008) is maintained the people have nothing to worry about. The state will survive. Lycurgus then disappears, never to return. But, we are told by Genius, the people of Athens maintain their oaths. Keeping of one’s word is the key to all social contracts and personal ones as well.

Thus hath Ligurgius his <i>wille</i> ,	
And tok his leve and forth he wente.	
Bot lest nou wel to what <i>entente</i>	<i>listen</i>
Of <i>rihtwysnesse</i> he dede so:	
For after that he was ago,	
He <i>schope</i> him never to be founde;	<i>contrived</i>
So that Athenis, which was <i>bounde</i> ,	
Nevere after scholde be <i>relessed</i> ,	
Ne thilke <i>goode lawe</i> cessed,	
Which was for <i>comun profit</i> set.	
And in this wise he hath it <i>knet</i> ;	<i>established</i>
He, which the <i>comun profit</i> soghte,	
The king, <i>his oghne astat ne roghte</i> ;	<i>did not care about</i>
To <i>do profit</i> to the <i>comune</i> ,	
He tok of exil the fortune,	
And lefte of prince thilke office	
Only <i>for love and for justice</i> ,	
Thurgh which he thoghte, if that he myhte,	
<i>Forevere after his deth to rihte</i>	
The cité which was <i>him betake</i> . (7.2998–3017) ⁶⁹	<i>entrusted to him</i>

⁶⁸ For examples of satirical and polemical criticism of failed central authority and of faulty application of just laws, all of which affirms just rule indirectly, see Dean, ed., *Medieval English Political Writings*; the first seven passus of *Piers Plowman*, B-text; *Richard the Redeless* and *Mum and the Sothsegger*, ed. Dean; or, especially, Gower in *Vox Clamantis* and *The Tripartite Chronicle*. But at the heart of such criticism is an affirmation of good kingship and law and how they *should* perform in unison.

⁶⁹ I have italicized those terms in the passage that focus attention on will, choice, and personal, social, and legal contracts that help Lycurgus’ plan to succeed.

Lycurgus mastered the law and thus was never mastered by it. The words that he left to the city keep order, but not through an old law imposed by a king; rather, they are written by free assent on the hearts of the people, even in the king's absence. This law to which the people give assent perpetually provides the city with a common language, a language that sets boundaries and useful parameters for narratives that cut across the interstices of memory, yet still cohere. Gower's position is in keeping with specific royal statutes, like the first Statute of Westminster (1285) that, as Kaeuper puts it, "worried over 'the peace less kept and the laws less used, and the offenders less punished than they ought to be so that the people feared the less to offend'." The king announced in the opening clause that the peace of the Church and of the land will henceforth be guarded and that commonright will be done to all, rich and poor."⁷⁰ The law binds, but it also keeps the people free, as long as it is just and justly administered. The *Confessio* repeatedly makes the point that people who uphold law gain access to perpetuity, the universals of nature, which, though temporal, provide some relief from the traumas of time; people who abuse law, however, are bound to the wheel of their abuse.

From *Mirour de l'Omme* to the *Vox Clamantis* to *Confessio Amantis* to *Cronica Tripartita* and the shorter Latin poems in the early fifteenth century, Gower always had his eye trained on his literary exempla, the matter of his legal training, and the workings of the three kings under whose rule he lived his life — Edward III, Richard II, and Henry IV.⁷¹ His writings against the extravagances of Edward III, his concern over the education of the young King Richard along with his revulsion at the king's later indulgences, and his hope for the nation (embodied perhaps in Henry IV) are perpetually present under the surface of his writing. A good king must be the most excellent of people, the one to whom all look for guidance. "For if men scholde trouthe seche / And founde it noght withinne a king, / It were an unsittende thing" (7.1734–36), so "unsittende," in fact, that the people have the right to remove him from office.⁷² But in the evidences of history, whether good or bad, one can see "What thing it is to kepe lawe, / Thurgh which the wronges ben withdrawe / And rihtwisnesse stant commended, / Wherof the regnes ben amended" (7.2705–08). It is a noble belief, the essence of the practise out of which Gower unfolds his appeal.

⁷⁰ Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence*, p. 108. The citation is from *Statutes of the Realm*, I, 19, 45, 26.

⁷¹ See Peck, "Politics and Psychology of Governance in Gower," especially pp. 224–38, on Gower and his critique of the ruling kings in his lifetime, particularly his moving away from the capricious behavior of Richard in the early 1390s. For an excellent discussion of Gower's understanding of the workings of law at the interface between justice and pity in his assessment of Richard II's behavior from 1388 to 1399 and after (as detailed in *Cronica Tripartita* and the *Confessio*), see Galloway ("Literature of 1388," *passim*).

⁷² See, for example, Knighton (1386), where Richard II is being addressed on behalf of the voice of the people: "Yet there remains one other thing which we have to tell you on behalf of your people. They have an ancient law, which not long since, lamentably, had to be invoked, which provides that if the king, upon some evil counsel, or from wilfulness and contempt or moved by his violent will, or in any other improper way, estrange himself from his people, and will not be governed and guided by the laws of the land, and its enactments and laudable ordinances, and the wholesome counsel of the lords and nobles of the kingdom, but wrong-headedly, upon his own unsound conclusions, follows the promptings of his untempered will, then it would be lawful with the common assent and agreement of the people of the realm to put down the king from his royal seat, and raise another of the royal lineage in his place" (*Knighton's Chronicle*, p. 361).

MANUSCRIPTS

Indexed as item 2262 in Brown and Robbins, eds., *Index of Middle English Verse*, and Cutler and Robbins, eds., *Supplement to the Index of Middle English Verse*. In composing this new edition of the *Confessio Amantis*, I have consulted a select number of the dozens of manuscripts of the poem, manuscripts generally considered to be the best representatives of the various recensions of Gower's English poem:

- A: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 902 (SC 27573), fols. 2r–183r. [Revised first recension.]
- B: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 294 (SC 2449), fols. 1r–197r. [Second recension.]
- C: Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 67, fols. 1r–209r. [Unrevised first recension.]
- F: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 3 (SC 3883), fols. 2r–186r. [Third recension; base-text for this edition.]
- J: Cambridge, St. John's College, MS B.12 (34), fols. 1r–214r. [Revised first recension.]
- S: San Marino, CA, Huntington Library, MS Ellesmere (*olim* Stafford) 26 A.17, fols. 1r–169v. [Second recension.]
- T: Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.3 (581), fols. 1r–147v. [Second recension.]

For a complete listing of *Confessio* manuscripts, as well as a stemma of their relationships, see Fisher, *John Gower*, pp. 303–09.



CONFESSIO AMANTIS: BOOK 5 (AVARICE)

INCIPIT LIBER QUINTUS

- i. *Obstat auaricia nature legibus, et que
Largus amor poscit, striccius illa vetat.
Omne quod est nimium viciosum dicitur aurum,
Vellera sicut oues, seruat auarus opes.
Non decet vt soli seruabitur es, set amori
Debet homo solam solus habere suam.¹*

- | | | |
|----|--|---|
| | Ferst whan the hyhe God began | <i>created</i> |
| | This world, and that the kinde of man | <i>and [when]; nature</i> |
| | Was falle into no gret encess, | <i>Had fallen; aggrandizement</i> |
| | For worldes good tho was no press, | <i>then [there]; eagerness</i> |
| 5 | Bot al was set to the comune, | <i>added to the common [good]</i> |
| | Thei spieken thanne of no fortune | |
| | Or for to lese or for to winne, | <i>Either . . . or; lose</i> |
| ☞ | Til Avarice broghte it inne; | <i>(see note)</i> |
| | And that was whan the world was woxe | <i>increased</i> |
| 10 | Of man, of hors, of schep, of oxe, | |
| | And that men knewen the moneie. | <i>became aware of money</i> |
| | Tho wente pes out of the weie, | <i>peace</i> |
| | And werre cam on every side | <i>war</i> |
| | Which alle love leide aside | <i>put aside all love</i> |
| 15 | And of comun his propre made, | <i>made his private property out of the common good</i> |
| | So that instede of schovele and spade | |
| | The scharpe swerd was take on honde. | |
| | And in this wise it cam to londe, | <i>in this manner it happened</i> |
| | Wherof men maden dyches depe | <i>deep moats</i> |
| 20 | And hyhe walles for to kepe | |
| | The gold which Avarice encloseth. | |
| | Bot al to lytel him supposeth, | <i>it seemed all too small to him</i> |
| | Thogh he mihte al the world pourchace; | |

¹ *Avarice obstructs the laws of nature, and those things that generous love requests, she (Avarice) very stingily denies. All gold that is excessive is called vicious; as a sheep preserves its coat, so an avaricious man preserves his wealth. It is not fitting that coin should be kept for one alone. So in love, one single man ought to have his sole woman.*

For what thing that he may embrace
 25 Of gold, of catel or of lond,
 He let it nevere out of his hond,
 Bot get him more and halt it faste,
 As thogh the world scholde evere laste.
 So is he lych unto the helle:

30 For as these olde bokes telle,
 What comth therinne, lasse or more,
 It schal departe neveremore.

Thus whanne he hath his cofre loken,
 It schal noght after ben unstoken,
 35 Bot whanne him list to have a syhte
 Of gold, hou that it schyneth brihte,
 That he ther on mai loke and muse.
 For otherwise he dar noght use
 To take his part, or lasse or more.

40 So is he povere, and everemore
 Him lacketh that he hath ynowh:
 An oxe draweth in the plowh,
 Of that himself hath no profit;

A schep riht in the same plit
 45 His wolle berth, bot on a day
 Another takth the flees away.
 Thus hath he that he noght ne hath,
 For he therof his part ne tath.

To seie hou such a man hath good,
 50 Who so that reson understod,
 It is impropreliche seid,
 For good hath him and halt him teid,
 That he ne gladeth noght withal,
 Bot is unto his good a thral;
 55 And as soubgit thus serveth he,
 Wher that he scholde maister be.
 Such is the kinde of th'averous.

Confessor “Mi sone, as thou art ameraus,
 Tell if thou farst of love so.”

Confessio Amantis “Mi fader, as it semeth, ‘no.’

61 That averous yit nevere I was,
 So as ye setten me the cas.
 For as ye tolden here above,
 In full possession of love
 65 Yit was I nevere hiertofore,
 So that me thenketh wel therfore,
 I mai excuse wel my dede.

Bot of mi will withoute drede,
 If I that tresor mihte gete,
 70 It scholde nevere be forgete,

*treasure chest locked
 opened*

Except; desires; glimpse

gaze

He feels deprived of that which he has plenty of

*does not partake
 To say that*

bound

slave

subject

*nature of the avaricious
 behave
 fare so in love*

In the manner you posit this

behavior (conduct)

(i.e., his beloved's favor)

- That I ne wolde it faste holde,
 Til god of love himselve wolde
 That deth ous scholde parte atuo. *in two*
 For lieveth wel, I love hire so *trust well*
 75 That evene with min oghne lif,
 If I that swete lusti wif
 Mihte ones welden at my wille, *subdue according to my desire*
 Forevere I wolde hire holde stille.
 And in this wise, taketh kepe, *take heed*
 80 If I hire hadde, I wolde hire kepe; *If I possessed her*
 And yit no Friday wolde I faste, *abstain [from her]*
 Thogh I hire kepte and hielde faste. *(i.e., every day would be a feast day)*
 Fy on the bagges in the kiste! *[money] bags; chest*
 I hadde ynogh, if I hire kiste. *kissed*
 85 For certes, if sche were myn,
 I hadde hir levere than a myn *would rather have her*
 Of gold. For al this worldes riche *earthly kingdom*
 Ne mihte make me so riche
 As sche, that is so inly good.
 90 I sette noght of other good,
 For mihte I gete such a thing,
 I hadde a tresor for a king;
 And thogh I wolde it faste holde, *tightly*
 I were thanne wel beholde. *bound (obliged)*
 95 Bot I mot pipe nou with lasse,
 And suffre that it overpasse, *be content now with less*
 Noght with mi will, for thus I wolde *endure until [this condition] ends*
 Ben averous, if that I scholde. *greedy*
 Bot, fader, I you herde seie
 100 Hou th'averous hath yit som weie, *miserly*
 Wherof he mai be glad; for he
 Mai whanne him list his tresor se
 And grope and fiele it al aboute,
 Bot I fulofte am schet theroute, *shut*
 105 Ther as my worthi tresor is. *From where*
 So is mi lif lich unto this,
 That ye me tolden hier tofore,
 Hou that an oxen his yock hath bore *yoke*
 For thing that scholde him noght availe. *benefit*
 110 And in this wise I me travaile;
 For who that evere hath the welfare, *profit*
 I wot wel that I have the care, *know*
 For I am hadd and noght ne have,
 And am, as who seith, loves knave. *servant*
 115 Nou demeth in youre oghne thoght,
 If this be avarice or noght."

Confessor “Mi sone, I have of thee no wonder,

- Thogh thou to serve be put under *overcome*
 With love which to kinde acordeth; *accords with nature's demands*
- 120 Bot so as every bok recordeth,
 It is to kinde no plesance *nature*
 That man above his sustenance *beyond what is necessary to sustain life*
 Unto the gold schal serve and bowe,
 For that mai no reson avowe. *sanction*
- 125 Bot Avarice natheles,
 If he mai geten his encrese
 Of gold, that wole he serve and kepe,
 For he takth of noght elles kepe *pays attention to nothing else*
 Bot for to fille hise bagges large; *moneybags*
- 130 And al is to him bot a charge, *burden*
 For he ne parteth noght withal
 Bot kepth it, as a servant schal. *should*
 And thus, thogh that he multeplie
 His gold, withoute tresorie *assets (resources)*
- 135 He is, for man is noght amended
 With gold bot if it be despended *unless; disbursed*
 To mannes us; wherof I rede *use; offer for instruction*
 A tale, and tak therof good hiede,
 Of that befell be olde tyde,
- 140 As telleth ous the clerk Ovide.

[TALE OF MIDAS]

- Bachus, which is the god of wyn,
 Acordant unto his divin *status as a divinity*
 A prest, the which Cillenus hihte, *was called Silenus*
 He hadde, and fell so that be nyhte *by night*
- 145 This prest was drunke and goth astraied, *went astray*
 ¶ Wherof the men were evele apaied *ill pleased (see note)*
 In Frigelond, whereas he wente. *Phrygia*
 Bot ate laste a cherl him hente *lowly servant seized him*
 With strengthe of other felaschipe, *companions*
- 150 So that upon his drunkeschipe
 Thei bounden him with chenes faste, *chains*
 And forth thei ladde him als so faste
 Unto the king, which hihte Myde. *who was called Midas*
 Bot he, that wolde his vice hyde,
- 155 This courteis king tok of him hiede, *heed*
 And bad that men him scholde lede
 Into a chambre for to kepe,
 Til he of leisir hadde slepe.
 And tho this prest was sone unbounde,
 160 And up a couche fro the grounde

- To slepe he was leid softe ynowh.
 And whanne he wok, the king him drowh *drew*
 To his presence and dede him chiere,
 So that this prest in such manere,
 165 Whil that him liketh, there he duelleth. *As long as it pleased him*
 And al this he to Bachus telleth,
 Whan that he cam to him agein.
 And whan that Bachus herde sein
 How Mide hath don his courtesie,
 170 Him thenkth it were a vilenie,
 Bot he rewarde him for his dede, *Unless*
 So as he mihte of his godhiede.
 Unto this king this god appiereth
 And clepeth, and that other hiereth. *speaks*
 175 This god to Mide thonketh faire
 Of that he was so debonaire
 Toward his prest, and bad him seie
 What thing it were he wolde preie,
 He scholde it have of worldes good.
 180 This king was glad, and stille stod,
 And was of his axinge in doute,
 And al the world he caste aboute,
 What thing was best for his astat,
 And with himself stod in debat
 185 Upon thre pointz, the whiche I finde
 Ben lievest unto mannes kinde. *dearest*
 The ferste of hem it is delit,
 The tuo ben worschipe and profit. *[other] two; honor (esteem, fame)*
 And thanne he thoghte, 'If that I crave
 190 Delit, thogh I delit mai have,
 Delit schal passen in myn age.
 That is no siker advantage, *What; certain*
 For every joie bodily *corporeal*
 Schal ende in wo: delit forthi
 195 Wol I noght chese. And if worschipe *honor*
 I axe and of the world lordschipe,
 That is an occupacion
 Of proud ymaginacion,
 Which makth an herte vein withinne;
 200 Ther is no certein for to winne, *assurance*
 For lord and knave al is o weie,
 Whan thei be bore and whan thei deie. *born*
 And if I profit axe wolde,
 I not in what manere I scholde *do not know*
 205 Of worldes good have sikernesse; *certainty*
 For every thief upon richesse
 Awaiteth for to robbe and stele: *Lies in ambush*

	Such good is cause of harmes fele.	<i>many</i>
	And also, thogh a man at ones	
210	Of al the world withinne his wones	<i>possession</i>
	The tresor myhte have everydel,	
	Yit hadde he bot o mannes del	<i>part</i>
	Toward himself, so as I thinke,	<i>In respect to himself</i>
	Of clothinge and of mete and drinke,	
215	For more, outake vanité,	<i>except for</i>
	Ther hath no lord in his degré.’	
	And thus upon the pointz diverse	
	Diverseliche he gan reherce	
	What point him thoghte for the beste;	
220	Bot plainly for to gete him reste	
	He can no siker weie caste.	<i>sure</i>
	And natheles yit ate laste	
	He fell upon the coveitise	
	Of gold; and thanne in sondri wise	
225	He thoghte, as I have seid tofore,	
	Hou tresor mai be sone lore,	<i>lost</i>
	And hadde an inly gret desir	
	Touchende of such recoverir,	<i>safekeeping</i>
	Hou that he mihte his cause availe	<i>advance</i>
230	To gete him gold withoute faile.	
	Withinne his herte and thus he preiseth	
	The gold, and seith hou that it peiseth	<i>weighs</i>
	Above al other metall most.	
	‘The gold,’ he seith, ‘may lede an host	<i>lead</i>
235	To make werre agein a king;	<i>against</i>
☞	The gold put under alle thing,	<i>destroys everything (see note)</i>
	And set it whan him list above;	<i>raises it [back] up when it pleases</i>
	The gold can make of hate love	
	And werre of pes and ryht of wrong,	
240	And long to schort and schort to long;	<i>[can make] long into short</i>
	Withoute gold mai be no feste,	
	Gold is the lord of man and beste,	<i>animal</i>
	And mai hem bothe beie and selle;	<i>buy</i>
	So that a man mai sothly telle	<i>truly</i>
245	That al the world to gold obeieth.’	
	Forthi this king to Bachus preieth	<i>Therefore</i>
	To grante him gold, bot he excedeth	
	Mesure more than him nedeth.	
	Men tellen that the maladie	
250	Which cleped is ydropesie	<i>called; dropsy</i>
	Resembled is unto this vice	
	Be weie of kinde of Avarice.	
	The more ydropesie drinketh,	<i>one afflicted with dropsy</i>
	The more him thursteth, for him thinketh	<i>it seems to him</i>

- 255 That he mai nevere drinke his fille,
 So that ther mai nothing fulfille
 The lustes of his appetit.
 And riht in such a maner plit
 Stant Avarice and evere stod.
- 260 The more he hath of worldes good,
 The more he wolde it kepe streyte, *keep it tightly bound*
 And evere mor and mor coveite.
 And riht in such condicioun
 Withoute good discrecioun
- 265 This king with Avarice is smite, *afflicted*
 That al the world it myhte wite, *know*
 For he to Bachus thanne preide,
 That wherupon his hond he leide,
 It scholde thurgh his touche anon
- 270 Become gold, and therupon
 This god him granteth as he bad. *requested*
 Tho was this king of Frige glad,
 And for to put it in assai *test it out*
 With al the haste that he mai,
- 275 He toucheth that, he toucheth this,
 And in his hond al gold it is,
 The ston, the tree, the lef, the gras,
 The flour, the fruit, al gold it was.
 Thus toucheth he, whil he mai laste
- 280 To go, bot hunger ate laste
 Him tok, so that he moste nede
 Be weie of kinde his hunger fede.
 The cloth was leid, the bord was set,
 And al was forth tofore him fet,
- 285 His disch, his coppe, his drinke, his mete; *food*
 Bot whanne he wolde or drinke or ete, *either to drink or eat*
 Anon as it his mouth cam nyh, *near*
 It was al gold, and thanne he syh *saw*
 Of Avarice the folie.
- 290 And he with that began to crie,
 And preide Bachus to forgive
 His gilt, and soffre him for to live,
 And be such as he was tofore,
 So that he were noght forlore. *would not be doomed to destruction*
- 295 This god, which herde of his grevance,
 Tok rowthe upon his repentance, *pity*
 And bad him go forth redily
 Unto a flod was faste by, *river nearby*
 Which Paceole thanne hyhte, *was called*
- 300 In which as clene as evere he myhte
 He scholde him waisschen overal,

	And seide him thanne that he schal Recovere his ferste astat agein.	
	This king, riht as he herde sein,	<i>heard said</i>
305	Into the flod goth fro the lond, And wisshe him bothe fot and hond	<i>washed himself</i>
	And so forth al the remenant, As him was set in covenant.	
	And thanne he syh merveilles strange:	
310	The flod his colour gan to change, The gravel with the smale stones	<i>river its color</i>
	To gold thei torne bothe at ones, And he was quit of that he hadde,	<i>free</i>
	And thus fortune his chance ladde.	
315	And whan he sih his touche aweie, He goth him hom the rihte weie	
	And liveth forth as he dede er, And putte al Avarice afer,	<i>previously did away</i>
	And the richesse of gold despiseth,	
320	And seith that mete and cloth sufficeth. Thus hath this king experience	<i>food and clothing</i>
	Hou foles don the reverence To gold, which of his oghne kinde	<i>its own</i>
	Is lasse worth than is the rinde	
325	To sustenance of mannes fode. And thanne he made lawes goode	
	And al his thing sette upon skile.	<i>reason</i>
	He bad his poeple for to tile	<i>till</i>
	Here lond, and live under the lawe,	<i>Their</i>
330	And that thei scholde also forthdrawe Bestaile, and seche non encess	<i>raise Livestock</i>
	Of gold which is the breche of pes. For this a man mai finde write,	<i>breach of the peace</i>
	Tofor the time, er gold was smite	<i>Before; before; struck</i>
335	In coign, that men the florin knewe, Ther was welnyh no man untrew.	<i>Into coins</i>
	Tho was ther nouthur schield ne spere	<i>Then</i>
	Ne dedly wepne for to bere;	<i>bear</i>
	Tho was the toun withoute wal,	
340	Which nou is closed overal; Tho was ther no brocage in londe,	<i>shady transactions (bribery)</i>
	Which nou takth every cause on honde.	<i>happens in all situations</i>
	So mai men knowe, hou the florin Was moder ferst of malengin	<i>treacherous schemes</i>
345	And bringere inne of alle werre, Wherof this world stant out of herre	<i>strife out of joint</i>
	Thurgh the conseil of Avarice, Which of his oghne propre vice	<i>its own private</i>

- Is as the helle wonderfull. *astonishing*
 350 For it mai neveremor be full,
 That what as evere comth therinne, *[In] that whatever*
 Away ne may it nevere winne. *go*
 Bot, sone myn, do thou noght so. *my son*
 Let al such Avarice go
 355 And tak thi part of that thou hast.
 I bidde noght that thou do wast, *engage in squandering*
 Bot hold largesce in his mesure; *generosity*
 And if thou se a creature,
 Which thurgh poverte is falle in nede,
 360 Gif him som good, for this I rede *advise*
 To him that wol noght given here,
 What peine he schal have elleswhere.

[PUNISHMENT OF TANTALUS]

- ☞ Ther is a peine amonges alle *torment (see note)*
 Benethe in helle, which men calle
 365 The wofull peine of Tantaly, *Tantalus*
 Of which I schal thee redely
 Devise hou men therinne stonde.
 In helle, thou schalt understonde,
 Ther is a flod of thilke office, *such a function*
 370 Which serveth al for Avarice:
 What man that stonde schal therinne,
 He stant up evene unto the chinne;
 Above his hed also ther hongeth
 A fruyt which to that peine longeth *pertains to that pain*
 375 And that fruit toucheth evere in on
 His overlippe. And therupon
 Swich thirst and hunger him assaileth,
 That nevere his appetit ne faileth.
 Bot whanne he wolde his hunger fede,
 380 The fruit withdrawth him ate nede,
 And thogh he heve his hed on hyh, *lifts; head*
 The fruit is evere aliche nyh, *equally near*
 So is the hunger wel the more;
 And also, thogh him thurste sore
 385 And to the water bowe a doun,
 The flod in such condicioun
 Avalet, that his drinke areche
 He mai noght. Lo nou, which a wreche,
 That mete and drinke is him so couth,
 390 And yit ther comth non in his mouth!
 Lich to the peines of this flod
 Stant Avarice in worldes good.

- He hath ynowh and yit him nedeth,
 For his skarsnesse it him forbideth,
 395 And evere his hunger after more
 Travaileth him aliche sore,
 So is he peined overal.
 Forthi thi goodes forth withal,
 Mi sone, loke thou despende,
 400 Wherof thou myht thiself amende
 Bothe hier and ek in other place.
 And also if thou wolt pourchace
 To be beloved, thou most use
 Largesce, for if thou refuse
 405 To give for thi loves sake,
 It is no reson that thou take
 Of love that thou woldest crave.
 Forthi, if thou wolt grace have,
 Be gracious and do largesse,
 410 Of Avarice and the seknesse
 Eschuie above alle other thing,
 And take ensample of Mide king
 And of the flod of helle also,
 Where is ynowh of alle wo.
 415 And thogh ther were no matiere
 Bot only that we finden hiere,
 Men oghten Avarice eschuie;
 For what man thilke vice suie,
 He get himself bot litel reste.
 420 For hou so that the body reste,
 The herte upon the gold travaileth,
 Whom many a nyhtes drede assaileth;
 For thogh he ligge abedde naked,
 His herte is everemore awaked,
 425 And dremeth, as he lith to slepe,
 How besi that he is to kepe
 His tresor, that no thief it stele.
 Thus hath he bot a woful wele.

*stinginess; denies**Afflicts; sorely
tormented (made wretched)**here**deserve**Generosity**Avoid**follows**labors**fear**lie**alert***[AVARICE: JEALOUSY OF LOVERS]**

- And riht so in the same wise,
 430 If thou thiself wolt wel advise,
 Ther be lovers of suche ynowe,
 That wole unto no reson bowe.
 If so be that thei come above,
 Whan thei ben maistres of here love,
 435 And that thei scholden be most glad,
 With love thei ben most bestad,

*enough**achieve success
their**troubled*

- So fain thei wolde it holden al.
 Here herte, here yhe is overal, *eye*
 And wenen every man be thief, *thinks*
 440 To stele away that hem is lief; *dear*
 Thus thurgh here oghne fantasie *their own*
 Thei fallen into Jelousie.
 Thanne hath the schip tobroke his cable, *broken its*
 With every wynd and is muable." *easily moved*
Amans "Mi fader, for that ye nou telle,
 446 I have herd ofte time telle *heard often*
 Of Jelousie, bot what it is
 Yit understode I nevere er this.
 Wherfore I wolde you beseche,
 450 That ye me wolde enforme and teche
 What maner thing it mihte be."
Confessor "Mi sone, that is hard to me.
 Bot natheles, as I have herd,
 Now herkne and thou schalt ben ansuerd.
 455 Among the men lacke of manhode *courteous behavior (gentility)*
 In mariage upon wifhode
 Makth that a man himself deceiveth,
 Wherof it is that he conceiveth
 That ilke unsely maladie, *unhappy*
 460 The which is cleped Jelousie; *called*
 ¶ Of which if I the propreté *(see note)*
 Schal telle after the nyceté, *foolishness*
 So as it worcheth on a man,
 A fievere it is cotidian, *fever; a daily recurrence*
 465 Which every day wol come aboute,
 Wher so a man be inne or oute. *Whether*
 At hom if that a man wol wone, *dwell*
 This fievere is thanne of comun wone *habit*
 Most grevous in a mannes yhe, *eye*
 470 For thanne he makth him tote and pryhe, *spy (gaze) and pry*
 Wher so as evere his love go;
 Sche schal noght with hir litel too *toe*
 Misteppe, bot he se it al. *without his seeing*
 His yhe is walkende overal; *eye*
 475 Wher that sche singe or that sche daunce,
 He seth the leste contenance; *least expression*
 If sche loke on a man aside
 Or with him rounne at eny tyde, *whisper; occasion*
 Or that sche lawghe, or that sche loure, *laugh; frown*
 480 His yhe is ther at every houre. *moment*
 And whanne it draweth to the nyht,
 If sche thanne is withoute lyht, *joy*
 Anon is al the game schent; *game [of love] spoiled*

- For thanne he set his parlement
 485 To speke it whan he comth to bedde,
 And seith, 'If I were now to wedde,
 I wolde neveremore have wif.'
 And so he torneth into strif
 The lust of loves dueté, *love's debt (i.e., sexual intercourse)*
 490 And al upon diverseté. *perverseness*
 If sche be freissh and wel araied,
 He seith hir baner is displaied *her sign of availability*
 To clepe in gestes fro the weie: *invite*
 And if sche be noght wel beseie,
 495 And that hir list noght to be gladd, *it pleases her not (she chooses)*
 He berth an hond that sche is madd *maintains that*
 And loveth noght hire housebonde;
 He seith he mai wel understonde,
 That if sche wolde his compaignie, *desired*
 500 Sche scholde thanne afore his ye *eye*
 Schewe al the plesir that sche mihte.
 So that be daie ne be nyhte *neither by day nor by*
 Sche not what thing is for the beste, *does not know*
 Bot liveth out of alle reste;
 505 For what as evere him liste sein, *it pleases him to speak*
 Sche dar noght speke a word agein,
 Bot wepeth and holt hire lippes clos. *keeps her*
 Sche mai wel wryte, 'Sanz repos,' *Without rest*
 The wif which is to such on married. *married to such a one*
 510 Of alle wommen be he waried, *may he be cursed*
 For with this fievere of Jalousie
 His echedaies fantasie *everyday*
 Of sorghe is evere aliche grene, *sorrow*
 So that ther is no love sene,
 515 Whil that him list at hom abyde.
 And whan so is he wol out ryde,
 Thanne hath he redi his asprie *spy*
 Abidinge in hir compaignie, *backbiter*
 A janglere, an evel-mouthed oon,
 520 That sche ne mai nowhider gon,
 Ne speke a word, ne ones loke,
 That he ne wol it wende and croke *twist and distort*
 And torne after his oghne entente,
 Thogh sche nothing bot honour mente.
 525 Whan that the lord comth hom agein,
 The janglere moste somewhat sein; *just has to say something about it*
 So what withoute and what withinne,
 This fievere is evere to beginne,
 For where he comth he can noght ende,
 530 Til deth of him have mad an ende.

- For thogh so be that he ne hierē,
 Ne se, ne wite in no manere
 Bot al honour and wommanhiede,
 Therof the Jelous takth non hiede,
 535 Bot as a man to love unkinde,
 He cast his staf, as doth the blinde,
 And fint defaulte where is non;
 As who so dremeth on a ston
 Hou he is leid, and groneth ofte,
 540 Whan he lith on his pilwes softe.
 So is ther noght bot strif and cheste,
 Whan love scholde make his feste;
 It is gret thing if he hir kisse.
 Thus hath sche lost the nyhtes blisse,
 545 For at such time he grucbeth evere
 And berth on hond ther is a levere,
 And that sche wolde another were
 In stede of him abedde there;
 And with tho wordes and with mo
 550 Of Jelousie, he torneth fro
 And lith upon his other side,
 And sche with that drawth hire aside,
 And ther sche wepeth al the nyht.
 Ha, to what peine sche is dyht,
 555 That in hire youthe hath so beset
 The bond which mai noght ben unknet!
 I wot the time is ofte cursed,
 That evere was the gold unpursed,
 The which was leid upon the bok,
 560 Whan that alle othre sche forsok
 For love of him. Bot al to late
 Sche pleigneth, for as thanne algate
 Sche mot forbere and to him bowe,
 Thogh he ne wole it noght allowe.
 565 For man is lord of thilke feire,
 So mai the womman bot empeire,
 If sche speke oght agein his wille;
 And thus sche berth hir peine stille.
 Bot if this fievere a womman take,
 570 Sche schal be wel mor harde schake;
 For thogh sche bothe se and hierē,
 And finde that ther is matiere,
 Sche dar bot to hirselve pleine,
 And thus sche suffreth double peine.
- Confessor** Lo thus, mi sone, as I have write,
 576 Thou miht of Jelousie wite
 His fievere and his condicion,
- hear*
see nor know
- finds*
in an uncomfortable position
laid; complains often
- contention*
- a major event*
happiness
complains
one preferred [by her]
wishes
- those; more*
- herself*
- constrained*
arranged
bond (marriage); untied
- the marriage fee*
missal
- in every respect*
- he will not praise it*
that business
only become worse off
- in silence*
- impute (blame)*

- Which is full of suspencion.
 Bot wherof that this fievere groweth,
 580 Who so these olde bokes troweth, *trusts*
 Ther mai he finden hou it is:
 For thei ous teche and telle this,
 Hou that this fievere of Jelousie
 Somdel it groweth of sotie *foolishness*
 585 Of love, and somdiel of untrust. *suspicion*
 For as a sek man lest his lust, *sick; loses; desire*
 And whan he may no savour gete,
 He hateth thanne his oughne mete, *own food*
 Riht so this feverous maladié,
 590 Which caused is of fantasie,
 Makth the Jelous in fieble plit *plight*
 To lese of love his appetit *lose*
 Thurgh feigned enformacion *deceitful*
 Of his ymaginacion.
 595 Bot finali to taken hiede,
 Men mai wel make a liklihiede *comparison*
 Betwen him which is averous *miserly*
 Of gold and him that is jelous
 Of love, for in on degré *one*
 600 Thei stonde bothe, as semeth me.
 That oon wolde have his bagges stille,
 And noght departen with his wille,
 And dar noght for the thieves slepe,
 So fain he wolde his tresor kepe;
 605 That other mai noght wel be glad,
 For he is evere more adrad *fearful*
 Of these lovers that gon aboute,
 In aunter if thei putte him oute. *In case they should*
 So have thei bothe litel joye
 610 As wel of love as of monoie. *money (wealth)*
 Now hast thou, sone, at my techinge *as a result of my*
 Of Jelousie a knowlechinge,
 That thou myht understonde this,
 For whenne he comth and what he is,
 615 And ek to whom that he is lik.
 Be war forthi thou be noght sik
 Of thilke fievere as I have spoke,
 For it wol in himself be wroke. *avenged*
 For love hateth nothing more,
 620 As men mai finde be the lore *by (i.e., in) the teaching*
 Of hem that whilom were wise, *those who once*
 Hou that thei spieke in many wise.”
Amans “Mi fader, soth is that ye sein.
 Bot for to loke ther agein,

625 Befor this time hou it is falle,
 Wherof ther mihte ensample falle
 To suche men as be jelous
 In what manere it is grevous,
 Riht fain I wolde ensample hiere.”

Confessor “Mi goode sone, at thi preiere

request

631 Of suche ensamples as I finde,
 So as thei comen nou to mynde
 Upon this point, of time gon
 I thenke for to tellen on.

intend; one

[TALE OF VULCAN, MARS, AND VENUS]

635 Ovide wrot of manye thinges,
 Among the whiche in his wrytinges
 He tolde a tale in poesie,
 Which toucheth unto Jelousie,
 Upon a certein cas of love.

640 Among the goddes alle above
 It fell at thilke time thus:

that

☞ The god of fyr, which Vulcanus
 Is hote, and hath a craft forthwith
 Assigned, for to be the smith

(see note)

Is called

645 Of Jupiter, and his figure
 Bothe of visage and of stature
 Is lothly and malgracious,
 Bot yit he hath withinne his hous
 As for the likynge of his lif
 The faire Venus to his wif.
 Bot Mars, which of batailles is
 The god, an yhe hadde unto this.
 As he which was chivalerous,
 It fell him to ben amerous,

loathly; ugly

pleasure

eye

amorous

655 And thoghte it was a gret pité
 To se so lusti on as sche
 Be coupled with so lourde a wiht.
 So that his peine day and nyht
 He dede, if he hire winne myhte;
 And sche, which hadde a good insiht
 Toward so noble a knyhtli lord,
 In love fell of his acord.
 Ther lacketh noght bot time and place,
 That he nys siker of hire grace:¹
 Bot whan tuo hertes falle in on,

*married; clumsy a creature
 labor constantly*

regard

in one accord

¹ Lines 663–64: i.e., *he is certain of her favor in all ways except the details of how they would meet*

- So wys await was nevere non,
 That at som time thei ne mete;¹
 And thus this faire lusti swete
 With Mars hath ofte compaignie.
 670 Bot thilke unkynde Jelousie,
 Which everemor the herte opposeth, *oppresses*
 Makth Vulcanus that he supposeth
 That it is nought wel overal,
 And to himself he seide, he schal
 675 Aspie betre, if that he may. *See (spy)*
 And so it fell upon a day,
 That he this thing so slyhli ledde, *slyly managed*
 He fond hem bothe tuo abedde *found them*
 Al warm, ech on with other naked.
 680 And he with craft al redy maked
 Of stronge chenes hath hem bounde, *chains*
 As he togedre hem hadde founde,
 And lefte hem bothe ligge so, *lying thus*
 And gan to clepe and crie tho *call; then*
 685 Unto the goddes al aboute;
 And thei assembled in a route *company*
 Come alle at ones for to se.
 Bot none amendes hadde he,
 Bot was rebuked hiere and there
 690 Of hem that loves frendes were, *those who*
 And seiden that he was to blame,
 For if ther fell him eny schame,
 It was thurgh his misgovernance:
 And thus he loste contenance, *courtly (gracious) standing*
 695 This god, and let his cause falle;
 And thei to skorne him lowhen alle, *all laughed*
 And losen Mars out of hise bondes. *loosened*
 Wherof these erthli housebondes
 Forevere myhte ensample take,
 700 If such a chaunce hem overtake.
 For Vulcanus his wif bewreide, *Because; maligned*
 The blame upon himself he leide,
 Wherof his schame was the more;
 Which oghte for to ben a lore *lesson*
 705 For every man that liveth hiere,
 To reulen him in this matiere. *control himself*
 Thogh such an happ of love asterte, *circumstance; come about*
 Yit scholde he nought apointe his herte *not fill*
 With Jelousie of that is wroght,

¹ Lines 666–67: i.e., *no amount of close scrutiny can prevent such a couple from meeting*

- 710 Bot feigne, as thogh he wiste it noght; *knew*
 For if he lete it overpasse,
 The sclaudre schal be wel the lasse,
 And he the more in ese stonde.
 For this thou myht wel understonde,
- 720 That where a man schal nedes lese, *must necessarily lose*
 The leste harm is for to chese. *least; choose*
 Bot Jelousie of his untrist
 Makth that full many an harm arist, *increase*
 Which elles scholde noght arise; *otherwise; come about*
- 720 And if a man him wolde avise *take counsel*
 Of that befell to Vulcanus,
 Him oghte of reson thenke thus,
 That sithe a god therof was schamed,
 Wel scholde an erthli man be blamed
- 725 To take upon him such a vice.
- Confessor** Forthi, my sone, in thin office
 Be war that thou be noght jelous,
 Which ofte time hath schent the hous.” *ruined*
- Amans** “Mi fader, this ensample is hard,
- 730 Hou such thing to the heveneward *all the way to heaven*
 Among the goddes myhte falle.
 For ther is bot o God of alle,
 Which is the Lord of hevene and helle.
 Bot if it like you to telle
- 735 Hou suche goddes come aplace, *come into existence*
 Ye mihten mochel thonk pourchace,
 For I schal be wel tawht withal.”
- Confessor** “Mi sone, it is thus overal
 With hem that stonden misbelieved,
- 740 That suche goddes ben believed:
 In sondri place sondri wise
 Amonges hem whiche are unwise
 Ther is betaken of credence; *belief*
 Wherof that I the difference
- 745 In the manere as it is write
 Schal do thee plainly for to wite.” *cause you openly to know*

[RELIGIONS]

- ii. *Gentibus illuis signantur templa deorum,
 Vnde deos cecos nacio ceca colit.*

*Nulla creatori ratio facit esse creatum
Equiperans, quod adhuc iura pagana fouent.*¹

	[Confessor] “Er Crist was bore among ous hierie,	<i>Before</i>
¶	Of the believes that tho were In foure formes thus it was.	<i>then (see note)</i>
750	Thei of Caldee as in this cas Hadde a believe be himselve, Which stod upon the signes tuelve, Forth ek with the planetes sevene, Whiche as thei sihe upon the hevene	<i>unto themselves twelve signs of the zodiac</i>
755	Of sondri constellacion In here ymaginacion With sondri kerf and pourtreture Thei made of goddes the figure.	<i>saw their carving</i>
760	In th’elementz and ek also Thei hadden a believe tho; And al was that unresonable: For th’elementz ben servicable To man, and ofte of accidence, As men mai se th’experience,	<i>then in their observable features</i>
765	Thei ben corrupt be sondri weie; So mai no mannes reson seie That thei ben god in eny wise. And ek, if men hem wel avise,	<i>are gods in any way carefully take thought</i>
770	The sonne and mone eclipse bothe, That be hem lieve or be hem lothe, Thei soffre; and what thing is passible	<i>So that whether they want it or not susceptible to suffering</i>
¶	To ben a god is impossible. These elementz ben creatures, So ben these heavenly figures,	<i>Cannot be a god (see note) created entities</i>
775	Wherof mai wel be justefied That thei mai nocht be deified. And who that takth away th’onour Which due is to the Creatour, And gifth it to the creature,	<i>(i.e., created things may not be gods) the honor</i>
780	He doth to gret a forsfaiture. Bot of Caldee natheles Upon this feith, thogh it be les, Thei holde affermed the creance;	<i>offence falsehood (lies) belief</i>
785	So that of helle the penance, As folk which stant out of believe, Thei schull receive, as we believe.	

¹ *The temples of the gods are inscribed by deluded peoples; whence a blind race worships blind gods. No reason allows a created being to be equal to its creator; yet this is what pagan laws foster.*

[THE EGYPTIANS]




	Of the Chaldeus, lo, in this wise	(see note)
	Stant the believe out of assisse.	<i>beyond legal standards (i.e., against divine law)</i>
	Bot in Egipte worst of alle	
790	The feith is fals, hou so it falle;	
	For thei diverse bestes there	<i>animals</i>
	Honoure, as thogh thei goddes were:	
	And natheles yit forth withal	
	Thre goddes most in special	
795	Thei have, forth with a goddesse,	
	In whom is al here sikernesse.	<i>their certitude</i>
	Tho goddes be yit cleped thus,	<i>Those; called</i>
	Orus, Typhon, and Isirus.	<i>Horus; Osiris</i>
	Thei were brethren alle thre,	
800	And the goddesse in hir degré	
	Here soster was and Ysis hyhte,	<i>Their; called</i>
	Whom Isirus forlai be nyhte	<i>copulated with by</i>
	And hield hire after as his wif.	
	So it befell that upon strif	
805	Typhon hath Isre his brother slain,	<i>Osiris</i>
	Which hadde a child to sone Orayn,	<i>Horus the younger</i>
	And he his fader deth to herte	<i>father's death</i>
	So tok, that it mai noght asterte	<i>cannot fail</i>
	That he Typhon after ne slowh,	<i>(i.e., nothing could prevent him from killing Typhon)</i>
810	Whan he was ripe of age ynowh.	
	Bot yit th'Egipcians trowe	<i>believe</i>
	For al this errour, which thei knowe,	
	That these brethren ben of myht	<i>sufficient strength</i>
	To sette and kepe Egipte upriht,	
815	And overthrowe, if that hem like.	
	Bot Ysis, as seith the cronique,	
	Fro Grece into Egipte cam,	
	And sche thanne upon honde nam	<i>undertook</i>
	To teche hem for to sowe and eere,	<i>cultivate</i>
820	Which no man knew tofore there.	
	And whan th'Egipcians syhe	<i>saw</i>
	The fieldes fulle afore here yhe,	<i>before their eyes</i>
	And that the lond began to greine,	<i>bear grain</i>
	Which whilom hadde be bareigne,	<i>once; barren</i>
825	For th'erthe bar after the kinde	<i>according to its nature</i>
	His due charge — this I finde —	<i>Its fitting offspring</i>
	That sche of berthe the goddesse	<i>childbirth</i>
	Is cleped, so that in destresse	<i>is called</i>
	The wommen there upon childinge	
830	To hire clepe, and here offringe	<i>call; their</i>
	Thei beren, whan that thei ben lyhte.	<i>have given birth</i>

- 875 And for he was so full of vices,
 Thei cleped him god of delices,
 Of whom, if thou wolt more wite,
 Ovide the poete hath write. *delights*
 Bot yit here sterres bothe tuo, *know more*
- 880 Saturne and Jupiter also,
 Thei have, although thei be to blame,
 Attitled to here oghne name. *Named after their own*
- ☞ Mars was another in that lawe,
 The which in Dace was forthdrawe, *(see note)*
- 885 Of whom the clerk Vegecius
 Wrot in his bok, and tolde thus,
 Hou he into Ytaile cam,
 And such fortune ther he nam, *took*
- 890 That he a maiden hath oppressed,
 Which in hire ordre was professed,
 As sche which was the prioresse
 In Vestes temple the goddesse,
 So was sche wel the mor to blame.
 Dame Ylia this ladi name
- 895 Men clepe, and ek sche was also *called*
 The kinges dowhter that was tho, *then*
 Which Mynitor be name hihte. *was called*
 So that agein the lawes ryhte
 Mars thilke time upon hire that
- 900 Remus and Romulus begat,
 Which after, whan thei come in age,
 Of knihthode and of vassellage
 Ytaile al hol thei overcome *completely*
 And foundeden the grete Rome;
- 905 In armes and of such emprise *warlike prowess*
 Thei weren, that in thilke wise *the same manner*
 Here fader Mars for the mervaille *Their*
 The god was cleped of bataille. *called*
 Thei were his children bothe tuo;
- 910 Thurgh hem he tok his name so,
 Ther was non other cause why.
 And yit a sterre upon the sky
 He hath unto his name applied,
- 914 In which that he is signified.
- ☞ Another god thei hadden eke, *also (see note)*
 To whom for conseil thei beseke,
 The which was brother to Venus,
 Appollo men him clepe thus.
- 920 He was an hunte upon the helles, *hunter; hills*
 Ther was with him no vertu elles, *skill*
 Wherof that enye bokes karpe, *say*

- Bot only that he couthe harpe;
 Which whanne he walked over londe,
 Fulofte time he tok on honde,
 925 To gete him with his sustienance,
 For lacke of other pourveance.
 And otherwhile of his falshede
 He feignede him to conne arede
 Of thing which after scholde falle;
 930 Wherof among hise sleyhtes alle
 He hath the lewed folk deceived,
 So that the betre he was received.
 Lo now, thurgh what creacion
 He hath deificacion,
 935 And cleped is the god of wit
 To suche as be the foles yit.
- ☞ And other god, to whom thei soghte,
 Mercurie hihte, and him ne roghte
 What thing he stal, ne whom he slowh.
 940 Of sorcerie he couthe ynowh,
 That whanne he wolde himself transforme,
 Fulofte time he tok the forme
 Of womman and his oghne lefte;
 So dede he wel the more thefte.
 945 A gret spekere in alle thinges
 He was also, and of lesinges
 An auctour, that men wiste non
 Another such as he was on.
 And yit thei maden of this thief
 950 A god, which was unto hem lief,
 And clepede him in tho believes
 The god of marchantz and of thieves.
 Bot yit a sterre upon the hevene
 954 He hath of the planetes sevene.
- ☞ Bot Vulcanus, of whom I spak,
 He hadde a courbe upon the bak,
 And therto he was hepehalt,
 Of whom thou understonde schalt,
 He was a schrewe in al his youthe,
 960 And he non other vertu couthe
 Of craft to helpe himselve with,
 Bot only that he was a smith
 With Jupiter, which in his forge
 Diverse thinges made him forge;
 965 So wot I noght for what desir
 Thei clepen him the god of fyr.
- Except that he knew how to play the harp*
To earn some food provision
be able to explain happen
untutored people
called fools yet
(see note)
was called; cared not stole; killed knew enough
false sayings authority (founder); knew
pleasing designated; those beliefs
(see note)
hump (curve); back lame
accomplished
I know not called

- ☞ King of Cizile Ypolitus *Sicily (see note)*
 A sone hadde, and Eolus
 He hihte, and of his fader grant *was called; father's*
 970 He hield be weie of covenant
 The governance of every yle
 Which was longende unto Cizile,
 Of hem that fro the lond forein *[were] far removed*
 Leie open to the wynd al plein.
 975 And fro thilke iles to the londe
 Fulofte cam the wynd to honde:
 After the name of him forthi
 The wyndes cleped Eoli
 Tho were, and he the god of wynd. *Those*
 980 Lo nou, hou this believe is blynd!
- ☞ The king of Crete Jupiter, *(see note)*
 The same which I spak of er, *earlier*
 Unto his brother, which Neptune
 Was hote, it list him to comune *was called; pleased him; distribute*
 985 Part of his good, so that be schipe *by*
 He mad him strong of the lordschipe *made himself*
 Of al the see in tho parties; *sea in those*
 Wher that he wroghte hise tyrannyes,
 And the strange yles al aboute *foreign islands (neighboring countries)*
 990 He wan, that every man hath doute *amassed (subjugated); fear*
 Upon his marche for to saile; *territory*
 For he anon hem wolde assaile
 And robbe what thing that thei ladden,
 His sauf conduit bot if thei hadden. *Unless they had his*
 995 Wherof the comun vois aros
 In every lond, that such a los *reputation*
 He cawhte, al nere it worth a stre, *even though it might not be worth a straw*
 That he was cleped of the see
 The god be name, and yit he is
 1000 With hem that so believe amis.
 This Neptune ek was thilke also,
 Which was the ferste foundour tho *founder then*
 Of noble Troie, and he forthi
 1004 Was wel the more lete by. *Was all the more honored*
- ☞ The loresman of the schepherdes,
 And ek of hem that ben netherdes, *teacher (see note)*
 Was of Archade and hihte Pan: *neatherds (cowherds)*
 Of whom hath spoke many a man, *Arcadia; called*
 For in the wode of Nonarcigne,
 1010 Enclosed with the tres of Pigne,
 And on the Mont of Parasia
 He hadde of bestes the baillie, *Peneus*
Parnassus
charge (keeping)

- And ek benethe in the valleie,
 Wher thilke rivere, as men seie,
 1015 Which Ladon hihte, made his cours, *was called*
 He was the chief of governours
 Of hem that kepten tame bestes,
 Wherof thei maken yit the festes
 In the cité Stinfalides. *Stymphalus*
 1020 And forth withal yit natheles
 He tawhte men the forthdrawinge *breeding*
 Of bestaile, and ek the makinge *livestock; training*
 Of oxen, and of hors the same,
 Hou men hem scholde ryde and tame.
 1025 Of foules ek, so as we finde,
 Ful many a soubtiel craft of kinde
 He fond, which no man knew tofore.
 Men dede him worschipe ek therfore, *also*
 That he the ferste in thilke lond
 1030 Was which the melodie fond
 Of riedes, whan thei weren ripe, *reeds*
 With double pipes for to pipe;
 Therof he gaf the ferste lore, *instruction*
 Til afterward men couthe more. *know*
 1035 To every craft for mannes helpe
 He hadde a redi wit to helpe
 Thurgh naturel experience.
 And thus the nyce reverence *foolish*
 Of foles, whan that he was ded,
 1040 The fot hath torned to the hed,
 And clepen him god of nature,
 For so thei maden his figure.
 ☞ Another god, so as thei fiele, *(see note)*
 Which Jupiter upon Samele *Semele*
 1045 Begat in his avouterie, *adultery*
 Whom, for to hide his lecherie,
 That non therof schal take kepe,
 In a montaigne for to kepe,
 Which Dyon hihte and was in Ynde, *Dionysus was called*
 1050 He sende, in bokes as I finde:
 And he be name Bachus hihte, *was called*
 Which afterward, whan that he mihte,
 A wastour was, and al his rente *revenue*
 In wyn and bordel he despente. *lechery he used up*
 1055 Bot yit, al were he wonder badde,
 Among the Greks a name he hadde;
 Thei cleped him the god of wyn,
 And thus a glotoun was dyvyn.






-  Ther was yit Esculapius *(see note)*
 1060 A godd in thilke time as thus.
 His craft stod upon surgerie;
 Bot for the lust of lecherie,
 That he to Daires dowhter drowh,
 It fell that Jupiter him slowh:
 1065 And yit thei made him noght forthi *not for that reason*
 A god, and was no cause why.
 In Rome he was long time also
 A god among the Romeins tho;
 For, as he seide, of his presence
 1070 Ther was destruid a pestilence,
 Whan thei to th'yle of Delphos wente,
 And that Appollo with hem sente
 This Esculapius his sone,
 Among the Romeins for to wone. *dwell*
 1075 And there he duehte for a while,
 Til afterward into that yle,
 Fro whenne he cam, agein he torneth,
 Where al his lyf that he sojorneth
 Among the Greks, til that he deide.
 1080 And thei upon him thanne leide
 His name, and god of medicine
 He hatte after that ilke line. *was called; same*
 Another god of Hercules *(see note)*
 Thei made, which was natheles
 1085 A man, bot that he was so strong,
 In al this world that brod and long
 So myhti was no man as he.
 Merveiles tuelve in his degré,
 As it was couth in sondri londes,
 1090 He dede with hise oghne hondes
 Agein geantz and monstres bothe,
 The whiche horrible were and lothe,
 Bot he with strengthe hem overcam:
 Wherof so gret a pris he nam, *reputation; acquired*
 1095 That thei him clepe amonges alle
 The god of strengthe, and to him calle.
 And yit ther is no reson inne,
 For he a man was full of sinne,
 Which proved was upon his ende,
 1100 For in a rage himself he brende; *burned*
 And such a cruel mannes dede
 Acordeth nothing with godhede.
 Thei hadde of goddes yit another, *(see note)*
 Which Pluto hihte, and was the brother *was called*

- 1105 Of Jupiter, and he fro youthe *from*
 With every word which cam to mouthe,
 Of eny thing whan he was wroth, *angry*
 He wolde swere his commun oth,
 Be Lethen and be Flegeton, *By Lethe*
- 1110 Be Cochitum and Acheron, *By Cocytus*
 The whiche, after the bokes telle,
 Ben the chief flodes of the helle: *principal rivers*
 Be Segne and Stige he swor also, *Seine; Styx*
 That ben the depe pettes tuo *pits two*
- 1115 Of helle the most principal.
 Pluto these othes overal
 Swor of his commun custummance, *habitual practice*
 Til it befell upon a chance, *by the casting of lots*
 That he for Jupiteres sake *behalf*
- 1120 Unto the goddes let do make *ordered (caused to be made)*
 A sacrifice, and for that dede
 On of the pettes for his mede
 In helle, of which I spak of er, *One; pits; reward*
 Was granted him; and thus he ther *earlier*
- 1125 Upon the fortune of this thing
 The name tok of helle king.
 Lo, these goddes and wel mo
 Among the Greks thei hadden tho,
 And of goddesses manyon, *many a one*
- 1130 Whos names thou schalt hiere anon, *hear soon*
 And in what wise thei deceiven *manner*
 The foles whiche here feith receiven. *their*
- ☞ So as Saturne is sovereign *(see note)*
 Of false goddes, as thei sein,
- 1135 So is Sibeles of goddesses
 The moder, whom withoute gesses *without doubt*
 The folk payene honoure and serve, *pagan*
 As thei the whiche hire lawe observe.
 Bot for to knowen upon this
- 1140 Fro when sche cam and what sche is,
 Bethincia the contré hihte, *Berecynthia; is called*
 Wher sche cam ferst to mannes sihte;
 And after was Saturnes wif,
 Be whom thre children in hire lif
- 1145 Sche bar, and thei were cleped tho *then*
 Juno, Neptunus, and Pluto,
 The whiche of nyce fantasie *foolish*
 The poeple wolde deifie.
 And for hire children were so, *since*
- 1150 Sibeles thanne was also
 Mad a goddesse, and thei hire calle

- The moder of the goddes alle.
 So was that name bore forth,
 And yit the cause is litel worth.
- 1155 A vois unto Saturne tolde
 Hou that his oghne sone him scholde
- ☞ Out of his regne putte aweie; *(see note)*
 And he because of thilke weie, *circumstance (problem, situation)*
 That him was schape such a fate,
- 1160 Sibele his wif began to hate
 And ek hire progenie bothe. *also*
 And thus, whil that thei were wrothe,
 Be Philerem upon a dai *Philyra*
 In his avouterie he lai, *adultery*
- 1165 On whom he Jupiter begat;
 And thilke child was after that
 Which wroghte al that was prophecied,
 As it tofore is specefied:
 So that whan Jupiter of Crete
- 1170 Was king, a wif unto him mete *suitable*
 The dowhter of Sibele he tok,
 And that was Juno, seith the bok.
 Of his deificacion
 After the false oppinion,
- 1175 That have I told, so as thei meene.
 And for this Juno was the queene
 Of Jupiter and soster eke,
 The foles unto hire sieke,
 And sein that sche is the goddesse
- 1180 Of regnes bothe and of richesse: *kingdoms*
 And ek sche, as thei understonde,
 The water nimphes hath in honde
 To leden at hire oghne heste; *own commands*
 And whan hir list the sky tempeste, *it pleases her to make the sky stormy*
- 1185 The reinbowe is hir messenger.
 Lo, which a misbelieve is hier!
 That sche goddesse is of the sky
 I wot non other cause why.
- ☞ Another goddesse is Minerve, *(see note)*
- 1190 To whom the Greks obeie and serve:
 And sche was nyh the grete lay *lake*
 Of Triton founde, wher she lay *placed*
 A child forcast, bot what sche was *cast away*
 Ther knew no man the sothe cas. *true case*
- 1195 Bot in Aufrique sche was leid
 In the manere as I have seid,
 And caried fro that ilke place
 Into an yle fer in Trace,

- The which Palene thanne hihte, *was called*
 1200 Wher a norrice hir kepte and dihte. *attended*
 And after, for sche was so wys
 That sche fond ferst in hire avis *invented; according to her counsel*
 The cloth makinge of wolle and lyn,
 Men seiden that sche was divin,
 1205 And the goddesse of sapience *wisdom*
 Thei clepen hire in that credence. *called; faith*
 ☞ Of the goddesse which Pallas *(see note)*
 Is cleped sondri speche was. *explanations exist*
 On seith hire fader was Pallant, *One*
 1210 Which in his time was geant, *giant*
 A cruel man, a bataillous. *warlike man*
 Another seith hou in his hous
 Sche was the cause why he deide.
 And of this Pallas some ek seide
 1215 That sche was Martes wif; and so
 Among the men that weren tho
 Of misbelieve in the riote *In the disorder of misbelief*
 The goddesse of batailles hote *called*
 She was, and yit sche berth the name.
 1220 Now loke, hou thei be for to blame.
 ☞ Saturnus after his exil *(see note)*
 Fro Crete cam in gret peril
 Into the londes of Ytaile,
 And ther he dede gret mervaille,
 1225 Wherof his name duelleth yit.
 For he fond of his oghne wit
 The ferste craft of plowh tilinge,
 Of eringe and of corn sowinge, *cultivation; grain*
 And how men scholden sette vines
 1230 And of the grapes make wyne;
 Al this he tawhte. And it fell so,
 His wif, the which cam with him tho, *then*
 Was cleped Cereres be name,
 And for sche tawhte also the same,
 1235 And was his wif that ilke throwe, *at that same time*
 As it was to the poeple knowe,
 Thei made of Ceres a goddesse,
 In whom here tilthe yit thei blesse, *their cultivation*
 And sein that Tricolonius *say*
 1240 Hire sone goth amonges ous
 And makth the corn good chep or dere, *costly*
 Riht as hire list fro yer to yeere;
 So that this wif because of this *it pleases her*
 1244 Goddesse of cornes cleped is. *grain is called*

- ☞ King Jupiter, which his likinge *pleasure (see note)*
 Whilom fulfelde in alle thinge,
 So priveliche aboute he ladde *secretly; took*
 His lust, that he his wille hadde
 Of Latona, and on hire that
 1250 Diane his dowhter he begat
 Unknownen of his wif Juno.
 And afterward sche knew it so,
 That Latona for drede fledde
 Into an ile, wher sche hedde *hid*
 1255 Hire wombe, which of childe aros. *with child grew large*
 Thilke yle cleped was Delos; *This same*
 In which Diana was forthbrought, *born*
 And kept so that hire lacketh noght.
 And after, whan sche was of age,
 1260 Sche tok non hiede of mariage,
 Bot out of mannes compaignie
 Sche tok hire al to venerie *hunting*
 In forest and in wildernesse
 For ther was al hire besinesse
 1265 Be daie and ek be nyhtes tyde *also by nighttime*
 With arwes brode under the side *arrows*
 And bowe in honde, of which sche slowh *killed*
 And tok al that hir liste ynowh
 Of bestes whiche ben chacable. *fair game (hunnable)*
 1270 Wherof the cronique of this fable
 Seith that the gentils most of alle
 Worschipen hire and to hire calle,
 And the goddesse of hihe helles, *high hills*
 Of grene trees, of freisshe welles,
 1275 Thei clepen hire in that believe,
 Which that no reson mai achieve. *obtain*
- ☞ Proserpina, which dowhter was *(see note)*
 Of Cereres, befell this cas:
 Whil sche was duellinge in Cizile,
 1280 Hire moder in that ilke while *same time*
 Upon hire blessinge and hire heste *command*
 Bad that sche scholde ben honeste,
 And lerne for to weve and spinne,
 And duelle at hom and kepe hire inne.
 1285 Bot sche caste al that lore aweie, *teaching*
 And as sche wente hir out to pleie,
 To gadre floures in a pleine,
 And that was under the monteine
 Of Ethna, fell the same tyde
 1290 That Pluto cam that weie ryde,
 And sodeinly, er sche was war, *before*

- He tok hire up into his char. *chariot*
 And as thei riden in the field,
 Hire grete beauté he behield,
 1295 Which was so plesant in his ye, *eye*
 That for to holde in compainie
 He weddeth hire and hield hire so
 To ben his wif foreveremo.
 And as thou hast tofore herd telle
 1300 Hou he was cleped god of helle,
 So is sche cleped the goddesse
 Because of him, ne mor ne lesse.
- Confessor** Lo, thus, mi sone, as I thee tolde,
 The Greks whilom be daies olde
 1305 Here goddes hadde in sondri wise, *Their*
 And thurgh the lore of here aprise *wisdom of their teaching*
 The Romeins hielden ek the same.
 And in the worschipe of here name
 To every godd in special
 1310 Thei made a temple forth withal,
 And ech of hem his yeeres dai
 Attitled hadde; and of arai *its annual holiday*
 The temples weren thanne ordeigned, *of splendid furnishings*
 And ek the poeple was constreigned
 1315 To come and don here sacrifice;
 The priestes ek in here office
 Solempne maden thilke festes.
 And thus the Greks lich to the bestes
 The men in stede of God honoure,
 1320 Whiche mihten noght himself socoure,
 Whil that thei were alyve hiere.
 And over this, as thou schalt hiere,
-  The Greks fulfild of fantasie *(see note)*
 Sein ek that of the helles hihe *also; high hills*
 1325 The goddes ben in special,
 Bot of here name in general
 Thei hoten alle Satiri. *are all called Satyrs*
-  Ther ben of Nymphes proprely *(see note)*
 In the believe of hem also:
 1330 Oreades thei seiden tho
 Attitled ben to the monteines;
-  And for the wodes in demeynes *possession (see note)*
 To kepe, tho ben Driades; *those are*
-  Of freisshe welles Naiades; *(see note)*
 1335 And of the Nymphes of the see *sea*
-  I finde a tale in propreté, *pertinent tale; (see note)*

- Hou Dorus whilom king of Grece, *once*
 Which hadde of infortune a piece,
 His wif forth with hire dowhtres alle,
 1340 So as the happes scholden falle,
 With many a gentil womman there
 Dreint in the salte see thei were: *Drowned*
 Wherof the Greks that time seiden,
 And such a name upon hem leiden,
 1345 Nereides that thei ben hote, *called*
 The Nymphes whiche that thei note
 To regne upon the stremes salte.
 Lo now, if this believe halte! *if this belief can [possibly] hold firm*
 Bot of the Nymphes as thei telle,
 1350 In every place wher thei duelle
 Thei ben al redi obeissant
 As damoiselles entendant
 To the goddesses, whos servise
 Thei mote obeie in alle wise;
 1355 Wherof the Greks to hem beseke *them beseech*
 With tho that ben goddesses eke,
 And have in hem a gret credence.
- ☞ And yit withoute experience *(see note)*
 Salve only of illusion,
 1360 Which was to hem dampnacion,
 For men also that were dede
 Thei hadden goddes, as I rede,
 And tho be name Manes hihten, *were called*
 To whom ful gret honour thei dihten, *offered*
 1365 So as the Grekes lawe seith,
 Which was agein the rihte feith. *against*
 Thus have I told a gret partie;
 Bot al the hole progenie
 Of goddes in that ilke time
 1370 To long it were for to rime. *Too*
 Bot yit of that which thou hast herd,
 Of misbelieve hou it hath ferd, *fared*
 Ther is a gret diversité.”
- Amans** “Mi fader, riht so thenketh me.
 1375 Bot yit o thing I you beseche, *one*
 Which stant in alle mennes speche,
 The godd and the goddesse of love,
 Of whom ye nothing hier above
 Have told, ne spoken of her fare, *their doings*
 1380 That ye me wolden now declare
 Hou thei ferst comen to that name.”
- [Confessor]** “Mi sone, I have it left for schame,
 ☞ Because I am here oghne prest; *their own (see note)*

- Bot for thei stonden nyh thi brest
 1385 Upon the schrifte of thi matiere, *disclosure*
 Thou schalt of hem the sothe hiere. *truth*
 And understond nou wel the cas.
 Venus Saturnes dowhter was,
 Which alle danger putte aweie *resistance*
 1390 Of love, and fond to lust a weie;
 So that of hire in sondri place
 Diverse men felle into grace,
 And such a lusti lif sche ladde,
 That sche diverse children hadde,
 1395 Nou on be this, nou on be that. *one*
 Of hire it was that Mars begat
 A child, which cleped was Armene; *Harmonia*
 Of hire also cam Andragene, *Androgynus (Hermaphroditus)*
 To whom Mercurie fader was.
 1400 Anchises begat Eneas
 Of hire also, and Ericon
 Biten begat, and therupon,
 Whan that sche sih ther was non other,
 Be Jupiter hire oghne brother
 1405 Sche lay, and he begat Cupide.
 And thilke sone upon a tyde,
 Whan he was come unto his age,
 He hadde a wonder fair visage,
 And fond his moder amorous,
 1410 And he was also lecherous:
 So whan thei weren bothe alone,
 As he which yhen hadde none *eyes*
 To se reson, his moder kiste;
 And sche also, that nothing wiste *knew*
 1415 Bot that which unto lust belongeth,
 To ben hire love him underfongeth. *undertook*
 Thus was he blind, and sche unwys.
 Bot natheles this cause it is,
 Why Cupide is the god of love,
 1420 For he his moder dorste love. *dared to*
 And sche, which thoghte hire lustes fonde, *to try*
 Diverse loves tok in honde,
 Wel mo thanne I thee tolde hiere;
 And for sche wolde hirselve skiere, *defend her own behavior*
 1425 Sche made comun that desport,
 And sette a lawe of such a port,
 That every womman mihte take
 What man hire liste, and noght forsake *not refuse*
 To ben als comun as sche wolde.
 1430 Sche was the ferste also which tolde

- That wommen scholde here bodi selle.
 Semiramis, so as men telle,
 Of Venus kepte thilke aprise, *the same teaching*
 And so dede in the same wise
- 1435 Of Rome faire Neabole,
 Which liste hire bodi to rigole; *delight*
 Sche was to every man felawe,
 And hild the lust of thilke lawe, *held*
 Which Venus of hirself began;
- 1440 Wherof that sche the name wan, *gained*
 Why men hire clepen the goddesse
 Of love and ek of gentilesse,
 Of worldes lust and of plesance.
- Se nou the foule mescrance *false belief*
 1445 Of Greks in thilke time tho, *then*
 Whan Venus tok hire name so.
 Ther was no cause under the mone
 Of which thei hadden tho to done,
 Of wel or wo wher so it was,
- 1450 That thei ne token in that cas
 A god to helpe or a goddesse.
 Wherof, to take mi witnesse,
- ☞ The king of Bragmans Dindimus *(see note)*
 Wrot unto Alisandre thus:
- 1455 In blaminge of the Grekes feith
 And of the misbelieve, he seith
 How thei for every membre hadden
 A sondri god, to whom thei spradden *different*
 Here armes and of help besoghten.
- 1460 Minerve for the hed thei soghten,
 For sche was wys, and of a man
 The wit and reson which he can
 Is in the celles of the brayn, *compartments*
 Wherof thei made hire sovereign.
- 1465 Mercurie, which was in his dawes
 A gret spekere of false lawes,
 On him the kepinge of the tunge
 Thei leide, whan thei spieke or sunge.
- For Bachus was a glotoun eke,
 1470 Him for the throte thei beseke, *pray*
 That he it wolde waisschen ofte *wash*
 With swote drinkes and with softe. *sweet*
- The god of schuldres and of armes
 Was Hercules; for he in armes
 1475 The myhtieste was to fihte,
 To him tho limes thei behihte. *dedicated*

- The god whom that thei clepen Mart *call Mars*
 The brest to kepe hath for his part,
 Forth with the herte, in his ymage
 1480 That he adresce the corage. *So that he controls*
 And of the galle the goddesse,
 For sche was full of hastifesse
 Of wraththe and liht to grieve also, *quick*
 Thei made and seide it was Juno.
 1485 Cupide, which the brond afyre *on fire*
 Bar in his hond, he was the sire
 Of the stomak, which builleth evere, *seethes with passion*
 Wherof the lustes ben the levere. *the more dear*
 To the goddesse Cereres,
 1490 Which of the corn gaf hire encess
 Upon the feith that tho was take,
 The wombes cure was betake; *custody; undertaken*
 And Venus thurgh the lecherie,
 For which that thei hire deifie,
 1495 Sche kept al down the remenant
 To thilke office appourtenant.

[IDOL WORSHIP]

- Thus was dispers in sondri wise
 ☞ The misbelieve, as I devise,
 With many an ymage of entaile, *sculpture (see note)*
 1500 Of suche as myhte hem noght availe;
 For thei withoute lyves chiere *living countenance*
 Unmyhti ben to se or hiere *Strengthless*
 Or speke or do or elles fiele;
 And yit the foles to hem knele,
 1505 Which is here oghne handes werk.
 Ha lord, hou this believe is derk,
 And fer fro resonable wit!
 And natheles thei don it yit:
 That was today a ragged tre, *What; scruffy*
 1510 Tomorwe upon his majesté
 Stant in the temple wel besein. *well cared for*
 How myhte a mannes resoun sein *say*
 That such a stock mai helpe or grieve?
 Bot thei that ben of such believe
 1515 And unto suche goddes calle,
 It schal to hem riht so befalle,
 And failen ate moste nede.
 Bot if thee list to taken hiede
 And of the ferste ymage wite, *know*
 1520 Petornius therof hath write *Petronius*

- And ek Nigargorus also;
 And thei afferme and write so,
 That Promotheus was tofore
 And fond the ferste craft therfore,
 1525 And Cirophanes, as thei telle,
 Thurgh conseil which was take in helle,
 In remembrance of his lignage
 Let setten up the ferste ymage.
 Of Cirophanes seith the bok,
 1530 That he for sorwe, which he tok
 Of that he sih his sone ded,
 Of confort knew non other red,
 Bot let do make in remembrance
 A faire ymage of his semblance
 1535 And set it in the market place,
 Which openly tofore his face
 Stod every dai to don him ese.
 And thei that thanne wolden plese
 The fader, scholden it obeie,
 1540 Whan that thei comen thilke weie.
- ☞ And of Ninus king of Assire
 I rede hou that in his empire
 He was next after the secounde
 Of hem that ferst ymages founde.
 1545 For he riht in semblable cas
 Of Belus, which his fader was
 Fro Nembroth in the rihte line,
 Let make of gold and stones fine
 A precious ymage riche
 1550 After his fader evene liche;
 And therupon a lawe he sette,
 That every man of pure dette
 With sacrifice and with truage
 Honoure scholde thilke ymage:
 1555 So that withinne time it fell,
 Of Belus cam the name of Bel,
 Of Bel cam Belzebub, and so
 The misbelieve wente tho.
- 1559 The thridde ymage next to this
 ☞ Was, whan the king of Grece Apis
 Was ded, thei maden a figure
 In resemblance of his stature.
 Of this king Apis seith the bok
 That Serapis his name tok,
 1565 In whom thurgh long continuance
 Of misbelieve a gret creance
 Thei hadden, and the reverence
- Nicagoras*
- saw
course of action
had made*
- Assyria (see note)*
- offering*
- then*
- (see note)*
- credulity*

- Of sacrifice and of encence
 To him thei made: and as thei telle,
 1570 Among the wondres that befelle,
 Whan Alisandre fro Candace
 Cam ridende, in a wilde place
 Undur an hull a cave he fond; *hill*
 And Candalus, which in that lond
 1575 Was bore, and was Candaces sone,
 Him tolde hou that of commun wone *practice*
 The goddes were in thilke cave.
 And he, that wolde assaie and have
 A knowlechinge if it be soth,
 1580 Liht of his hors and in he goth, *Got off*
 And fond therinne that he soghte.
 For thurgh the fendes sleihte him thoghte, *devil's deception*
 Amonges othre goddes mo
 That Serapis spak to him tho,
 1585 Whom he sih there in gret arrai.
 And thus the fend fro dai to dai *one day after another*
 The worschipe of ydolatrie
 Drowh forth upon the fantasie
 Of hem that weren thanne blinde
 1590 And couthen noght the trouthe finde.
 Thus hast thou herd in what degré
 Of Grece, Egipte, and of Caldee
 The misbelieves whilom stode;
 And hou so that thei be noght goode
 1595 Ne trewe, yit thei sprungen oute,
 Wherof the wyde world aboute
 His part of misbelieve tok.
 Til so befell, as seith the bok,
 That god a poeple for himselve
 1600 Hath chose of the lignages twelve, *tribes*
 Wherof the sothe redely,
 As it is write in Genesi,
 I thenke telle in such a wise
 1604 That it schal be to thin apprise. *your instruction*

[THE JEWS]

- After the flod, fro which Noé *Noah*
 Was sauf, the world in his degré *according to its office*
 Was mad, as who seith, newe agein, *made*
 Of flour, of fruit, of gras, of grein,
 ☞ Of beste, of bridd and of mankinde, *(see note)*
 1610 Which evere hath be to God unkinde.
 For noght withstondende al the fare,

- Of that this world was mad so bare *made so barren*
 And afterward it was restored,
 Among the men was nothing mored *increased*
 1615 Towards God of good lyvyng,
 Bot al was torned to liking
 After the fleissh, so that forgete
 Was He which gaf hem lif and mete, *them; food*
 Of hevene and erthe creatour.
 1620 And thus cam forth the grete errour,
 That thei the hihe God ne knewe,
 Bot maden othre goddes newe,
 As thou hast herd me seid tofore.
 Ther was no man that time bore,
 1625 That he ne hadde after his chois
 A god, to whom he gaf his vois.
 Wherof the misbelieve cam
 Into the time of Habraham.
 Bot he fond out the rihte weie,
 1630 Hou only that men scholde obeie
 The hihe God, which weldeth al, *rules*
 And evere hath don and evere schal,
 In hevene, in erthe and ek in helle.
 Ther is no tunge His miht mai telle.
 1635 This patriarch to his lignage
 Forbad, that thei to non ymage
 Encline scholde in none wise,
 Bot here offrende and sacrificise *their*
 With al the hole hertes love
 1640 Unto the mihti God above
 Thei scholden give and to no mo.
 And thus in thilke time tho
 Began the secte upon this erthe,
 Which of believes was the ferthe. *systems of belief; fourth*
 1645 Of rihtwisnesse it was conceived,
 So moste it nedes be received
 Of Him that alle riht is inne,
 The hihe God, which wolde winne
 A poeple unto His oghne feith.
 1650 On Habraham the ground He leith,
 And made him for to multeplie
 Into so gret a progenie,
 That thei Egipte al overspradde.
 Bot Pharaon with wrong hem ladde
 1655 In servitude agein the pes, *against the peace (i.e., illegally)*
 Til God let sende Moises
 To make the deliverance;
 And for his poeple gret vengeance

- He tok, which is to hiere a wonder.
 1660 The king was slain, the lond put under,
 God bad the Rede See divide,
 Which stod upriht on either side
 And gaf unto his poeple a weie,
 That thei on fote it passe dreie *dry*
 1665 And gon so forth into desert.
 Wher for to kepe hem in covert, *under shelter*
 The daies, whan the sonne brente,
 A large cloude hem overwente,
 And for to wissen hem be nyhte, *guide them by*
 1670 A firy piler hem alyhte. *came down [before] them*
 And whan that thei for hunger pleigne,
 The myhti God began to reyne
 Manna fro hevene down to grounde,
 Wherof that ech of hem hath founde
 1675 His fode, such riht as him liste; *each according to his desire*
 And for thei scholde upon Him triste, *trust*
 Riht as who sette a tonne abroche, *one who would tap open a cask*
 He percede the harde roche,
 And sprong out water al at wille,
 1680 That man and beste hath drunke his fille.
 And afterward He gaf the Lawe
 To Moises, that hem withdrawe
 Thei scholden noght fro that he bad.
 And in this wise thei be lad, *way*
 1685 Til thei tok in possession *seized*
 The londes of promission, *promise*
 Wher that Caleph and Josué
 The marches upon such degré
 Departen, after the lignage *Distributed*
 1690 That ech of hem as heritage
 His porpartie hath underfonge. *share; received*
 And thus stod this believe longe,
 Which of prophetes was governed;
 And thei hadde ek the poeple lerned *taught*
 1695 Of gret honour that scholde hem falle;
 Bot ate moste nede of alle
 Thei faileden, whan Crist was bore.
 Bot hou that thei here feith have bore,
 It nedeth noght to tellen al,
 1700 The matiere is so general:
 Whan Lucifer was best in hevene *the best [angel]*
 And oghte moste have stonde in evene, *stood within angelic ranks*
 Towardes God he tok debat,
 And for that he was obstinat,
 1705 And wolde noght to trouthe encline,

- He fell forevere into ruine:
 And Adam ek in Paradis,
 Whan he stod most in al his pris *nobility*
 After th'astat of Innocence,
 1710 Agein the God brak his defence
 And fell out of his place aweie:
 And riht be such a maner weie
 The Jwes in here beste plit, *their best situation*
 Whan that thei scholden most parfit
 1715 Have stond upon the prophecie,
 Tho fellen thei to most folie,
 And Him which was fro hevene come,
 And of a maide his fleissh hath nome, *took*
 And was among hem bore and fedd,
 1720 As men that wolden noght be spedd
 Of Goddes Sone, with o vois
 Thei hinge and slowhe upon the crois. *hung; cross*
 Wherof the parfit of here Lawe *perfection*
 Fro thanne forth hem was withdrawe,
 1725 So that thei stonde of no merit,
 Bot in truage as folk soubgit *bondage; subject*
 Withoute propreté of place
 Thei liven out of Goddes grace,
 Dispers in alle londes oute. *Dispersed throughout all*
 1730 And thus the feith is come aboute,
 That whilom in the Jewes stod,
 Which is noght parfihliche good.
 To speke as it is nou befallé,
 Ther is a feith aboven alle,
 1735 In which the trouthe is comprehended,
 Wherof that we ben alle amended.

[THE CHRISTIANS]

- The hihe almyhti majesté,
 Of rihtwisnesse and of pité,
 The sinne which that Adam wroghte,
 1740 Whan He sih time, agein He boghte, *redeemed*
 1741 And sende His Sone fro the hevene *(see note)*
 To sette mannes Soule in evene,
 Which thanne was so sore falle
 Upon the point which was befallé,
 1745 That he ne mihte himself arise.
 Gregoire seith in his aprise, *teaching*
 It helpeth noght a man be bore,
 If Goddes Sone were unbore;
 For thanne thurgh the ferste sinne,

- 1750 Which Adam whilom broghte ous inne,
 Ther scholden alle men be lost;
 Bot Crist restoreth thilke lost,
 And boghte it with His fleissh and blod.
 And if we thenken hou it stod
- 1755 Of thilke rancoun which He payde, *ransom*
 As seint Gregoire it wrot and sayde, *(see note)*
 Al was behovely to the man. *profitable*
 For that wherof his wo began
 Was after cause of al his welthe,
- 1760 Whan He which is the welle of helthe,
 The hihe creatour of lif,
 Upon the nede of such a strif
 So wolde for His creature
 Take on Himself the forsaiture *penalty*
- 1765 And soffre for the mannes sake.
 Thus mai no reson wel forsake
 That thilke senne original *sin*
 Ne was the cause in special
 Of mannes worschipe ate laste, *honor*
- 1770 Which schal withouten ende laste.
 For be that cause the Godhede
 Assembled was to the manhede
 In the Virgine, where He nom
 Oure fleissh and verai man becom
- 1775 Of bodely fraternité;
 Wherof the man in his degré
 Stant more worth, as I have told,
 Than he stod erst be manyfold, *previously by many times over*
 Thurgh baptesme of the Newe Lawe,
- 1780 Of which Crist Lord is and felawe.
 And thus the hihe Goddes myht,
 Which was in the Virgine alyht,
 The mannes soule hath reconsiled,
 Which hadde longe ben exiled.
- 1785 So stant the feith upon believe,
 Withoute which mai non achieve
 To gete him paradis agein.
 Bot this believe is so certein,
 So full of grace and of vertu,
- 1790 That what man clepeth to Jhesu *appeals to*
 In clene lif forthwith good dede,
 He mai noght faile of hevene mede, *heaven's reward*
 Which taken hath the rihte feith;
 For elles, as the Gospel seith,
- 1795 Salvacion ther mai be non.
 And for to preche therupon

- Crist bad to Hise apostles alle,
 The whos pouer as nou is falle *Those whose*
 1799 On ous that ben of Holi Cherche,
 ☞ If we the goode dedes werche; *(see note)*
 For feith only sufficeth noght,
 Bot if good dede also be wroght.
- Confessor** Now were it good that thou forthi,
 Which thurgh baptesme proprely
 1805 Art unto Cristes feith professed,
 Bewar that thou be noght oppressed
 ☞ With Anticristes Lollardie. *(see note)*
 For as the Jwes prophecie
 Was set of God for advantage,
 1810 Riht so this newe tapinage *sect of deceivers*
 Of Lollardie goth aboute
 To sette Cristes feith in doute.
 The seintz that weren ous tofore,
 Be whom the feith was ferst upbore,
 1815 That Holi Cherche stod relieved,
 Thei oghten betre be believed
 Than these, whiche that men knowe
 Noght holy, thogh thei feigne and blowe
 Here Lollardie in mennes ere. *Their; ear*
- 1820 Bot if thou wolt live out of fere,
 Such newe lore, I rede, eschuie, *advise, avoid*
 And hold forth riht the weie and suie, *follow*
 As thine ancestres dede er this,
 1824 So schalt thou noght believe amis.
- ☞ Crist wroghte ferst and after tawhte, *created; taught (see note)*
 So that the dede His Word arawhte; *interpreted*
 He gaf ensample in His persone,
 And we the wordes have al one,
 Lich to the tree with leves grene,
 1830 Upon the which no fruit is sene.
 The priest Thoas, which of Minerve
- ☞ The temple hadde for to serve, *(see note)*
 And the Palladion of Troie
 Kepte under keie, for monoie *Kept locked up; bribe*
 1835 Of Antenor which he hath nome, *taken*
 Hath soffred Anthenor to come
 And the Palladion to stele, *steal*
 Wherof the worschipe and the wele *honor; prosperity*
 Of the Troiens was overthrowe.
- 1840 Bot Thoas at the same throwe,
 Whan Anthenor this juel tok, *jewel*
 Wynkende caste awei his lok *turned his look aside*

- For a deceipte and for a wyle: *wily trick*
 As he that scholde himself beguile,
 1845 He hidde his yhen fro the sihte, *eyes; sight*
 And wende wel that he so mihte *thought*
 Excuse his false conscience.
 I wot noght if thilke evidence *the same*
 Nou at this time in here estatz
 1850 Excuse mihte the prelatz,
 Knowende hou that the feith discreceth *Given that*
 And alle moral vertu cesseth,
 Wherof that thei the keies bere, *guard*
 Bot yit hem liketh noght to stere
 1855 Here gostliche yhe for to se *Their spiritual (inner) eye*
 The world in his adversité;
 Thei wol no labour undertake
 To kepe that hem is betake.
 Crist deide Himselfe for the feith,
 1860 Bot nou our feerfull prelat seith,
 ‘The lif is suete,’ and that he kepeth,
 So that the feith unholpe slepeth, *neglected*
 And thei unto here ese entenden
 And in here lust her lif despenden,
 1865 And every man do what him list. *what pleases him*
 Thus stant this world fulfild of mist,
 That no man seth the rihte weie.
 The wardes of the cherche keie *keepers*
 Thurgh mishandlinge ben mysweynt, *twisted askew*
 1870 The worldes wawe hath welnyh dreynt *wave*
 The schip which Peter hath to stiere,
 The forme is kept, bot the matiere
 Transformed is in other wise.
 Bot if thei weren gostli wise, *Unless; spiritually*
 1875 And that the prelatz weren goode,
 As thei be olde daies stode,
 It were thanne litel nede
 Among the men to taken hiede
 Of that thei hieren Pseudo telle, *False*
 1880 Which nou is come for to duelle,
 To sowe cokkel with the corn,
 So that the tilthe is nyh forlorn, *crop; lost*
 Which Crist sew ferst his oghne hond.
 Nou stant the cockel in the lond, *weeds*
 1885 Wher stod whilom the goode grein,
 For the prelatz nou, as men sein,
 Forslowthen that thei scholden tile.
 And that I trowe be the skile,
 Whan ther is lacke in hem above,

- 1890 The poeple is stranged to the love *estranged from*
 Of trouthe, in cause of ignorance.
 For wher ther is no pourveance *provision*
 Of liht, men erren in the derke. *wander*
 Bot if the prelatz wolden werke
- 1895 Upon the feith which thei ous teche,
 Men scholden noght here weie seche
 Withoute liht, as now is used:
 Men se the charge aldai refused,
 Which Holi Cherche hath undertake.
- ☞ Bot who that wolde ensample take, *(see note)*
- 1901 Gregoire upon his Omelie
 Agein the Slouthe of Prelacie
 Compleigneth him, and thus he seith:
 ‘Whan Peter, fader of the feith,
- 1905 At domesdai schal with him bringe
 Judeam, which thurgh his prechinge
 He wan, and Andrew with Achaie *with the Achaians*
 Schal come his dette for to paie,
 And Thomas ek with his beyete *gains*
- 1910 Of Ynde, and Poul the routes grete *India*
 Of sondri londes schal presente,
 And we fulfild of lond and rente, *property and income*
 Which of this world we holden hierre,
 With voide handes schul appiere, *empty*
- 1915 Touchende oure cure spirital, *spiritual duty*
 Which is our charge in special,
 I not what thing it mai amonte *do not know*
 Upon thilke ende of oure accompte,
 Wher Crist himself is auditour,
- 1920 Which takth non hiede of vein honour.’
 Th’office of the chancellerie
 Or of the kinges tresorie
 Ne for the writ ne for the taille *summons; tally stick*
 To warrant mai noght thanne availe;
- 1925 The world, which nou so wel we trowe, *trust*
 Schal make ous thanne bot a mowe: *grimace*
 So passe we withoute mede, *reward*
 That we non otherwise spede, *achieve our goal*
 Bot as we rede that he spedde, *Except as; succeeded*
- 1930 The which his lordes besant hedde *coin hid*
 And therupon gat non encress.
 Bot at this time natheles,
 What other man his thonk deserve,
 The world so lusti is to serve,
- 1935 That we with him ben all acorded,
 And that is wist and wel recorded *known*

- Thurghout this erthe in alle londes
 Let knyhtes winne with here hondes, *their*
 For oure tunge schal be stille
 1940 And stonde upon the fleissches wille. *bodily desire*
 It were a travail for to preche *labor*
 The feith of Crist, as for to teche
 The folk paiene, it wol nought be; *pagan*
 Bot every prelat holde his see
 1945 With al such ese as he mai gete
 Of lusti drinke and lusti mete,
 Wherof the bodi fat and full
 Is unto gostli labour dull *spiritual*
 And slowh to handle thilke plowh. *slow*
 1950 Bot elles we ben swifte ynowh
 Toward the worldes Avarice.
 And that is as a sacrifice,
 Which, after that th'apostel seith, *St. Paul*
 Is openly agein the feith
 1955 Unto th'idoles gove and granted. *gave*
 Bot natheles it is nou haunted, *practiced*
 And vertu changed into vice,
 So that largesce is Avarice,
 In whos chapitre now we trete."
Amans "Mi fader, this matiere is bete *discussed (beaten)*
 1961 So fer, that evere whil I live
 I schal the betre hiede give
 Unto miself be many weie.
 Bot over this nou wolde I preie
 1965 To wite what the branches are *know*
 Of Avarice, and hou thei fare
 Als wel in love as otherwise."
Confessor "Mi sone, and I thee schal devise
 In such a manere as thei stonde,
 1970 So that thou schalt hem understonde." *them*

[COVETOUSNESS]

- iii. *Agros iungit agris cupidus domibusque domosque,
 Possideat totam sic quasi solus humum.
 Solus et innumeros mulierum spirat amores,
 Vt sacra millenis sit sibi culta Venus.*¹

¹ *The cupidinous man joins fields to other fields, and houses to other houses, so that he alone might own nearly the whole landscape. And he alone pursues the love of innumerable women, so that Venus, sacred to thousands, might be worshiped by him alone.*

	<p>[Confessor] “Dame Avarice is noght soleine, Which is of gold the capiteine, Bot of hir court in sondri wise</p>	<p><i>solitary</i> <i>lady captain</i></p>
1974	<p>After the scole of hire apprise</p>	<p><i>instruction (expertise)</i></p>
15	<p>Sche hath of servantz manyon, Wherof that Covoitise is on; Which goth the large world aboute, To seche th'avantages oute, Wher that he mai the profit winne</p>	<p><i>many a one (see note)</i> <i>seek the sources of profit</i></p>
1980	<p>To Avarice, and bringth it inne. That on hald and that other draweth, Ther is no day which hem bedaweth, No mor the sonne than the mone, Whan ther is eny thing to done,</p>	<p><i>one</i> <i>dawns upon them</i> <i>sun; moon</i></p>
1985	<p>And namely with Covoitise; For he stant out of al assisse Of resonable mannes fare. Wher he pourposeth him to fare Upon his lucre and his beyete,</p>	<p><i>manner (sort)</i> <i>doings</i> <i>money; possessions</i></p>
1990	<p>The smale path, the large strete, The furlong and the longe mile, Al is bot on for thilke while. And for that he is such on holde, Dame Avarice him hath withholde,</p>	<p><i>wide street</i> <i>considered such a one</i> <i>engaged in her service</i></p>
1995	<p>As he which is the principal Outward, for he is overal A pourveour and an asprie. For riht as of an hungri pie The storve bestes ben awaited,</p>	<p><i>procurer; spy</i> <i>magpie</i> <i>dead; attended</i></p>
2000	<p>Riht so is Covoitise afaited To loke where he mai pourchace, For be his wille he wolde embrace Al that this wyde world beclippeth; Bot evere he somewhat overhippeth,</p>	<p><i>prepared</i> <i>procure</i> <i>by</i> <i>encompasses</i> <i>overlooks (skips over)</i></p>
2005	<p>That he ne mai noght al fulfille The lustes of his gredi wille. Bot where it falleth in a lond, That Covoitise in myhti hond Is set, it is ful hard to fiede;</p>	<p><i>So that</i> <i>support oneself</i></p>
2010	<p>For thanne he takth non other hiede, Bot that he mai pourchace and gete. His conscience hath al forgete, And not what thing it mai amonte That he schal afterward acompte.</p>	<p><i>Except</i> <i>knows not; cost</i> <i>confess (square accounts)</i></p>
2015	<p>Bote as the luce in his degré Of tho that lasse ben than he The fisshes griedeli devoureth,</p>	<p><i>pike; its</i> <i>those; smaller</i></p>

- So that no water hem socoureth,
 Riht so no lawe mai rescowe
 2020 Fro him that wol no riht allowe;
 For wher that such on is of myht,
 His will schal stonde in stede of riht.
 Thus be the men destruid fulofte,
 Til that the grete God alofte
 2025 Agein so gret a covoitise *covetousness*
 Redresce it in His oghne wise:
 And in ensample of alle tho
 I finde a tale write so,
 The which, for it is good to liere, *teach*
 2030 Hierafterward thou schalt it hiere.

[TALE OF VIRGIL'S MIRROR]

- ☞ Whan Rome stod in noble plit, *(see note)*
 Virgile, which was tho parfit, *who was then unblemished*
 A mirour made of his clergie *by means of his learning*
 And sette it in the tounes ye *eye (i.e., public view)*
 2035 Of marbre on a piler withoute;
 That thei be thritty mile aboute
 Be daie and ek also be nyhte
 In that mirour beholde myhte
 Here enemys, if eny were, *Their*
 2040 With al here ordinance there,
 Which thei agein the cité caste,
 So that, whil thilke mirour laste, *while this; endures*
 Ther was no lond which mihte achieve *succeed*
 With werre Rome for to grieve; *aggrieve*
 2045 Wherof was gret envie tho. *then*
 And fell that ilke time so, *same*
 That Rome hadde werres stronge *fierce wars*
 Agein Cartage, and stoden longe
 The tuo cites upon debat. *at war*
 2050 Cartage sih the stronge astat *saw; powerful condition*
 Of Rome in thilke mirour stonde,
 And thoghte al prively to fonde *secretly to discover a means*
 To overthrowe it be som wyle. *by some stratagem*
 And Hanybal was thilke while
 2055 The prince and ledere of Cartage,
 Which hadde set al his corage *inclination*
 Upon knihthod in such a wise,
 That he be worthi and be wise *by worthy and wise men*
 And be non othre was conseiled,
 2060 Wherof the world is yit merveiled
 Of the maistries that he wroghte *conquests*

- Upon the marches whiche he soghte. *territories*
 And fell in thilke time also,
 The king of Puile, which was tho *Apulia*
 2065 Thoghte agein Rome to rebelle,
 And thus was take the querele *initiated the debate [about]*
 Hou to destruie this mirour.
 Of Rome tho was emperour
 Crassus, which was so coveitous,
 2070 That he was evere desirous
 Of gold to gete the pilage;
 Wherof that Puile and ek Cartage
 With philosophres wise and grete
 Begunne of this matiere trete,
 2075 And ate laste in this degré
 Ther weren philosophres thre,
 To do this thing whiche undertoke,
 And therupon thei with hem toke
 A gret tresor of gold in cophres,
 2080 To Rome and thus these philisophres
 Togedre in compainie wente,
 Bot no man wiste what thei mente. *knew; intended*
 Whan thei to Rome come were,
 So prively thei duelte there,
 2085 As thei that thoghten to deceive.
 Was non that mihte of hem perceive,
 Til thei in sondri stedes have *places*
 Here gold under the ground begrave *Their; buried*
 In tuo tresors, that to beholde *two repositories*
 2090 Thei scholden seme as thei were olde. *ancient*
 And so forth thanne upon a day
 Al openly in good arai
 To th'emperour thei hem presente,
 And tolden it was here entente
 2095 To duellen under his servise.
 And he hem axeth in what wise;
 And thei him tolde in such a plit,
 That eche of hem hadde a spirit,
 The which slepende a nyht appiereth *while they slept*
 2100 And hem be sondri dremes lereth *instruct*
 After the world that hath betid.
 Under the ground if oght be hid
 Of old tresor at eny throwe, *time*
 Thei schull it in here swevenes knowe; *dreams*
 2105 And upon this condicioun,
 Thei sein, what gold under the toun
 Of Rome is hid, thei wole it finde,
 Ther scholde noght be left behinde, *whatever*

- Be so that he the halvendel
 2110 Hem grante, and he assenteth wel;
 And thus cam Sleighte for to duelle
 With Covoitise, as I thee telle.
 This emperour bad redily
 That thei be logged faste by
 2115 Where he his oghne body lay;
 And whan it was amorwe day,
 That on of hem seith that he mette
 Wher he a goldhord scholde fette.
 Wherof this emperour was glad,
 2120 And therupon anon he bad
 His mynours for to go and myne,
 And he himself of that covine
 Goth forth withal, and at his hond
 The tresor redi there he fond,
 2125 Where as thei seide it scholde be;
 And who was thanne glad bot he?
 Upon that other dai secounde
 Thei have another goldhord founde,
 Which the seconde maister tok
 2130 Upon his swevene and undertok.
 And thus the sothe experience
 To th'emperour gaf such credence,
 That al his trist and al his feith
 So sikerliche on hem he leith,
 2135 Of that he fond him so relieved,
 That thei ben parfitli believed,
 As thogh thei were goddes thre.
 Nou herkne the soutileté.
 The thridde maister scholde mete,
 2140 Which, as thei seiden, was unmete
 Above hem alle, and couthe most;
 And he withoute noise or bost
 Al priveli, so as he wolde,
 Upon the morwe his swevene tolde
 2145 To th'emperour riht in his ere,
 And seide him that he wiste where
 A tresor was so plentivous
 Of gold and ek so precious
 Of jeuëals and of riche stones,
 2150 That unto alle hise hors at ones
 It were a charge sufficant.
 This lord upon this covenant
 Was glad, and axeth where it was.
 The maister seide, under the glas,
 2155 And tolde him eke, as for the myn,
- Provided that; half part*
Deceit
he himself lay
dreamed
get (fetch)
group of conspirators
treasure
dream; declared
trust
truly
satisfied
trick (stratagem)
dream
beyond comparison
knew of
outcry
secretly
dream
ear
knew
mirror
also, with regard to the mining

- He wolde ordeigne such engin *devices*
 That thei the werk schull undersette *support*
 With tymber, that withoute lette *so that without hindrance*
 Men mai the tresor sauflī delve, *safely excavate*
 2160 So that the mirour be himselve *by itself*
 Withoute empeirement schal stonde.
 And this the maister upon honde
 Hath undertake in alle weie.
 This lord, which hadde his wit aweie
 2165 And was with Covoitise blent, *blinded*
 Anon therto gaf his assent;
 And thus thei myne forth withal,
 The timber set up overal,
 Wherof the piler stod upriht;
 2170 Til it befell upon a nyht
 These clerkes, whan thei were war
 Hou that the timber only bar
 The piler wher the mirour stod
 (Here sleihte no man understod), *Their deception*
 2175 Thei go be nyhte unto the myne
 With pich, with soulphe, and with rosine, *pitch*
 And whan the cité was aslepe,
 A wylde fyr into the depe
 Thei caste among the timberwerk,
 2180 And so forth, whil the nyht was derk,
 Desguised in a povere arai *Disguised as beggars*
 Thei passeden the toun er dai. *slipped out of; before*
 And whan thei come upon an hell, *hill*
 Thei sihen how the mirour fell, *saw*
 2185 Wherof thei maden joie ynowh,
 And ech of hem with other lowh, *laughed*
 And seiden, 'Lo, what coveitise
 Mai do with hem that be noght wise!
 And that was proved afterward,
 2190 For every lond, to Romeward
 Which hadde be soubgit tofore,
 Whan this mirour was so forlore *destroyed*
 And thei the wonder herde seie, *[when] they heard tell of the wonder*
 Anon begunne desobeie *Soon began to rebel*
 2195 With werres upon every side; *Wars*
 And thus hath Rome lost his pride
 And was defouled overal.
 For this I finde of Hanybal,
 That he of Romeins in a dai,
 2200 Whan he hem fond out of arai, *found them in disorder*
 So gret a multitude slowh, *slew*
 That of gold ringes, whiche he drowh *pulled*

- Of gentil handes that ben dede, *From; who were dead*
 Buisshelles fulle thre, I rede, *Bushels*
 2205 He felde, and made a bregge also, *filled; bridge*
 That he mihte over Tibre go
 Upon the corps that dede were *corpses; dead*
 Of the Romeins, whiche he slowh there.
 Bot now to speke of the juisse, *sentence (punishment)*
 2210 The which after the covoitise
 Was take upon this emperour,
 For he destruide the mirour; *Because*
 It is a wonder for to hiere.
 The Romeins maden a chaiere
 2215 And sette here emperour therinne,
 And seiden, for he wolde winne
 Of gold the superfluité,
 Of gold he scholde such plenté
 Receive til he seide 'Ho!' *Whoa*
 2220 And with gold, which thei hadden tho
 Buillende hot withinne a panne,
 Into his mouth thei poure thanne. *Boiling*
 And thus the thirst of gold was queynt, *pour*
 2224 With gold which hadde ben atteight. *quenched*
Confessor Wherof, mi sone, thou miht hiere, *corrupted*
 Whan Covoitise hath lost the stiere *helm*
 Of resonable governance,
 Ther falleth ofte gret vengeance.
 For ther mai be no worse thing
 2230 Than Covoitise aboute a king.
 If it in his persone be,
 It doth the more adversité; *causes more harm*
 And if it in his conseil stonde,
 It bringth alday meschief to honde *perpetually*
 2235 Of commun harm; and if it growe
 Withinne his court, it wol be knowe,
 For thanne schal the king be piled. *plundered*
 The man which hath hise londes tiled,
 Awaiteth noght more redily
 2240 The hervest, than thei gredily
 Ne maken thanne warde and wacche,
 Wher thei the profit mihten cacche:
 And yit fulofte it falleth so,
 As men mai sen among hem tho, *then*
 2245 That he which most coveiteth faste
 Hath lest avantage ate laste.
 For whan fortune is theragein,
 Thogh he coveite, it is in vein;
 The happes be noght alle liche: *circumstances of fortune; the same*

- 2250 On is mad povere, another riche, *One; made poor*
 The court to some doth profit,
 And some ben evere in o plit;
 And yit thei bothe aliche sore
 Coveite, bot fortune is more
 2255 Unto that o part favorable.
 And thogh it be noght resonable,
 This thing a man mai sen alday,
 Wherof that I thee telle may
 A fair ensample in remembrance,
 2260 Hou every man mot take his chance *must accept his fortunes*
 Or of richesse or of poverte. *Either of*
 Hou so it stonde of the decerte, *what is deserved*
 Hier is noght everything aquit, *remitted*
 For ofte a man mai se this yit,
 2265 That who best doth, lest thonk schal have; *least thanks*
 It helpeth noght the world to crave,
 Which out of reule and of mesure
 Hath evere stonde in aventure
 Als wel in court as elles where:
 2270 And hou in olde daies there
 It stod, so as the thinges felle,
 I thenke a tale for to telle.

[TALE OF THE TWO COFFERS]

- In a cronique this I rede.
 Aboute a king, as moste nede, *as is appropriate*
 2275 Ther was of knyhtes and squiers
 Gret route, and ek of officers: *company*
 Some of long time him hadden served,
 ¶ And thoghten that thei have deserved *(see note)*
 Avancement, and gon withoute;
 2280 And some also ben of the route *group*
 That comen bot a while agon,
 And thei avanced were anon. *soon*
 These olde men upon this thing,
 So as thei dorste, agein the king
 2285 Among hemself compleignen ofte:
 Bot ther is nothing seid so softe,
 That it ne comth out ate laste;
 The king it wiste, and als so faste, *knew*
 As he which was of hih prudence,
 2290 He schop therfore an evidence *made; instructive example*
 Of hem that pleignen in that cas,
 To knowe in whos defalte it was.
 And al withinne his oghne entente,

- That no man wiste what it mente,
 2295 Anon he let tuo cofres make *had two*
 Of o semblance and of o make, *one likeness*
 So lich that no lif thilke throwe *alike; person at that time*
 That on mai fro that other knowe: *one*
 Thei were into his chambre broght,
 2300 Bot no man wot why thei be wroght,
 And natheles the king hath bede *commanded*
 That thei be set in privé stede. *place*
 As he that was of wisdom slih, *sly*
 Whan he therto his time sih, *saw*
 2305 Al prively, that non it wiste, *knew*
 Hise oghne hondes that o kiste *By his own hands [he filled]; chest*
 Of fin gold and of fin perrie, *precious stones*
 The which out of his tresorie
 Was take, anon he felde full; *filled full*
 2310 That other cofre of straw and mull *rubbish*
 With stones meind he felde also. *mingled; filled*
 Thus be thei fulle bothe tuo,
 So that erliche upon a day *early*
 He bad withinne, ther he lay,
 2315 Ther scholde be tofore his bed
 A bord upset and faire spred; *set up a table*
 And thanne he let the cofres fette, *had the coffers brought*
 Upon the bord and dede hem sette.
 He knew the names wel of tho,
 2320 The whiche agein him grucche so, *against; grumbled*
 Bothe of his chambre and of his halle,
 Anon and sende for hem alle,
 And seide to hem in this wise:
 "Ther schal no man his happ despise; *chance*
 2325 I wot wel ye have longe served,
 And God wot what ye have deserved. *knows*
 Bot if it is along on me *it is my fault (owing to me)*
 Of that ye unavanced be,
 Or elles it belong on you, *it (the fault) is owing to you*
 2330 The sothe schal be proved nou,
 To stoppe with youre evele word.
 Lo hier tuo cofres on the bord: *table*
 Ches which you list of bothe tuo; *Choose; desire*
 And witeth wel that on of tho
 2335 Is with tresor so full begon, *filled*
 That if ye happe therupon,
 Ye schull be riche men forevere.
 Now ches and tak which you is levere: *choose; preferable to you*
 Bot be wel war, er that ye take; *cautious before*
 2340 For of that on I undertake *one*

- Ther is no maner good therinne,
 Wherof ye mihten profit winne.
 Now goth togedre of on assent *one*
 And taketh youre avisement,
 2345 For bot I you this dai avance,
 It stant upon youre oghne chance
 Al only in defalte of grace.
 So schal be schewed in this place *shown*
 Upon you alle wel afyn,
 2350 That no defalte schal be myn.
 Thei knelen alle and with o vois
 The king thei thonken of this chois:
 And after that thei up arise,
 And gon aside and hem advise,
 2355 And ate laste thei acorde; *finally they agree*
 Wherof her tale to recorde,
 To what issue thei be falle,
 A kniht schal speke for hem alle.
 He kneleth doun unto the king,
 2360 And seith that thei upon this thing,
 Or for to winne or for to lese,
 Ben alle avised for to chese.
 Tho tok this kniht a yerde on honde, *wand*
 And goth there as the cofres stonde, *where*
 2365 And with assent of everichon
 He leith his yerde upon that on,
 And seith the king hou thilke same
 Thei chese in reguerdoun be name, *recompense (reward)*
 And preith him that thei mote it have. *might*
 2370 The king, which wolde his honour save,
 Whan he hath herd the commun vois,
 Hath granted hem here oghne chois
 And tok hem therupon the keie. *gave them; key*
 Bot for he wolde it were seie *seen*
 2375 What good thei have, as thei suppose,
 He bad anon the cofre uncloze, *open*
 Which was fulfild with straw and stones.
 Thus be thei served al at ones.
 This king thanne in the same stede *place*
 2380 Anon that other cofre undede, *opened*
 Where as thei sihen gret richesse, *saw*
 Wel more than thei couthen gesse. *could estimate (evaluate)*
 'Lo,' seith the king, 'nou mai ye se
 That ther is no defalte in me; *lack*
 2385 Forthi miself I wole aquyte,
 And bereth ye youre oghne wyte *blame*
 Of that fortune hath you refused.' *With regard to what*

Thus was this wise king excused,
 And thei lefte of here evele speche *left off their*
 2390 And mercy of here king beseche.

[TALE OF THE BEGGARS AND THE TWO PASTRIES]

Somdiel to this matiere lik *Somewhat; akin*
 I finde a tale, hou Frederik,
 Of Rome that time emperour,
 2394 Herde, as he wente, a gret clamour
 ☞ Of tuo beggers upon the weie. *(see note)*
 That on of hem began to seie, *say*
 'Ha lord, wel mai the man be riche
 Whom that a king list for to riche.' *chooses to make rich*
 That other saide nothing so,
 2400 Bot, 'He is riche and wel bego,
 To whom that God wole sende wele.' *prosperity*
 And thus thei maden wordes fele, *many*
 Wherof this lord hath hiede nome, *taken notice*
 And dede hem bothe for to come
 2405 To the paleis, wher he schal ete,
 And bad ordeine for here mete *food*
 Tuo pastes, whiche he let do make. *Two pastries; ordered to be made*
 A capoun in that on was bake, *capon*
 And in that other for to winne
 2410 Of florins al that mai withinne
 He let do pute a gret richesse;
 And evene aliche, as man mai gesse, *identical*
 Outward thei were bothe tuo.
 This begger was comanded tho,
 2415 He that which hield him to the king,
 That he ferst chese upon this thing:
 He sih hem, bot he felte hem noght,
 So that upon his oghne thoght
 He ches the capoun and forsok
 2420 That other, which his fela tok.
 Bot whanne he wiste hou that it ferde,
 He seide alowd, that men it herde,
 'Nou have I certainly conceived
 That he mai lihtly be deceived,
 2425 That tristeth unto mannes helpe;
 Bot wel is him whom God wol helpe,
 For he stant on the siker side,
 Which elles scholde go beside, *more certain*
 I se mi fela wel recovere, *go astray/do without*
 2430 And I mot duelle stille povere.'

- Thus spak this begger his entente,
 And povere he cam and povere he wente;
 Of that he hath richesse soght,
 His infortune it wolde noght.
 2435 So mai it schewe in sondri wise,
 Betwen fortune and covoitise
 The chance is cast upon a dee; *die (dice)*
 Bot yit fulofte a man mai se
 Ynowe of suche natheles,
 2440 Whiche evere pute hemself in press
 To gete hem good, and yit thei faile.

[COVETOUSNESS OF LOVERS]

- And for to speke of this entaile *construction*
 Touchende of love in thi matiere,
 Mi goode sone, as thou miht hiere,
 2445 That riht as it with tho men stod *those*
 Of infortune of worldes good,
 As thou hast herd me telle above,
 Riht so fulofte it stant be love.
 Thogh thou coveite it everemore,
 2450 Thou schalt noght have o diel the more, *a single part more*
 Bot only that which thee is schape, *is appointed for you*
 The remenant is bot a jape. *jest*
 And natheles ynowe of tho
 Ther ben, that nou coveiten so,
 2455 That where as thei a womman se,
 Ye ten or tuelle thogh ther be,
 The love is nou so unavised, *unwise (untutored)*
 That wher the beauté stant assised, *judged*
 The mannes herte anon is there,
 2460 And rouneth tales in hire ere, *whispers; ear*
 And seith hou that he loveth streite, *devotedly*
 And thus he set him to coveite,
 An hundred thogh he sihe aday. *saw every day*
 So wolde he more thanne he mai;
 2465 Bot for the grete covoitise
 Of sotie and of fol emprise *folly; boldness*
 In ech of hem he fint somewhat *finds something*
 That pleseth him, or this or that; *either; or*
 Som on, for sche is whit of skin, *one*
 2470 Som on, for sche is noble of kin,
 Som on, for sche hath rodi chieke, *rosy cheeks*
 Som on, for that sche semeth mieke, *meek*
 Som on, for sche hath yhen greie, *gleaming eyes*
 Som on, for sche can lawhe and pleie, *laugh; play*

- 2475 Som on, for sche is long and smal, *tall; petite*
 Som on, for sche is lyte and tall, *comely (elegant)*
 Som on, for sche is pale and bleche, *of fair complexion*
 Som on, for sche is softe of speche,
 Som on, for that sche is camused, *pug-nosed*
 2480 Som on, for sche hath noght ben used, *is a virgin*
 Som on, for sche can daunce and singe;
 So that som thing to his likinge
 He fint, and thogh no more he fiele, *finds*
 Bot that sche hath a litel hiele, *small heel*
 2485 It is ynow that he therfore
 Hire love, and thus an hundred score,
 Whil thei be newe, he wolde he hadde;
 Whom he forsakth, sche schal be badde.
- ☞ The blinde man no colour demeth, *perceives (see note)*
 2490 But al is on, riht as him semeth; *one; it seems to him*
 So hath his lust no juggement,
 Whom covoitise of love blent.
 Him thenkth that to his covoitise
 Hou al the world ne mai suffise,
 2495 For be his wille he wolde have alle,
 If that it mihte so befallē.
 Thus is he commun as the strete,
 I sette noght of his beyete. *promiscuous; street gain*
- Confessor** Mi sone, hast thou such covoitise?"
- Amans** "Nai, fader, such love I despise,
 2501 And whil I live schal don evere,
 For in good feith yit hadde I levere, *rather*
 Than to coveite in such a weie,
 To ben forevere til I deie
 2505 As povere as Job, and loveles,
 Outaken on, for haveles *Except for one; possessionless*
 His thonkes is no man alyve. *Willingly*
 For that a man scholde al unthryve *entirely fail*
 Ther oghte no wisman coveite, *In matters where*
 2510 The lawe was noght set so streite:
 Forthi miself withal to save,
 Such on ther is I wolde have,
 And non of al these othre mo."
- Confessor** "Mi sone, of that thou woldest so,
 2515 I am noght wroth, bot over this *angry*
 I wol thee tellen hou it is.
 For ther be men, whiche otherwise,
 Riht only for the covoitise
 Of that thei sen a womman riche,
 2520 Ther wol thei al here love affiche; *fix*
 Noght for the beauté of hire face,

- Ne yit for vertu ne for grace,
 Which sche hath elles riht ynowh,
 Bot for the park and for the plowh,
 2525 And other thing which therto longeth.
 For in non other wise hem longeth
 To love, bot thei profit finde;
 And if the profit be behinde,
 Here love is evere lesse and lesse,
 2530 For after that sche hath richesse,
 Her love is of proporcion.
 If thou hast such condicion,
 Mi sone, tell riht as it is."
- Confessio Amantis** "Min holi fader, nay ywiss,
 2535 Condicion such have I non.
 For trewli, fader, I love oon
 So wel with al myn hertes thoght,
 That certes, thogh sche hadde noght,
 And were as povere as Medea,
 2540 Which was exiled for Creusa,
 I wolde hir noght the lasse love;
 Ne thogh sche were at hire above,
 As was the riche qwen Candace,
 Which to deserve love and grace
 2545 To Alisandre, that was king,
 Gaf many a worthi riche thing,
 Or elles as Pantasilee,
 Which was the quen of Feminee,
 And gret richesse with hir nam,
 2550 Whan sche for love of Hector cam
 To Troie in rescousse of the toun,
 I am of such condicion,
 That thogh mi ladi of hirselve
 Were also riche as suche tuelve,
 2555 I couthe noght, thogh it wer so,
 No betre love hir than I do.
 For I love in so plein a wise,
 That for to speke of coveitise,
 As for poverte or for richesse
 2560 Mi love is nouthor mor ne lesse.
 For in good feith I trowe this,
 So coveitous no man ther is,
 Forwhy and he mi ladi sihe,
 That he thurgh lokinge of his yhe
 2565 Ne scholde have such a strok withinne,
 That for no gold he mihte winne
 He scholde noght hire love asterte,
 Bot if he lefte there his herte;
- (i.e., pasture land and arable land)*
pertain
the land of the Amazons
took
rescue
Such that if he; saw
escape

- Be so it were such a man,
 2570 That couthe skile of a womman. *knew the craft*
 For ther be men so ruide some,
 Whan thei among the wommen come,
 Thei gon under proteccioun,
 That love and his affeccioun
 2575 Ne schal noght take hem be the slieve;
 For thei ben out of that believe,
 Hem lusteth of no ladi chiere,
 Bot evere thenken there and hierie
 Wher that here gold is in the cofre,
 2580 And wol non other love profre:
 Bot who so wot what love amounteth *is worth*
 And be resoun trewliche acompteth,
 Than mai he knowe and taken hiede
 That al the lust of wommanhiede,
 2585 Which mai ben in a ladi face,
 Mi ladi hath, and ek of grace
 If men schull given hire a pris, *just appraisal*
 Thei mai wel seie hou sche is wys
 And sobre and simple of contenance,
 2590 And al that to good governance
 Belongeth of a worthi wiht
 Sche hath pleinli: for thilke nyht
 That sche was bore, as for the nones
 Nature sette in hire at ones
 2595 Beauté with bounté so besein, *goodness*
 That I mai wel afferme and sein,
 I sawh yit nevere creature
 Of comelihiéd and of feture *gracefulness*
 In eny kinges regioun
 2600 Be lich hire in comparisoun:
 And therto, as I have you told,
 Yit hath sche more a thousandfold
 Of bounté, and schortli to telle,
 Sche is the pure hed and welle
 2605 And mirour and ensample of goode.
 Who so hir vertus understode,
 Me thenkth it oughte ynow suffise
 Withouten other covoitise
 To love such on and to serve,
 2610 Which with hire chiere can deserve *countenance*
 To be beloved betre ywiss *indeed*
 Than sche per cas that richest is *by chance who*
 And hath of gold a milion.
 Such hath be myn opinion
 2615 And evere schal. Bot natheles,

- I seie noght sche is haveles, *destitute*
 That sche nys riche and wel at ese, *is not*
 And hath ynow wherwith to plesse
 Of worldes good whom that hire liste;
 2620 Bot o thing wolde I wel ye wiste, *knew*
 That nevere for no worldes good
 Min herte untoward hire stod,
 Bot only riht for pure love;
 That wot the hihe God above. *knows*
 2625 Nou, fader, what seie ye therto?"
Confessor "Mi sone, I seie it is wel do.
 For tak of this riht good believe,
 What man that wole himself relieve
 To love in eny other wise,
 2630 He schal wel finde his coveitise
 Schal sore grieve him ate laste,
 For such a love mai noght laste.
 Bot nou, men sein, in oure daies
 Men maken bot a fewe assaies, *only; attempts*
 2635 Bot if the cause be richesse; *Unless*
 Forthi the love is wel the lesse.
 And who that wolde ensamples telle,
 Be olde daies as thei felle,
 Than mihte a man wel understonde
 2640 Such love mai noght longe stonde.
 Now herkne, sone, and thou schalt hierre
 A gret ensample of this matiere.

[TALE OF THE KING AND HIS STEWARD'S WIFE]

- To trete upon the cas of love,
 So as we tolden hierre above,
 2645 I finde write a wonder thing.
 Of Puile whilom was a king, *Apulia*
 A man of hih complexioun *noble spirit*
 And yong, bot his affeccioun
 After the nature of his age
 Was yit noght falle in his corage *(see note)*
 2651 The lust of wommen for to knowe. *enjoyment*
 So it betidde upon a throwe *happened; time*
 This lord fell into gret seknesse: *sickness*
 Phisique hath don the besinesse
 2655 Of sondri cures manyon *many diverse treatments*
 To make him hol; and therupon
 A worthi maister which ther was *learned scholar*
 Gaf him conseil upon this cas,
 That if he wolde have parfit hele, *health*

- 2660 He scholde with a womman dele, *have intercourse*
 A freissh, a yong, a lusti wiht, *creature*
 To don him compaignie a nyht; *at*
 For thanne he seide him redily,
 That he schal be al hol therby, *well*
- 2665 And otherwise he kneu no cure.
 This king, which stod in aventure *in doubt*
 Of lif and deth, for medicine
 Assented was, and of covine *into [his] confidence*
 His steward, whom he tristeth wel, *trusted*
- 2670 He tok, and tolde him everydel, *everything*
 Hou that this maister hadde seid.
 And therupon he hath him preid
 And charged upon his ligance, *allegiance*
 That he do make porveance *cause arrangements to be made*
- 2675 Of such on as be covenable *one; suitable*
 For his plesance and delitable;
 And bad him, hou that evere it stod,
 That he schal spare for no good, *cost*
 For his will is riht wel to paie. *focused on pleasure [or, to pay generously]*
- 2680 The steward seide he wolde assaie. *try*
 Bot nou hierafter thou schalt wite, *know*
 As I finde in the bokes write,
 What coveitise in love doth.
 This steward, for to telle soth, *to speak the truth*
- 2685 Amonges al the men alyve
 A lusti ladi hath to wyve,
 Which natheles for gold he tok *Whom he married for wealth*
 And noght for love, as seith the bok.
 A riche marchant of the lond
- 2690 Hir fader was, and hire fond
 So worthily, and such richesse
 Of worldes good and such largesse
 With hire he gaf in mariage,
 That only for thilke avantage
- 2695 Of good this steward hath hire take,
 For lucre and noght for loves sake, *money*
 And that was afterward wel seene.
 Nou herkne what it wolde meene.
- 2700 This steward in his oghne herte *own*
 Sih that his lord mai noght asterte *Saw; escape*
 His maladie, bot he have *unless*
 A lusti womman him to save,
 And thoghte he wolde give ynowh
 Of his tresor; wherof he drowh
- 2705 Gret coveitise into his mynde,
 And sette his honour fer behynde. *disregarded his honor*

	Thus he, whom gold hath overset,	<i>overwhelmed</i>
	Was trapped in his oghne net;	
	The gold hath mad hise wittes lame,	
2710	So that sechende his oghne schame	
	He rouneth in the kinges ere,	<i>whispers; ear</i>
	And seide him that he wiste where	<i>knew</i>
	A gentile and a lusti on	
	Tho was, and thider wolde he gon.	<i>There</i>
2715	Bot he mot give giftes grete;	<i>must</i>
	For bot it be thurgh gret beyete	<i>possessions</i>
	Of gold, he seith, he schal noght spede.	<i>succeed</i>
	The king him bad upon the nede	
	That take an hundred pound he scholde,	
2720	And give it where that he wolde,	
	Be so it were in worthi place.	<i>Provided that</i>
	And thus to stonde in loves grace	
	This king his gold hath abandouned.	
	And whan this tale was full rouned,	<i>arrangement was secretly agreed upon</i>
2725	The steward tok the gold and wente,	
	Withinne his herte and many a wente	<i>contrivance</i>
	Of coveitise thanne he caste,	
	Wherof a pourpos ate laste	
	Agein love and agein his riht	<i>Against</i>
2730	He tok, and seide hou thilke nyht	
	His wif schal ligge be the king.	<i>lie by</i>
	And goth thenkende upon this thing	
	Toward his in, til he cam hom	<i>dwelling</i>
	Into the chambre, and thanne he nom	<i>took</i>
2735	His wif, and told hire al the cas.	
	And sche, which red for schame was,	
	With bothe hire handes hath him preid	
	Knelende and in this wise seid,	
	That sche to reson and to skile	<i>within law and reason</i>
2740	In what thing that he bidde wile	<i>commanded</i>
	Is redy for to don his heste,	<i>behest</i>
	Bot this thing were noght honeste,	<i>honorable</i>
	That he for gold hire scholde selle.	
	And he tho with hise wordes felle	<i>then; cruel (fierce)</i>
2745	Forth with his gastly contenance	<i>frightening expression</i>
	Seith that sche schal don obeissance	<i>be obedient</i>
	And folwe his will in every place.	
	And thus thurgh strengthe of his manace	
	Hir innocence is overlad,	<i>overwhelmed</i>
2750	Wherof sche was so sore adrad	
	That sche his will mot nede obeie.	
	And therupon was schape a weie,	
	That he his oghne wif be nyhte	

- Hath out of alle mennes sihte
 2755 So prively that non it wiste
 Broght to the king, which as him liste *who, as it pleased him*
 Mai do with hire what he wolde.
 For whan sche was ther as sche scholde,
 With him abedde under the cloth, *bedcovers*
 2760 The steward tok his leve and goth
 Into a chambre faste by. *close by*
 Bot hou he slep, that wot noght I,
 For he sih cause of jelousie.
 Bot he, which hath the compainie
 2765 Of such a lusti on as sche,
 Him thoghte that of his degré
 Ther was no man so wel at ese.
 Sche doth al that sche mai to plese,
 So that his herte al hol sche hadde;
 2770 And thus this king his joie ladde,
 Til it was nyh upon the day.
 The steward thanne wher sche lay
 Cam to the bedd, and in his wise
 Hath bede that sche scholde arise. *asked*
 2775 The king seith, 'Nay, sche schal noght go.'
 His steward seide agein, 'Noght so;
 For sche mot gon er it be knowe,
 And so I swor at thilke throwe, *on that occasion*
 Whan I hire fette to you hierе.' *brought*
 2780 The king his tale wol noght hierе,
 And seith hou that he hath hire boght,
 Forthi sche schal departe noght,
 Til he the brighte dai beholde.
 And cawhte hire in hise armes folde, *the embrace of his arms*
 2785 As he which liste for to pleie,
 And bad his steward gon his weie,
 And so he dede agein his wille.
 And thus his wif abedde stille
 Lay with the king the longe nyht,
 2790 Til that it was hih sonne lyht.
 Bot who sche was he knew nothing.
 Tho cam the steward to the king
 And preide him that withoute schame
 In savinge of hire goode name
 2795 He myhte leden hom agein
 This lady, and hath told him plein
 Hou that it was his oghne wif.
 The king his ere unto this strif *ear*
 Hath leid, and whan that he it herde,
 2800 Welnyh out of his wit he ferde,

- And seide, 'Ha, caitif most of alle,
 Wher was it evere er this befalle,
 That eny cokard in this wise
 Betok his wif for coveitise?
 2805 Thou hast bothe hire and me beguiled
 And ek thin oghne astat reviled,
 Wherof that buxom unto thee
 Hierafter schal sche nevere be.
 For this avou to God I make,
 2810 After this day if I thee take,
 Thou schalt ben honged and todrawe.
 Nou loke anon thou be withdrawe,
 So that I se thee neveremore.'
 This steward thanne dradde him sore,
 2815 With al the haste that he mai
 And fledde awei that same dai,
 And was exiled out of londe.
 Lo, there a nyce housebonde,
 Which thus hath lost his wif forevere!
 2820 Bot natheles sche hadde a levere:
 The king hire weddeth and honoureth,
 Wherof hire name sche socoureth,
 Which erst was lost thurgh coveitise
 Of him, that ladde hire other wise,
 2825 And hath himself also forlore.
Confessor Mi sone, be thou war therfore,
 Wher thou schalt love in eny place,
 That thou no covoitise embrace,
 The which is noght of loves kinde.
 2830 Bot for al that a man mai finde
 Nou in this time of thilke rage
 Ful gret desese in mariage,
 Whan venym melleth with the sucre
 And mariage is mad for lucre,
 2835 Or for the lust or for the hele.
 What man that schal with outhur dele,
 He mai noght faile to repente."
Amans "Mi fader, such is myn entente:
 Bot natheles good is to have,
 2840 For good mai ofte time save
 The love which scholde elles spille.
 Bot God, which wot myn hertes wille,
 I dar wel take to witnesse;
 Yit was I nevere for richesse
 2845 Beset with mariage non.
 For al myn herte is upon on
 So frely, that in the persone
- most miserable wretch of all*
simpleton
Surrendered
obedient
vow
feared him greatly
foolish
preferable [husband]
remedied
earlier
disgraced
nature
mixes; sweet
desire; prosperity
either [motive] concern himself
it is good to have [possessions]
wealth
otherwise fail
who knows

Stant al my worldes joie alone.
 I axe nouthur park ne plowh: *lands for game or crops*
 2850 If I hire hadde, it were ynowh,
 Hir love scholde me suffise
 Withouten other coveitise. *wishes*
 Lo now, mi fader, as of this,
 Touchende of me riht as it is,
 2855 Mi schrifte I am beknowe plein; *My confession I make known fully*
 And if ye wole oght elles sein,
 Of covoitise if ther be more
 In love, agropeth out the sore.” *investigate the problem*

[PERJURY]

*iv. Fallere cum nequeat propria vir fraude, subornat
 Testes, sit quod eis vera retorta fides.
 Sicut agros cupidus dum querit amans mulieres,
 Vult testes falsos falsus habere suos.
 Non sine vindicta periurus abibit in eius
 Visu, qui cordis intima cuncta videt.
 Fallere periuro non est laudanda puellam
 Gloria, set false condicionis opus.¹*

[Confessor] “Mi sone, thou schalt understonde

2860 Hou Coveitise hath yit on honde
 In special tuo conseilours,
 That ben also hise procurours. *agents*
 ¶ The ferst of hem is Falswitnessse, *(see note)*
 Which evere is redi to witnessse
 2865 What thing his maister wol him hote. *command*
 Perjurie is the secounde hote, *called*
 Which spareth noght to swere an oth,
 Thogh it be fals and God be wroth.
 That on schal Falswitnessse bere,
 2870 That other schal the thing forswere,
 Whan he is charged on the bok.
 So what with hepe and what with crok *by hook or by crook*
 Thei make here maister ofte winne
 And wol noght knowe what is sinne
 2875 For coveitise, and thus, men sain,
 Thei maken many a fals bargain.

¹ When he is not able to deceive a man by fraud, he suborns and corrupts witnesses, so that true faith is twisted back in them. In the same way, a cupidinous lover seeks women as if he were seeking lands: he desires his own false witnesses. But not without punishment will the perjurer live in the sight of whoever sees all the secrets of his heart. To deceive a girl by perjury is not a praiseworthy glory, but an action of false contract.

- Ther mai no trewe querele arise
 In thilke queste and thilke assise,
 Where as thei tuo the poeple enforme;
 2880 For thei kepe evere o maner forme,
 That upon gold here conscience
 Thei founde, and take here evidence;
 And thus with falswitnessse and othes
 Thei winne him mete and drinke and clothes. *food*
- 2885 Riht so ther be, who that hem knewe,
 Of thes lovers ful many untrewē:
 Nou mai a womman finde ynowe, *aplenty*
 That ech of hem, whan he schal wowe, *woo*
 Anon he wole his hand down lein *lay*
 2890 Upon a bok, and swere and sein *say*
 That he wole feith and trouthe bere.
 And thus he profreth him to swere
 To serven evere til he die.
 And al is verai tricherie. *absolute treachery*
- 2895 For whan the sothe himselven trieth,
 The more he swerth, the more he lieth;
 Whan he his feith makth althermost,
 Than mai a womman truste him lest; *truth; tests*
 For til he mai his will achieve, *swears most of all*
 2900 He is no lengere for to lieve. *least*
 Thus is the trouthe of love exiled,
 And many a good womman beguiled.
- Confessor** And ek to speke of Falswitnessse,
 Ther be nou many such, I gesse,
 2905 That lich unto the provisours *appointers of benefices*
 Thei make here privé procurours, *agents*
 To telle hou ther is such a man,
 Which is worthi to love and can
 Al that a good man scholde kunne; *come to know*
- 2910 So that with lesinge is begunne *lying*
 The cause in which thei wole procede,
 And also siker as the Crede *certain; Creed*
 Thei make of that thei knowen fals.
 And thus fulofte aboute the hals *neck*
- 2915 Love is of false men embraced;
 Bot love which is so pourchaced
 Comth afterward to litel pris. *worth*
 Forthi, mi sone, if thou be wis,
 Nou thou hast herd this evidence,
 2920 Thou miht thin oghne conscience
 Oppose, if thou hast ben such on.” *Interrogate; a one*
- Amans** “Nai, God wot, fader, I am non,
 Ne nevere was; for as men seith,

- Whan that a man schal make his feith,
 2925 His herte and tunge moste acorde;
 For if so be that thei discorde,
 Thanne is he fals and elles noght:
 And I dar seie, as of my thoght,
 In love it is noght descordable
 2930 Unto mi word, bot acordable. *harmonious*
 And in this wise, fader, I
 Mai riht wel swere and salvely, *confidently*
 That I mi ladi love wel,
 For that acordeth everydel.
 2935 It nedeth noght to mi sothsawe *truthfulness*
 That I wnesse scholde drawe,
 Into this dai for nevere yit
 Ne mihte it sinke into mi wit,
 That I my conseil scholde seie
 2940 To eny wiht, or me bewreie *any person, or expose myself*
 To sechen help in such manere,
 Bot only of mi ladi diere.
 And thogh a thousand men it wiste, *knew*
 That I hire love, and thanne hem liste *if it were to please them*
 2945 With me to swere and to wnesse,
 Yit were that no falswnesse.
 For I dar on this trouthe duelle,
 I love hire mor than I can telle.
 Thus am I, fader, gulteles,
 2950 As ye have herd, and natheles
 In youre dom I put it al.” *judgment*
Confessor “Mi sone, wite in special,
 It schal noght comunliche faile,
 Althogh it for a time availe
 2955 That Falswnesse his cause spede, *advance*
 Upon the point of his falshiede
 It schal wel afterward be kid; *known*
 Wherof, so as it is betid,
 Ensampl of suche thinges blinde *deceitful things*
 2960 In a cronique write I finde.

[TALE OF ACHILLES AND DEIDAMIA]

- The goddesse of the see, Thetis, *sea*
 Sche hadde a sone, and his name is
 Achilles, whom to kepe and warde,
 2964 Whil he was yong, as into warde *care for and protect*
 Sche thoghte him salfly to betake, *safe keeping*
 2965 As sche which dradde for his sake *safely to deliver (see note)*
 Of that was seid in prophecie, *who feared*
 Of that was seid in prophecie, *what*

- That he at Troie scholde die,
 Whan that the cité was belein. *besieged*
 2970 Forthi, so as the bokes sein,
 Sche caste hire wit in sondri wise,
 Hou sche him mihte so disguise
 That no man scholde his bodi knowe.
 And so befell that ilke throwe, *at that time*
 2975 Whil that sche thoghte upon this dede,
 Ther was a king, which Lichomede
 Was hote, and he was wel begon *called; well supplied*
 With faire dowhtres manyon, *many a one*
 And duelte fer out in an yle. *dwelt far*
 2980 Nou schalt thou hier a wonder wyle:
 This queene, which the moder was
 Of Achilles, upon this cas
 Hire sone, as he a maiden were, *as if he were*
 Let clothen in the same gere *Caused him to be clothed; clothing*
 2985 Which longeth unto wommanhiede.
 And he was yong and tok non hiede,
 Bot soffreth al that sche him dede.
 Wherof sche hath hire wommen bede
 And charged be here othes alle, *by all their oaths*
 2990 Hou so it afterward befaller,
 That thei discovere noght this thing,
 Bot feigne and make a knowleching,
 Upon the conseil which was nome, *taken*
 In every place wher thei come
 2995 To telle and to wisse this,
 Hou he here ladi dowhter is. *their lady's daughter*
 And riht in such a maner wise
 Sche bad thei scholde hire don servise,
 So that Achilles underfongeth, *receives*
 3000 As to a yong ladi belongeth,
 Honour, servise, and reverence.
 For Thetis with gret diligence
 Him hath so tawht and so afaited *trained*
 That, hou so that it were awaited, *however it might be observed*
 3005 With sobre and goodli contenance
 He scholde his wommanhiede avance, *advance*
 That non the sothe knowe myhte, *truth*
 Bot that in every mannes syhte
 He scholde seme a pure maide. *innocent maiden*
 3010 And in such wise as sche him saide,
 Achilles, which that ilke while
 Was yong, upon himself to smyle *same time*
 Began, whan he was so besein. *equipped*

- And thus, after the bokes sein,
 3015 With frette of perle upon his hed, *ornamental diadem*
 Al freissh between the whyt and red,
 As he which tho was tendre of age, *then*
 Stod the colour in his visage,
 That for to loke upon his cheke
 3020 And sen his childly manere eke, *childlike manner also*
 He was a womman to beholde.
 And thanne his moder to him tolde,
 That sche him hadde so begon
 Because that sche thoghte gon
 3025 To Lichomede at thilke tyde, *time*
 Wher that sche seide he scholde abyde
 Among hise dowhtres for to duelle.
 Achilles herde his moder telle,
 And wiste noght the cause why;
 3030 And natheles ful buxomly *knew not the reason*
 He was redy to that sche bad, *obediently*
 Wherof his moder was riht glad, *for what she requested*
 To Lichomede and forth thei wente.
 And whan the king knew hire entente,
 3035 And sih this yonge dowhter there,
 And that it cam unto his ere *ear*
 Of such record, of such witnesse,
 He hadde riht a gret gladnesse *truly*
 Of that he bothe syh and herde, *what; saw and heard*
 3040 As he that wot noght hou it ferde
 Upon the conseil of the nede. *In regard to the secret*
 Bot for al that King Lichomede
 Hath toward him this dowhter take,
 And for Thetis his moder sake
 3045 He put hire into compainie
 To duelle with Deidamie,
 His oghne dowhter, the eldeste, *own*
 The faireste, and the comelieste
 Of alle hise doghtres whiche he hadde.
 3050 Lo, thus Thetis the cause ladde,
 And lefte there Achilles feigned, *disguised*
 As he which hath himself restreigned
 In al that evere he mai and can
 Out of the manere of a man,
 3055 And tok his wommannysse chiere,
 Wherof unto his beddefere *bedfellow*
 Deidamie he hath be nyhte. *by night*
 Wher kinde wole himselve rihte, *nature; direct*
 After the philosophres sein,
 3060 Ther mai no wiht be theragein;

- And that was thilke time seene.
 The longe nyhtes hem betuene
 Nature, which mai noght forbere,
 Hath mad hem bothe for to stere.
 3065 Thei kessen ferst, and overmore
 The hihe weie of loves lore
 Thei gon, and al was don in dede,
 Wherof lost is the maydenhede;
 And that was afterward wel knowe.
 3070 For it befell that ilke throwe
 At Troie, wher the siege lay
 Upon the cause of Menelay
 And of his queene Dame Heleine,
 The Gregois hadden mochel peine
 3075 Alday to fihte and to assaile.
 Bot for thei mihten noght availe
 So noble a cité for to winne,
 A privé conseil thei beginne,
 In sondri wise wher thei trete;
 3080 And ate laste among the grete
 Thei fellen unto this acord,
 That Protheus, of his record
 Which was an astronomien
 And ek a gret magicien,
 3085 Scholde of his calculacion
 Seche after constellacion,
 Hou thei the cité mihten gete.
 And he, which hadde noght forgete
 Of that belongeth to a clerk,
 3090 His studie sette upon this werk.
 So longe his wit aboute he caste,
 Til that he fond out ate laste,
 Bot if they hadden Achilles
 Here werre schal ben endeles.
 3095 And over that he tolde hem plein
 In what manere he was besein,
 And in what place he schal be founde;
 So that withinne a litel stounde
 Ulixes forth with Diomedede
 3100 Upon this point to Lichomedede
 Agamenon togedre sente.
 Bot Ulixes, er he forth wente,
 Which was on of the moste wise,
 Ordeigned hath in such a wise,
 3105 That he the moste riche aray
 Wherof a womman mai be gay
 With him hath take manyfold,
- made them both become aroused*
kiss
highway of love's
deed
at that time
Menelaus
Greeks
fight
secret
warlords
reputation
scholar
broadly
Unless
Their war
set up
a little while
before
one
exquisite clothing

- And overmore, as it is told,
 An harneis for a lusti kniht,
 3110 Which burned was as selver bryht,
 Of swerd, of plate, and ek of maile,
 As thogh he scholde to bataille,
 He tok also with him be schipe. *by*
 And thus togedre in felaschipe
 3115 Forth gon this Diomedé and he
 In hope til thei mihten se
 The place where Achilles is.
 The wynd stod thanne noght amis,
 Bot evene topseilcole it blew,
 3120 Til Ulixes the marche knew *wind blew on the topsail*
 Wher Lichomede his regne hadde. *region*
 The stieresman so wel hem ladde,
 That thei ben comen sauf to londe,
 Wher thei gon out upon the stronde
 3125 Into the burgh, wher that thei founde *citadel*
 The king, and he which hath facounde, *who has eloquence*
 Ulixes, dede the message. *made the greeting*
 Bot the conseil of his corage, *heart*
 Why that he cam, he tolde noght,
 3130 Bot undernethe he was bethoght *surreptitiously; mindful*
 In what manere he mihte asprie *distinguish*
 Achilles fro Deidamie *from*
 And fro these othre that ther were,
 Full many a lusti ladi there.
 3135 Thei pleide hem there a day or tuo,
 And as it was fortuné so,
 It fell that time in such a wise, *manner*
 To Bachus that a sacrificise
 Thes yonge ladys scholden make;
 3140 And for the strange mennes sake,
 That comen fro the siege of Troie,
 Thei maden wel the more joie.
 Ther was revel, ther was daunsinge,
 And every lif which coude singe *person*
 3145 Of lusti wommen in the route
 A freissh carole hath sunge aboute. *round dance with singing*
 Bot for al this yit natheles
 The Greks unknowe of Achilles *(i.e., having no knowledge of)*
 So weren, that in no degré
 3150 Thei couden wite which was he, *know*
 Ne be his vois, ne be his pas. *walk*
 Ulixes thanne upon this cas
 A thing of hih prudence hath wroght,
 For thilke aray, which he hath broght

- 3155 To give among the wommen there,
 He let do fetten al the gere *caused to be brought; clothing*
 Forth with a knihtes harneis eke. *together; armor also*
 In al a contré for to seke
 Men scholden noght a fairer se,
- 3160 And every thing in his degré
 Endlong upon a bord he leide. *Along; table*
 To Lichomede and thanne he preide
 That every ladi chese scholde *choose*
 What thing of alle that sche wolde,
- 3165 And take it as be weie of gifte;
 For thei hemself it scholde schifte, *themselves; decide*
 He seide, after here oghne wille. *their*
 Achilles thanne stod noght stille:
 Whan he the bryhte helm behield, *helmet*
- 3170 The swerd, the hauberk, and the schield,
 His herte fell therto anon; *immediately*
 Of all that othre wolde he non,
 The knihtes gere he underfongeth, *seizes*
 And thilke aray which that belongeth
- 3175 Unto the wommen he forsok.
 And in this wise, as seith the bok,
 Thei knowen thanne which he was.
 For he goth forth the grete pas *swiftly*
 Into the chambre where he lay; *slept*
- 3180 Anon, and made no delay,
 He armeth him in knyhtli wise, *armed himself; manner*
 That bettre can no man devise,
 And as fortune scholde falle, *before*
 He cam so forth tofore hem alle,
- 3185 As he which tho was glad ynowh.
 But Lichomede nothing lowh, *laughed*
 Whan that he syh hou that it ferde, *fared*
 For thanne he wiste wel and herde,
 His dowhter hadde be forlein; *had illicit sex*
- 3190 Bot that he was so oversein, *deluded*
 The wonder overgoth his wit. *overwhelmed*
 For in cronique is write yit
 Thing which schal nevere be forgete,
 Hou that Achilles hath begete
- 3195 Pirrus upon Deidamie,
 Wherof cam out the tricherie
 Of Falswitnessse, whan thei saide
 Hou that Achilles was a maide. *maiden*
 Bot that was nothing seene tho, *then*
- 3200 For he is to the siege go
 Forth with Ulixé and Diomede.

- Confessor** Lo, thus was proved in the dede
 And fulli spoke at thilke while:
 If o womman another guile,
 3205 Wher is ther eny sikernesse?
 Whan Thetis, which was the goddesse,
 Deidamie hath so bejaped,
 I not hou it schal ben ascaped
 With tho wommen whos innocence
 3210 Is nou alday thurgh such credence
 Deceived ofte, as it is seene,
 With men that such untrouthe meene.
 For thei ben slyhe in such a wise,
 That thei be sleihte and be queintise
 3215 Of Falswitnessen bringen inne
 That doth hem ofte for to winne,
 Wher thei ben noght worthi therto.
 Forthi, mi sone, do noght so.”
- Amans** “Mi fader, as of Falswitnessen
 3220 The trouthe and the matiere expresse,
 Touchende of love hou it hath ferd,
 As ye have told, I have wel herd.
 Bot for ye seiden otherwise,
 Hou thilke vice of Covoitise
 3225 Hath yit Perjurie of his acord,
 If that you list of som record
 To telle another tale also
 In loves cause of time ago,
 What thing it is to be forswore,
 3230 I wolde preie you therfore,
 Wherof I mihte ensample take.”
- Confessor** “Mi goode sone, and for thi sake
 Touchende of this I schal fulfille
 Thin axinge at thin oghne wille,
 3235 And the matiere I schal declare,
 Hou the wommen deceived are,
 Whan thei so tendre herte bere,
 Of that thei hieren men so swere;
 Bot whan it comth unto th’assay,
 3240 Thei finde it fals another day,
 As Jason dede to Medee,
 Which stant yit of auctorité
 In tokne and in memorial;
 Wherof the tale in special
 3245 Is in the bok of Troie write,
 Which I schal do thee for to wite.
- one woman beguiles another*
certitude
tricked
know not how
trust
cunning (guile)
causes them
desire
proof (testing of character)

[TALE OF JASON AND MEDEA]

	In Grece whilom was a king,	<i>once</i>
	Of whom the fame and knowleching	
¶	Beleveth yit, and Peleus	<i>Remains yet (see note)</i>
3250	He hihte; bot it fell him thus,	<i>was called</i>
	That his Fortune hir whiel so ladde	
	That he no child his oghne hadde	
	To regnen after his decess.	<i>death</i>
	He hadde a brother natheles,	
3255	Whos rihte name was Eson,	
	And he the worthi kniht Jason	
	Begat, the which in every lond	
	Alle othre passede of his hond	<i>surpassed</i>
	In armes, so that he the beste	
3260	Was named and the worthieste,	
	He soghte worschipe overal.	
	Nou herkne, and I thee telle schal	
	An aventure that he soghte,	
	Which afterward ful dere he boghte.	<i>dearly</i>
3265	Ther was an yle, which Colchos	
	Was cleped, and therof aros	<i>was called</i>
	Gret speche in every lond aboute,	
	That such merveile was non oute	
	In al the wyde world nawhere,	
3270	As tho was in that yle there.	
	Ther was a schiep, as it was told,	<i>sheep</i>
	The which his flees bar al of gold,	<i>had (displayed/possessed)</i>
	And so the goddes hadde it set,	
	That it ne mihte awei be fet	<i>might not be carried away</i>
3275	Be pouer of no worldes wiht.	<i>creature</i>
	And yit ful many a worthi kniht	
	It hadde assaied, as thei dorste,	
	And evere it fell hem to the worste.	
	Bot he, that wolde it noght forsake,	
3280	Bot of his knythod undertake	
	To do what thing therto belongeth,	
	This worthi Jason, sore alongeth	<i>sorely longs</i>
	To se the strange regiouns	
	And knowe the condiciouns	
3285	Of othre marches where he wente;	
	And for that cause his hole entente	
	He sette Colchos for to seche,	
	And therupon he made a speche	
	To Peleus his em the king.	<i>uncle</i>
3290	And he wel paid was of that thing;	<i>pleased</i>
	And schop anon for his passage,	<i>arranged immediately</i>

- And suche as were of his lignage,
 With othre knihtes whiche he ches,
 With him he tok, and Hercules,
 3295 Which full was of chivalerie, *prowess*
 With Jason wente in compaignie;
 And that was in the monthe of Maii,
 Whan colde stormes were away.
 The wynd was good, the schip was yare, *ready*
 3300 Thei tok here leve, and forth thei fare
 Toward Colchos. Bot on the weie *But; way*
 What hem befell is long to seie;
 Hou Lamedon the king of Troie,
 Which oghte wel have mad hem joie, *made them welcome*
 3305 Whan thei to reste a while him preide, *asked him*
 Out of his lond he hem congeide; *dismissed*
 And so fell the dissencion,
 Which after was destruccion
 Of that cité, as men mai hiere.
 3310 Bot that is noght to mi matiere.
 Bot thus this worthi folk Gregeis *Greek*
 Fro that king, which was noght curteis, *gracious*
 And fro his lond with sail updrawe
 Thei wente hem forth, and many a sawe *speech*
 3315 Thei made and many a gret manace,
 Til ate laste into that place
 Which as thei soghte thei aryve,
 And striken sail, and forth as blyve
 Thei sente unto the king and tolden
 3320 Who weren ther and what thei wolden.
 Oetes, which was thanne king,
 Whan that he herde this tyding
 Of Jason, which was comen there,
 And of these othre, what thei were,
 3325 He thoghte don hem gret worschipe.
 For thei anon come out of schipe,
 And strawht unto the king thei wente,
 And be the hond Jason he hente, *by; seized*
 And that was ate paleis gate,
 3330 So fer the king cam on his gate *way*
 Toward Jason to don him chiere.
 And he, whom lacketh no manere,
 Whan he the king sih in presence, *saw*
 Gaf him agein such reverence
 3335 As to a kinges stat belongeth. *station pertains*
 And thus the king him underfongeth, *receives*
 And Jason in his arm he cawhte,
 And forth into the halle he strawhte, *proceeded*

- And ther thei siete and spieke of thinges, *sat*
 3340 And Jason tolde him tho tidinges,
 Why he was come, and faire him preide
 To haste his time, and the kyng seide,
 'Jason, thou art a worthi kniht,
 Bot it lith in no mannes myht
 3345 To don that thou art come fore.
 Ther hath be many a kniht forlore *been; destroyed*
 Of that thei wolden it assaie.' *attempt*
 Bot Jason wolde him noght esmaie, *not be disconcerted*
 And seide, 'Of every worldes cure *care*
 3350 Fortune stant in aventure,
 Per aunter wel, per aunter wo. *[Whether] for good luck*
 Bot hou as evere that it go,
 It schal be with myn hond assaied.' *attempted*
 The king tho hield him noght wel paied, *then was not; pleased*
 3355 For he the Grekes sore dredde, *feared*
 In aunter, if Jason ne spedde, *should not succeed*
 He mihte therof bere a blame. *bear*
 For tho was al the worldes fame
 In Grece, as for to speke of armes. *military strength*
 3360 Forthi he dredde him of his harmes,
 And gan to preche him and to preie. *plead with him*
 Bot Jason wolde noght obeie,
 Bot seide he wolde his porpos holde
 For ought that eny man him tolde. *Regardless of what any*
 3365 The king, whan he thes wordes herde,
 And sih hou that this kniht ansuerde,
 Yit for he wolde make him glad,
 After Medea gon he bad, *He called for Medea*
 Which was his dowhter, and sche cam.
 3370 And Jason, which good hiede nam, *heed took*
 Whan he hire sih, agein hire goth; *saw, toward her goes*
 And sche, which was him nothing loth, *who was not loathsome to him*
 Welcomede him into that lond,
 And softe tok him be the hond,
 3375 And down thei seten bothe same. *together*
 Sche hadde herd spoke of his name
 And of his grete worthinesse.
 Forthi sche gan hir yhe impresse *eye*
 Upon his face and his stature,
 3380 And thoghte hou nevere creature
 Was so wel farende as was he. *handsome*
 And Jason riht in such degré
 Ne mihte noght withholde his lok,
 Bot so good hiede on hire he tok,
 3385 That him ne thoghte under the hevene

- Of beauté sawh he nevere hir evene,
 With al that fell to wommanhiede.
 Thus ech of other token hiede,
 Thogh ther no word was of record.
 3390 Here hertes bothe of on acord
 Ben set to love, bot as tho
 Ther mihten be no wordes mo.
 The king mad him gret joie and feste,
 To alle his men he gaf an heste,
 3395 So as thei wolde his thonk deserve,
 That thei scholde alle Jason serve,
 Whil that he wolde there duelle.
 And thus the dai, schortly to telle,
 With manye merthes thei despente,
 3400 Til nyht was come, and tho thei wente,
 Echon of other tok his leve,
 Whan thei no lengere myhten leve.
 I not hou Jason that nyht slep,
 Bot wel I wot that of the schep,
 3405 For which he cam into that yle,
 He thoghte bot a litel whyle;
 Al was Medea that he thoghte,
 So that in many a wise he soghte
 His witt wakende er it was day,
 3410 Som time yee, som time nay,
 Som time thus, som time so,
 As he was stered to and fro
 Of love, and ek of his conqueste
 As he was holde of his behest.
 3415 And thus he ros up be the morwe
 And tok himself Seint John to borwe,
 And seide he wolde ferst beginne
 At love, and after for to winne
 The flees of gold, for which he com,
 3420 And thus to him good herte he nom.
 Medea riht the same wise,
 Til dai cam that sche moste arise,
 Lay and bethoughte hire al the nyht,
 Hou sche that noble worthi kniht
 3425 Be eny weie mihte wedde.
 And wel sche wiste, if he ne spedde
 Of thing which he hadde undertake,
 Sche mihte hirsself no porpos take;
 For if he deide of his bataile,
 3430 Sche moste thanne algate faile
 To geten him, whan he were ded.
 Thus sche began to sette red
- match*
pertained to womanliness
- order*
- remain*
do not know how
- manner*
waking before
yes; no
- tossed*
By; also
beholden to; promise
- as guarantor*
- took*
- pondered*
- knew; should not succeed*
- altogether*
to use her wisdom

- And torne aboute hir wittes alle,
 To loke hou that it mihte falle
 3435 That sche with him hadde a leisir
 To speke and telle of hir desir.
 And so it fell that same day
 That Jason with that suete may *sweet maiden*
 Tokedre sete and hadden space *had leisure*
 3440 To speke, and he besoughte hir grace.
 And sche his tale goodli herde, *willingly*
 And afterward sche him ansuerde
 And seide, 'Jason, as thou wilt,
 Thou miht be sauf, thou miht be spilt;
 3445 For wite wel that nevere man, *safe; destroyed*
 Bot if he couthe that I can, *know*
 Ne mihte that fortune achieve *knows what I know*
 For which thou comst: bot as I lieve,
 If thou wolt holde covenant
 3450 To love, of al the remenant *from everything else*
 I schal thi lif and honour save,
 That thou the flees of gold schalt have.'
 He seide, 'Al at youre oghne wille,
 Ma dame, I schal treuly fulfille
 3455 Your heste, whil mi lif mai laste.'
 Thus longe he preide, and ate laste
 Sche granteth, and behihte him this, *promised*
 That whan nyht comth and it time is,
 Sche wolde him sende certainly
 3460 Such on that scholde him prively *Such a person; secretly*
 Alone into hire chambre bringe.
 He thonketh hire of that tidenge,
 For of that grace him is begonne
 Him thenkth alle othre thinges wonne.
 3465 The dai made ende and lost his lyht,
 And comen was the derke nyht,
 Which al the daies yhe blente. *day's eye (sun) concealed*
 Jason tok leve and forth he wente,
 And whan he cam out of the pres, *crowd*
 3470 He tok to conseil Hercules,
 And tolde him hou it was betid, *what was what*
 And preide it scholde wel ben hid, *kept secret*
 And that he wolde loke aboute,
 Therwhiles that he schal ben oute.
 3475 Thus as he stod and hiede nam,
 A mayden fro Medea cam *took heed*
 And to hir chambre Jason ledde, *maidservant (lady-in-waiting)*
 Wher that he fond redi to bedde *for bed*
 The faireste and the wiseste eke; *also*

- 3480 And sche with simple chiere and meke, *facial expression*
 Whan sche him sih, wax al aschamed.
 Tho was here tale neue entamed; *Then; their; opened up*
 For sikernesse of mariage *security*
 Sche fette forth a riche ymage, *brought*
- 3485 Which was figure of Jupiter,
 And Jason swor and seide ther,
 That also wiss god scholde him helpe, *truly*
 That if Medea dede him helpe,
 That he his pourpos myhte winne,
- 3490 Thei scholde nevere parte atwinne, *separate*
 Bot evere whil him lasteth lif,
 He wolde hire holde for his wif.
 And with that word thei kisten bothe.
 And for thei scholden hem unclothe, *because; undress*
- 3495 Ther cam a maide, and in hir wise
 Sche dede hem bothe full servise,
 Til that thei were in bedde naked.
 I wot that nyht was wel bewaked; *know; kept sleepless*
 Thei hadden bothe what thei wolde. *desired*
- 3500 And thanne of leisir sche him tolde,
 And gan fro point to point enforme
 Of his bataile and al the forme, *conflict; details*
 Which as he scholde finde there,
 Whan he to th'yle come were. *the island*
- 3505 Sche seide, at entre of the pas *beginning; passage (adventure)*
 Hou Mars, which god of armes was,
 Hath set tuo oxen sterne and stoute, *two fierce oxen*
 That caste fyr and flamme aboute
 Bothe at the mouth and ate nase, *nose*
- 3510 So that thei setten al on blase *on fire*
 What thing that passeth hem betwene,
 And forthermore upon the grene *green*
 Ther goth the flees of gold to kepe
 A serpent, which mai nevere slepe.
- 3515 Thus who that evere scholde it winne,
 The fyr to stoppe he mot beginne, *must*
 Which that the fierce bestes caste,
 And daunte he mot hem ate laste, *must control them*
 So that he mai hem yoke and dryve;
- 3520 And therupon he mot as blyve *quickly*
 The serpent with such strengthe assaile,
 That he mai slen him be bataile;
 Of which he mot the teth outdrawe, *extract*
 As it belongeth to that lawe,
- 3525 And thanne he mot tho oxen yoke, *those*
 Til thei have with a plowh tobroke

- A furgh of lond, in which arowe
 The teth of th'addre he moste sowe,
 And therof schule arise knihtes
 3530 Wel armed up at alle rihtes.
 Of hem is noght to taken hiede,
 For ech of hem in hastihiede
 Schal other slen with dethes wounde: *lethal wound*
 And thus whan thei ben leid to grounde,
 3535 Than mot he to the goddes preie,
 And go so forth and take his preie. *pray*
 Bot if he faile in eny wise *prey*
 Of that ye hiere me devise, *any way*
 Ther mai be set non other weie,
 3540 That he ne moste algates deie.
 'Nou have I told the peril al:
 I wol you tellen forth withal,'
 Quod Medea to Jason tho, *then*
 'That ye schul knowen er ye go,
 3545 Agein the venym and the fyr
 What schal ben the recoverir. *antidote*
 Bot, sire, for it is nyh day,
 Ariseth up, so that I may
 Deliver you what thing I have,
 3550 That mai youre lif and honour save.'
 Thei weren bothe loth to rise,
 Bot for thei weren bothe wise,
 Up thei arisen ate laste.
 Jason his clothes on him caste *put on*
 3555 And made him redi riht anon,
 And sche hir scherte dede upon
 And caste on hire a mantel clos,
 Withoute more and thanne aros.
 Tho tok sche forth a riche tye *splendid casket*
 3560 Mad al of gold and of perrie, *jewels*
 Out of the which sche nam a ring, *took*
 The ston was worth al other thing.
 Sche seide, whil he wolde it were,
 Ther myhte no peril him dere, *harm*
 3565 In water mai it noght be dreynt, *drowned*
 Wher as it comth the fyr is queynt,
 It daunteth ek the cruel beste,
 Ther may no qued that man areste, *evil*
 Wher so he be on see or lond,
 3570 Which hath that ring upon his hond:
 And over that sche gan to sein,
 That if a man wol ben unsein,
 Withinne his hond hold clos the ston,

- And he mai invisible gon.
 3575 The ring to Jason sche betauhte, *entrusted*
 And so forth after sche him tauhte
 What sacrificise he scholde make;
 And gan out of hire cofre take
 Him thoughte an hevenely figure,
 3580 Which al be charme and be conjure *by magical spell; incantation*
 Was wroght, and ek it was thurgh write
 With names, which he scholde wite,
 As sche him tauhte tho to rede; *understand*
 And bad him, as he wolde spede,
 3585 Withoute reste of eny while,
 Whan he were loded in that yle,
 He scholde make his sacrificise
 And rede his carecte in the wise *recite his charm*
 As sche him tauhte, on knes down bent,
 3590 Thre sithes toward orient;
 For so scholde he the goddes plese
 And winne himselven mochel ese.
 And whanne he hadde it thries rad,
 To opne a buiste sche him bad, *box*
 3595 Which sche ther tok him in present, *gave him as present*
 And was full of such oignement,
 That ther was fyr ne venym non *neither fire or poison*
 That scholde fastnen him upon,
 Whan that he were enoynt withal.
 3600 Forthi sche tauhte him hou he schal
 Enoignte his armes al aboute,
 And for he scholde nothing doute,
 Sche tok him thanne a maner glu, *gave; kind of glue*
 The which was of so gret vertu,
 3605 That where a man it wolde caste,
 It scholde binde anon so faste *grip; securely*
 That no man mihte it don aweie.
 And that sche bad be alle weie
 He scholde into the mouthes throwen
 3610 Of tho tweie oxen that fyr blowen,
 Therof to stoppen the malice;
 The glu schal serve of that office.
 And over that hir oignement,
 Hir ring and hir enchantement
 3615 Agein the serpent scholde him were, *defend*
 Til he him sle with swerd or spere. *slew*
 And thanne he may saufliche ynowh *safely enough*
 His oxen yoke into the plowh
 And the teth sowe in such a wise,
 3620 Til he the knyhtes se arise, *should see*

- And ech of other doun be leid
In such manere as I have seid.
- Lo, thus Medea for Jason
Ordeigneth, and preith therupon
3625 That he nothing forgete scholde,
And ek sche preith him that he wolde,
Whan he hath alle his armes don, *trials completed*
To grounde knele and thonke anon
The goddes, and so forth be ese *with (by)*
3630 The flees of gold he scholde sese. *seize*
And whanne he hadde it sesed so,
That thanne he were sone ago
Withouten eny tariynge.
- Whan this was seid, into wepinge
3635 Sche fell, as sche that was thurgh nome *thoroughly overwhelmed*
With love, and so fer overcome, *far*
That al hir world on him sche sette.
Bot whan sche sih ther was no lette, *delaying [him]*
That he mot nedes parte hire fro,
- 3640 Sche tok him in hire armes tuo,
An hundred time and gan him kisse,
And seide, 'O, al mi worldes blisse,
Mi trust, mi lust, mi lif, min hele,
To be thin helpe in this querele
- 3645 I preie unto the goddes alle.'
And with that word sche gan doun falle
On swoune, and he hire uppe nam,
And forth with that the maiden cam,
And thei to bedde anon hir broghte,
- 3650 And thanne Jason hire besoghte,
And to hire seide in this manere:
'Mi worthi lusti ladi dere,
Conforteth you, for be my trouthe
It schal noght fallen in mi slouthe
- 3655 That I ne wol thurghout fulfille
Youre hestes at youre oghne wille.
And yit I hope to you bringe
Withinne a while such tidinge,
The which schal make ous bothe game.'
- 3660 Bot for he wolde kepe hir name,
Whan that he wiste it was nyh dai,
He seide, 'A dieu, mi swete mai.'
And forth with him he nam his gere,
Which as sche hadde take him there,
- 3665 And strauht unto his chambre he wente,
And goth to bedde and slep him hente,
And lay, that no man him awok,
- And kissed him a hundred times*
- salvation trial*
- a faint; took her up*
- not be because of my sloth
if I do not completely fulfill
instructions*
- glad
reputation
knew; nearly
maiden
took; equipment*
- seized him*

- For Hercules hiede of him tok,
 Til it was undren hih and more. *between 9 and 10 a.m.*
- 3670 And thanne he gan to sighe sore
 And sodeinliche abreide of slep;
 And thei that token of him kep,
 His chamberleins, be sone there, *started from*
 And maden redi al his gere, *attended to him*
- 3675 And he aros and to the king
 He wente, and seide hou to that thing
 For which he cam he wolde go. *equipment*
 The king therof was wonder wo,
 And for he wolde him fain withdrawe, *gladly discourage him*
- 3680 He tolde him many a dredful sawe, *tale*
 Bot Jason wolde it noght recorde, *pay heed*
 And ate laste thei acorde. *stay*
 Whan that he wolde noght abide,
 A bot was redy ate tyde,
- 3685 In which this worthi kniht of Grece
 Ful armed up at every piece,
 To his bataile which belongeth,
 Tok ore on honde and sore him longeth, *oar; sorely he longs*
 Til he the water passed were. *Until*
- 3690 Whan he cam to that yle there, *island*
 He set him on his knes doun strauht,
 And his carecte, as he was tawht,
 He radde, and made his sacrificse, *charm*
 And sihthe enoignte him in that wise *recited aloud*
- 3695 As Medea him hadde bede; *then anointed himself*
 And thanne aros up fro that stede, *commanded*
 And with the glu the fyr he queynte, *place*
 And anon after he atteinte, *quenched*
 The grete serpent and him slowh. *quickly; overtook*
 Bot erst he hadde sorwe ynowh. *killed him*
 For that serpent made him travaile *work*
 So harde and sore of his bataile,
 That nou he stod and nou he fell.
 For longe time it so befell,
- 3705 That with his swerd ne with his spere
 He mihte noght that serpent dere. *harm*
 He was so scherded al aboute, *covered with scales*
 It hield all eggetol withoute, *withstood all swords and spears*
 He was so ruide and hard of skin, *rough*
- 3710 Ther mihte nothing go therin;
 Venym and fyr togedre he caste,
 That he Jason so sore ablaste, *so sorely blasted*
 That if ne were his oignement, *if it were not for*
 His ring and his enchantement, *charm*

- 3715 Which Medea tok him tofore, *gave him previously*
 He hadde with that worm be lore; *by that dragon would have been destroyed*
 Bot of vertu which therof cam
 Jason the dragon overcam.
 And he anon the teth outdrouh, *drew out*
- 3720 And sette his oxen in a plouh, *plow*
 With which he brak a piece of lond
 And sieu hem with his oghne hond. *sowed them*
 Tho mihte he gret merveile se: *Then*
 Of every toth in his degré *From; its*
- 3725 Sprong up a kniht with spere and schield,
 Of whiche anon riht in the field
 Ech on slow other; and with that *Each one slew the other*
 Jason Medea noght forgat,
 On bothe his kneis he gan doun falle,
- 3730 And gaf thonk to the goddes alle.
 The flees he tok and goth to bote, *goes to the boat*
 The sonne schyneth bryhte and hote,
 The flees of gold schon forth withal,
 The water glistreth overal.
- 3735 Medea wepte and sigheth ofte,
 And stod upon a tour alofte: *tower*
 Al prively withinne hirselve,
 Ther herde it nouthen ten ne tuelve,
 Sche preide, and seide, 'O, god him spede,
- 3740 The kniht which hath mi maidenhiede!'
 And ay sche loketh toward th'yle.
 Bot whan sche sih withinne a while
 The flees glistrende agein the sonne,
 Sche saide, 'Ha lord, now al is wonne.
- 3745 Mi kniht the field hath overcome.
 Nou wolde god he were come,
 Ha lord, that he ne were alonde!'
 Bot I dar take this on honde, *daresay*
 If that sche hadde wynges tuo,
- 3750 Sche wolde have flowe unto him tho
 Strawht ther he was into the bot. *where*
 The dai was clere, the sonne hot,
 The Gregeis weren in gret doute, *fear*
 The whyle that here lord was oute.
- 3755 Thei wisten noght what scholde tyde,
 Bot waiten evere upon the tyde,
 To se what ende scholde falle.
 Ther stoden ek the nobles alle
 Forth with the comun of the toun; *citizenry*
- 3760 And as thei loken up and doun,
 Thei weren war withinne a throwe,

- And kempde his hed, whan he was clad, *combed*
 3810 And goth him forth al merie and glad
 Riht strawht into the kinges halle.
 The king cam with his knihtes alle
 And maden him glad welcominge;
 And he hem tolde the tidinge *news*
 3815 Of this and that, hou it befell,
 Whan that he wan the schepes fell. *won; sheep's fleece*
 Medea, whan sche was asent, *sent for*
 Com sone to that parlement,
 And whan sche mihte Jason se,
 3820 Was non so glad of alle as sche.
 Ther was no joie for to seche:
 Of him mad every man a speche; *everyone made a speech*
 Som man seid on, som man seide other. *one [thing]*
 Bot though he were goddes brother *even if*
 3825 And mihte make fyr and thonder, *lightning; thunder*
 Ther mihte be no more wonder
 Than was of him in that cité.
 Ech on tauhte other, "This is he,
 Which hath in his pouer withinne
 3830 That al the world ne mihte winne. *What no one else on earth*
 Lo, hier the beste of alle goode.' *best of all good [people]*
 Thus saiden thei that there stode,
 And ek that walkede up and down,
 Bothe of the court and of the toun.
 3835 The time of souper cam anon,
 Thei wisshen, and therto thei gon. *clean up (wash)*
 Medea was with Jason set. *beside; seated*
 Tho was ther many a deynté fet *gourmet food brought*
 And set tofore hem on the bord, *before them; table*
 3840 Bot non so likinge as the word
 Which was ther spoke among hem tuo, *between the two of them*
 So as thei dorste speke tho. *dared; then*
 Bot though thei hadden litel space,
 Yit thei acorden in that place *agreed*
 3845 Hou Jason scholde come at nyht,
 Whan every torche and every liht
 Were oute, and thanne of other thinges
 Thei spieke aloud for supposinges *[purpose of] deluding*
 Of hem that stoden there aboute.
 3850 For love is everemore in doute, *fear*
 If that it be wisly governed
 Of hem that ben of love lerned.
 Whan al was don, that dissh and cuppe
 And cloth and bord and al was uppe,
 3855 Thei waken whil hem lest to wake, *stayed awake as long as it pleased them*

- And after that thei leve take
 And gon to bedde for to reste.
 And whan him thoghte for the beste,
 That every man was faste aslepe, *soundly*
 3860 Jason, that wolde his time kepe, *bide his time*
 Goth forth stalkende al prively *stealthily*
 Unto the chambre, and redely *eagerly*
 Ther was a maide, which him kepte. *who awaited him*
 Medea wok and nothing slepte,
 3865 Bot natheles sche was abedde,
 And he with alle haste him spedde *came quickly*
 And made him naked and al warm.
 Anon he tok hire in his arm:
 What nede is for to speke of ese?
 3870 Hem list ech other for to plese, *They yearned to please each other*
 So that thei hadden joie ynow. *enough*
 And tho thei setten whanne and how *planned*
 That sche with him away schal stele.
 With wordes suche and othre fele *many others*
 3875 Whan al was treted to an ende, *negotiated*
 Jason tok leve and gan forth wende *went*
 Unto his oughne chambre in pes. *contentedly (quietly)*
 Ther wiste it non bot Hercules. *knew*
 He slepte and ros whan it was time,
 3880 And whanne it fell towardses prime, *first part of the day (6–9 a.m.)*
 He tok to him suche as he triste *trusted*
 In secre, that non other wiste, *secrecy*
 And told hem of his conseil there,
 And seide that his wille were
 3885 That thei to schipe hadde alle thinge
 So priveliche in th'evenynge,
 That no man mihte here dede asprie *their deed*
 Bot tho that were of compaignie: *Except those who*
 For he woll go withoute leve,
 3890 And lengere woll he noght beleve; *remain*
 Bot he ne wolde at thilke throwe *wished not at that time*
 That king or queene scholde it knowe.
 Thei saide, 'Al this schal wel be do.'
 And Jason truste wel therto. *They (i.e., Hercules and others)*
 3895 Medea in the menewhile,
 Which thoghte hir fader to beguile, *deceive*
 The tresor which hir fader hadde
 With hire al priveli sche ladde,
 And with Jason at time set
 3900 Away sche stal and fond no let, *stole; hindrance*
 And straght sche goth hire unto schipe
 Of Grece with that felaschipe,

- And thei anon drowe up the seil.
 And al that nyht this was conseil, *secret*
 3905 Bot erly, whan the sonne schon,
 Men syhe hou that thei were agon, *saw*
 And come unto the king and tolde.
 And he the sothe knowe wolde, *truth*
 And axeth where his dowhter was. *asked*
 3910 Ther was no word bot 'Out, allas!'
 Sche was ago. The moder wepte,
 The fader as a wod man lepte, *madman leapt*
 And gan the time for to warie, *curse*
 And swor his oth he wol noght tarie,
 3915 That with caliphe and with galeie *(two kinds of boats)*
 The same cours, the same weie,
 Which Jason tok, he wolde take,
 If that he mihte him overtake.
 To this thei seiden alle 'Yee.'
 3920 Anon thei weren ate see, *Yes*
 And alle, as who seith, at a word *sea*
 Thei gon withinne schipes bord, *aboard ship*
 The sail goth up, and forth thei strauhte. *set out*
 Bot non espleit therof thei cauhte, *no success*
 3925 And so thei tornen hom agein,
 For al that labour was in vein.
 Jason to Grece with his preie *plunder*
 Goth thurgh the see the rihte weie: *most direct*
 Whan he ther com and men it tolde,
 3930 Thei maden joie yonge and olde.
 Eson, whan that he wiste of this,
 Hou that his sone comen is,
 And hath achieved that he soughte
 And hom with him Medea broughte,
 3935 In al the wyde world was non
 So glad a man as he was on.
 Togedre ben these lovers tho,
 Til that thei hadden sones tuo,
 Wherof thei weren bothe glade;
 3940 And olde Eson gret joie made
 To sen th'encress of his lignage,
 For he was of so gret an age,
 That men awaiten every day
 Whan that he scholde gon away. *(i.e., die)*
 3945 Jason, which sih his fader old,
 Upon Medea made him bold, *Mustered a venture before Medea*
 Of art magique, which sche couthe, *knew*
 And preith hire that his fader youthe *father's youth*
 Sche wolde make ageinward newe:

- 3950 And sche, that was toward him trewe,
Behihte him that sche wolde it do, *Promised*
Whan that sche time sawh therto.
Bot what sche dede in that matiere
It is a wonder thing to hier. *hear*
- 3955 Bot yit for the novellerie
I thenke tellen a partie.
- ☞ Thus it befell upon a nyht, *(see note)*
Whan ther was noght bot sterreliht,
Sche was vanysst riht as hir liste,
- 3960 That no wyht bot himself it wiste, *person; knew*
And that was ate mydnyht tyde. *time*
The world was stille on every side;
With open hed and fot al bare, *bare head; feet*
Hir her tosprad sche gan to fare, *hair spread out*
- 3965 Upon hir clothes gert sche was, *clothed*
Al specheles and on the gras *And all speechless on*
Sche glod forth as an addre doth. *slithered*
Non otherwise sche ne goth,
Til sche cam to the freisshe flod, *ocean*
- 3970 And there a while sche withstod. *stood in*
Thries sche torned hire aboute,
And thries ek sche gan down loute *bow*
And in the flod sche wette hir her, *water; wet her hair*
And thries on the water ther
- 3975 Sche gaspeth with a drecchinge onde, *drowning wave*
And tho sche tok hir speche on honde. *utilized her speech*
Ferst sche began to clepe and calle *call and cry out*
Upward unto the sterres alle, *stars*
To wynd, to air, to see, to lond
- 3980 Sche preide, and ek hield up hir hond,
To Echates and gan to crie, *And began to call to Hecate*
Which is goddesse of sorcerie. *Who*
Sche seide, ‘Helpeth at this nede,
And as ye maden me to spede,
- 3985 Whan Jason cam the flees to seche, *seek*
So help me nou, I you beseche.’
With that sche loketh and was war,
Down fro the sky ther cam a char, *chariot*
The which Dragouns aboute drowe:
- 3990 And tho sche gan hir hed down bowe,
And up sche styh, and faire and wel *ascended*
Sche drof forth bothe char and whel
Above in th’air among the skyes. *the air [where birds and spirits live]*
The lond of Crete and tho parties
- 3995 Sche soughte, and faste gan hire hye, *hasten*
And there upon the hulles hye *high hills*

- Of Othrin and Olimpe also,
 And ek of othre hulles mo,
 Sche fond and gadreth herbes suote, *sweet*
 4000 Sche pulleth up som be the rote,
 And manye with a knyf sche scherth, *cuts off*
 And alle into hir char sche berth. *chariot*
 Thus whan sche hath the hulles sought, *hills*
 The flodes ther forgat sche nought, *rivers*
 4005 Eridian and Amphisos,
 Peneie and ek Spercheidos,
 To hem sche wente and ther sche nom *took*
 Bothe of the water and the fom, *foam*
 The sond and ek the smale stones,
 4010 Whiche as sche ches out for the nones,
 And of the Rede See a part,
 That was behovelich to hire art,
 Sche tok, and after that aboute
 Sche soughte sondri sedes oute *seeds*
 4015 In felde and in many greves, *groves*
 And ek a part sche tok of leves:
 Bot thing which mihte hire most availe
 Sche fond in Crete and in Thessaile.
 In daies and in nyhtes nyne,
 4020 With gret travaile and with gret pyne, *labor; pain*
 Sche was pourveid of every piece, *fully supplied with every necessity*
 And torneth homward into Grece.
 Before the gates of Eson
 Hir char sche let awai to gon, *chariot*
 4025 And tok out ferst that was therinne;
 For tho sche thoghte to beginne
 Such thing as semeth impossible,
 And made hirselves invisible,
 As sche that was with air enclosed
 4030 And mihte of no man be desclosed. *revealed*
 Sche tok up turves of the lond *clods*
 Withoute helpe of mannes hond,
 Al heled with the grene gras, *covered*
 Of which an alter mad ther was *altar made*
 4035 Unto Echates the goddesse
 Of art magique and the maistresse,
 And eft another to Juvente, *the goddess of youth*
 As sche which dede hir hole entente. *accomplished; whole*
 Tho tok sche fieldwode and verveyne, *medicinal herb; vervain*
 4040 Of herbes be noght betre tueyne, *two*
 Of which anon withoute let *hindrance*
 These alters ben aboute set.
 Tuo sondri puttes faste by *Two different pits*

- Sche made, and with that hastely
 4045 A wether which was blak sche slouh, *sheep; killed*
 And out therof the blod sche drouh *blood; drew*
 And dede into the pettes tuo; *put in the two pits*
 Warm melk sche putte also therto *milk*
 With hony meynd: and in such wise *mixed*
 4050 Sche gan to make hir sacrifice,
 And cride and preide forth withal
 To Pluto the god infernal,
 And to the queene Proserpine. *lineage*
 And so sche soghte out al the line
 4055 Of hem that longen to that craft, *those who are skilled in occult arts*
 Behinde was no name laft,
 And preide hem alle, as sche wel couthe, *knew*
 To grante Eson his ferste youthe.
 This olde Eson broght forth was tho. *then*
 4060 Awei sche bad alle othre go *told all others to leave*
 Upon peril that mihte falle;
 And with that word thei wenten alle,
 And leften there hem tuo alone.
 And tho sche gan to gaspe and gone, *gasp and gape*
 4065 And made signes many on, *many a one*
 And seide hir wordes therupon;
 So that with spellinge of hir charmes *chanting; incantations*
 Sche tok Eson in bothe hire armes,
 And made him for to slepe faste,
 4070 And him upon hire herbes caste.
 The blake wether tho sche tok,
 And hiewh the fleiss, as doth a cok; *minced; as a cook does*
 On either alter part sche leide, *altar*
 And with the charmes that sche seide
 4075 A fyr down fro the sky alyhte
 And made it for to brenne lyhte. *burn brightly*
 Bot whan Medea sawh it brenne, *burn*
 Anon sche gan to sterte and renne *run*
 The fyr aulters al aboute: *altars*
 4080 Ther was no beste which goth oute *beast*
 More wylde than sche semeth ther.
 Aboute hir schuldres hyng hir her *hung her hair*
 As thogh sche were oute of hir mynde
 And torned in another kynde. *creature*
 4085 Tho lay ther certein wode cleft, *chopped wood*
 Of which the pieces nou and eft
 Sche made hem in the pettes wete, *pits wet*
 And put hem in the fyri hete,
 And tok the brond with al the blase, *firebrand; flame*
 4090 And thries sche began to rase *run swiftly*

	Aboute Eson, ther as he slepte;	<i>where</i>
	And eft with water, which sche kepte,	
	Sche made a cercle aboute him thries,	
	And eft with fyr of sulphre twyes.	<i>twice</i>
4095	Ful many another thing sche dede,	
	Which is noght writen in this stede.	<i>place</i>
	Bot tho sche ran so up and down,	
	Sche made many a wonder soun,	<i>sound</i>
	Somtime lich unto the cock,	
4100	Somtime unto the laverock,	<i>lark</i>
	Somtime kacleth as an hen,	
	Somtime spekth as don the men.	
	And riht so as hir jargoun strangeth,	<i>just as her speech becomes more weird</i>
	In sondri wise hir forme changeth,	
4105	Sche semeth faie and no womman;	<i>fairylife</i>
	For with the craftes that sche can	<i>knows</i>
	Sche was, as who seith, a goddesse;	
	And what hir liste, more or lesse,	<i>desired</i>
	Sche dede, in bokes as we finde,	
4110	That passeth over manneskinde.	<i>What exceeds human nature</i>
	Bot who that wole of wondres hiere,	<i>hear</i>
	What thing sche wroghte in this matiere,	
	To make an ende of that sche gan,	
	Such merveile herde nevere man.	
4115	Apointed in the newe mone,	<i>Prescribed by; moon</i>
	Whan it was time for to done,	
	Sche sette a caldron on the fyr,	<i>kettle</i>
	In which was al the hole atir,	<i>were all the necessary supplies</i>
	Wheron the medicine stod,	
4120	Of jus, of water, and of blod,	<i>herbal extract</i>
	And let it buile in such a plit,	<i>boil</i>
	Til that sche sawh the spume whyt;	<i>white froth (spume)</i>
	And tho sche caste in rynde and rote,	
	And sed and flour that was for bote,	<i>seed; remedy</i>
4125	With many an herbe and many a ston,	
	Wherof sche hath ther many on.	
	And ek Cimpheius the serpent	
	To hire hath alle his scales lent,	
	Chelidre hire gaf his addres skin,	<i>A poisonous snake</i>
4130	And sche to builen caste hem in;	<i>boil</i>
	A part ek of the horned oule,	<i>owl</i>
	The which men hiere on nyhtes houle;	<i>howl</i>
	And of a raven, which was told	
	Of nyne hundred wynter old,	
4135	Sche tok the hed with al the bile;	<i>head</i>
	And as the medicine it wile,	<i>medicinal formula dictates</i>
	Sche tok therafter the bouele	<i>bowel</i>

- Of the seewolf, and for the hele *shark; healing*
 Of Eson, with a thousand mo
 4140 Of thinges that sche hadde tho,
 In that Caldroun togedre as blyve *forthwith*
 Sche putte, and tok thanne of olyve
 A drie branche hem with to stere, *stir*
 The which anon gan floure and bere *flower; bear*
 4145 And waxe al freisshe and grene agein.
 Whan sche this vertu hadde sein,
 Sche let the leste drope of alle *smallest*
 Upon the bare flor down falle;
 Anon ther sprong up flour and gras,
 4150 Where as the drope falle was,
 And wox anon al medwe grene, *grew swiftly; meadow*
 So that it mihte wel be sene.
 Medea thanne knew and wiste *understood*
 Hir medicine is for to triste, *trustworthy*
 4155 And goth to Eson ther he lay,
 And tok a swerd was of assay, *of proven quality*
 With which a wounde upon his side
 Sche made, that therout mai slyde
 The blod withinne, which was old
 4160 And sek and trouble and fieble and cold. *sick; murky; feeble*
 And tho sche tok unto his us *use*
 Of herbes al the beste jus,
 And poured it into his wounde;
 That made his veynes fulle and sounde.
 4165 And tho sche made his wounde clos,
 And tok his hand, and up he ros,
 And tho sche gaf him drinke a drauhte,
 Of which his youthe agein he cauhte, *caught*
 His hed, his herte, and his visage
 4170 Lich unto twenty wynter age.
 Hise hore heres were away, *gray hair disappeared*
 And lich unto the freisshe Maii,
 Whan passed ben the colde schoures,
 Riht so recovereth he his floures. *youthfulness*
 4175 Lo, what mihte eny man devise,
 A womman schewe in eny wise
 Mor hertly love in every stede,
 Than Medea to Jason dede?
 Ferst sche made him the flees to winne,
 4180 And after that fro kiththe and kinne
 With gret tresor with him sche stal,
 And to his fader forth withal
 His elde hath torned into youthe,
 Which thing non other womman couthe. *knew*

- 4185 Bot hou it was to hire aquit,
The remembrance duelleth yit.
King Peleus his em was ded, *uncle*
Jason bar corone on his hed,
Medea hath fulfild his wille.
- 4190 Bot whanne he scholde of riht fulfille
The trouthe, which to hire afore *pledge; before*
He hadde in th'yle of Colchos swore, *sworn*
Tho was Medea most deceived.
For he another hath received, *entered into sexual relationship with*
- 4195 Which dowhter was to King Creon. *Who*
Creusa sche hihte, and thus Jason, *was named*
As he that was to love untrew, *soon paid for*
Medea lefte and tok a newe.
- 4200 Bot that was after sone aboght:
Medea with hire art hath wrought
Of cloth of gold a mantel riche,
Which semeth worth a kinges riche, *worthy of a kingdom*
And that was unto Creusa sent
In name of gifte and of present,
- 4205 For sosterhode hem was betuene;
And whan that yonge freisshe queene
That mantel lappeth hire aboute,
Anon therof the fyr sprong oute
And brente hir bothe fleissch and bon.
- 4210 Tho cam Medea to Jason
With bothe his sones on hire hond,
And seide, 'O thou of every lond
The moste untrew creature,
Lo, this schal be thi forfeiture.'
- 4215 With that sche bothe his sones slouh
Before his yhe, and he outdrouh
His swerd and wold have slayn hir tho,
Bot farewel, sche was ago
Unto Pallas the court above, *Pallas' court*
- 4220 Wher as sche pleigneth upon love, *bewails*
As sche that was with that goddesse,
And he was left in gret destresse.
- Confessor** Thus miht thou se what sorwe it doth
To swere an oth which is noght soth, *true*
- 4225 In loves cause namely.
Mi sone, be wel war forthi, *well-cautioned*
And kep that thou be noght forswore: *take care; perjured*
For this, which I have told tofore,
- 4229 Ovide telleth everydel." *every part*
- Amans** "Mi fader, I may lieve it wel,
For I have herde it ofte seie


	Sche caste hou that sche mihte make These children to here fader lothe, And schope a wyle agein hem bothe, Which to the king was al unknowe.	<i>deliberated</i> <i>hateful</i> <i>conceived a deceit against them</i>
4280	A yeer or tuo sche let do sowe The lond with sode whete aboute, Wherof no corn mai springen oute; And thus be sleyhte and be covine Aros the derthe and the famine	<i>had sown</i> <i>boiled wheat</i> <i>grain</i> <i>deceit; fraud</i>
4285	Thurghout the lond in such a wise, So that the king a sacrificise Upon the point of this destresse To Ceres, which is the goddesse Of corn, hath schape him for to give,	
4290	To loke if it mai be forgive, The meschief which was in his lond. Bot sche, which knew tofor the hond The circumstance of al this thing, Agein the cominge of the king	<i>she (the stepmother)</i>
4295	Into the temple, hath schape so, Of hire acord that alle tho Whiche of the temple prestes were Have seid and full declared there Unto the king, bot if so be	<i>Prior to</i> <i>contrived</i>
4300	That he deliver the contré Of Frixus and of Hellen bothe, With whom the goddes ben so wrothe, That whil tho children ben therinne, Such tilthe schal no man beginne,	<i>rid</i>
4305	Wherof to gete him eny corn. Thus was it seid, thus was it sworn Of all the prestes that ther are; And sche which causeth al this fare Seid ek therto what that sche wolde,	<i>cultivation</i>
4310	And every man thanne after tolde So as the queene hem hadde preid. The king, which hath his ere leid, And lieveth al that evere he herde, Unto here tale thus ansuerde,	<i>situation</i>
4315	And seith that levere him is to chese Hise children bothe for to lese, Than him and al the remenant Of hem whiche are aportenant Unto the lond which he schal kepe,	<i>ear applied</i> <i>believes</i>
4320	And bad his wif to take kepe In what manere is best to done, That thei delivered weren sone	<i>preferable; choose</i> <i>lose</i> <i>take care</i>

- Out of this world. And sche anon
 Tuo men ordeigneth for to gon.
 4325 Bot ferst sche made hem for to swere
 That thei the children scholden bere
 Unto the see, that non it knowe, *sea*
 And hem therinne bothe throwe.
 The children to the see ben lad,
 4330 Wher in the wise as Yno bad *ordered*
 These men be redy for to do.
 Bot the goddesse which Juno
 Is hote, appiereth in the stede, *called; on the spot (i.e., immediately)*
 And hath unto the men forbede
 4335 That thei the children noght ne sle, *should slay*
 Bot bad hem loke into the see
 And taken hiede of that thei sihen. *what they saw*
 Ther swam a schep tofore here yhen, *before their eyes*
 Whos flees of burned gold was al;
 4340 And this goddesse forth withal
 Comandeth that withoute lette *delay*
 Thei scholde anon these children sette
 Above upon this schepes bak;
 And al was do, riht as sche spak,
 4345 Wherof the men gon hom agein.
 And fell so, as the bokes sein,
 Hellen the yonge mayden tho,
 Which of the see was wobego, *distressed*
 For pure drede hire herte hath lore, *broke her heart*
 4350 That fro the schep, which hath hire bore, *[So] that*
 As sche that was swounende feint,
 Sche fell, and hath hirselve dreint; *drowned*
 With Frixus and this schep forth swam,
 Til he to th'yle of Colchos cam,
 4355 Where Juno the goddesse he fond,
 Which tok the schep unto the lond,
 And sette it there in such a wise
 As thou tofore hast herd devise,
 Wherof cam after al the wo,
 4360 Why Jason was forswore so
 Unto Medee, as it is spoke.”
Amans “Mi fader, who that hath tobroke
 His trouthe, as ye have told above,
 He is noght worthi for to love
 4365 Ne be beloved, as me semeth.
 Bot every newe love quemeth *is pleasing*
 To him which newefongel is. *fickle*
 And natheles nou after this,
 If that you list to taken hiede

- 4370 Upon mi schrifte to procede,
 In loves cause agein the vice
 Of covoitise and Avarice
 What ther is more I wolde wite.” *know*
- Confessor** “Mi sone, this I finde write,
 4375 Ther is yit on of thilke brood, *one of that kind of person*
 Which only for the worldes good,
 To make a tresor of moneie, *wealth*
 Put alle conscience aweie. *aside*
 Wherof in thi confession
- 4380 The name and the condicion
 I schal hierafterward declare,
 Which makth on riche, another bare.” *one person*

[USURY]

- v. *Plus capit usura sibi quam debetur, et illud
 Fraude colorata sepe latenter agit.
 Sic amor excessus quamsepe suos ut avarus
 Spirat, et vnius tres capit ipse loco.¹*

- [Confessor]** “Upon the bench sittende on hih
 With Avarice Usure I sih, *saw*
- 4385 Full clothed of his oghne suite,
 Which after gold makth chace and suite
 With his brocours, that renne aboute *purveyors*
 Lich unto racches in a route. *hunting hounds; pack*
- 4389 Such lucre is non above grounde, *(i.e., there is no wealth on earth)*
-  Which is noght of tho racches founde; *hounds sniffed out*
 For wher thei se beyete sterte, *wealth move*
 That schal hem in no wise asterte, *escape*
 Bot thei it dryve into the net
 Of lucre, which Usure hath set.
- 4395 Usure with the riche duelleth,
 To al that evere he beith and selleth *buys*
 He hath ordeined of his sleyhte *deceit*
 Measure double and double weyhte.
 Outward he selleth be the lasse,
- 4400 And with the more he makth his tasse, *loot (pile of money)*
 Wherof his hous is full withinne.
 He reccheth noght, be so he winne, *cares; provided that*
 Though that ther lese ten or tuelle: *Even though; ten or twelve [others] lose*
 His love is al toward himselfe

¹ *Usury takes for itself more than it is owed, and often does so by concealed fraud. Thus love frequently pursues its excesses like an avaricious man, and takes three instead of one.*

- 4405 And to non other, bot he se *unless*
 That he mai winne suche thre. *three times as much*
 For wher he schal oght give or lene, *lend*
 He wol ageinward take a bene, *in return; bean*
 Ther he hath lent the smale pese. *Where; small peas*
- 4410 And riht so ther ben manye of these
 Lovers, that thogh thei love a lyte,
 That scarsly wolde it weie a myte, *weigh; mile*
 Yit wolde thei have a pound again, *in exchange*
 As doth Usure in his bargain. *So; business dealings*
- 4415 Bot certes such usure unliche
 It falleth more unto the riche, *unequal usury*
 Als wel of love as of beyete, *possessions*
 Than unto hem that be noght grete,
 And, as who seith, ben simple and povere.
- 4420 For sielden is whan thei recovere, *it is seldom that*
 Bot if it be thurgh gret decerte. *Unless; merit*
 And natheles men se poverte
 With porsuite and continuance
 Fulofte make a gret chevance *success*
- 4425 And take of love his advantage,
 Forth with the help of his brocage *wins out in love*
 That maken seme wher it is noght. *clandestine dealings*
 And thus fulofte is love boght
 For litel what, and mochel take, *a little something*
- 4430 With false weyhtes that thei make.
Confessor Nou, sone, of that I seide above
 Thou wost what Usure is of love:
 Tell me forthi what so thou wilt,
- 4434 If thou therof hast eny gilt.”
Amans “Mi fader, nay, for ought I hiere.
 For of tho pointz ye tolden hiere
 I wol you be mi trouthe assure,
 Mi weyhte of love and mi mesure *weight*
 Hath be mor large and mor certein
- 4440 Than evere I tok of love agein:
 For so yit couthe I nevere of sleyhte, *was never able by trickery*
 To take agein be double weyhte
 Of love mor than I have give.
 For als so wiss mot I be schrive *certainly*
- 4445 And have remission of sinne,
 As so yit couthe I nevere winne,
 Ne yit so mochel, soth to sein,
 That evere I mihte have half agein
 Of so full love as I have lent.
- 4450 And if myn happ were so wel went,
 That for the hole I mihte have half,

- Me thenkth I were a goddes half.
 For where Usure wole have double,
 Mi conscience is noght so trouble,
 4455 I biede nevere as to my del *never demand; part*
 Bot of the hole an halvendel; *whole a half share*
 That is non excess, as me thenketh.
 Bot natheles it me forthenketh, *to me it is displeasing*
 For wel I wot that wol noght be,
 4460 For every day the betre I se
 That hou so evere I give or lene
 Mi love in place ther I mene,
 For oght that evere I axe or crave, *ask*
 I can nothing ageinward have. *have in return*
 4465 Bot yit for that I wol noght lete, *desist*
 What so befallle of mi beyete, *possession*
 That I ne schal hire give and lene
 Mi love and al mi thoght so clene,
 That toward me schal noght beleve. *remain*
 4470 And if sche of hire goode leve
 Rewarde wol me noght again,
 I wot the laste of my bargain *bottom line*
 Schal stonde upon so gret a lost,
 That I mai neveremor the cost
 4475 Recovere in this world til I die.
 So that touchende of this partie
 I mai me wel excuse and schal;
 And for to speke forth withal,
 If eny brocour for me wente, *procurer traveled on my behalf*
 4480 That point cam nevere in myn entente.
 So that the more me merveilleth,
 What thing it is mi ladi eilleth, *ails*
 That al myn herte and al my time
 Sche hath, and doth no betre bime. *by me*
 4485 I have herd seid that thoght is fre,
 And natheles in priveté
 To you, mi fader, that ben hiere
 Min hole schrifte for to hiere, *whole; hear*
 I dar min herte wel desclose.
 4490 Touchende Usure, as I suppose,
 Which as ye telle in love is used,
 Mi ladi mai noght ben excused;
 That for o lokinge of hire ye *eye*
 Min hole herte til I dye
 4495 With al that evere I may and can
 Sche hath me wonne to hire man.
 Wherof, me thenkth, good reson wolde
 That sche somdel rewarde scholde,

- And give a part, ther sche hath al.
 4500 I not what falle hierafter schal, *do not know; befall*
 Bot into nou yit dar I sein, *the present time*
 Hire liste nevere give agein
 A goodli word in such a wise,
 Wherof min hope miht arise,
 4505 Mi grete love to compensate. *requite*
 I not hou sche hire conscience
 Excuse wole of this usure;
 Be large weyhte and gret mesure
 Sche hath mi love, and I have noght
 4510 Of that which I have diere boght, *dearly paid for*
 And with myn herte I have it paid.
 Bot al that is asyde laid, *put aside*
 And I go loveles aboute.
 Hire oghte stonde in ful gret doute,
 4515 Til sche redresce such a sinne,
 That sche wole al mi love winne
 And gifth me noght to live by; *live on*
 Noght als so moche as 'grant mercy'
 Hir list to seie, of which I mihte *'thanks'*
 4520 Som of mi grete peine allyhte. *by which*
 Bot of this point, lo, thus I fare *alleviate*
 As he that paith for his chaffare,
 And beith it diere, and yit hath non,
 So mot he nedes povere gon. *merchandise*
 4525 Thus beie I diere and have no love, *buys it dearly; nothing*
 That I ne mai noght come above
 To winne of love non encess.
 Bot I me wole natheles
 Touchende usure of love aquite;
 4530 And if mi ladi be to wyte, *blame*
 I preie to god such grace hir sende
 That sche be time it mot amende."
- Confessor** "Mi sone, of that thou hast ansuerd
 Touchende Usure I have al herd,
 4535 Hou thou of love hast wonne smale. *won very little*
 Bot that thou tellest in thi tale
 And thi ladi therof accusest,
 Me thenkth tho wordes thou misusest. *It seems to me those*
 For be thin oghne knowlechinge *by*
 4540 Thou seist hou sche for o lokinge *one glance*
 Thin hole herte fro thee tok.
 Sche mai be such, that hire o lok
 Is worth thin herte manyfold;
 So hast thou wel thin herte sold,
 4545 Whan thou hast that is more worth. *worth many times [more than]*

- And ek of that thou tellest forth,
 Hou that hire weyhte of love unevene
 Is unto thin, under the hevene
 Stod nevere in evene that balance
 4550 Which stant in loves governance.
 Such is the statut of his lawe,
 That thogh thi love more drawe
 And peise in the balance more, *weighs*
 Thou miht noght axe agein therfore
 4555 Of duet , bot al of grace. *Out of*
 For love is lord in every place,
 Ther mai no lawe him justefie *govern him*
 Be reddour ne be compaignie,
By strictness; social pressure
 That he ne wole after his wille
 4560 Whom that him liketh spede or spille. *to assist or destroy*
 To love a man mai wel beginne,
 Bot whether he schal lese or winne, *lose*
 That wot no man til ate laste. *knows*
 Forthi coveite noght to faste, *too recklessly*
 4565 Mi sone, bot abyd thin ende, *wait your turn*
 Per cas al mai to goode wende. *turn*
 Bot that thou hast me told and said,
 Of o thing I am riht wel paid, *one; pleased*
 That thou be sleyhte ne be guile *by deceit*
 4570 Of no brocour hast otherwhile *matchmaker*
 Engined love, for such dede *Inveigled (Deceitful)*
 Is sore venged, as I rede.

[TALE OF ECHO]

- Brocours of love that deceiven, *Procurers*
 No wonder is thogh thei receiven
 4575 After the wrong that thei decerven; *In proportion to; deserve*
 For whom as evere that thei serven
 And do plesance for a whyle,
 Yit ate laste here oghne guile *their*
 ¶ Upon here oghne hed descendeth, *(see note)*
 4580 Which God of his vengance sendeth,
 As be ensample of time go
 A man mai finde it hath be so.
 It fell sometime, as it was sene,
 The hihe goddesse and the queene
 4585 Juno tho hadde in compainie
 A maiden full of tricherie;
 For sche was evere in on acord
 With Jupiter, that was hire lord,
 To gete him othre loves newe,

- 4590 Thurgh such brocage and was untrewē *procuring*
 Al otherwise than him nedeth.
 Bot sche, which of no schame dredeth,
 With queinte wordes and with slyhe *deceitful; sly*
 Blente in such wise hir lady yhe, *Impaired . . . eye (Deceived her)*
- 4595 As sche to whom that Juno triste, *trusted*
 So that therof sche nothing wiste. *knew*
 Bot so privé mai be nothing, *secret*
 That it ne comth to knowleching;
 Thing don upon the derke nyht
- 4600 Is after knowe on daies liht.
 So it befell, that ate laste
 Al that this slyhe maiden caste *contrived*
 Was overcast and overthrowe.
 For as the sothe mot be knowe, *must*
- 4605 To Juno was don understonde
 In what manere hir housebonde
 With fals brocage hath take usure *dishonest dealing; accepted*
 Of love mor than his mesure,
 Whan he tok othre than his wif,
- 4610 Wherof this mayden was gultif,
 Which hadde ben of his assent.
 And thus was al the game schent: *spoiled*
 Sche soffreth him, as sche mot nede, *endured; had to do*
 Bot the brocour of his misdede, *procurer*
- 4615 Sche which hir conseil gaf therto,
 On hire is the vengeance do.
 For Juno with hire wordes hote, *angry*
 This maiden, which Eccho was hote, *was named*
 Reproveth and seith in this wise:
- 4620 'O traiteresse, of which servise
 Hast thou thin oghne ladi served!
 Thou hast gret peine wel deserved,
 That thou canst maken it so queinte,
 Thi slyhe wordes for to peinte
- 4625 Towardes me, that am thi queene,
 Wherof thou madest me to wene *think*
 That myn housbonde trewe were,
 Whan that he loveth elleswhere,
 Al be it so him nedeth noght.
- 4630 Bot upon thee it schal be boght,
 Which art privé to tho doinges, *privity to those activities*
 And me fulofte of thi lesinges *lies*
 Deceived hast. Nou is the day
 That I thi while aquite may, *your deceit*
- 4635 And for thou hast to me conceled *because you have from me*
 That my lord hath with othre deled, *had sexual relations*

- I schal thee sette in such a kende, *circumstance*
 That evere unto the worldes ende
 Al that thou hierest thou schalt telle, *hear*
 4640 And clappe it out as doth a belle.
 And with that word sche was forschape. *transformed*
 Ther may no vois hire mouth ascape;
 What man that in the wodes crieth,
 Withoute faile Eccho replieth,
 4645 And what word that him list to sein, *it pleases him to say*
 The same word sche seith agein.
 Thus sche, which whilom hadde leve
 To duelle in chambre, mot beleve *must remain*
 In wodes and on helles bothe, *hills*
 4650 For such brocage as wyves lothe,
 Which doth here lordes hertes change *their*
 And love in other place strange.
- Confessor** Forthi, if evere it so befallē,
 That thou, mi sone, amanges alle
 4655 Be wedded man, hold that thou hast,
 For thanne al other love is wast. *wasted*
 O wif schal wel to thee suffise; *One*
 And thanne, if thou for covoitise
 Of love woldest axe more,
 4660 Thou scholdest don agein the lore
 Of alle hem that trewe be.”
- Amans** “Mi fader, as in this degré
 Mi conscience is noght accused,
 For I no such brocage have used, *procuring*
 4665 Wherof that lust of love is wonne.
 Forthi spek forth, as ye begonne,
 Of Avarice upon mi schrifte.”
- Confessor** “Mi sone, I schal the branches schifte
 Be ordre so as thei ben set,
 4670 On whom no good is wel beset.”

[PARSIMONY]

- vi. *Pro verbis verba, munus pro munere reddi*
Convenit, ut pondus equa statera gerat.
Propterea cupido non dat sua dona Cupido,
*Nam qui nulla serit, gramina nulla metet.*¹

¹ It is fitting to pay back words with words, and a gift with a gift, so that balanced scales carry the weight. Wherefore Cupid (Cupido) does not give his gifts to the avaricious (cupido); for whoever sows nothing, harvests no hay.

- [**Confessor**] “Blinde Avarice of his lignage
 For conseil and for cousinage, *kinship*
 To be withholde agein largesse,
 Hath on, whos name is seid Skarsnesse, *one; called; Parsimony*
 4675 The which is kepere of his hous,
 ¶ And is so thurghout averous, *avaricious (see note)*
 That he no good let out of honde.
 Thogh God Himself it wolde fonde, *seek*
 Of gifte scholde He nothing have;
 4680 And if a man it wolde crave,
 He moste thanne faile nede,
 Wher God Himselfe mai noght spede. *succeed*
 And thus Skarsnesse in every place
 Be reson mai no thonk porchace,
 4685 And natheles in his degree
 Above alle othre most privé
 With Avarice stant he this.
 For he governeth that ther is
 In ech astat of his office
 4690 After the reule of thilke vice:
 He takth, he kepth, he halt, he bint, *binds*
 That lihtere is to fle the flint *flay (chip) the flint*
 Than gete of him in hard or neisshe *soft*
 Only the value of a reysshe *rush*
 4695 Of good in helpinge of another,
 Noght thogh it were his oghne brother.
 For in the cas of gifte and lone
 Stant every man for him alone,
 Him thenkth of his unkindeschipe
 4700 That him nedeth no felaschipe.
 Be so the bagge and he acorden, *moneybag (purse)*
 Him reccheth noght what men recorden *cares not; remember*
 Of him, or it be evel or good. *whether; or*
 For al his trust is on his good, *possessions*
 4705 So that alone he falleth ofte,
 Whan he best weneth stonde alofte, *thinks to stand*
 Als wel in love as other wise;
 For love is evere of som reprise *cost*
 To him that wole his love holde.
 4710 Forthi, mi sone, as thou art holde,
 Touchende of this tell me thi schrifte:
 Hast thou be scars or large of gifte *stingy; generous*
 Unto thi love, whom thou servest?
 For after that thou wel deservest
 4715 Of gifte, thou miht be the bet;
 For that good holde I wel beset,
 For why thou miht the betre fare.

- Thanne is no wisdom for to spare,
 For thus men sein, in every nede
 4720 He was wys that ferst made mede. *gave gifts*
 For whereas mede mai noght spede, *reward; succeed*
 I not what helpeth other dede. *know not*
 Fulofte he faileth of his game
 That wol with ydel hand reclame
 4725 His hauk, as many a nyce doth. *fool*
 Forthi, mi sone, tell me soth *truthfully*
 And sei the trouthe, if thou hast be
 Unto thi love or skars or fre.” *either stingy; liberal*
- Confessio Amantis** “Mi fader, it hath stonde thus,
 4730 That if the tresor of Cresus
 And al the gold Octovien,
 Forth with the richesse Yndien
 Of perles and of riche stones, *pearls*
 Were al togedre myn at ones,
 4735 I sette it at no more acompte
 Than wolde a bare straw amonte, *amount to a barren straw*
 To give it hire al in a day,
 Be so that to that suete may *Provided that; sweet maiden*
 I myhte like or more or lesse.
 4740 And thus because of my scarsnesse *stinginess*
 Ye mai wel understonde and lieve *believe*
 That I schal noght the worse achieve
 The pourpos which is in my thocht.
 Bot yit I gaf hir nevere noght,
 4745 Ne therto dorste a profre make;
 For wel I wot sche wol noght take,
 And give wol sche noght also,
 She is eschu of bothe tuo. *averse to*
 And this I trowe be the skile *case*
 4750 Towardes me: for sche ne wile *In regard to me*
 That I have eny cause of hope,
 Noght also mochel as a drope. *drop*
 Bot toward othre, as I mai se,
 Sche takth and gifth in such degré,
 4755 That as be weie of frendlihiede
 Sche can so kepe hir wommanhiede,
 That every man spekth of hir wel.
 Bot sche wole take of me no del, *part*
 And yit sche wot wel that I wolde
 4760 Give and do bothe what I scholde
 To plesen hire in al my myht.
 Be reson this wot every wyht, *knows; person*
 For that mai be no weie asterte: *avoided*
 Ther sche is maister of the herte, *Where*

4765 Sche mot be maister of the good.
 For God wot wel that al my mod
 And al min herte and al mi thoght
 And al mi good, whil I have oght,
 Als freliche as God hath it give,

4770 It schal ben hires, while I live,
 Riht as hir list himself commande.
 So that it nedeth no demande,
 To axe of me if I be scars
 To love, for as to tho pars

*oak; miserly
 details*

4775 I wole ansuere and seie no.”


Confessor “Mi sone, that is riht wel do.
 For oftentimes of scarsnesse
 It hath be sen, that for the lesse
 Is lost the more, as thou schalt hier

4780 A tale lich to this matiere.

[TALE OF BABIO AND CROCEUS]

Skarsnesse and love acorden nevere,
 For every thing is wel the levere
 Whan that a man hath boght it diere:
 4784 And for to speke in this matiere,

more desired

 For springe of a litel cost
 Fulofte time a man hath lost
 The large cote for the hod.

(see note)

What man that scars is of his good
 And wol noght give, he schal noght take:
 4790 With gifte a man mai undertake
 The hihe God to plese and queme,
 With gifte a man the world mai deme;

*whole coat; hood
 parsimonious*

For every creature bore,
 If thou him give, is glad therfore,
 4795 And every gladschipe, as I finde,
 Is confort unto loves kinde
 And causeth ofte a man to spede.

satisfy

*be judge of
 born*

So was he wys that ferst gaf mede,
 For mede kepeth love in house;

reward keeps love at home

4800 Bot wher the men ben coveitouse
 And sparen for to give a part,
 Thei knowe noght Cupides art.
 For his fortune and his aprise
 Desdeigneth alle coveitise

renown

4805 And hateth alle nygardie.
 And for to loke of this partie,
 A soth ensample, hou it is so,

	I finde write of Babio;	
	Which hadde a love at his menage,	<i>home</i>
4810	Ther was non fairere of hire age,	
	And hihte Viola be name;	<i>was called</i>
	Which full of youthe and ful of game	
	Was of himself, and large and fre,	<i>generous; kindhearted</i>
	Bot such another chinche as he	<i>miser</i>
4815	Men wisten noght in al the lond,	<i>might not know</i>
	And hadde affaited to his hond	<i>trained</i>
	His servant, the which Spodius	
	Was hote. And in this wise thus	<i>was called</i>
	The worldes good of sufficance	
4820	Was had, bot likinge and plesance,	<i>enjoyment</i>
	Of that belongeth to richesse	
	Of love, stod in gret destresse;	
	So that this yonge lusty wyht	<i>person</i>
	Of thing which fell to loves riht	
4825	Was evele served overal,	
	That sche was wobego withal,	<i>woebegone</i>
	Til that Cupide and Venus eke	<i>also</i>
	A medicine for the seke	
	Ordeigne wolden in this cas.	
4830	So as fortune thanne was,	
	Of love upon the destiné	
	It fell, riht as it scholde be,	
	A freissh, a fre, a frendly man	
	That noght of Avarice can,	<i>nothing; knows</i>
4835	Which Croceus be name hihte,	<i>was called</i>
	Toward this swete caste his sihte,	
	And ther sche was cam in presence.	
	Sche sih him large of his despenche,	<i>generous</i>
	And amorous and glad of chiere,	
4840	So that hir liketh wel to hierie	
	The goodly wordes whiche he seide;	
	And therupon of love he preide,	
	Of love was al that he mente,	<i>intended</i>
	To love and for sche scholde assente,	
4845	He gaf hire giftes evere among.	<i>repeatedly</i>
	Bot for men sein that mede is strong,	<i>reward; powerful</i>
	It was wel seene at thilke tyde;	<i>this time</i>
	For as it scholde of ryht betyde,	<i>fittingly happen</i>
	This Viola largesce hath take	
4850	And the nygard sche hath forsake.	<i>miser</i>
	Of Babio sche wol no more,	
	For he was grucchende everemore;	<i>complaining</i>
	Ther was with him non other fare	
	Bot for to prinche and for to spare,	<i>scrimp</i>

- 4855 Of worldes muk to gete encess. *dross; increase*
 So goth the wrecche loveles,
 Bejaped for his skarceté,
 And he that large was and fre *generous; liberal*
 And sette his herte to despende,
 4860 This Croceus, the bowe bende, *bent the bow [of Cupid]*
 Which Venus tok him for to holde,
 And schotte als ofte as evere he wolde.
 Lo, thus departeth love his lawe, *distributes*
 That what man wol nocht be felawe
 4865 To give and spende, as I thee telle,
 He is nocht worthi for to duelle
 In loves court to be relieved.
 Forthi, my sone, if I be lieved, *if I am to be believed*
 4869 Thou schalt be large of thi despence.” *generous in expenditure*
Amans “Mi fader, in mi conscience
 If ther be eny thing amis,
 I wol amende it after this,
 Toward mi love namely.”
Confessor “Mi sone, wel and redely
 4875 Thou seist, so that wel paid withal
 I am, and forthere if I schal
 Unto thi schrifte specefie
 Of Avarices progenie
 What vice suieth after this,
 4880 Thou schalt have wonder hou it is,
 Among the folk in eny regne
 That such a vice myhte regne,
 Which is comun at alle assaies, *under any circumstance*
 As men mai finde nou adaies.”

[INGRATITUDE]

- vii. *Cuncta creatura, deus et qui cuncta creauit,
 Dampnant ingrati dicta que facta viri.
 Non dolor a longe stat, quo sibi talis amicam
 Traxit, et in fine deserit esse suam.*¹

- [Confessor]** “The vice lik unto the fend,
 4886 Which nevere yit was mannes frend,
 And cleped is Unkindeschipe, *Ingratitude*
 Of covine and of felaschipe *(see note)*

¹ Every creature, God, and all that he created, condemn the words and deeds of an ungrateful man. Sorrow does not stand far off from such a one who has drawn to himself a girlfriend but ultimately fails to belong to her as well.

- With Avarice he is withholde.
 4890 Him thenkth he scholde noght ben holde *loyal*
 Unto the moder which him bar;
 Of him mai nevere man be war,
 He wol noght knowe the merite, *acknowledge*
 For that he wolde it noght aquite; *does not want to*
 4895 Which in this world is mochel used,
 And fewe ben therof excused.
 To telle of him is endeles,
 Bot this I seie natheles,
 Wher as this vice comth to londe, *occurs*
 4900 Ther takth no man his thonk on honde;
 Thogh he with alle his myhtes serve,
 He schal of him no thonk deserve. *gain*
 He takth what eny man wol give,
 Bot whil he hath o day to live,
 4905 He wol nothing rewarde agein;
 He gruccheth for to give o grein,
 Wher he hath take a berne full. *as much as a barn will hold*
 That makth a kinde herte dull,
 To sette his trust in such frendschipe,
 4910 Ther as he fint no kindeschipe;
 And for to speke wordes pleine,
 Thus hiere I many a man compleigne,
 That nou on daies thou schalt finde
 At nede fewe frendes kinde;
 4915 What thou hast don for hem tofore,
 It is forgete, as it were lore.
 The bokes speken of this vice,
 And telle hou God of His justice,
 Be weie of kinde and ek nature
 4920 And every lifissh creature, *living*
 The lawe also, who that it kan,
 Thei dampnen an unkinde man.
 It is al on to seie unkinde *define*
 As thing which don is agein kinde,
 4925 For it with kinde nevere stod
 A man to yelden evel for good.
 For who that wolde taken hede,
 A beste is glad of a good dede,
 And loveth thilke creature
 4930 After the lawe of his nature *According to*
 Which doth him ese. And for to se *[That person or creature] who makes him content*
 Of this matiere Auctorité,
 Fulofte time it hath befalle;
 Wherof a tale amonges alle,

4935 Which is of olde ensamplerie,
I thenke for to specefie.

[TALE OF ADRIAN AND BARDUS]

	To speke of an unkinde man, I finde hou whilom Adrian, Of Rome which a gret lord was,	
4940	Upon a day as he per cas	
☞	To wode in his huntinge wente, It hapneth at a soudein wente, After his chace as he poursuieth, Thurgh happ, the which no man eschuieth,	(see note) sudden turn [of fate]
4945	He fell unwar into a pet, Wher that it mihte noght be let. The pet was dep and he fell lowe, That of his men non myhte knowe Wher he becam, for non was nyh	chance pit made known Where he had gone
4950	Which of his fall the meschief syh. And thus alone ther he lay Clepende and criende al the day For socour and deliverance, Til agein eve it fell per chance,	Who all alone Calling out (Begging) toward evening; by
4955	A while er it began to nyhte, A povere man, which Bardus hihte, Cam forth walkende with his asse, And hadde gadred him a tasse Of grene stickes and of dreie	become night was called gathered for himself a bundle
4960	To selle, who that wolde hem beie, As he which hadde no liflode, Bot whanne he myhte such a lode To tounne with his asse carie. And as it fell him for to tarie	buy them
4965	That ilke time nyh the pet, And hath the trusse faste knet, He herde a vois, which cride dimme, And he his ere to the brimme Hath leid, and herde it was a man,	pause near the pit truss tightened faintly ear; brink
4970	Which seide, 'Ha, help hier Adrian, And I wol given half mi good.'	placed here
	The povere man this understod, As he that wolde gladly winne, And to this lord which was withinne	
4975	He spak and seide, 'If I thee save, What sikerneshe schal I have Of covenant, that afterward	security agreement

- Thou wolt me give such reward
As thou behihtest nou tofore?’
4980 That other hath his othes swore
Be hevene and be the goddes alle,
If that it myhte so befallē
That he out of the pet him broghte,
Of all the goodes whiche he oghte
4985 He schal have evene halvendel.
This Bardus seide he wolde wel;
And with this word his asse anon
He let untrusse, and therupon
Doun goth the corde into the pet,
4990 To which he hath at the ende knet
A staf, wherby, he seide, he wolde
That Adrian him scholde holde.
Bot it was tho per chance falle,
Into that pet was also falle,
4995 An ape, which at thilke throwe,
Whan that the corde cam doun lowe,
Al sodeinli therto he skipte
And it in bothe hise armes clipte.
And Bardus with his asse anon
5000 Him hath updrawe, and he is gon.
Bot whan he sih it was an ape,
He wende al hadde ben a jape
Of faierie, and sore him dradde:
And Adrian eftsone gradde
5005 For help, and cride and preide faste,
And he eftsone his corde caste;
Bot whan it cam unto the grounde,
A gret serpent it hath bewounde,
The which Bardus anon up drouh.
5010 And thanne him thoghte wel ynough
It was fantosme, bot yit he herde
The vois, and he therto ansuerde,
‘What wiht art thou in Goddes name?’
‘I am,’ quod Adrian, ‘the same,
5015 Whos good thou schalt have evene half.’
Quod Bardus, ‘Thanne a Goddes half
The thridde time assaie I schal,’
And caste his corde forth withal
Into the pet, and whan it cam
5020 To him, this lord of Rome it nam,
And therupon him hath adresced,
And with his hand fulofte blessed,
And thanne he bad to Bardus hale.
And he, which understod his tale,
- promised a moment ago*
- owned
equal half
gladly*
- unloaded*
- tied*
- that moment*
- grasped*
- [the ape] departed*
- thought; delusion
he was sorely afraid
impatiently cried out (shrieked/implored) again*
- again*
- entwined
at once drew up
it seemed to him clear*
- creature*
- on God’s behalf
try*
- took
prepared himself
crossed himself
haul
who; words*

- 5025 Betwen him and his asse al softe *gently*
 Hath drawe and set him up alofte
 Withouten harm al esely.
 He seith noght ones 'grant merci,' *(Adrian); gramercy (thanks)*
 Bot strauhte him forth to the cité, *proceeded*
- 5030 And let this povere Bardus be.
 And natheles this simple man
 His covenant, so as he can,
 Hath axed; and that other seide, *demanded*
 If so be that he him umbreide *reproached (censured)*
 5035 Of oght that hath be speke or do, *been said or done*
 It schal ben venged on him so,
 That him were betre to be ded.
 And he can tho non other red, *knows then no other course of action*
 Bot on his asse agein he caste
- 5040 His trusse, and hieth homward faste. *hastened quickly home*
 And whan that he cam hom to bedde,
 He tolde his wif hou that he spedde.
 Bot finaly to speke oght more
 Unto this lord he dradde him sore,
- 5045 So that a word ne dorste he sein.
 And thus upon the morwe agein,
 In the manere as I recorde,
 Forth with his asse and with his corde
 To gadre wode, as he dede er, *gather wood; did before*
- 5050 He goth; and whan that he cam ner
 Unto the place where he wolde, *wished [to go]*
 He hath his ape anon beholde,
 Which hadde gadred al aboute
 Of stickes hier and there a route, *great pile*
- 5055 And leide hem redy to his hond,
 Wherof he made his trasse and bond; *truss*
 Fro dai to dai and in this wise
 This ape profreth his servise,
 So that he hadde of wode ynouh. *wood aplenty*
- 5060 Upon a time and as he drouh
 Toward the wode, he sih besyde
 The grete gastli serpent glyde,
 Til that sche cam in his presence,
 And in hir kinde a reverence
- 5065 Sche hath him do, and forth withal
 A ston mor briht than a cristall
 Out of hir mouth tofore his weie
 Sche let doun falle, and wente aweie,
 For that he schal noght ben adrad. *So that*
- 5070 Tho was this povere Bardus glad,
 Thonkende God, and to the ston *Thanking*

- He goth and takth it up anon, *lifts*
 And hath gret wonder in his wit
 Hou that the beste him hath aquit, *repaid*
 5075 Wher that the mannes sone hath failed,
 For whom he hadde most travailed. *worked hardest*
 Bot al he putte in Goddes hond,
 And torneth hom, and what he fond
 Unto his wif he hath it schewed;
 5080 And thei, that weren bothe lewed, *uneducated*
 Acorden that he scholde it selle. *Agree*
 And he no lengere wolde duelle, *did not tarry*
 Bot forth anon upon the tale *according to this plan*
 The ston he profreth to the sale;
 5085 And riht as he himself it sette,
 The jueler anon forth fette *brought*
 The gold and made his paiement.
 Therof was no delaïement!
 Thus whan this ston was boght and sold,
 5090 Homward with joie manyfold
 This Bardus goth; and whan he cam
 Hom to his hous and that he nam *took*
 His gold out of his purs, withinne
 He fond his ston also therinne,
 5095 Wherof for joie his herte pleide,
 Unto his wif and thus he seide,
 'Lo, hier my gold, lo, hier mi ston!'
 His wif hath wonder therupon,
 And axeth him hou that mai be.
 5100 'Nou be mi trouthe I not,' quod he, *I do not know*
 'Bot I dar swere upon a bok, *Bible*
 That to my marchant I it tok,
 And he it hadde whan I wente:
 So knowe I noght to what entente
 5105 It is nou hier, bot it be grace. *here, unless*
 Forthi tomorwe in other place
 I wole it fonde for to selle, *attempt*
 And if it wol noght with him duelle,
 Bot crepe into mi purs agein,
 5110 Than dar I saufly swere and sein,
 It is the vertu of the ston.' *power*
 The morwe cam, and he is gon
 To seche aboute in other stede *place*
 His ston to selle, and he so dede,
 5115 And lefte it with his chapman there. *merchant*
 Bot whan that he cam elleswhere,
 In presence of his wif at hom,
 Out of his purs and that he nom *took*

- His gold, he fond his ston withal.
 5120 And thus it fell him overal, *happened to him repeatedly*
 Where he it solde in sondri place,
 Such was the fortune and the grace.
 Bot so wel may nothing ben hidd,
 That it nys ate laste kidd: *made known*
 5125 This fame goth aboute Rome
 So ferforth, that the wordes come
 To th'emperour Justinian,
 And he let sende for the man,
 And axede him hou that it was.
 5130 And Bardus tolde him al the cas,
 Hou that the worm and eke the beste, *serpent; also; ape (beast)*
 Although thei maden no beheste, *promise*
 His travail hadden wel aquit.
 Bot he which hadde a mannes wit,
 5135 And made his covenant be mouthe *by*
 And swor therto al that he couthe *knew how to do*
 To parte and given half his good,
 Hath nou forgete hou that it stod,
 As he which wol no trouthe holde. *faith*
 5140 This emperour al that he tolde
 Hath herd, and thilke unkindenesse
 He seide he wolde himself redresse.
 And thus in court of juggement
 This Adrian was thanne assent, *summoned*
 5145 And the querele in audience *legal hearing*
 Declared was in the presence
 Of th'emperour and many mo; *more*
 Wherof was mochel speche tho *then*
 And gret wondringe among the press. *crowd*
 5150 Bot ate laste natheles
 For the partie which hath pleigned *complained*
 The lawe hath diemed and ordeigned *decided (arbitrated)*
 Be hem that were avised wel, *By those who; well informed*
 That he schal have the halvendel *half part*
 5155 Thurghout of Adrianes good.
 And thus of thilke unkinde blod *unnatural person*
 Stant the memoire into this day,
 Wherof that every wysman may
 Ensamplen him, and take in mynde
 5160 What schame it is to ben unkinde;
 Agein the which reson debateth,
 And every creature it hateth.
Confessor Forthi, mi sone, in thin office
 I rede fle that ilke vice. *advise [you] to flee; same*
 5165 For riht as the cronique seith

- Of Adrian, hou he his feith
 Forgat for worldes covoitise,
 Fulofte in such a maner wise
 Of lovers nou a man mai se
 5170 Full manye that unkinde be.
 For wel behote and evele laste,
 That is here lif; for ate laste,
 Whan that thei have here wille do,
 Here love is after sone ago.
 5175 What seist thou, sone, to this cas?"
- Amans** "Mi fader, I wol seie 'Helas
 That evere such a man was bore,'
 Which whan he hath his trouthe suore
 And hath of love what he wolde,
 5180 That he at eny time scholde
 Evere after in his herte finde
 To falsen and to ben unkinde.
 Bot, fader, as touchende of me,
 I mai noght stonde in that degré;
 5185 For I tok nevere of love why
 That I ne mai wel go therby
 And do my profit elles where,
 For eny sped I finde there.
 I dar wel thenken al aboute,
 5190 Bot I ne dar noght speke it oute;
 And if I dorste, I wolde pleigne
 That sche for whom I soffre peine
 And love hir evere aliche hote,
 That nouthur give ne behote
 5195 In rewardinge of mi servise
 It list hire in no maner wise.
 I wol noght say that sche is kinde,
 And for to sai sche is unkinde,
 That dar I noght; bot God above,
 5200 Which demeth every herte of love,
 He wot that on myn oghne side
 Schal non unkindeschipe abide.
 If it schal with mi ladi duelle,
 Therof dar I no more telle.
 5205 Nou, goode fader, as it is,
 Tell me what thenketh you of this?"
- Confessor** "Mi sone, of that unkindeschipe,
 The which toward thi ladischipe
 Thou pleignest, for sche wol thee noght,
 5210 Thou art to blamen of that thought.
 For it mai be that thi desir,
 Thogh it brenne evere as doth the fyr,
- promised; evilly concluded
 in the end
 done their will
 Their; soon gone*
- Alas*
- faith sworn*
- [any reason] why*
- complain*
- continuously passionate
 to give; to promise*
- judges
 knows; own*

- Per cas to hire honour missit, *is inappropriate*
 Or elles time com noght yit,
 5215 Which standt upon thi destiné.
 Forthi, mi sone, I rede thee, *advise you*
 Thenk wel, what evere thee befalle;
 For no man hath his lustes alle. *all his desires*
 Bot as thou toldest me before
 5220 That thou to love art noght forswore,
 And hast don non unkindenesse,
 Thou miht therof thi grace blesse.
 And lef noght that continuance; *leave*
 For ther mai be no such grevance
 5225 To love, as is unkindeschipe.
 Wherof to kepe thi worschipe, *honor*
 So as these olde bokes tale, *relate*
 I schal thee telle a redi tale: *pithy story*
 Nou herkne and be wel war therby,
 5230 For I wol telle it openly.

[TALE OF THESEUS AND ARIADNE]

- Mynos, as telleth the poete,
 The which whilom was king of Crete,
 A sone hadde and Androchee
 He hihte. And so befell that he *was called (see note)*
 5235 Unto Athenes for to lere *study*
 Was send, and so he bare him there,
 For that he was of hih lignage,
 Such pride he tok in his corage,
 That he forgeten hath the scoles,
 5240 And in riote among the foles *dissipation; fools*
 He dede manye thinges wronge;
 And useth thilke lif so longe,
 Til ate laste of that he wroghte
 He fond the meschief which he soghte,
 5245 Wherof it fell that he was slain.
 His fader, which it herde sain,
 Was wroth, and al that evere he mihte,
 Of men of armes he him dighte *assembled*
 A strong pouer, and forth he wente
 5250 Unto Athenys, where he brente
 The pleine contré al aboute. *entire*
 The cites stode of him in doute, *fear*
 As thei that no defence hadde
 Agein the pouer which he ladde.
 5255 Egeus, which was there king,
 His conseil tok upon this thing,

- For he was thanne in the cité,
 So that of pes into trettee *peace; treaty*
 Betwen Mynos and Egeus
 5260 Thei felle, and ben acorded thus;
 That king Mynos fro yer to yeere
 Receive schal, as thou schalt here, *hear*
 Out of Athenys for truage *tribute*
 Of men that were of myhti age
 5265 Persones nyne, of whiche he schal
 His wille don in special
 For vengeance of his sones deth.
 Non other grace ther ne geth, *gets*
 Bot for to take the juise; *be subjected to the judgment*
 5270 And that was don in such a wise, *manner*
 Which stod upon a wonder cas.
 For thilke time so it was,
 Wherof that men yit rede and singe,
 King Mynos hadde in his kepinge
 5275 A cruel monstre, as seith the geste: *story*
 For he was half man and half beste,
 And Minotaurus he was hote, *called*
 Which was begete in a riote *in an act of debauchery*
 Upon Pasiphe, his oghne wif,
 5280 Whil he was oute upon the strif *war*
 Of thilke grete siege at Troie.
 Bot sche, which lost hath alle joie,
 Whan that sche syh this monstre bore, *born*
 Bad men ordeigne anon therfore. *Ordered; deal [with it] quickly*
 5285 And fell that ilke time thus,
 Ther was a clerk, on Dedalus, *one*
 Which hadde ben of hire assent *in agreement with her*
 Of that hir world was so miswent; *had so gone astray (lit., become crooked)*
 And he made of his oghne wit,
 5290 Wherof the remembrance is yit,
 For Minotaure such an hous
 Which was so strange and merveilous,
 That what man that withinne wente,
 Ther was so many a sondri wente, *diverse turn*
 5295 That he ne scholde noght come oute,
 Bot gon amased al aboute. *bewildered*
 And in this hous to loke and warde *to keep watch and to guard*
 Was Minotaurus put in warde, *keeping*
 That what lif that therinne cam,
 5300 Or man or beste, he overcam
 And slow and fedde him therupon. *killed*
 And in this wise manye on
 Out of Athenys for truage *tribute*

- Devoured weren in that rage.
 5305 For every yeer thei schope hem so,
 Thei of Athenys, er thei go
 Toward that ilke wofull chance,
 As it was set in ordinance,
 Upon fortune here lot thei caste; *their lot*
 5310 Til that Theseus ate laste,
 Which was the kinges sone there,
 Amonges othre that ther were
 In thilke yeer, as it befell,
 The lot upon his chance fell.
 5315 He was a worthi kniht withalle;
 And whan he sih this chance falle,
 He ferde as thogh he tok non hiede, *behaved*
 Bot al that evere he mihte spiede *would further everything he could*
 With him and with his felaschipe. *On behalf of himself and of*
 5320 Forth into Crete he goth be schipe,
 Wher that the king Mynos he soghte,
 And profreth all that he him oghte
 Upon the point of here acord. *their agreement*
 This sterne king, this cruel lord,
 5325 Tok every day on of the nyne
 And put him to the discipline
 Of Minotaure, to be devoured.
 Bot Theseus was so favoured,
 That he was kept til ate laste.
 5330 And in the meene while he caste
 What thing him were best to do.
 And fell that Adriagne tho, *then*
 Which was the dowhter of Mynos, *Who*
 And hadde herd the worthi los *noble fame*
 5335 Of Theseus and of his myht
 And syh he was a lusti kniht,
 Hire hole herte on him sche leide, *whole*
 And he also of love hir preide,
 So ferforth that thei were al on. *of one accord*
 5340 And sche ordeigneth thanne anon
 In what manere he scholde him save, *save himself*
 And schop so that sche dede him have *contrived; caused him to have*
 A clue of thred, of which withinne *ball (clew) of thread*
 Ferst ate dore he schal beginne
 5345 With him to take that on ende, *one*
 That whan he wolde ageinward wende,
 He mihte go the same weie.
 And over this, so as I seie,
 Of pich sche toke him a pelote, *pitch; gave; ball*
 5350 The which he scholde into the throte

- Of Minotaure caste rihte.
 Such wepne also for him sche dighte,
 That he be reson mai noght faile
 To make an ende of his bataile.
 5355 For sche him tawhte in sondri wise,
 Til he was knowe of thilke emprise,
 Hou he this beste schulde quelle. *beast; kill*
 And thus, schort tale for to telle,
 So as this maide him hadde tawht,
 5360 Theseus with this monstre fawht,
 Smot of his hed, the which he nam,
 And be the thred, so as he cam,
 He goth agein, til he were oute.
 Tho was gret wondre al aboute.
 5365 Mynos the tribut hath relessed,
 And so was al the werre cessed
 Betwen Athene and hem of Crete.
 Bot now to speke of thilke suete,
 Whos beauté was withoute wane,
 5370 This faire maiden Adriane,
 Whan that sche sih Theseus sound,
 Was nevere yit upon the ground
 A gladder wyht than sche was tho.
 Theseus duelte a dai or tuo
 5375 Wher that Mynos gret chiere him dede.
 Theseus in a privé stede
 Hath with this maiden spoke and rouned, *place*
 That sche to him was abandouned *whispered*
 In al that evere that sche couthe, *surrendered to him [sexually]*
 5380 So that of thilke lusty youthe
 Al prively between hem tweie
 The ferste flour he tok aweie. *virginity*
 For he so faire tho behihte *prettily then promised*
 That evere, whil he live mihte,
 5385 He scholde hire take for his wif,
 And as his oghne hertes lif
 He scholde hire love and trouthe bere;
 And sche, which mihte noght forbere,
 So sore loveth him agein,
 5390 That what as evere he wolde sein
 With al hire herte sche believeth.
 And thus his pourpos he achieveth,
 So that assured of his trouthe
 With him sche wente, and that was routhe. *a pity*
 5395 Fedra hire yonger soster eke,
 A lusti maide, a sobre, a meke,
 Fulfild of alle curtesie, *courtly ideals*

- For sosterhode and compainie
 Of love, which was hem betuene,
 5400 To sen hire soster mad a queene
 Hire fader lefte and forth sche wente
 With him, which al his ferste entente
 Forgat withinne a litel throwe, *short time*
 So that it was al overthrowe,
 5405 Whan sche best wende it scholde stonde. *(i.e., Ariadne); thought*
 The schip was blowe fro the londe,
 Wherin that thei seilende were;
 This Adriagne hath mochel fere
 Of that the wynd so loude blew, *Because; loudly blew*
 5410 As sche which of the see ne kneu, *knew nothing*
 And preide for to reste a whyle.
 And so fell that upon an yle, *island*
 Which Chyo hihte, thei ben drive,
 Where he to hire his leve hath give
 5415 That sche schal londe and take hire reste.
 Bot that was nothing for the beste,
 For whan sche was to londe broght,
 Sche, which that time thoghte noght
 Bot alle trouthe, and tok no kepe,
 5420 Hath leid hire softe for to slepe,
 As sche which longe hath ben forwacched; *without sleep*
 Bot certes sche was evel macched *badly married (matched)*
 And fer from alle loves kinde.
 For more than the beste unkinde
 5425 Theseus, which no trouthe kepte,
 Whil that this yonge ladi slepte,
 Fulfild of his unkindeschipe
 Hath al forgete the goodschipe
 Which Adriane him hadde do,
 5430 And bad unto the schipmen tho
 Hale up the seil and noght abyde,
 And forth he goth the same tyde *Haul; not wait*
 Toward Athene, and hire alonde
 He lefte, which lay nyh the stronde *beach*
 5435 Slepene, til that sche awok.
 Bot whan that sche cast up hire lok
 Toward the stronde and sih no wyht, *saw no one*
 Hire herte was so sore aflyht, *frightened*
 That sche ne wiste what to thinke, *knew not*
 5440 Bot drouh hire to the water brinke,
 Wher sche behield the see at large. *sea*
 Sche sih no schip, sche sih no barge
 Als ferforth as sche mihte kenne. *descry (perceive)*
 'Ha lord,' sche seide, 'which a senne, *sin*

- 5445 As al the world schal after hiere,
 Upon this woful womman hiere
 This worthi kniht hath don and wroght!
 I wende I hadde his love boght,
 And so deserved ate nede, *thought; secured*
in situations of need
- 5450 Whan that he stod upon his drede,
 And ek the love he me behihte. *promised*
 It is gret wonder hou he mihte
 Towardes me nou ben unkinde,
 And so to lete out of his mynde
- 5455 Thing which he seide his oghne mouth. *from his own mouth*
 Bot after this whan it is couth *known*
 And drawe into the worldes fame,
 It schal ben hindringe of his name:
 For wel he wot and so wot I, *knows; know*
- 5460 He gaf his trouthe bodily, *faith personally*
 That he myn honour scholde kepe.'
 And with that word sche gan to wepe,
 And sorweth more than ynouh: *enough*
 Hire faire tresces sche todrouh, *tore*
- 5465 And with himself tok such a strif
 That sche between the deth and lif
 Swounende lay fulofte among.
 And al was this on him along, *because of him*
 Which was to love unkinde so,
- 5470 Wherof the wrong schal everemo
 Stonde in cronique of remembrance.
 And ek it asketh a vengeance *demands*
 To ben unkinde in loves cas,
 So as Theseus thanne was,
- 5475 Although he were a noble kniht.
 For he the lawe of loves riht
 Forfeted hath in alle weie, *every way*
 That Adriagne he putte aweie, *In that*
 Which was a gret unkinde dede.
- 5480 And after this, so as I rede,
 Fedra, the which hir soster is,
 He tok in stede of hire, and this
 Fel afterward to mochel teene. *grief*
 For thilke vice of which I meene,
- 5485 Unkindeschipe, where it falleth,
 The trouthe of mannes herte it palleth, *diminishes*
 That he can no good dede aquite.
 So mai he stonde of no merite
 Towardes God, and ek also
- 5490 Men clepen him the worldes fo; *call; enemy*
 For he no more than the fend *fiend*

Unto non other man is frend,
 Bot al toward himself alone.
 Forthi, mi sone, in thi persone
 5495 This vice above alle othre fle.”
Amans “Mi fader, as ye techen me,
 I thenke don in this matiere.
 Bot over this nou wolde I hiere,
 5499 Wherof I schal me schryve more.”
Confessor “Mi goode sone, and for thi lore,
 After the reule of coveitise
 I schal the propreté devise
 Of every vice by and by. *one by one*
 5504 Nou herkne and be wel war therby.”

[RAPACITY]

viii. *Viribus ex clara res tollit luce Rapina,
 Floris et invita virgine mella capit.*¹

☞ **[Confessor]** “In the lignage of Avarice, *(see note)*
 Mi sone, yit ther is a vice,
 His rihte name it is Ravine, *Robbery (Rapacity/Rape)*
 Which hath a route of his covine. *company; gang (coven)*
 Ravine among the maistres duelleth,
 5510 And with his servantz, as men telleth,
 Extorcion is nou withholde. *maintained*
 Ravine of othre mennes folde *from other men’s keep (holding/sheepfold)*
 Makth his larder and paieth noght.
 For wher as evere it mai be soght,
 5515 In his hous ther schal nothing lacke,
 And that fulofte abyth the packe *suffers (is paid for by)*
 Of povere men that duelle aboute.
 Thus stant the comun poeple in doute, *fear*
 Which can do non amendement;
 5520 For whanne him faileth paiement,
 Ravine makth non other skile, *offers no explanation*
 Bot takth be strengthe what he wile.
 So ben ther in the same wise
 Lovers, as I thee schal devise,
 5525 That whan noght elles mai availe,
 Anon with strengthe thei assaile *venture*
 And gete of love the sesine, *possession*
 Whan thei se time, be Ravine.

¹ By violence Rapacity seizes things in broad daylight; he takes the honey from flowers and from the unwilling virgin.

Confessor Forthi, mi sone, schrif thee hier,

confess yourself here

5530 If thou hast ben a Raviner."

Amans "Of love? Certes, fader, no!

For I mi ladi love so,

That thogh I were as was Pompeie,

(Caesar)

That al the world me wolde obeie,

5535 Or elles such as Alisandre,

I wolde noght do such a sklaundre.

It is no good man which so doth."

Confessor "In good feith, sone, thou seist soth:

true

For he that wole of pourveance

from procurement

5540 Be such a weie his lust avance,

He schal it after sore abie,

pay for it dearly

Bot if these olde ensamples lie."

Unless

Amans "Nou, goode fader, tell me on,

So as ye cunne manyon,

can many a one

5545 Touchende of love in this matiere."

Confessor "Nou list, mi sone, and thou schalt hiere,

So as it hath befalle er this,

In loves cause hou that it is

A man to take be Ravine

5550 The preie which is femeline.

prey; feminine

[TALE OF TEREUS, PROCNE, AND PHILOMENA]

Ther was a real noble king,

royal

And riche of alle worldee thing,

Which of his propre enheritance

Athenes hadde in governance,

5555 And who so thenke therupon,

His name was King Pandion.

¶ Tuo douhtres hadde he be his wif,

two (see note)

The whiche he lovede as his lif.

The ferste douhter Progné hihte,

was called Procne

5560 And the secounde, as sche wel mihte,

Was cleped faire Philomene,

called

To whom fell after mochel tene.

suffering (injury)

The fader of his pourveance

foresight

His doughter Progné wolde avance,

advance

5565 And gaf hire unto mariage

A worthi king of hih lignage,

noble; birth

A noble kniht eke of his hond,

also

So was he kid in every lond,

famous (known)

Of Trace he hihte Tereus;

was called

5570 The clerk Ovide telleth thus.

This Tereus his wif hom ladde;

A lusti lif with hire he hadde,

- Til it befell upon a tyde, *time*
 This Progné, as sche lay him besyde,
 5575 Bethoughte hir hou it mihte be
 That sche hir soster myhte se,
 And to hir lord hir will sche seide
 With goodly wordes, and him preide
 That sche to hire mihte go,
 5580 And if it liked him noght so, *did not please him [to let her go]*
 That thanne he wolde himselve wende, *go*
 Or elles be som other sende, *someone else*
 Which mihte hire diere soster griete, *greet*
 And schape hou that thei mihten miete. *figure out how; meet*
 5585 Hir lord anon to that he herde *at once to what he heard*
 Gaf his acord, and thus ansuerde:
 'I wole,' he seide, 'for thi sake
 The weie after thi soster take
 Miself, and bringe hire, if I may.'
 5590 And sche with that, there as he lay,
 Began him in hire armes clippe *embrace*
 And kist him with hir softe lippe,
 And seide, 'Sire, grant mercy.'
 And he sone after was redy,
 5595 And tok his leve for to go;
 In sori time dede he so.
 This Tereus goth forth to schipe
 With him and with his felaschipe.
 Be see the rihte cours he nam,
 5600 Into the contré til he cam
 Wher Philomene was duellinge,
 And of hir soster the tidinge
 He tolde, and tho thei weren glade,
 And mochel joie of him thei made.
 5605 The fader and the moder bothe
 To leve here douhter weren lothe,
 Bot if thei weren in presence. *leave their*
 And natheles at reverence *Unless; were in attendance*
 Of him, that wolde himself travaile, *out of respect*
 5610 Thei wolden noght he scholde faile *For; carry out the mission*
 Of that he preide, and give hire leve. *asked; their permission*
 And sche, that wolde noght beleve, *be left behind (remain)*
 In alle haste made hire yare *made herself ready*
 Toward hir soster for to fare
 5615 With Tereus, and forth sche wente.
 And he, with al his hole entente
 Whan sche was fro hir frendes go
 Assoteth of hire love so, *Became so besotted with love of her*
 His yhe myhte he noght withholde, *[That] his eye*

- 5620 That he ne moste on hir beholde.
 And with the sihte he gan desire
 And sette his oghne herte on fyre.
 And fyr, whan it to tow aprocheth,
 To him anon the strengthe acrocheth,
 5625 Til with his hete it be devoured;
 The tow ne mai noght be socoured.
 And so that tirant raver,
 Whan that sche was in his pouer
 And he therto sawh time and place,
 5630 As he that lost hath alle grace
 Forgat he was a wedded man,
 And in a rage on hire he ran,
 Riht as a wolf which takth his preie.
 And sche began to crie and preie,
 5635 ‘O fader, o mi moder diere,
 Nou help!’ Bot thei ne mihte it hiere,
 And sche was of to litel myht
 Defense agein so ruide a knyht
 To make, whanne he was so wod
 5640 That he no reson understod,
 Bot hield hire under in such wise
 That sche ne myhte noght arise,
 Bot lay oppressed and desesed
 As if a goshauk hadde sesed
 5645 A brid, which dorste noght for fere
 Remue: and thus this tirant there
 Beraft hire such thing as men sein
 Mai neveremor be yolde agein,
 And that was the virginité:
 5650 Of such Ravine it was pité.
 Bot whan sche to hirselves com,
 And of hir meschief hiede nom,
 And knew hou that sche was no maide,
 With wofull herte thus sche saide:
 5655 ‘O thou of alle men the worste,
 Wher was ther evere man that dorste
 Do such a dede as thou hast do?
 That dai schal falle, I hope so,
 That I schal telle out al mi fille,
 5660 And with mi speche I schal fulfille
 The wyde world in brede and lengthe.
 That thou hast do to me be strengthe,
 If I among the poeple duelle,
 Unto the poeple I schal it telle;
 5665 And if I be withinne wall
 Of stones closed, thanne I schal
- straw*
To itself at once gathers
its heat
straw; rescued
tyrannical ravager
- prey*
- hear*
strength
- vehemently reckless*
- distressed*
seized
who dared not; fear
Flee (escape)
- yielded*
- took heed*
- who dared*
- breadth*
What you have done; force

- Unto the stones clepe and crie, *call*
 And tellen hem thi felonie;
 And if I to the wodes wende,
 5670 Ther schal I tellen tale and ende,
 And crie it to the briddes oute,
 That thei schul hieren it al aboute.
 For I so loude it schal reherce,
 That my vois schal the hevne perce, *pierce*
 5675 That it schal sounen in Goddes ere. *ear*
 Ha, false man, where is thi fere? *reverence*
 O mor cruel than eny beste, *beast*
 Hou hast thou holden thi behest
 Which thou unto my soster madest?
 5680 O thou, which alle love ungladest,
 And art ensample of alle untrewen,
 Nou wolde God mi soster knewen,
 Of thin untrouthe, hou that it stod!
 And he thanne as a lyon wod *enraged*
 5685 With hise unhappi handes stronge
 Hire cauhte be the tresses longe,
 With whiche he bond ther bothe hire armes —
 That was a fieble dede of armes —
 And to the grounde anon hire caste,
 5690 And out he clippeth also faste
 Hire tunge with a peire scheres. *scissors*
 So what with blod and what with teres
 Out of hire yhe and of hir mouth, *eyes*
 He made hire faire face uncouth. *unrecognizable*
 5695 Sche lay swounende unto the deth,
 Ther was unethes eny breth. *scarcely*
 Bot yit whan he hire tunge refte,
 A litel part therof belefte, *was left*
 Bot sche with al no word mai sounen, *articulate*
 5700 Bot chitre and as a brid jargounen.
 And natheles that wode hound *chitter; chatter*
 Hir bodi hent up fro the ground, *insane fiend*
 And sente hir there as be his wille
 Sche scholde abyden in prison stille *[to a place] where*
 5705 Foreveremo. Bot nou tak hiede
 What after fell of this misdede.
 Whanne al this meschief was befallen,
 This Tereus — that foule him falle! — *whom may evil befall*
 Unto his contré hom he tyh; *came*
 5710 And whan he com his paleis nyh,
 His wif al redi there him kepte. *awaited him*
 Whan he hir sih, anon he wepte, *saw, quickly*
 And that he dede for deceite.

- For sche began to axe him streite,
 5715 'Wher is mi soster?' And he seide
 That sche was ded; and Progné abreide,
 As sche that was a wofull wif,
 And stod betuen hire deth and lif,
 Of that sche herde such tidinge.
 5720 Bot for sche sih hire lord wepinge,
 Sche wende noght bot alle trouthe,
 And hadde wel the more routhe.
 The perles weren tho forsake
 To hire, and blake clothes take;
 5725 As sche that was gentil and kinde,
 In worschipe of hir sostres mynde
 Sche made a riche enterement,
 For sche fond non amendement
 To syghen or to sobbe more:
 5730 So was ther guile under the gore.
 Nou leve we this king and queene,
 And torne agein to Philomene,
 As I began to tellen erst.
 Whan sche cam into prison ferst,
 5735 It thoghte a kinges douhter strange
 To maken so soudein a change
 Fro welthe unto so grete a wo;
 And sche began to thenke tho,
 Thogh sche be mouthe nothing preide,
 5740 Withinne hir herte thus sche seide:
 'O thou, almyhty Jupiter,
 That hihe sist and lokest fer,
 Thou soffrest many a wrong doinge,
 And yit it is noght thi willinge.
 5745 To thee ther mai nothing ben hid,
 Thou wost hou it is me betid.
 I wolde I hadde noght be bore,
 For thanne I hadde noght forlore
 Mi speche and mi virginité.
 5750 Bot, goode lord, al is in thee,
 Whan thou therof wolt do vengeance
 And schape mi deliverance.'
 And evere among this ladi wepte,
 And thoghte that sche nevere kepte
 5755 To ben a worldes womman more,
 And that sche wissheth everemore.
 Bot ofte unto hir soster diere
 Hire herte spekth in this manere,
 And seide, 'Ha, soster, if ye knewe
 5760 Of myn astat, ye wolde rewe,

*directly**cried out**thought**jewelry**honor; memory
memorial service**cloak**before**seemed to**sees**know; happened to me
been born
lost**continually
cared**perpetually**have pity*

- I trowe, and my deliverance *believe*
 Ye wolde schape, and do vengeance *devise*
 On him that is so fals a man.
 And natheles, so as I can,
 5765 I wol you sende som tokninge,
 Wherof ye schul have knowlechinge
 Of thing I wot, that schal you lothe, *be loathsome to you*
 The which you toucheth and me bothe.' *concerns*
 And tho withinne a whyle als tyt *quickly*
 5770 Sche waf a cloth of selk al whyt *wove; silk*
 With lettres and ymagerie,
 In which was al the felonie
 Which Tereus to hire hath do;
 And lappede it togedre tho *wrapped; then*
 5775 And sette hir signet therupon
 And sende it unto Progné anon. *immediately*
 The messenger which forth it bar,
 What it amonteth is noght war;
 And natheles to Progné he goth
 5780 And prively takth hire the cloth, *delivers to her*
 And wente agein riht as he cam.
 The court of him non hiede nam.
 Whan Progné of Philomene herde,
 Sche wolde knowe hou that it ferde,
 5785 And opneth that the man hath broght,
 And wot therby what hath be wroght *knew; been*
 And what meschief ther is befallē.
 In swoune tho sche gan down falle,
 And efte aros and gan to stonde,
 5790 And eft sche takth the cloth on honde,
 Behield the lettres and th'ymages.
 Bot ate laste, 'Of suche outrages,' *outrages*
 Sche seith, 'wepinge is noght the bote,' *remedy*
 And swerth, if that sche live mote, *swears; might*
 5795 It schal be venged otherwise.
 And with that sche gan hire advise
 Hou ferst sche mihte unto hire winne
 Hir soster, that no man withinne, *[so] that*
 Bot only thei that were suore, *sworn*
 5800 It scholde knowe, and schop therfore *arranged*
 That Tereus nothing it wiste;
 And yit riht as hirselves liste, *knew*
 Hir soster was delivered sone *desired*
 Out of prison, and be the mone *by moonlight*
 5805 To Progné sche was broght be nyhte.
 Whan ech of other hadde a sihte,
 In chambre, ther thei were alone,

- Thei maden many a pitous mone; *lament*
 Bot Progné most of sorwe made,
 5810 Which sihe hir soster pale and fade *Who saw; wan*
 And specheles and deshonoured,
 Of that sche hadde be defloured;
 And ek upon hir lord sche thoghte,
 Of that he so untreuly wroghte
 5815 And hadde his espousaile broke. *wedding vow broken*
 Sche makth a vou it schal be wroke, *avenged*
 And with that word sche kneleth doun
 Wepinge in gret devocioun.
 Unto Cupide and to Venus
 5820 Sche preide and seide thanne thus:
 ‘O ye, to whom nothing asterte *eludes*
 Of love mai, for every herte
 Ye knowe, as ye that ben above
 The god and the goddesse of love:
 5825 Ye witen wel that evere yit
 With al mi will and al my wit,
 Sith ferst ye schopen me to wedde,
 That I lay with mi lord abedde,
 I have be trewe in mi degré,
 5830 And evere thoghte for to be,
 And nevere love in other place,
 Bot al only the king of Trace,
 Which is mi lord and I his wif.
 Bot nou allas this wofull strif!
 5835 That I him thus ageinward finde *on the contrary*
 The most untrewe and most unkinde
 That evere in ladi armes lay.
 And wel I wot that he ne may *know*
 Amende his wrong, it is so gret;
 5840 For he to lytel of me let, *too little; considered*
 Whan he myn oughne soster tok, *own*
 And me that am his wif forsok.’
 Lo, thus to Venus and Cupide
 Sche preide, and furthermor sche cride
 5845 Unto Appollo the hiheste,
 And seide, ‘O myhti god of reste,
 Thou do vengeance of this debat.
 Mi soster and al hire astat
 Thou wost, and hou sche hath forlore *lost*
 5850 Hir maidenhod, and I therfore
 In al the world schal bere a blame
 Of that mi soster hath a schame,
 That Tereus to hire I sente.
 And wel thou wost that myn entente

- 5855 Was al for worschipe and for goode. *honor*
 O lord, that gifest the lives fode *sustenance*
 To every wyht, I prei thee hiere
 Thes wofull sostres that ben hiere,
 And let ous noght to thee ben lothe; *odious*
- 5860 We ben thin oghne wommen bothe.’
 Thus pleigneth Progné and axeth wreche, *asks vengeance*
 As, thogh hire soster lacke speche, *Since, even though*
 To him that alle thinges wot
 Hire sorwe is noght the lasse hot.
- 5865 Bot he that thanne had herd hem tuo, *the two of them*
 Him oughte have sorwed everemo
 For sorwe which was hem betuene.
 With signes pleigneth Philomene, *laments*
 And Progné seith, ‘It schal be wreke, *avenged*
- 5870 That al the world therof schal speke.’
 And Progné tho seknesse feigneth, *feigns sickness*
 Wherof unto hir lord sche pleigneth,
 And preith sche moste hire chambres kepe,
 And as hir liketh wake and slepe. *as she needs*
- 5875 And he hire granteth to be so;
 And thus togedre ben thei tuo,
 That wolde him bot a litel good. *Who wanted for him only*
 Nou herk hierafter hou it stod
 Of wofull auntres that befelle: *mishaps*
- 5880 Thes sostres, that ben bothe felle *of deadly intent*
 (And that was noght on hem along, *not their fault*
 Bot onliche on the grete wrong
 Which Tereus hem hadde do),
 Thei schopen for to venge hem tho. *plotted how to avenge themselves then*
- 5885 This Tereus be Progné his wif *by*
 A sone hath, which as his lif
 He loveth, and Ithis he hihte: *was called*
 His moder wiste wel sche mihte
 Do Tereus no more grief
- 5890 Than sle this child, which was so lief. *who was so dear [to him]*
 Thus sche, that was, as who seith, mad
 Of wo, which hath hir overlad, *overwhelmed*
 Withoute insihte of moderhede *regard for*
 Forgat pité and loste drede,
- 5895 And in hir chambre prively
 This child withouten noise or cry
 Sche slou, and hieu him al to pieces. *killed; hacked*
 And after with diverse spieces
 The fleissch, whan it was so toheewe, *cut to pieces*
- 5900 Sche takth, and makth therof a sewe, *spicy dish*
 With which the fader at his mete

- Was served, til he hadde him ete;
 That he ne wiste hou that it stod,
 Bot thus his oughne fleissch and blod
 5905 Himself devoureth agein kinde, *contrary to nature*
 As he that was tofore unkinde.
 And thanne, er that he were arise,
 For that he scholde ben agrise, *terrified*
 To schewen him the child was ded,
 5910 This Philomene tok the hed *placed the head*
 Betwen tuo disshes, and al wrothe *in a rage*
 Tho comen forth the sostres bothe,
 And setten it upon the bord.
 And Progné tho began the word,
 5915 And seide, 'O werste of alle wicke, *evil men*
 Of conscience whom no pricke *move (guide)*
 Mai stere, lo, what thou hast do!
 Lo, hier be nou we sostres tuo;
 O raviner, lo hier thi preie,
 5920 With whom so falsliche on the weie
 Thou hast thi tirannye wrought.
 Lo, nou it is somdel aboght, *paid for*
 And bet it schal, for of thi dede *deed*
 The world schal evere singe and rede
 5925 In remembrance of thi defame. *evil renown*
 For thou to love hast do such schame,
 That it schal nevere be forgete.'
 With that he sterte up fro the mete, *leaped; food*
 And schof the bord unto the flor, *table*
 5930 And cauhte a swerd anon and suor *swore*
 That thei scholde of his hondes dye
 And thei unto the goddes crie
 Begunne with so loude a stevene, *voice*
 That thei were herd unto the hevene;
 5935 And in a twinclinge of an yhe *eye*
 The goddes, that the meschief syhe, *saw*
 Here formes changen alle thre. *Their*
 Ech on of hem in his degré
 Was torned into briddes kinde;
 5940 Diverseliche, as men mai finde,
 After th'astat that thei were inne,
 Here formes were set atwinne. *Their; established as distinctly different*
 And as it telleth in the tale,
 The ferst into a nyhtingale
 5945 Was schape, and that was Philomene,
 Which in the wynter is noght sene,
 For thanne ben the leves falle
 And naked ben the buissches alle.

- For after that sche was a brid, *bird*
 5950 Hir will was evere to ben hid, *desire; hidden*
 And for to duelle in privé place, *secret*
 That no man scholde sen hir face
 For schame, which mai noght be lassed, *diminished*
 Of thing that was tofore passed, *From a matter; previously*
 5955 Whan that sche loste hir maidenhiede.
 Forevere upon hir wommanhiede,
 Thogh that the goddes wolde hire change, *Even though*
 Sche thenkth, and is the more strange, *reclusive*
 And halt hir clos the wyntres day. *keeps herself sequestered*
 5960 Bot whan the wynter goth away,
 And that Nature the goddesse
 Wole of hir oughne fre largesse
 With herbes and with floures bothe
 The feldes and the medwes clothe,
 5965 And ek the wodes and the greves *groves*
 Ben heled al with grene leves, *covered*
 So that a brid hire hyde mai,
 Betwen Averil and March and Maii,
 Sche that the wynter hield hir clos,
 5970 For pure schame and noght aros,
 Whan that sche seth the bowes thikke,
 And that ther is no bare sticke,
 Bot al is hid with leves grene,
 To wode comth this Philomene
 5975 And makth hir ferste yeres flyht;
 Wher as sche singeth day and nyht,
 And in hir song al openly
 Sche makth hir pleignte and seith, 'O why,
 O why ne were I yit a maide?' *lament*
 5980 For so these olde wise saide, *still a virgin*
 Which understoden what sche mente, *wise people*
 Hire notes ben of such entente.
 And ek thei seide hou in hir song
 Sche makth gret joie and merthe among,
 5985 And seith, 'Ha, nou I am a brid,
 Ha, nou mi face mai ben hid.
 Thogh I have lost mi maidenhede,
 Schal no man se my chekes rede.'
 Thus medleth sche with joie wo *mingles*
 5990 And with hir sorwe merthe also,
 So that of loves maladie
 Sche makth diverse melodie,
 And seith love is a wofull blisse,
 A wisdom which can no man wisse, *know*
 5995 A lusti fievere, a wounde softe:

- This note sche reherceth ofte
 To hem whiche understonde hir tale.
 Nou have I of this nyhtingale,
 Which erst was cleped Philomene,
 6000 Told al that evere I wolde mene, *intend*
 Bothe of hir forme and of hir note,
 Wherof men mai the storie note.
 And of hir soster Progné I finde,
 Hou sche was torned out of kinde
 6005 Into a swalwe swift of winge, *swallow*
 Which ek in wynter lith swounynge, *lies in a deep sleep*
 Ther as sche mai nothing be sene.
 Bot whan the world is woxe grene
 And comen is the somertide,
 6010 Than fleth sche forth and ginth to chide,
 And chitreth out in hir langage
 What falshod is in mariage,
 And telleth in a maner speche
 Of Tereus the spousebreche. *adulterer*
 6015 Sche wol noght in the wodes duelle,
 For sche wolde openliche telle;
 And ek for that sche was a spouse,
 Among the folk sche comth to house,
 To do thes wyves understonde *cause*
 6020 The falshod of here housebonde,
 That thei of hem be war also,
 For ther ben manye untrewes of tho. *those*
 Thus ben the sostres briddes bothe,
 And ben toward the men so lothe,
 6025 That thei ne wole of pure schame
 Unto no mannes hand be tame.
 Forevere it duelleth in here mynde *their*
 Of that thei founde a man unkinde,
 And that was false Tereus.
 6030 If such on be amonges ous *such a person*
 I not, bot his condicion *do not know; type*
 Men sein in every region
 Withinne tounes and ek withoute
 Nou regneth comunliche aboute.
 6035 And natheles in remembrance
 I wol declare what vengeance
 The goddes hadden him ordeined,
 Of that the sostres hadden pleigned.
 For anon after he was changed
 6040 And from his oghne kinde stranged, *proper nature estranged*
 A lappewincke mad he was, *lappwing made*
 And thus he hoppeth on the gras,

- And on his hed ther stant upriht
 A creste in tokne he was a kniht;
 6045 And yit unto this dai men seith,
 A lappewincke hath lore his feith
 And is the brid falseste of alle. *lapwing; lost bird*
- Confessor** Bewar, mi sone, er thee so falle;
 For if thou be of such covine, *such a conspiracy*
 6050 To gete of love be Ravine *by*
 Thi lust, it mai thee falle thus,
 As it befell of Tereus.”
- Amans** “Mi fader, goddes forebode!
 Me were levere be fortrode *trampled*
 6055 With wilde hors and be todrawe, *torn apart*
 Er I agein love and his lawe *Before I against*
 Dede eny thing or loude or stille, *either loud or quiet*
 Which were noght mi ladi wille. *my lady's desire*
 Men sein that every love hath drede; *anxiety*
 6060 So folweth it that I hire drede, *revere*
 For I hire love, and who so dredeth, *fears*
 To plesse his love and serve him nedeth. *must serve him (love)*
 Thus mai ye knowen be this skile *reason*
 That no Ravine don I wile
- 6065 Agein hir will be such a weie.
 Bot while I live, I wol obeie
 Abidinge on hire courtesie,
 If eny merci wolde hir plie. *move (bend)*
 Forthi, mi fader, as of this
- 6070 I wot noght I have don amis.
 Bot furthermore I you beseche,
 Som other point that ye me teche,
 And axeth forth, if ther be auht,
 That I mai be the betre tauht.”

[ROBBERY]

- ix. *Uiuat ut ex spoliis grandi quamsepe tumultu,
 Quo graditur populus, latro perurget iter.
 Sic amor, ex casu poterit quo carpere predam,
 Si locus est aptus, cetera nulla timet.*¹


- [Confessor]** “Whan Covoitise in povere astat
 6076 Stant with himself upon debat
 Thurgh lacke of his misgovernance,

¹ That he might live off his spoils, the bandit frequently ambushes, in a great onslaught, the road on which people journey. Thus love fears nothing if the setting is suitable and by chance he can snatch his prey.

- That he unto his sustenance
 ¶ Ne can non other weie finde *(see note)*
 6080 To gete him good, thanne as the blinde, *the blind man*
 Which seth noght what schal after falle, *Who sees*
 That ilke vice which men calle
 Of Robberie, he takth on honde;
 Wherof be water and be londe
 6085 Of thing which othre men beswinke *by*
 He get him cloth and mete and drinke. *produce by [their] labor*
 Him reccheth noght what he beginne, *It does not concern him what he might undertake*
 Thurgh thefte so that he mai winne.
 Forthi to maken his pourchas
 6090 He lith awaitende on the pas,
 And what thing that he seth ther passe,
 He takth his part, or more or lasse,
 If it be worthi to be take.
 He can the packes wel ransake,
 6095 So prively berth non aboute
 His gold, that he ne fint it oute, *may not discover it*
 Or other juel, what it be;
 He takth it as his propreté.
 In wodes and in feldes eke *also*
 6100 Thus Robberie goth to seke, *seek*
 Wher as he mai his pourpos finde.
 And riht so in the same kinde,
 Mi goode sone, as thou miht hierie,
 To speke of love in the matiere
 6105 And make a verrai resemblance,
 Riht as a thief makth his chevance *acquisition*
 And robbeth mennes good aboute
 In wode and field, wher he goth oute,
 So be ther of these lovers some,
 6110 In wylde stedes wher thei come
 And finden there a womman able,
 And therto place covenable,
 Withoute leve, er that thei fare,
 Thei take a part of that chaffare: *commodity (chastity)*
 6115 Yee, though sche were a scheperdesse,
 Yit wol the lord of wantounesse
 Assaie, althogh sche be unmete, *displeasing (unworthy)*
 For other mennes good is swete.
 Bot therof wot nothing the wif *knows*
 6120 At hom, which loveth as hir lif
 Hir lord, and sitt alday wisshinge
 After hir lordes hom comynge.
 Bot whan that he comth hom at eve,
 Anon he makth his wif beleve,

- 6125 For sche noght elles scholde knowe.
 He telth hire hou his hunte hath blowe,
 And hou his houndes have wel runne,
 And hou ther schon a merye sunne,
 And hou his haukes flowen wel;
- 6130 Bot he wol telle hire nevere a diel
 Hou he to love untrew was,
 Of that he robbede in the pas,
 And tok his lust under the schawe *woods*
- 6134 Agein love and agein his lawe. *Against its law*
- Confessor** Which thing, mi sone, I thee forbede,
 For it is an ungoodly dede.
 For who that takth be Robberie
 His love, he mai noght justefie
 His cause, and so fulofte sithe *times*
- 6140 For ones that he hath be blithe
 He schal ben after sory thries. *thrice*
 Ensampl of suche Robberies
 I finde write, as thou schalt hiere,
- 6144 Acordende unto this matiere.

[TALE OF NEPTUNE AND CORNIX]

-  I rede hou whilom was a maide, *once (see note)*
 The faireste, as Ovide saide,
 Which was in hire time tho;
 And sche was of the chambre also
 Of Pallas, which is the goddessse
- 6150 And wif to Marte, of whom prouesse
 Is gove to these worthi knihtes.
 For he is of so grete mihtes,
 That he governeth the bataille.
 Withouten him may noght availe
- 6155 The stronge hond, bot he it helpe; *unless*
 Ther mai no knyht of armes yelp; *boast*
 Bot he feihte under his banere. *Unless he fights*
 Bot nou to speke of mi matiere,
 This faire, freisshe, lusti mai, *maiden*
- 6160 Alone as sche wente on a dai
 Upon the stronde for to pleie, *seashore*
 Ther cam Neptunus in the weie, *sea*
 Which hath the see in governance;
 And in his herte such plesance
- 6165 He tok, whan he this maide sih, *saw*
 That al his herte aros on hih,
 For he so sodeinliche unwar
 Behield the beauté that sche bar.

- And caste anon withinne his herte
 6170 That sche him schal no weie asterte, *escape*
 Bot if he take in advantage
 Fro thilke maide som pilage,
 Noght of the broches ne the ringes,
 Bot of some othre smale thinges
 6175 He thoghte parte, er that sche wente; *to take away*
 And hire in bothe hise armes hente, *[he] seized*
 And putte his hond toward the cofre
 Wher for to robbe he made a profre *an attempt*
 That lusti tresor for to stele,
 6180 Which passeth othre goodes fele *many other goods*
 And cleped is the maidenhede, *called*
 Which is the flour of wommanhede.
 This maiden, which Cornix be name
 Was hote, dredende alle schame, *Was called*
 6185 Sih that sche mihte noght debate, *Saw; fight*
 And wel sche wiste he wolde algate
 Fulfille his lust of Robberie,
 Anon began to wepe and crie,
 And seide, 'O Pallas, noble queene,
 6190 Scheu nou thi myht and let be sene,
 To kepe and save myn honour!
 Help, that I lese noght mi flour,
 Which nou under thi keie is loke.' *so that I lose not*
 That word was noght so sone spoke,
 6195 Whan Pallas schop recoverir *prepared a safe haven*
 After the will and the desir
 Of hire, which a maiden was,
 And sodeinliche upon this cas
 Out of hire wommanisshe kinde
 6200 Into a briddes like I finde *bird's likeness*
 Sche was transformed forth withal,
 So that Neptunus nothing stal
 Of such thing as he wolde have stole.
 With fetheres blake as eny cole
 6205 Out of hise armes in a throwe
 Sche flih before his yhe a crowe; *flew; eye*
 Which was to hire a more delit, *greater delight*
 To kepe hire maidenhede whit
 Under the wede of fethers blake, *clothes*
 6210 In perles whyte than forsake
 That no lif mai restore agein.
 Bot thus Neptune his herte in vein
 Hath upon Robberie sett;
 The bridd is flowe and he was let, *thwarted*
 6215 The faire maide him hath ascaped,

Wherof forevere he was bejaped *derided*
 And scorned of that he hath lore. *lost*
Confessor Mi sone, be thou war therefore
 That thou no maidenhode stele,
 6220 Wherof men sen deseses fele *harms of all kinds*
 Aldai befall in sondri wise;
 So as I schal thee yit devise
 Another tale therupon,
 Which fell be olde daies gon.

[TALE OF CALISTONA]

6225 King Lichaon upon his wif
 A dowhter hadde, a goodly lif,
 A clene maide of worthi fame,
 Calistona whos rihte name
 Was cleped, and of many a lord
 6230 Sche was besoght, bot hire acord *sought after*
 ¶ To love myhte no man winne, *(see note)*
 As sche which hath no lust therinne;
 Bot swor withinne hir herte and saide
 That sche wolde evere ben a maide.
 6235 Wherof to kepe hireself in pes
 With suche as Amadriades
 Were cleped, wodemaydes, tho, *called, wood nymphs, then*
 And with the nimphes ek also
 Upon the spring of freisshe welles
 6240 Sche schop to duelle and nagher elles. *nowhere*
 And thus cam this Calistona
 Into the wode of Tegea,
 Wher sche virginité behihte *promised*
 Unto Diane, and therto plihte *pledged*
 6245 Her trouthe upon the bowes grene,
 To kepe hir maidenhode clene.
 Which afterward upon a day
 Was priveliche stole away; *surreptitiously stolen*
 For Jupiter thurgh his queintise *cunning*
 6250 From hire it tok in such a wise,
 That sodeinliche forth withal
 Hire wombe aros and sche toswal, *swelled up*
 So that it mihte noght ben hidd.
 And therupon it is betidd, *it happened*
 6255 Diane, which it herde telle,
 In privé place unto a welle
 With nimphes al a compainie
 Was come, and in a ragerie
 Sche seide that sche bathe wolde, *fit of sprightliness*

- 6260 And bad that every maide scholde
 With hire al naked bathe also.
 And tho began the privé wo:
 Calistona wax red for schame,
 Bot thei that knewe noght the game, *circumstance*
- 6265 To whom no such thing was befallle,
 Anon thei made hem naked alle,
 As thei that nothing wolden hyde.
 Bot sche withdrouh hire evere asyde,
 And natheles into the flod,
- 6270 Wher that Diane hirselve stod,
 Sche thoghte come unaperceived.
 Bot therof sche was al deceived;
 For whan sche cam a litel nyh,
 And that Diane hire wombe syh, *saw*
- 6275 Sche seide, 'Awey, thou foule beste, *filthy beast*
 For thin astat is noght honeste
 This chaste water for to touche;
 For thou hast take such a touche,
 Which nevere mai ben hol agein.'
- 6280 And thus goth sche which was forlein *raped (seduced)*
 With schame, and fro the nimphes fledde,
 Til whanne that nature hire spedde,
 That of a sone, which Archas
 Was named, sche delivered was.
- 6285 And tho Juno, which was the wif
 Of Jupiter, wroth and hastif,
 In pourpos for to do vengeance
 Cam forth upon this ilke chance,
 And to Calistona sche spak,
- 6290 And sette upon hir many a lak, *fault*
 And seide, 'Ha, nou thou art atake, *caught in the act*
 That thou thi werk myht noght forsake.
 Ha, thou ungoodlich ypocrite,
 Hou thou art gretly for to wyte! *to be blamed*
- 6295 Bot nou thou schalt ful sore abie *sorely pay*
 That ilke stelthe and micherie, *underhanded conduct*
 Which thou hast bothe take and do;
 Wherof thi fader Lichao
 Schal noght be glad, whan he it wot, *knows*
- 6300 Of that his dowhter was so hot *How that; lecherous*
 That sche hath broke hire chaste avou.
 Bot I thee schal chastise nou; *punish now*
 Thi grete beauté schal be torned,
 Thurgh which that thou hast be mistorned,
- 6305 Thi large frount, thin yhen greie, *broad forehead; eyes grey*
 I schal hem change in other weie,

- And al the feture of thi face
 In such a wise I schal deface,
 That every man thee schal forbere.’
- 6310 With that the liknesse of a bere
 Sche tok and was forschape anon.
 Withinne a time and therupon
 Befell that with a bowe on honde,
 To hunte and gamen for to fonde,
- 6315 Into that wode goth to pleie
 Hir sone Archas, and in his weie
 It hapneth that this bere cam.
 And whan that sche good hiede nam,
 Wher that he stod under the bowh,
- 6320 Sche kneu him wel and to him drouh;
 For thogh sche hadde hire forme lore,
 The love was noght lost therfore
 Which kinde hath set under his lawe.
 Whan sche under the wodesschawe
- 6325 Hire child behield, sche was so glad,
 That sche with bothe hire armes sprad,
 As thogh sche were in wommanhiede,
 Toward him cam, and tok non hiede
 Of that he bar a bowe bent.
- 6330 And he with that an arwe hath hent
 And gan to teise it in his bowe,
 As he that can non other knowe,
 Bot that it was a beste wylde.
 Bot Jupiter, which wolde schylde
- 6335 The moder and the sone also,
 Ordeineth for hem bothe so,
 That thei forevere were save.
- Confessor** Bot thus, mi sone, thou myht have
 Ensamle, hou that it is to fle
- 6340 To robbe the virginité
 Of a yong innocent aweie.
 And overthis be other weie,
 In olde bokes as I rede,
 Such Robberie is for to drede,
- 6345 And nameliche of thilke good
 Which every womman that is good
 Desireth for to kepe and holde,
 As whilom was be daies olde.
 For if thou se mi tale wel
- 6350 Of that was tho, thou miht somdiel
 Of old ensample taken hiede,
 Hou that the flour of maidenhiede
 Was thilke time holde in pris.

avoid
bear

took
bough
drew
lost

nature
woods

arrow; seized
position
knows not otherwise

protect

somewhat

held in esteem

And so it was, and so it is,
 6355 And so it schal forevere stonde.
 And for thou schalt it understonde,
 Nou herkne a tale next suiende,
 Hou maidenhod is to commende.”

*following
 praiseworthy*

[VIRGINITY]

x. *Ut Rosa de spinis spineto preualet orta,
 Et lilii flores cespite plura valent,
 Sic sibi virginitas carnis sponsalia vincit,
 Eternos fetus que sine labe parit.*¹

[Confessor] “Of Rome among the gestes olde

stories

6360 I finde hou that Valerie tolde
 That what man tho was Emperour
 Of Rome, he scholde don honour
 To the virgine, and in the weie,
 6364 Wher he hire mette, he scholde obeie
 ¶ In worschipe of virginité,
 Which tho was of gret dignité.
 Noght onliche of the wommen tho,
 Bot of the chaste men also
 It was commended overal.

honor (see note)

6370 And for to speke in special
 Touchende of men, ensample I finde,

¶ Phyrins, which was of mannes kinde
 Above alle othre the faireste
 Of Rome and ek the comelieste,
 6375 That wel was hire which him mihte
 Beholde and have of him a sihte.
 Thus was he tempted ofte sore;
 Bot for he wolde be no more
 Among the wommen so coveited,

who; nature (see note)

6380 The beauté of his face streited
 He hath, and threste out bothe hise yhen,
 That alle wommen whiche him syhen
 Thanne afterward, of him ne roghte.
 And thus his maidehiede he boghte.

*despoiled
 thrust; eyes*

6385 So mai I prove wel forthi,
 Above alle othre under the sky,
 Who that the vertus wolde peise,
 Virginité is for to preise,

*cared
 secured*

weigh

¹ *As the rose, born amidst thorns, prevails over its thorny thicket, and lily flowers are worth more than the sod, so virginity triumphs in itself over fleshly marital unions, and without sin gives birth to eternal offspring.*

- Which, as th'Apocalips recordeth,
 6390 To Crist in hevene best acordeth.
 So mai it schewe wel therfore,
 As I have told it hiertofores,
 In hevene and ek in erthe also
 6394 It is accept to bothe tuo. *pleasing (agreeable)*
 ☞ And if I schal more over this *(see note)*
 Declare what this vertu is,
 I finde write upon this thing
 Of Valentinian the king
 And Emperour be thilke daies,
 6400 A worthi knyht at alle assaies, *in every way*
 Hou he withoute mariage
 Was of an hundred wynter age,
 And hadde ben a worthi kniht
 Bothe of his lawe and of his myht.
 6405 Bot whan men wolde his dedes preise *evaluate*
 And his knyghthode of armes preise,
 Of that he dede with hise hondes,
 Whan he the kinges and the londes
 To his subjeccion put under,
 6410 Of al that pris hath he no wonder,
 For he it sette of non acompte,
 And seide al that may noght amonte
 Ageins o point which he hath nome,
 That he his fleissh hath overcome: *In comparison with; received*
 6415 He was a virgine, as he seide;
 On that bataille his pris he leide. *moral struggle*
 Lo nou, my sone, avise thee."
Amans "Yee, fader, al this wel mai be,
 Bot if alle othre dede so, *others did*
 6420 The world of men were sone go *soon gone*
 And in the lawe a man mai finde,
 Hou God to man be weie of kinde *nature*
 Hath set the world to multeplie;
 And who that wol him justefie, *make righteous*
 6425 It is ynough to do the lawe.
 And natheles youre goode sawe *wise saying*
 Is good to kepe, who so may,
 I wol noght theragein seie nay."

[AGAMEMNON AND CRISEIDE]


- Confessor** "Mi sone, take it as I seie;
 6430 If maidenhod be take aweie
 Withoute lawes ordinance,
 It mai noght failen of vengeance. *fail to be avenged*

- And if thou wolt the sothe wite,
 Behold a tale which is write,
 6435 Hou that the King Agamenon,
 Whan he the cité of Lesbon
 Hath wonne, a maiden ther he fond, *conquered*
 Which was the faireste of the lond
 In thilke time that men wiste. *knew*
 6440 He tok of hire what him liste *pleased him*
 Of thing which was most precious,
 Wherof that sche was dangerous. *protective*
 This faire maiden cleped is *called*
 Criseide, douhter of Crisis,
 6445 Which was that time in special
 Of thilke temple principal,
 Wher Phebus hadde his sacrifice,
 So was it wel the more vice. *greater*
 Agamenon was thanne in weie
 6450 To Troieward, and tok aweie
 This maiden, which he with him ladde,
 So grete a lust in hire he hadde.
 Bot Phebus, which hath gret desdeign *who was greatly offended*
 Of that his maiden was forlein, *Because; raped*
 6455 Anon as he to Troie cam,
 Vengance upon this dede he nam
 And sende a comun pestilence. *took*
 Thei soghten thanne here evidence *widespread plague*
 And maden calculacion,
 6460 To knowe in what condicion
 This deth cam in so sodeinly;
 And ate laste redyly
 The cause and ek the man thei founde:
 And forth withal the same stounde *time*
 6465 Agamenon opposed was, *confronted*
 Which hath beknownen al the cas *admitted*
 Of the folie which he wroghte.
 And therupon mercy thei soghte
 Toward the god in sondri wise
 6470 With preiere and with sacrificise,
 The maide and hom agein thei sende, *And sent the maiden home*
 And give hire good ynough to spende
 Forevere whil sche scholde live.
 And thus the senne was forgive *sin*
 6475 And al the pestilence cessed.
Confessor Lo, what it is to ben encrested *augmented*
 Of love which is evele wonne.
 It were betre noght begonne
 Than take a thing withoute leve,

- 6480 Which thou most after nedes leve,
 And yit have malgré forth withal. *spite*
 Forthi to robben overal
 In loves cause if thou beginne,
 I not what ese thou schalt winne. *know not*
- 6485 Mi sone, be wel war of this,
 For thus of Robberie it is.”
- Amans** “Mi fader, youre ensamplerie
 In loves cause of Robberie
 I have it riht wel understonde.
- 6490 Bot overthis, hou so it stonde,
 Yit wolde I wite of youre aprise *teaching*
 What thing is more of Covoitise.”

[STEALTH AND PILFERING]

- xi. *Insidiando latens tempus rimatur et horam
 Fur, quibus occulto tempore furta parat.
 Sic amor insidiis vacat, vt sub tegmine ludos
 Prendere furtiuos nocte fauente queat.*¹

- Confessor** “With Covoitise yit I finde
 A servant of the same kinde,
- 6495 Which Stelthe is hote, and Mecherie *is called; Pilfering*
 With him is evere in compainie.
 Of whom if I schal telle soth,
-  He stalketh as a pocok doth, *walks cautiously; peacock (see note)*
 And takth his preie so covert, *furtively*
- 6500 That no man wot it in apert. *openly*
 For whan he wot the lord from home,
 Than wol he stalke aboute and rome;
 And what thing he fint in his weie,
 Whan that he seth the men aweie,
- 6505 He stelth it and goth forth withal, *steals*
 That therof no man knowe schal.
 And ek fulofte he goth a nyht
 Withoute mone or sterreliht, *moon*
 And with his craft the dore unpiketh, *picks the lock of the door*
- 6510 And takth therinne what him liketh.
 And if the dore be so schet,
 That he be of his entré let, *hindered*
 He wole in ate wyndou crepe,

¹ The thief, lying hidden, surreptitiously scopes out the time and hour, so that he might prepare his thefts at a hidden moment. Thus love finds leisure for treachery so that under cover, it might be able to take furtive frolicking when the night is favorable.

- And whil the lord is faste aslepe,
 6515 He stelth what thing as him best list, *desires*
 And goth his weie er it be wist. *known*
 Fulofte also be lyhte of day
 Yit wole he stele and make assay; *attempt*
 Under the cote his hond he put,
 6520 Til he the mannes purs have cut, *cut away*
 And rifleth that he fint therinne. *what*
 And thus he auntreth him to winne, *ventures himself*
 And berth an horn and noght ne bloweth,
 For no man of his conseil knoweth;
 6525 What he mai gete of his michinge, *pilfering*
 It is al bile under the winge. *i.e., unobserved*
 And as an hound that goth to folde *[sheep]fold*
 And hath ther taken what he wolde,
 His mouth upon the gras he wypeth,
 6530 And so with feigned chiere him slypeth, *sneaks about*
 That what as evere of schep he strangle, *might kill*
 Ther is no man therof schal jangle, *complain*
 As for to knowen who it dede;
 Riht so doth Stelthe in every stede, *place*
 6535 Where as him list his preie take. *it pleases him; prey*
 He can so wel his cause make
 And so wel feigne and so wel glose, *obscure the truth*
 That ther ne schal no man suppose,
 Bot that he were an innocent,
 6540 And thus a mannes yhe he blent: *sight he obscured*
 So that this craft I mai remene *relate*
 Withouten help of eny mene. *intermediary*
 Ther be lovers of that degré,
 Which al here lust in priveté, *their*
 6545 As who seith, geten al be Stelthe,
 And ofte atteignen to gret welthe
 As for the time that it lasteth.
 For love awaiteth evere and casteth
 Hou he mai stele and cacche his preie,
 6550 Whan he therto mai finde a weie.
 For be it nyht or be it day,
 He takth his part, whan that he may,
 And if he mai no more do,
 6554 Yit wol he stele a cuss or tuo. *kiss*
Confessor Mi sone, what seist thou therto?
 Tell if thou dedest evere so.”
[Amans] “Mi fader, hou?”
[Confessor] “Mi sone, thus, —
 If thou hast stolen eny cuss *kiss*
 Or other thing which therto longeth,

- 6560 For no man suche thieves hongeth,
Tell on forthi and sei the trouthe.” *say*
- Confessio Amantis** “Mi fader, nay, and that is routhe, *pity*
For be mi will I am a thief; *by; desire*
Bot sche that is to me most lief, *dear*
- 6565 Yit dorste I nevere in priveté
Noght ones take hire be the kne, *once clasp her by*
To stele of hire or this or that,
And if I dorste, I wot wel what! *dared*
And natheles, bot if I lie,
- 6570 Be Stelthe ne be Robberie *By*
Of love, which fell in mi thoght,
To hire dede I nevere noght.
Bot as men sein, wher herte is failed,
Ther schal no castell ben assailed;
- 6575 Bot thogh I hadde hertes ten,
And were als strong as alle men,
If I be noght myn oghne man
And dar noght usen that I can,
I mai miselve noght recovere.
- 6580 Thogh I be nevere man so povere,
I bere an herte and hire it is, *hers*
So that me failleth wit in this,
Hou that I scholde of myn acord
The servant lede agein the lord.
- 6585 For if mi fot wolde awher go, *anywhere*
Or that min hand wolde elles do,
Whan that myn herte is theragein,
The remenant is al in vein.
And thus me lacketh alle wele, *happiness (goods)*
- 6590 And yit ne dar I nothing stele
Of thing which longeth unto love:
And ek it is so hyh above,
I mai noght wel therto areche,
Bot if so be at time of speche,
- 6595 Ful selde if thanne I stele may
A word or tuo and go my way.
Betwen hire hih astat and me
Comparison ther mai non be,
So that I fiele and wel I wot,
- 6600 Al is to hevy and to hot *too*
To sette on hond withoute leve. *To put my hand to; permission*
And thus I mot algate leve *must certainly renounce*
To stele that I mai noght take,
And in this wise I mot forsake
- 6605 To ben a thief agein mi wille
Of thing which I mai noght fulfille.

- For that serpent which nevere slept
 The flees of gold so wel ne kepte
 In Colchos, as the tale is told,
 6610 That mi ladi a thousandfold
 Nys betre yemed and bewaked,
Is not; guarded and protected at night
 Wher sche be clothed or be naked.
Whether
 To kepe hir bodi nyht and day,
 Sche hath a wardein redi ay,
guardian ever ready
 6615 Which is so wonderful a wyht,
creature
 That him ne mai no mannes myht
 With swerd ne with no wepne daunte,
 Ne with no sleihte of charme enchaunte,
 Wherof he mihte be mad tame,
made gentle
 6620 And Danger is his rihte name;
Standoffishness
 Which under lock and under keie,
 That no man mai it stele aweie,
So that
 Hath al the tresor underfonge
taken command of
 That unto love mai belonge.
 6625 The leste lokinge of hire yhe
 Mai noght be stole, if he it syhe;
sees
 And who so gruccheth for so lyte,
 He wolde sone sette a wyte
allege a censure (lay blame)
 On him that wolde stele more.
 6630 And that me grieveth wonder sore,
 For this proverbe is evere newe,
 That stronge lokes maken trewe
strong locks make true [men]
 Of hem that wolden stele and pyke:
[Out] of those; pilfer
 For so wel can ther no man slyke
flatter
 6635 Be him ne be non other mene,
means
 To whom Danger wol give or lene
 Of that tresor he hath to kepe.
 So thogh I wolde stalke and crepe,
 And wayte on eve and ek on morwe,
watch
 6640 Of Danger schal I nothing borwe,
 And stele I wot wel may I noght.
 And thus I am riht wel bethoght,
resolved
 Whil Danger stant in his office,
 Of Stelthe, which ye clepe a vice,
call
 6645 I schal be gultif neveremo.
 Therfore I wolde he were ago
gone away
 So fer that I nevere of him herde,
 Hou so that afterward it ferde.
 For thanne I mihte yit per cas
by chance
 6650 Of love make som pourchas
 Be Stelthe or be som other weie,
 That nou fro me stant fer aweie.

- Bot, fader, as ye tolde above,
 Hou Stelthe goth a nyht for love,
 6655 I mai noght wel that point forsake,
 That ofte times I ne wake
 On nyhtes, whan that othre slepe.
 Bot hou, I prei you, taketh kepe.
 Whan I am loged in such wise
 6660 That I be nyhte mai arise
 At som wyndowe and loken oute
 And se the housinge al aboute,
 So that I mai the chambre knowe
 In which mi ladi, as I trowe,
 6665 Lyth in hir bed and slepeth softe,
 Thanne is myn herte a thief fulofte.
 For there I stonde to beholde
 The longe nyhtes that ben colde
 And thenke on hire that lyth there.
 6670 And thanne I wisshe that I were
 Als wys as was Nectanabus
 Or elles as was Protheus,
 That couthen bothe of nigromaunce
 In what liknesse, in what semblaunce,
 6675 Riht as hem liste, hemself transforme.
 For if I were of such a forme,
 I seie thanne I wolde fle
 Into the chambre for to se
 If eny grace wolde falle,
 6680 So that I mihte under the palle
 Som thing of love pyke and stele.
 And thus I thenke thoghtes fele,
 And thogh therof nothing be soth,
 Yit ese as for a time it doth.
 6685 Bot ate laste whanne I finde
 That I am falle into my mynde,
 And se that I have stonde longe
 And have no profit underfonge,
 Than stalke I to mi bedd withinne.
 6690 And this is al that evere I winne
 Of love, whanne I walke on nyht.
 Mi will is good, bot of mi myht
 Me lacketh bothe and of mi grace;
 For what so that mi thoghte embrace,
 6695 Yit have I noght the betre ferd.
 Mi fader, lo, nou have ye herd
 What I be Stelthe of love have do,
 And hou mi will hath be therto.

at night
deny

lodged; manner

imagine
Lies; comfortably

clever

both understood; necromancy
outward appearance
Just; pleased them; themselves

fly
in order to see
befall
covers

many
true
comfort; serves

grasped
creep

fared

- If I be worthi to penance
 6700 I put it on your ordinance.”
Confessor “Mi sone, of stelthe I thee behiete, *reassure*
 Thogh it be for a time swete,
 At ende it doth bot litel good,
 As be ensample hou that it stod
 6705 Whilom, I mai thee telle nou.”
Amans “I preie you, fader, sei me hou.”
Confessor “Mi sone, of him which goth be daie
 Be weie of Stelthe to assaie, *attempt*
 In loves cause and takth his preie, *prey*
 6710 Ovide seide as I schal seie,
 And in his *Methamor* he tolde *Metamorphosis*
 A tale, which is good to holde.

[TALE OF LEUCOTHOE]

- The poete upon this matiere *(i.e., Ovid)*
 Of Stelthe wrot in this manere.
 6715 Venus, which hath this lawe in honde
 Of thing which mai noght be withstonde,
 As sche which the tresor to warde *guard*
 ¶ Of love hath withinne hir warde, *(see note)*
 Phebum to love hath so constreigned,
 6720 That he withoute reste is peined
 With al his herte to coveite
 A maiden, which was warded streyte *guarded closely*
 Withinne chambre and kept so clos,
 That selden was whan sche, desclos, *at large*
 6725 Goth with hir moder for to pleie.
 Leuchotoe, so as men seie,
 This maiden hihte and Orchamus *was named*
 Hir fader was; and befell thus.
 This doughter, that was kept so deere,
 6730 And hadde be fro yer to yeere
 Under hir moder discipline
 A clene maide and a virgine,
 Upon the whos nativité *loveliness*
 Of comelihiede and of beauté
 6735 Nature hath set al that sche may,
 That lich unto the fresshe Maii,
 Which othre monthes of the yeer
 Surmonteth, so withoute pier
 Was of this maiden the feture. *bodily stature*
 6740 Wherof Phebus out of mesure
 Hire loveth, and on every syde
 Awaiteth, if so mai betyde,

- That he thurgh eny sleihte myhte
 Hire lusti maidenhod unrihte,
 6745 The which were al his worldes welthe.
 And thus lurkende upon his stelthe
 In his await so longe he lai,
 Til it befell upon a dai,
 That he thurghout hir chambre wall
 6750 Cam in al sodeinliche, and stall
 That thing which was to him so lief.
 Bot wo the while, he was a thief!
 For Venus, which was enemie
 Of thilke loves micherie,
 6755 Discovereth al the pleine cas
 To Clymene, which thanne was
 Toward Phebus his concubine.
 And sche to lette the covine
 Of thilke love, dedli wroth
 6760 To pleigne upon this maide goth,
 And tolde hire fader hou it stod;
 Wherof for sorwe welnyh wod
 Unto hire moder thus he saide:
 ‘Lo, what it is to kepe a maide!
 6765 To Phebus dar I nothing speke,
 Bot upon hire I schal be wreke,
 So that these maidens after this
 Mow take ensample, what it is
 To soffre her maidenhed be stole
 6770 Wherof that sche the deth schal thole.’
 And bad with that do make a pet,
 Wherinne he hath his douhter set,
 As he that wol no pité have,
 So that sche was al quik begrave
 6775 And deide anon in his presence.
 Bot Phebus, for the reverence
 Of that sche hadde be his love,
 Hath wroght thurgh his pouer above,
 That sche sprong up out of the molde
 6780 Into a flour was named golde,
 Which stant governed of the sonne.
 And thus whan love is evele wonne,
 Fulofte it comth to repentaile.”
Amans “Mi fader, that is no mervaile,
 6785 Whan that the conseil is bewreid.
 Bot ofte time love hath pleid
 And stole many a privé game,
 Which nevere yit cam into blame,
 Whan that the thinges weren hidde.
- destroy*
(see note)

stole
dear

Exposes; full situation

obstruct; conspiracy (collusion)

insane

avenged

Might
stolen
suffer
pit

buried alive
died immediately

earth
marigold

evilly won
repentance

betrayed

- 6790 Bot in youre tale, as it betidde,
 Venus discoverede al the cas, *exposed*
 And ek also brod dai it was, *broad daylight*
 Whan Phebus such a Stelthe wroghte,
 Wherof the maide in blame he broghte,
- 6795 That afterward sche was so lore. *thus lost*
 Bot for ye seiden nou tofore
 Hou stelthe of love goth be nyhte,
 And doth hise thinges out of syhte,
 Therof me liste also to hie
it would please me
- 6800 A tale lich to the matiere,
 Wherof I myhte ensample take.”
- Confessor** “Mi goode sone, and for thi sake,
 So as it fell be daies olde,
 And so as the poete it tolde, *(i.e., Ovid)*
- 6805 Upon the nyhtes micherie
 Nou herkne a tale of poesie.

[TALE OF HERCULES AND FAUNUS]

- ☞ The myhtieste of alle men *(see note)*
 Whan Hercules with Eolen,
 Which was the love of his corage, *Who; heart*
- 6810 Togedre upon a pelrinage *pilgrimage*
 Towardes Rome scholden go,
 It fell hem be the weie so,
 That thei upon a dai a cave
 Withinne a roche founden have,
- 6815 Which was real and glorious *regal*
 And of entaile curious, *exquisite (sumptuous) workmanship*
 Be name and Thophis it was hote. *called*
 The sonne schon tho wonder hote, *then wondrously hot*
 As it was in the somer tyde. *time*
- 6820 This Hercules, which be his syde
 Hath Eolen his love there,
 Whan thei at thilke cave were,
 He seide it thoghte him for the beste *seemed to him*
 That sche hire for the hete reste *herself*
- 6825 Al thilke day and thilke nyht;
 And sche, that was a lusti wyht, *creature*
 It liketh hire al that he seide.
 And thus thei duelle there and pleide
 The longe dai. And so befell,
- 6830 This cave was under the hell *hill*
 Of Tymolus, which was begrowe *grown over*
 With vines, and at thilke throwe
 Faunus with Saba the goddesse,

- Be whom the large wilderness
 6835 In thilke time stod governed,
 Weere in a place, as I am lerned,
 Nyh by, which Bachus wode hihte. *was called Bacchus' wood*
 This Faunus tok a gret insihte *regard*
 Of Eolen, that was so nyh;
 6840 For whan that he hire beauté syh, *saw*
 Out of his wit he was assoted, *infatuated*
 And in his herte it hath so noted,
 That he forsok the nimphes alle,
 And seide he wolde, hou so it falle,
 6845 Assaie another for to winne
 So that his hertes thoght withinne
 He sette and caste hou that he myhte *calculated*
 Of love pyke away be nyhte
 That he be daie in other wise *role*
 6850 To stele mihte noght suffise.
 And therupon his time he waiteth.
 Nou tak good hiede hou love afaiteth *rules (disciplines)*
 Him which withal is overcome.
 Faire Eolen, whan sche was come
 6855 With Hercules into the cave,
 Sche seide him that sche wolde have
 Hise clothes of and hires bothe, *off*
 That ech of hem scholde other clothe.
 And al was do riht as sche bad,
 6860 He hath hire in hise clothes clad
 And caste on hire his gulion, *tunic*
 Which of the skyn of a leon
 Was mad, as he upon the weie *slew*
 6865 It slouh, and overthis to pleie
 Sche tok his grete mace also
 And knet it at hir gerdil tho. *tied*
 So was sche lich the man arraied,
 And Hercules thanne hath assaied *undertaken*
 To clothen him in hire array.
 6870 And thus thei jape forth the dai,
 Til that her souper redy were. *fool away the time*
 And whan thei hadden souped there, *their*
 Thei schopen hem to gon to reste;
 And as it thoghte hem for the beste, *prepared themselves*
 6875 Thei bedde, as for that ilke nyht,
 Tuo sondri beddes to be dyht, *went to bed*
 For thei togedre ligge nolde, *prepared*
 Because that thei offere wolde *would not lie*
 Upon the morwe here sacrifice. *their*
 6880 The servantz deden here office

- And sondri beddes made anon,
 Wherin that thei to reste gon
 Ech be himself in sondri place.
 Faire Eole hath set the mace
 6885 Beside hire beddes hed above,
 And with the clothes of hire love
 Sche helede al hire bed aboute; *covered*
 And he, which hadde of nothing doute, *fear*
 Hire wympel wond aboute his cheke, *head-covering wound*
 6890 Hire kertell and hire mantel eke *smock; sleeveless overgown also*
 Abrod upon his bed he spredde. *Spread out*
 And thus thei slepen bothe abedde. *in separate beds*
 And what of travail, what of wyn, *from hard work; wine*
 The servantz lich to drunke swyn *inebriated swine*
 6895 Begunne for to route faste. *snore loudly*
 This Faunus, which his stelthe caste,
 Was thanne come to the cave,
 And fond thei weren alle save *snug (safe)*
 Withoute noise, and in he wente.
 6900 The derke nyht his sihte blente, *obscured his vision*
 And yit it happeth him to go
 Where Eolen abedde tho
 Was leid alone for to slepe;
 Bot for he wolde take kepe
 6905 Whos bed it was, he made assai, *investigated*
 And of the leoun, where it lay,
 The cote he fond, and ek he fieleth
 The mace, and thanne his herte kieleth, *grew chilly with fear*
 That there dorste he noght abyde,
 6910 Bot stalketh upon every side
 And soghte aboute with his hond,
 That other bedd til that he fond,
 Wher lai bewymped a visage. *wearing a wimple; face*
 Tho was he glad in his corage, *heart*
 6915 For he hir kertell fond also
 And ek hir mantell bothe tuo
 Bespred upon the bed alofte. *Spread out*
 He made him naked thanne, and softe
 Into the bedd unwar he crepte,
 6920 Wher Hercules that time slepte,
 And wende wel it were sche; *thought*
 And thus in stede of Eole
 Anon he profreth him to love.
 Bot he, which felte a man above,
 6925 This Hercules, him threw to grounde
 So sore, that thei have him founde
 Liggende there upon the morwe;

And tho was noght a litel sorwe,
 That Faunus of himselve made,
 6930 Bot elles thei were alle glade
 And lowhen him to scorne aboute. *laughed*
 Saba with nimphis al a route *in a great crowd*
 Cam down to loke hou that he ferde,
 And whan that thei the sothe herde,
 6935 He was bejaped overal. *ridiculed by everyone*

Confessor Mi sone, be thou war withal
 To seche suche mecheries, *snitchings*
 Bot if thou have the betre aspies, *Unless; inside information*
 In aunter if thee so betyde
 6940 As Faunus dede thilke tyde,
 Wherof thou miht be schamed so.”

Amans “Min holi fader, certes no.
 Bot if I hadde riht good leve, *Unless; permission*
 Such mecherie I thenke leve. *to avoid*
 6945 Mi feinte herte wol noght serve;
 For malgré wolde I noght deserve *ill will; earn*
 In thilke place wher I love.
 Bot for ye tolden hier above
 Of Covoitise and his pilage,
 6950 If ther be more of that lignage,
 Which toucheth to mi schrifte, I preie
 That ye therof me wolde seie,
 So that I mai the vice eschuie.”

Confessor “Mi sone, if I be order suie *follow in sequence*
 6955 The vices, as thei stonde arowe, *in a row*
 Of Covoitise thou schalt knowe
 Ther is yit on, which is the laste;
 In whom ther mai no vertu laste,
 For he with God himself debateth, *wars*
 6960 Wherof that al the hevene him hateth.”

[SACRILEGE]

xii. *Sacrilegus tantum furto loca sacra prophanat;*
Vt sibi sunt agri, sic domus alma dei.
Nec locus est, in quo non templat amans quod amatur,
Et que posse nequit carpere, velle capit.¹

¹ *The sacrilegious man profanes sacred places as if by theft; he treats the cherished house of God as his own estate. Nor is there anywhere in which the lover does not attempt to possess what is beloved to him; and what Capability cannot seize, Will still grasps.*

[**Confessor**] “The hihe God, which alle goode
 Pourveied hath for mannes fode
 Of clothes and of mete and drinke,
 Bad Adam that he scholde swinke
 6965 To geten him his sustenance;
 ¶ And ek he sette an ordinance
 Upon the lawe of Moises,
 That though a man be haveles,
 Yit schal he noght be thefte stele.
 6970 Bot nou adaies ther ben fele
 That wol no labour undertake,
 Bot what thei mai be Stelthe take
 Thei holde it sikerliche wonne.
 And thus the lawe is overronne
 6975 Which God hath set, and namely
 With hem that so untrewely
 The goodes robbe of Holi Cherche.
 The thefte which thei thanne werche
 Be name is cleped Sacrilegge,
 6980 Agein the whom I thenke alegge.
 Of his condicion to telle,
 Which rifleth bothe bok and belle,
 So forth with al the remenant
 To Goddes hous appourtenant,
 6985 Wher that he scholde bidde his bede,
 He doth his thefte in holi stede,
 And takth what thing he fint therinne.
 For whan he seth that he mai winne,
 He wondeth for no cursednesse,
 6990 That he ne brekth the holinesse
 And doth to God no reverence;
 For he hath lost his conscience,
 That though the prest therfore curse,
 He seith he fareth noght the wurse.
 6995 And for to speke it otherwise,
 What man that lasseth the franchise
 And takth of Holi Cherche his preie,
 I not what bedes he schal preie.
 Whan he fro God, which hath give al,
 7000 The pourpartie in special,
 Which unto Crist himself is due,
 Benymth, he mai noght wel eschue
 The peine comende afterward;
 For he hath mad his foreward
 7005 With Sacrilegge for to duelle,
 Which hath his heritage in helle.
 And if we rede of th’olde lawe,

*Commanded; labor**(see note)**without possessions
by theft
many**assuredly
violated**By; called
accuse**i.e., steals everything**make his prayers
place**turns aside; excommunication/damnation**excommunicate**diminishes privilege
prey
prayers**share**Takes away; avoid**contract*

	I finde write, in thilke dawe	<i>in that time</i>
	Of princes hou ther weren thre	
7010	Coupable sore in this dégradé.	<i>Guilty</i>
	That on of hem was cleped thus,	
	The proude king Antiochus;	
	That other Nabuzardan hihte,	
	Which of his cruauté behyhte	<i>promised</i>
7015	The temple to destruie and waste,	
	And so he dede in alle haste;	
	The thridde, which was after schamed,	
	Was Nabugodonosor named,	
	And he Jerusalem putte under,	<i>subjugated</i>
7020	Of Sacrilege and many a wonder	
	There in the holi temple he wroghte,	
	Which Baltazar his heir aboghte,	<i>paid for</i>
	Whan Mane, Techel, Phares write	
	Was on the wal, as thou miht wite,	
7025	So as the Bible it hath declared.	
	Bot for al that it is noght spared	
	Yit nou aday, that men ne pile,	<i>plunder</i>
	And maken argument and skile	
	To Sacrilege as it belongeth,	
7030	For what man that ther after longeth,	<i>yearns</i>
	He takth non hiede what he doth.	

[SACRILEGIOUSNESS OF LOVERS]

	And riht so, for to telle soth,	
	In loves cause if I schal trete,	
	Ther ben of suche smale and grete.	
7035	If thei no leisir fynden elles,	
	Thei wol noght wonden for the belles,	<i>turn aside; [church] bells</i>
	Ne thogh thei sen the prest at masse;	
	That wol thei leten overpasse.	
	If that thei finde here love there,	<i>their; [in church]</i>
7040	Thei stonde and tellen in hire ere,	<i>express [their desires]; ear</i>
	And axe of God non other grace,	
	Whyl thei ben in that holi place;	
	Bot er thei gon som avantage	
	Ther wol thei have, and som pilage	<i>plunder</i>
7045	Of goodli word or of beheste,	<i>promise</i>
	Or elles thei take ate leste	
	Out of hir hand or ring or glove,	
	So nyh the weder thei wol love,	<i>i.e., close to the wind (dangerously)</i>
	As who seith sche schal noght forgete,	
7050	Nou I this tokne of hire have gete.	
	Thus halwe thei the hihe feste.	<i>observe (celebrate)</i>

- Such thefte mai no cherche areste,
 For al is leueful that hem liketh,
 To whom that elles it misliketh.
 7055 And ek riht in the selve kinde
 In grete cites men mai finde
 This lusti folk, that make it gay,
 And waite upon the haliday.
 In cherches and in menstres eke
 7060 Thei gon the wommen for to seke,
 And wher that such on goth aboute,
 Tofore the faireste of the route,
 Wher as thei sitten alle arewe,
 Ther wol he most his bodi schewe,
 7065 His croket kembd and theron set
 A nouche with a chapelet,
 Or elles on of grene leues,
 Which late com out of the greves,
 Al for he scholde seme freissh.
 7070 And thus he loketh on the fleissh
 Riht as an hauk which hath a sihte
 Upon the foul, ther he schal lihte;
 And as he were of faerie,
 He scheweth him tofore here yhe
 7075 In holi place wher thei sitte,
 Al for to make here hertes flitte.
 His yhe nawher wole abyde,
 Bot loke and prie on every syde
 On hire and hire, as him best lyketh.
 7080 And otherwhile among he syketh;
 Thenkth on of hem, "That was for me,"
 And so ther thenken tuo or thre,
 And yit he loveth non of alle,
 Bot wher as evere his chance falle.
 7085 And natheles to seie a soth,
 The cause why that he so doth
 Is for to stele an herte or tuo,
 Out of the cherche er that he go
 And as I seide it hier above,
 7090 Al is that Sacrilege of love;
 For wel mai be he stelth away
 That he nevere after yelde may.
 Tell me forthi, my sone, anon,
 Hast thou do Sacrilege, or non,
 7095 As I have said in this manere?"
- Confessio Amantis** "Mi fader, as of this matiere
 I wole you tellen redely
 What I have do; bot trewely
- inhibit
lawful*
- chapels also*
- Before
gathered in a row*
- ornamental curl combed
jeweled clasp; diadem
one (a chaplet)
groves
lusty*
- exhibits himself before their eye*
- giddy
eye nowhere; settle down*
- this one and that one
from time to time sighs*
- steal*

- I mai excuse min entente,
 7100 That nevere I yit to cherche wente
 In such manere as ye me schryve,
 For no womman that is on lyve.
 The cause why I have it laft
 Mai be for I unto that craft
 7105 Am nothing able so to stele,
 Thogh ther be wommen noght so fele. *many*
 Bot yit wol I noght seie this,
 Whan I am ther mi ladi is, *where*
 In whom lith holly mi querele, *lies wholly; complaint*
 7110 And sche to cherche or to chapele *And [when]*
 Wol go to matins or to messe, *mass*
 That time I waite wel and gesse,
 To cherche I come and there I stonde,
 And thogh I take a bok on honde,
 7115 Mi contenance is on the bok, *face*
 Bot toward hire is al my lok.
 And if so falle that I preie
 Unto mi God, and somewhat seie
 Of Paternoster or of Crede,
 7120 Al is for that I wolde spede, *succeed*
 So that mi bede in Holi Cherche *prayer*
 Ther mihte som miracle werche
 Mi ladi herte for to chaunge, *lady's heart*
 Which evere hath be to me so strange. *distant*
 7125 So that al mi devocion
 And al mi contemplacion
 With al min herte and mi corage
 Is only set on hire ymage,
 And evere I waite upon the tyde. *time*
 7130 If sche loke eny thing asyde, *at all*
 That I me mai of hire avise, *be aware of*
 Anon I am with covoitise
 So smite, that me were lief
 To ben in Holi Cherche a thief,
 7135 Bot noght to stele a vestement,
 For that is nothing mi talent. *not at all my desire*
 Bot I wold stele, if that I mihte,
 A glad word or a goodly syhte;
 And evere mi service I profre,
 7140 And namly whan sche wol gon offre, *go to make an offering*
 For thanne I lede hire, if I may, *lead*
 For somewhat wolde I stele away.
 Whan I beclippe hire on the wast, *embrace her around the waist*
 Yit ate leste I stele a tast, *taste*
 7145 And otherwhile 'grant mercy'

- Sche seith, and so winne I therby
 A lusti touch, a good word eke,
 Bot al the remenant to seke
 Is fro mi pourpos wonder ferr. *wide of the mark*
- 7150 So mai I seie, as I seide er,
 In Holy Cherche if that I wowe, *woo*
 My conscience it wolde allowe,
 Be so that up amendement *Provided that as compensation*
 I mihte gete assignement *an allocation of funds*
- 7155 Wher for to spede in other place. *In order to succeed*
 Such Sacrilege I holde a grace.
 And thus, mi fader, soth to seie,
 In cherche riht as in the weie,
 If I mihte oght of love take,
- 7160 Such hansell have I noght forsake. *good luck gift*
 Bot finali I me confesse,
 Ther is in me non holinesse
 Whil I hire se in eny stede; *any place*
 And yit, for oght that evere I dede,
- 7165 No Sacrilege of hire I tok,
 Bot if it were of word or lok, *Unless*
 Or elles if that I hir fredde, *feel*
 Whan I toward offringe hir ledde,
 Take therof what I take may,
- 7170 For elles bere I noght away.
 For thogh I wolde oght elles have,
 Alle othre thinges ben so save *well protected*
 And kept with such a privilege,
 That I mai do no Sacrilege.
- 7175 God wot mi wille natheles,
 Thogh I mot nedes kepe pes
 And malgré myn so let it passe, *in spite of myself*
 Mi will therto is noght the lasse,
 If I mihte other wise aweie. *be successful*
- 7180 Forthi, mi fader, I you preie,
 Tell what you thenketh therupon,
 If I therof have gult or non.”
- Confessor** “Thi will, mi sone, is for to blame,
 The remenant is bot a game, *rest*
- 7185 That I have herd thee telle as yit.
 Bot tak this lore into thi wit,
 That alle thing hath time and stede, *place*
 The cherche serveth for the bede, *prayer*
 The chambre is of another speche. *story*
- 7190 Bot if thou wistest of the wreche, *knew; vengeance*
 Hou Sacrilege it hath aboght,
 Thou woldest betre ben bethoght; *would have been better advised*

And for thou schalt the more amende,
A tale I wole on thee despende.

[TALE OF PARIS AND HELEN]

- 7195 To alle men, as who seith, knowe *made known*
It is, and in the world thurgh blowe, *spread abroad*
Hou that of Troie Lamedon
To Hercules and to Jasoun,
Whan toward Colchos out of Grece
7200 Be see sailende upon a piece
☞ Of lond of Troie reste preide, *(see note)*
Bot he hem wrathfulli congeide. *dismissed them angrily*
And for thei founde him so vilein, *because; villainous*
Whan thei come into Grece agein,
7205 With pouer that thei gete myhte
Towardes Troie thei hem dyhte, *directed themselves*
And ther thei token such vengeance,
Wherof stant yit the remembrance;
For thei destruide king and al,
7210 And leften bot the brente wal. *only; burned*
The Grecs of Troiens many slowe *killed*
And prisoners thei toke ynowe, *aplenty*
Among the whiche ther was on, *one*
The kinges doughter Lamedon, *daughter of king Lamedon*
7215 Esiona, that faire thing,
Which unto Thelamon the king
Be Hercules and be th'assent
Of al the hole parlement
Was at his wille gove and granted. *given*
7220 And thus hath Grece Troie danted, *conquered*
And hom thei torne in such manere.
Bot after this nou schalt thou hier *hear*
The cause why this tale I telle,
Upon the chances that befelle.
7225 King Lamedon, which deide thus, *died*
He hadde a sone, on Priamus, *one*
Which was noght thilke time at hom. *Who; at that time*
Bot whan he herde of this, he com
And fond hou the cité was falle,
7230 Which he began anon to walle *rebuild*
And made ther a cité newe,
That thei whiche othre londes knewe
Tho seiden, that of lym and ston
In al the world so fair was non.
7235 And on that o side of the toun
The king let maken Ylioun,

- That hihe tour, that stronge place,
 Which was adrad of no manace
 Of quarel nor of non engin;
 7240 And thogh men wolde make a myn,
 No mannes craft it mihte aproche,
 For it was sett upon a roche.
 The walles of the toun aboute,
 Hem stod of al the world no doute,
 7245 And after the proporcion
 Sex gates weren of the toun
 Of such a forme, of such entaile,
 That hem to se was gret mervaile.
 The diches weren brode and depe;
 7250 A fewe men it mihte kepe
 From al the world, as semeth tho,
 Bot if the goddes weren fo.
 Gret presse unto that cité drouh,
 So that ther was of poeple ynouh,
 7255 Of burgeis that therinne duellen;
 Ther mai no mannes tunge tellen
 Hou that cité was riche of good.
 Whan al was mad and al wel stod,
 King Priamus tho him bethoghte
 7260 What thei of Grece whilom wroghte,
 And what was of her swerd devoured,
 And hou his soster deshonoured
 With Thelamon away was lad.
 And so thenkende he wax unglad,
 7265 And sette anon a parlement,
 To which the lordes were assent.
 In many a wise ther was spoke,
 Hou that thei mihten ben awroke,
 Bot ate laste natheles
 7270 Thei seiden alle, 'Acord and pes.'
 To setten either part in reste
 It thoghte hem thanne for the beste
 With resonable amendement;
 And thus was Antenor forth sent
 7275 To axe Esionam agein
 And witen what thei wolden sein.
 So passeth he the see be barge
 To Grece for to seie his charge,
 The which he seide redely
 7280 Unto the lordes by and by:
 Bot where he spak in Grece aboute,
 He herde noght bot wordes stoute,
 And nameliche of Thelamon;
- bolt of a crossbow; weapon
tunnel*

*Six
workmanship*

*moats
defend
then*
*Except if; opposed to them
multitude; drew*

merchants

completed

be avenged

redress

sea by ship

*sagely
one by one (completely)*

fierce

- The maiden wolde he noght forgon,
 7285 He seide, for no maner thing,
 And bad him gon hom to his king,
 For there gat he non amende *reparation*
 For oght he couthe do or sende.
 This Anthenor agein goth hom
 7290 Unto his king, and whan he com,
 He tolde in Grece of that he herde,
 And hou that Thelamon ansuerde,
 And hou thei were at here above, *exalted frame of mind (i.e., on their high horse)*
 That thei wol nouthur pes ne love,
 7295 Bot every man schal don his beste.
 Bot for men sein that nyht hath reste,
 The king bethoghte him al that nyht,
 And erli, whan the dai was lyht,
 He tok conseil of this matiere,
 7300 And thei acorde in this manere,
 That he withouten eny lette *delay*
 A certain time scholde sette
 Of parlement to ben avised.
 And in the wise it was devised,
 7305 Of parlement he sette a day,
 And that was in the monthe of Maii.
 This Priamus hadde in his yhte *possession*
 A wif, and Hecuba sche hyhte, *was named*
 Be whom that time ek hadde he
 7310 Of sones fyve, and douhtres thre
 Besiden hem, and thritty mo,
 And weren knyhtes alle tho,
 Bot noght upon his wif begete, *begotten*
 Bot elles where he myhte hem gete
 7315 Of wommen whiche he hadde knowe.
 Such was the world at thilke throwe,
 So that he was of children riche,
 As therof was no man his liche. *match*
 Of parlement the dai was come,
 7320 Ther ben the lordes alle and some;
 Tho was pronounced and pourposed,
 And al the cause hem was desclosed,
 Hou Anthenor in Grece ferde.
 Thei seten alle stille and herde,
 7325 And tho spak every man aboute.
 Ther was alegged many a doute, *expressed; fear*
 And many a proud word spoke also;
 Bot for the moste part as tho
 Thei wisten noght what was the beste,
 7330 Or for to werre or for to reste. *Whether to make war*

- Bot he that was withoute fere, *fear*
 Hector, among the lordes there
 His tale tolde in such a wise,
 And seide, 'Lordes, ye ben wise,
 7335 Ye knowen this als wel as I,
 Above all othre most worthi
 Stant nou in Grece the manhode
 Of worthinesse and of kniethode;
 For who so wole it wel agroke, *explore*
 7340 To hem belongeth al Europe,
 Which is the thridde parti evene
 Of al the world under the hevene;
 And we be bot of folk a fewe.
 So were it reson for to schewe *perceive*
 7345 The peril, er we falle thrinne. *therein*
 Betre is to leve, than beginne
 Thing which as mai noght ben achieved;
 He is noght wys that fint him grieved, *who finds himself*
 And doth so that his grief be more.
 7350 For who that loketh al tofore
 And wol noght se what is behinde,
 He mai fulofte hise harmes finde:
 Wicke is to stryve and have the worse. *Bad (Harmful)*
 We have encheson for to corse, *a reason; curse*
 7355 This wot I wel, and for to hate
 The Greks; bot er that we debate *fight*
 With hem that ben of such a myht,
 It is ful good that every wiht
 Be of himself riht wel bethoght.
 7360 Bot as for me this seie I noght;
 For while that mi lif wol stonde,
 If that ye taken werre on honde, *war*
 Falle it to beste or to the werste,
 I schal miselven be the ferste
 7365 To grieven hem, what evere I may.
 I wol noght ones seie nay
 To thing which that youre conseil demeth,
 For unto me wel more it quemeth *pleases*
 The werre certes than the pes;
 7370 Bot this I seie natheles,
 As me belongeth for to seie. *behooves*
 Nou schape ye the beste weie.'
 Whan Hector hath seid his avis,
 Next after him tho spak Paris,
 7375 Which was his brother, and alleide *asserted*
 What him best thoghte, and thus he seide:
 'Strong thing it is to soffre wrong, *An arduous thing*

- And suffre schame is more strong,
 Bot we have suffred bothe tuo;
 7380 And for al that yit have we do
 What so we mihte to reforme
 The pes, whan we in such a forme *peace; on these terms*
 Sente Anthenor, as ye wel knowe.
 And thei here grete wordes blowe *their; boast noisily*
 7385 Upon her wrongful dedes eke;
 And who that wole himself noght meke *submit*
 To pes, and list no reson take, *desires to follow no reason*
 Men sein reson him wol forsake.
 For in the multitude of men
 7390 Is noght the strengthe, for with ten
 It hath be sen in trew querele
 Agein an hundred false dele, *false [men] to fight*
 And had the betre of Goddes grace. *had the advantage*
 This hath befall in many place;
 7395 And if it like unto you alle,
 I wole assaie, hou so it falle,
 Oure enemis if I mai grieve;
 For I have cawht a gret believe
 Upon a point I wol declare.
 7400 This ender day, as I gan fare *other*
 To hunte unto the grete hert,
 Which was tofore myn houndes stert,
 And every man went on his syde *flanked him*
 Him to poursuie, and I to ryde
 7405 Began the chace, and soth to seie,
 Withinne a while out of mi weie
 I rod, and nyste where I was. *knew not*
 And slep me cauhte, and on the gras
 Beside a welle I lay me down
 7410 To slepe, and in a visioun
 To me the god Mercurie cam;
 Goddesses thre with him he nam, *brought*
 Minerve, Venus, and Juno,
 And in his hond an appel tho
 7415 He hield of gold with lettres write.
 And this he dede me to wite,
 Hou that thei putt hem upon me,
 That to the faireste of hem thre *caused me to know*
 Of gold that appel scholde I give. *entrusted themselves to me*
 7420 With ech of hem tho was I schrive,
 And ech on faire me behihte. *absolved*
 Bot Venus seide, if that sche mihte *promised*
 That appel of mi gifte gete,
 Sche wolde it neveremor forgete,

- 7425 And seide hou that in Grece lond
 Sche wolde bringe unto myn hond
 Of al this erthe the faireste;
 So that me thoghte it for the beste,
 To hire and gaf that appel tho. *And to her [I] gave; then*
- 7430 Thus hope I wel, if that I go,
 That sche for me wol so ordeine,
 That thei matiere for to pleigne
 Schul have, er that I come agein.
 Nou have ye herd that I wol sein.
- 7435 Sey ye what stant in youre avis.' *opinion*
 And every man tho seide his,
 And sundri causes thei recorde,
 Bot ate laste thei acorde
 That Paris schal to Grece wende, *go*
- 7440 And thus the parlement tok ende.
 Cassandra, whan sche herde of this,
 The which to Paris soster is, *Paris' sister*
 Anon sche gan to wepe and weile,
 And seide, 'Allas, what mai ous eile? *What harm may befall us*
- 7445 Fortune with hire blinde whiel
 Ne wol noght lete ous stonde wel.
 For this I dar wel undertake,
 That if Paris his weie take, *assure [you]*
 As it is seid that he schal do,
- 7450 We ben forevere thanne undo.' *undone*
 This, which Cassandre thanne hihte, *promised*
 In al the world as it berth sihte,
 In bokes as men finde write,
 Is that Sibille of whom ye wite, *know*
- 7455 That alle men yit clepen sage. *call wise*
 Whan that sche wiste of this viage,
 Hou Paris schal to Grece fare,
 No womman mihte worse fare
 Ne sorwe more than sche dede;
- 7460 And riht so in the same stede *at the same moment (on the spot)*
 Ferde Helenus, which was hir brother, *Fared (i.e., Lamented)*
 Of prophecie and such another.
 And al was holde bot a jape, *But; bit of nonsense*
 So that the pourpos which was schape,
- 7465 Or were hem lief or were hem loth, *Whether it were pleasing or loathsome to them*
 Was holde, and into Grece goth *adhered to*
 This Paris with his retenance. *retinue*
 And as it fell upon his chance,
 Of Grece he londeth in an yle, *island*
- 7470 And him was told the same whyle
 Of folk which he began to freyne, *question*

- Tho was in th'yle queene Heleyne,
 And ek of contres there aboute
 Of ladi many a lusti route, *lively company*
 7475 With mochel worthi poeple also.
 And why thei comen theder tho,
 The cause stod in such a wise:
 For worschipe and for sacrificise
 That thei to Venus wolden make,
 7480 As thei tofore hadde undertake,
 Some of good will, some of behest, *by promise*
 For thanne was hire hihe feste
 Withinne a temple which was there.
 Whan Paris wiste what thei were, *knew*
 7485 Anon he schop his ordinance
 To gon and don his obeissance
 To Venus on hire holi day,
 And dede upon his beste aray. *put on*
 With gret riches he him behongeth, *clothes himself sumptuously*
 7490 As it to such a lord belongeth,
 He was noght armed natheles,
 Bot as it were in lond of pes,
 And thus he goth forth out of schipe
 And takth with him his felaschipe.
 7495 In such manere as I you seie
 Unto the temple he hield his weie. *made his way*
 Tydinge, which goth overal *News*
 To grete and smale, forth withal
 Com to the queenes ere and tolde *ear*
 7500 Hou Paris com, and that he wolde
 Do sacrificise to Venus:
 And whan sche herde telle thus,
 She thoghte, hou that it evere be,
 That sche wole him abyde and se. *await*
 7505 Forth comth Paris with glad visage
 Into the temple on pelrinage, *pilgrimage*
 Wher unto Venus the goddesse
 He gifth and offreth gret riches,
 And preith hir that he preie wolde. *what he wished to pray*
 7510 And thanne aside he gan beholde
 And sih wher that this ladi stod;
 And he forth in his freisshe mod
 Goth ther sche was and made hir chiere,
 As he wel couthe in his manere,
 7515 That of his wordes such plesance
 Sche tok that al hire aqueintance, *intimacy*
 Als ferforth as the herte lay,
 He stal er that he wente away.

- So goth he forth and tok his leve,
 7520 And thoghte, anon as it was eve,
 He wolde don his Sacrilege,
 That many a man it scholde abegge. *atone (pay) for*
 Whan he to schipe agein was come,
 To him he hath his conseil nome, *taken*
 7525 And al devised the matiere
 In such a wise as thou schalt hiere.
 Withinne nyht al prively
 His men he warneth by and by,
 That thei be redy armed sone
 7530 For certein thing which was to done.
 And thei anon ben redi alle,
 And ech on other gan to calle,
 And went hem out upon the stronde *beach*
 And tok a pourpos ther alonde *adopted*
 7535 Of what thing that thei wolden do,
 Toward the temple and forth thei go.
 So fell it, of devocion
 Heleine in contemplacion
 With many another worthi wiht *person*
 7540 Was in the temple and wok al nyht, *on an all-night vigil*
 To bidde and preie unto th'ymage *make request; pray*
 Of Venus, as was thanne usage.
 So that Paris riht as him liste
 Into the temple, er thei it wiste, *before; knew*
 7545 Com with his men al sodeinly,
 And alle at ones sette ascry *attacked with battle cry*
 In hem whiche in the temple were,
 For tho was mochel poeple there;
 Bot of defense was no bote, *avail*
 7550 So soffren thei that soffre mote. *must*
 Paris unto the queene wente,
 And hire in bothe hise arnes hente *seized*
 With him and with his felaschipe,
 And forth thei bere hire unto schipe.
 7555 Up goth the seil and forth thei wente,
 And such a wynd fortune hem sente,
 Til thei the havene of Troie cauhte;
 Where out of schipe anon thei strauhte *arrived at*
 And gon hem forth toward the toun, *proceeded straight away*
 7560 The which cam with processioun
 Agein Paris to sen his preie. *Toward; prize*
 And every man began to seie
 To Paris and his felaschipe
 Al that thei couthen of worschipe;
 7565 Was non so litel man in Troie,

- That he ne made merthe and joie
 Of that Paris hath wonne Heleine.
 Bot al that merthe is sorwe and peine
 To Helenus and to Cassaundre;
 7570 For thei it token schame and sklaundre
 And lost of al the comun grace,
 That Paris out of holi place
 Be Stelthe hath take a mannes wif,
 Wherof that he schal lese his lif
 7575 And many a worthi man therto,
 And al the cité be fordo, *doomed*
 Which nevere schal be mad agein. *rebuilt*
 And so it fell, riht as thei sein,
 The sacrilege which he wroghte
 7580 Was cause why the Gregois soughte
 Unto the toun and it beleie, *besieged*
 And wolden nevere parte aweie,
 Til what be sleihte and what be strengthe *deceit*
 Thei hadde it wonne in brede and lengthe, *(i.e., in every respect)*
 7585 And brent and slayn that was withinne.
[Confessor] Nou se, mi sone, which a sinne
 Is Sacrilege in holy stede.
 Be war therfore and bidd thi bede, *recite your prayers*
 And do nothing in Holy Cherche,
 7590 Bot that thou miht be reson werche.
 And ek tak hiede of Achilles,
 Whan he unto his love ches *chose*
 Polixena, that was also
 In holi temple of Appollo,
 7595 Which was the cause why he dyde *died*
 And al his lust was leyd asyde.
 And Troilus upon Criseide
 Also his ferste love leide
 In holi place, and hou it ferde,
 7600 As who seith, al the world it herde;
 Forsake he was for Diomedé,
 Such was of love his laste mede. *recompense*
Confessor Forthi, mi sone, I wolde rede, *advise*
 Be this ensample as thou myht rede, *interpret*
 7605 Sech elles, wher thou wolt, thi grace, *Seek elsewhere*
 And war thee wel in holi place *guard yourself well*
 What thou to love do or speke,
 In aunter if it so be wreke *In case; avenged*
 As thou hast herd me told before.
 7610 And tak good hiede also therfore
 Upon what forme of Avarice,
 Mor than of eny other vice,

I have divided in parties
 The branches, whiche of compainies
 7615 Thurghout the world in general
 Ben nou the leders overal,
 Of Covoitise and of Perjure,
 Of fals Brocage and of Usure,
 Of Skarsnesse and Unkindeschipe,
 7620 Which nevere drouh to felaschipe,
 Of Robberie and privi Stelthe,
 Which don is for the worldes welthe,
 Of Ravine and of Sacrilege,
 Which makth the conscience agregge;
 7625 Although it mai richesse atteigne,
 It floureth, bot it schal noght greine
 Unto the fruit of rihtwisnesse.
 Bot who that wolde do largesse
 Upon the reule as it is give,
 7630 So myhte a man in trouthe live
 Toward his God, and ek also
 Toward the world, for bothe tuo
 Largesse awaiteth as belongeth,
 To neither part that he ne wrongeth;
 7635 He kepth himself, he kepth his frendes,
 So stant he sauf to bothe hise endes,
 That he excedeth no mesure,
 So wel he can himself mesure.
 Wherof, mi sone, thou schalt wite,
 7640 So as the Philosophre hath write.”

become deadened
blooms; bear grain

is appropriate

[PRODIGALITY]

xiii. *Prodegus et parcus duo sunt extrema, que largus
 Est horum medius, plebis in ore bonus.*¹

[Confessor] “Betwen the tuo extremities

☞ Of vice stant the propretes (see note)
 Of vertu, and to prove it so
 Tak Avarice and tak also
 7645 The vice of Prodegalité;
 Betwen hem Liberalité,
 Which is the vertu of Largesse,
 Stant and governeth his noblesse.
 For tho tuo vices in discord

¹ *Prodigality and parsimony are two extremes, and generosity is their middle, a trait held good by the voice of the people.*

- 7650 Stonde evere, as I finde of record;
 So that betwen here tuo debat *their mutual conflict*
 Largesse reuleth his astat.
 For in such wise as Avarice,
 As I tofore have told the vice, *described*
- 7655 Thurgh streit holdinge and thurgh skarsnesse *tightfistedness*
 Stant in contraire to Largesse,
 Riht so stant Prodegalité *Just so*
 Revers, bot noght in such degré. *In reverse*
 For so as Avarice spareth,
- 7660 And for to kepe his tresor careth,
 That other al his oghne and more
 Agein the wise mannes lore
 Gifh and despendeth hier and there,
 So that him reccheth nevere where. *it concerns him*
- 7665 While he mai borwe, he wol despende, *receive on credit; spend*
 Til ate laste he seith, 'I wende'; *'I repent'*
 Bot that is spoken al to late,
 For thanne is poverté ate gate
 And takth him evene be the slieve, *plucks*
- 7670 For erst wol he no wisdom lieve. *believe*
 And riht as Avarice is sinne,
 That wolde his tresor kepe and winne,
 Riht so is Prodegalité.
 Bot of Largesse in his degré,
- 7675 Which evene stant betwen the tuo,
 The hihe God and man also
 The vertu ech of hem commendeth.
 For he himselven ferst amendeth,
 That overal his name spreadeth,
- 7680 And to alle othre, where it nedeth,
 He gifh his good in such a wise,
 That he makth many a man arise,
 Which elles scholde falle lowe.
 Largesce mai noght ben unknowe;
- 7685 For what lond that he regneth inne,
 It mai noght faile for to winne
 Thurgh his decerté love and grace,
 Wher it schal faile in other place.
 And thus betwen to moche and lyte
- 7690 Largesce, which is noght to wyte, *too much; little*
 Halt evere forth the middel weie. *blame*
 Bot who that torne wole aweie
 Fro that to Prodegalité,
 Anon he lest the propreté *loses*
- 7695 Of vertu and goth to the vice;
 For in such wise as Avarice

- Lest for scarsnesse his goode name,
 Riht so that other is to blame,
 Which thurgh his wast mesure exceedeth, *waste*
 7700 For no man wot what harm that bredeth.
 Bot mochel joie ther betydeth,
 Wher that largesse an herte guydeth.
 For his mesure is so governed,
 That he to bothe partz is lerned,
 7705 To God and to the world also,
 He doth reson to bothe tuo.
 The povere folk of his almesse
 Relieved ben in the destresse
 Of thurst, of hunger and of cold.
 7710 The gifte of him was nevere sold,
 Bot frely give, and natheles
 The myhti God of His encess
 Rewardeth him of double grace;
 The hevene he doth him to pourchace
 7715 And gifth him ek the worldes good.
 And thus the cote for the hod
 Largesse takth, and yit no sinne
 He doth, hou so that evere he winne.
- ☞ What man hath hors men give him hors, *(see note)*
 7720 And who non hath of him no fors, *nothing*
 For he mai thanne on fote go;
 The world hath evere stonde so.
 Bot for to loken of the tweie,
 7724 A man to go the siker weie, *more certain way*
- ☞ Betre is to give than to take:
 With gifte a man mai frendes make, *(see note)*
 Bot who that takth or gret or smal, *either great or*
 He takth a charge forth withal, *takes responsibility*
 And stant noght fre til it be quit.
- 7730 So for to deme in mannes wit, *judge*
 It helpeth more a man to have
 His oghne good, than for to crave
 Of othre men and make him bounde,
 Wher elles he mai stonde unbounde.
- ☞ Senec conseileth in this wise, *(see note)*
 7736 And seith, 'Bot if thi good suffise *Unless*
 Unto the liking of thi wille,
 Withdrawh thi lust and hold thee stille,
 And be to thi good sufficient.'
- 7740 For that thing is appourtenant *pertinent*
 To trouthe and causeth to be fre
 After the reule of charité,

- ¶ Which first beginneth of himselve. *(see note)*
 For if thou richest othre tuelve,
 7745 Wherof thou schalt thiself be povere,
 I not what thonk thou miht recovere.
 Whil that a man hath good to give,
 With grete routes he mai live *company*
 And hath his frendes overal,
 7750 And everich of him telle schal.
 Therwhile he hath his fulle packe,
 Thei seie, 'A good felawe is Jacke';
 Bot whanne it faileth ate laste,
 Anon his pris thei overcaste, *repute*
 7755 For thanne is ther non other lawe
 Bot, 'Jacke was a good felawe.'
 Whan thei him povere and nedy se,
 Thei lete him passe and farwel he;
 Al that he wende of compainie *expected of friendship*
 7760 Is thanne torned to folie.
 Bot nou to speke in other kinde
 Of love, a man mai suche finde,
 That wher thei come in every route
 Thei caste and waste her love aboute,
 7765 Til al here time is overgon, *passed by*
 And thanne have thei love non.
 For who that loveth overal,
 It is no reson that he schal
 Of love have eny propriété.
 7770 Forthi, mi sone, avise thee
 If thou of love hast be to large, *too extravagant*
 For such a man is noght to charge: *of little importance*
 And if it so be that thou hast
 Despended al thi time in wast *waste*
 7775 And set thi love in sondri place,
 Though thou the substance of thi grace
 Lese ate laste, it is no wonder; *Lose*
 For he that put himselven under,
 As who seith, comun overal,
 7780 He lest the love special
 Of eny on, if sche be wys.
 For love schal noght bere his pris
 Be reson, whanne it passeth on.
 So have I sen ful many on,
 7785 That were of love wel at ese,
 Whiche after felle in gret desese
 Thurgh wast of love, that thei spent
 In sondri places wher thei wente.

Confessor Riht so, mi sone, I axe of thee
 7790 If thou with Prodegalité
 Hast hier and ther thi love wasted.”

Amans “Mi fader, nay; bot I have tasted
 In many a place as I have go,
 And yit love I nevere on of tho,
 7795 Bot for to drive forth the dai.
 For lieveth wel, myn herte is ay
 Withoute mo foreveremore
 Al upon on, for I no more
 Desire bot hire love alone.

*pass the time
 believe; ever*

7800 So make I many a privé mone,
 For wel I fiele I have despended
 Mi longe love and noght amended
 Mi sped, for oght I finde yit.

*improved
 fortune
 understanding*

7805 Of love, and Prodegalité,
 Nou, goode fader, demeth ye:
 Bot of o thing I wol me schryve,
 That I schal for no love thryve,

*you judge
 confess*

7809 Bot if himself me wol relieve.”

*Unless
 believe*

Confessor “Mi sone, that I mai wel lieve.
 And natheles me semeth so,
 For oght that thou hast yit misdo
 Of time which thou hast despended,
 It mai with grace ben amended.

7815 For thing which mai be worth the cost
 Per chaunce is nouthur wast ne lost;
 For what thing stant on aventure,
 That can no worldes creature

is subject to chance

Tell in certein hou it schal wende,
 7820 Til he therof mai sen an ende.

change

So that I not as yit therfore
 If thou, mi sone, hast wonne or lore.
 For ofte time, as it is sene,

*do not know
 lost*

Whan somer hath lost al his grene
 7825 And is with wynter wast and bare,
 That him is left nothing to spare,
 Al is recovered in a throwe.

*its youthful vigor
 laid waste; barren*

The colde wyndes overblowe,
 And stille be the scharpe schoures,
 7830 And soudeinliche agein his floures
 The somer hapneth and is riche.

*showers
 in preparation for
 appears
 similarly*

And so per cas thi graces liche,
 Mi sone, thogh thou be nou povere
 7834 Of love, yit thou miht recovere.”

Amans “Mi fader, certes grant merci.
Ye have me tawht so redeli,
That evere whil I live schal
The betre I mai be war withal
Of thing which ye have seid er this.
7840 Bot overmore hou that it is,
Toward mi schrifte as it belongeth,
To wite of othre pointz me longeth;
Wherof that ye me wolden teche
With al myn herte I you beseche.”

it behooves me

EXPLICIT LIBER QUINTUS



INCIPIT LIBER SEXTUS

- i. *Est gula que nostrum maculauit prima parentem
Ex vetito pomo, quo dolet omnis homo.
Hec agit vt corpus anime contraria spirat,
Quo caro fit crassa, spiritus atque macer.
Intus et exterius si que virtutis habentur,
Potibus ebrietas conuiciata ruit.
Mersa sopore, labris, que Bachus inebriat hospes,
Indignata Venus oscula raro premit.¹*

[Confessor] “The grete senne original,

 \dot{sin}

Which every man in general
Upon his berthe hath envenymed,
In Paradis it was mystymed:

committed

5 Whan Adam of thilke appel bot,
 His swete morscel was to hot,
 Which dedly made the mankinde.

ate (bit)

His swete morscel was to hot,

too spicy

Which dedly made the mankinde.

mortal

☞ And in the bokes as I finde,

(see note)

This vice, which so out of rule

10 Hath sette ous alle, is cleped Gule,
 Of which the branches ben so grete,
 That of hem alle I wol noht trete,
 Bot only as touchende of tuo

called Gluttony

I thenke speke and of no mo.

15 Wherof the ferste is Dronkeschipe,
Which berth the cuppe felaschipe.

Ful many a wonder doth this vice,

He can make of a wisman nyce,

foolish

And of a fool, that him schal seme

20 That he can al the lawe deme,

judge (arbitrate)

And given every judgement

¹ *It is Gluttony that first tainted our parents, by the primeval apple for which every human being mourns. This sin makes the body yearn for things contrary to the soul, by which the flesh is made stout and the spirit thin. If anything virtuous belongs to a man, within or without, loathsome drunkenness destroys it with tipping. Indignant Venus rarely imprints kisses languid with sleep on lips that Bacchus the tavern host has made drunken.*

- Which longeth to the firmament
 Bothe of the sterre and of the mone;
 And thus he makth a gret clerk sone
 25 Of him that is a lewed man. *unlearned (layman)*
 Ther is nothing which he ne can,
 Whil he hath Dronkeschipe on honde.
 He knowth the see, he knowth the stronde; *sea*
 He is a noble man of armes,
 30 And yit no strengthe is in his armes.
 Ther he was strong ynouh tofore,
 With Dronkeschipe it is forlore, *totally lost*
 And al is changed his astat,
 And wext anon so fieble and mat, *spent (powerless)*
 35 That he mai nouthur go ne come,
 Bot al togedre him is benome *[[from] him is taken away*
 The pouer bothe of hond and fot,
 So that algate abide he mot. *must*
 And alle hise wittes he forget,
 40 The which is to him such a let, *hindrance*
 That he wot nevere what he doth,
 Ne which is fals, ne which is soth, *true*
 Ne which is dai, ne which is nyht,
 And for the time he knowth no wyht, *person*
 45 That he ne wot so moche as this,
 What maner thing himselven is,
 Or he be man, or he be beste. *Whether*
 That holde I riht a sori feste,
 Whan he that reson understod
 50 So soudeinliche is woxe wod, *grown senseless*
 Or elles lich the dede man,
 Which nouthur go ne speke can.
 Thus ofte he is to bedde broght, *put to bed*
 Bot where he lith yit wot he noght,
 55 Til he arise upon the morwe,
 And thanne he seith, 'O, which a sorwe
 It is a man be drinkeles!'
 So that halfdrunke in such a res *delirium (stupor)*
 With dreie mouth he sterte him uppe, *arises abruptly*
 60 And seith, 'Nou *baillez ça* the cuppe.'
 That made him lese his wit at eve *pass (let go) the cup!*
 Is thanne a morwe al his beleve; *in the morning; trust*
 The cuppe is al that evere him pleseth,
 And also that him most deseseth. *does most harm to him*
 65 It is the cuppe whom he serveth,
 Which alle cares fro him kerveth *extirpates (removes)*
 And alle bales to him bringeth: *disasters (harms)*
 In joie he wepeth, in sorwe he singeth,

	For Dronkeschipe is so divers,	<i>unstable (perverse)</i>
70	It may no whye stonde in vers.	<i>in order (metrical form)</i>
	He drinkth the wyn, bot ate laste	
	The wyn drynkth him and bint him faste,	<i>captures securely</i>
	And leith him drunke be the wal,	<i>lays</i>
	As him which is his bonde thral	<i>slave to vice</i>
75	And al in his subjeccion.	

[DRUNKENNESS OF LOVERS]

	And lich to such condicion,	
	As for to speke it other wise,	
	It falleth that the moste wise	
	Ben otherwhile of love adoted,	<i>doting</i>
80	And so bewhaped and assoted,	<i>befuddled and infatuated</i>
	Of drunke men that nevere yit	
	Was non, which half so loste his wit	
	Of drinke, as thei of such thing do	
	Which cleped is the jolif wo;	<i>called</i>
85	And waxen of here oghne thocht	
	So drunke, that thei knowe noght	
	What reson is, or more or lesse.	<i>neither more nor</i>
	Such is the kinde of that sieknesse,	<i>nature</i>
	And that is noght for lacke of brain,	<i>judgment (common sense)</i>
90	Bot love is of so gret a main,	<i>strength</i>
	That where he takth an herte on honde,	
	Ther mai nothing his miht withstonde.	
	The wise Salomon was nome,	<i>taken</i>
	And stronge Sampson overcome,	
95	The knihtli David him ne mihte	<i>himself</i>
	Rescoue, that he with the sihte	
	Of Bersabee ne was bestad.	<i>Bathsheba; overwhelmed</i>
	Virgile also was overlad,	<i>overpowered</i>
	And Aristotle was put under.	
100	Forthi, mi sone, it is no wonder	
	If thou be drunke of love among,	
	Which is above alle othre strong.	
	And if so is that thou so be,	
	Tell me thi schrifte in privité;	<i>confession</i>
105	It is no schame of such a thew	<i>trait</i>
	A yong man to be dronkelew.	<i>besotted</i>
	Of such phisique I can a part,	<i>natural science; know a bit</i>
	And as me semeth be that art,	
	Thou scholdest be phisonomie	<i>by physical features</i>
110	Be schapen to that maladie	
	Of lovedrunke, and that is routhe."	<i>pity</i>

Confessio Amantis “Ha, holi fader, al is trouthe

- That ye me telle: I am beknowe *do confess*
 That I with love am so bethrowe, *tormented*
 115 And al myn herte is so thurgh sunke,
 That I am verrailiche drunke,
 And yit I mai bothe speke and go.
 Bot I am overcome so,
 And torned fro miself so clene, *utterly*
 120 That ofte I wot noght what I mene; *know not*
 So that excusen I ne mai
 Min herte, fro the ferste day
 That I cam to mi ladi kiththe, *I gained knowledge of my lady*
 I was yit sobre nevere siththe. *since*
 125 Wher I hire se or se hire noght,
 With musinge of min oghne thoght,
 Of love, which min herte assaileth,
 So drunke I am, that mi wit failleth
 And al mi brain is overtorned,
 130 And mi manere so mistorned, *behavior*
 That I forgete al that I can
 And stonde lich a mased man; *deranged*
 That ofte, whanne I scholde pleie, *enter into group activities*
 It makth me drawe out of the weie
 135 In soulein place be miselve, *solitary; by myself alone*
 As doth a labourer to delve,
 Which can no gentil mannes chere. *knows; behavior*
 Or elles as a lewed frere, *stupid (misguided; unlearned)*
 Whan he is put to his penance,
 140 Riht so lese I mi contenance. *lose*
 And if it nedes so betyde, *must so happen*
 That I in compainie abyde,
 Wher as I moste daunce and singe
 The hovedance and carolinge, *court dance (a kind of round dance)*
 145 Or for to go the newefot, *“dance in the newfangled way”*
 I mai noght wel heve up mi fot,
 If that sche be noght in the weie. *out in public (in view)*
 For thanne is al mi merthe aweie,
 And waxe anon of thoght so full,
 150 Wherof mi limes ben so dull *limbs*
 I mai unethes gon the pas. *scarcely walk*
 For thus it is and evere was,
 Whanne I on suche thoghtes muse,
 The lust and merthe that men use,
 155 Whan I se noght mi ladi byme, *beside me*
 Al is forgete for the time
 So ferforth that mi wittes changen
 And alle lustes fro me strangen, *flee*


- That thei seie alle trewely
160 And swere that it am noght I.
For as the man which ofte drinketh,
With wyn that in his stomac sinketh
Wext drunke and witles for a throwe, *Became; a time*
Riht so mi lust is overthrowe,
165 And of myn oghne thoght so mat *defeated*
I wexe that to myn astat
Ther is no lime wol me serve, *limb*
Bot as a drunke man I swerve *stagger*
And suffre such a passion
170 That men have gret compassion,
And everich be himself merveillesh *each to himself*
What thing it is that me so eilleth. *ails*
Such is the manere of mi wo
Which time that I am hire fro,
175 Til eft agein that I hire se.
Bot thanne it were a nyceté
To telle you hou that I fare.
For whanne I mai upon hire stare,
Hire wommanhede, hire gentillesse,
180 Myn herte is full of such gladnesse,
That overpasseth so mi wit,
That I wot nevere where it sit,
Bot am so drunken of that sihte,
Me thenkth that for the time I mihte
185 Riht sterte thurgh the hole wall; *leap*
And thanne I mai wel, if I schal,
Bothe singe and daunce and lepe aboute,
And holde forth the lusti route. *act in a lusty (or joyful) manner*
Bot natheles it falleth so
190 Fulofte, that I fro hire go
Ne mai, bot as it were a stake,
I stonde avisement to take *stare (take advisement)*
And loke upon hire faire face;
That for the while out of the place
195 For al the world ne myhte I wende. *turn [away]*
Such lust comth thanne into mi mende, *desire; mind*
So that withoute mete or drinke, *food*
Of lusti thoughtes whiche I thinke
Me thenkth I mihte stonden evere.
200 And so it were to me levere *rather*
Than such a sihte for to leve,
If that sche wolde gif me leve
To have so mochel of mi wille.
And thus thenkende I stonde stille
205 Withoute blenchinge of myn yhe, *blinking; eye*

	Riht as me thoghte that I syhe	<i>saw</i>
	Of Paradis the moste joie.	<i>greatest happiness</i>
	And so therwhile I me rejoie,	<i>therewith; rejoice</i>
	Into myn herte a gret desir,	
210	The which is hotere than the fyr,	
	Al soudeinliche upon me renneth,	<i>burns</i>
	That al mi thoght withinne brenneth,	
	And am so ferforth overcome,	
	That I not where I am become;	<i>do not know</i>
215	So that among the hetes stronge	
	In stede of drinke I underfonge	<i>am filled with (welcome, receive, appropriate)</i>
	A thoght so swete in mi corage,	<i>heart</i>
	That nevere pyment ne vernage	<i>sweetened wine</i>
	Was half so swete for to drinke.	
220	For as I wolde, thanne I thinke	
	As thogh I were at myn above,	<i>had succeeded</i>
	For so thurgh drunke I am of love,	
	That al that mi sotye demeth	<i>besottedness thinks</i>
	Is soth, as thanne it to me semeth.	
225	And whyle I mai tho thoghtes kepe,	
	Me thenkth as thogh I were aslepe	
	And that I were in Goddes barm;	<i>God's bosom</i>
	Bot whanne I se myn oghne harm,	
	And that I soudeinliche awake	
230	Out of my thought, and hiede take	<i>perceive</i>
	Hou that the sothe stant in dede,	<i>fact</i>
	Thanne is mi sekernesse in drede	<i>certainly afrighted</i>
	And joie torned into wo,	<i>woe</i>
	So that the hete is al ago	<i>fire; gone</i>
235	Of such sotie as I was inne.	<i>folly</i>
	And thanne ageinward I beginne	
	To take of love a newe thorst,	<i>thirst</i>
	The which me grieveth altherworst,	<i>pains me worst of all</i>
	For thanne comth the blanche fievere,	<i>pale</i>
240	With chele and makth me so to chievere,	<i>chills; shiver</i>
	And so it coldeth at myn herte,	
	That wonder is hou I asterte,	<i>escape</i>
	In such a point that I ne deie.	<i>die</i>
	For certes ther was nevere keie	<i>key</i>
245	Ne frosen ys upon the wal	<i>ice</i>
	More inly cold than I am al.	
	And thus soffre I the hote chele,	<i>burning cold</i>
	Which passeth othre peines fele.	<i>many/excellent</i>
	In cold I brenne and frese in hete.	<i>burn; freeze; heat</i>
250	And thanne I drinke a biter swete	<i>experience pain and pleasure mingled</i>
	With dreie lippe and yhen wete.	<i>eyes wet</i>
	Lo, thus I tempre mi diete,	

- And take a drauhte of such reles,
 That al mi wit is herteles,
 255 And al myn herte, ther it sit,
 Is, as who seith, withoute wit.
 So that to prove it be reson
 In makinge of comparison
 Ther mai no difference be
 260 Betwen a drunke man and me.
 Bot al the worste of everychon
 Is evere that I thurste in on;
 The more that myn herte drinketh,
 The more I may; so that me thinketh,
 265 My thirst schal nevere ben aqueint.
 God schilde that I be noght dreint
 Of such a superfluité,
 For wel I fiele in mi degré
 That al mi wit is overcast,
 270 Wherof I am the more agast,
 That in defaulte of ladischipe
 Per chance in such a drunkeschipe
 I mai be ded er I be war.
 For certes, fader, this I dar
 275 Beknowe and in mi schrifte telle:
 Bot I a drauhte have of that welle,
 In which mi deth is and mi lif,
 Mi joie is torned into strif,
 That sobre schal I nevere worthe,
 280 Bot as a drunke man forworthe;
 So that in londe where I fare
 The lust is lore of mi welfare,
 As he that mai no bote finde.
 Bot this me thenkth a wonder kinde,
 285 As I am drunke of that I drinke,
 So am I ek for falte of drinke;
 Of which I finde no reles.
 Bot if I myhte natheles
 Of such a drinke as I coveite,
 290 So as me liste, have o receite,
 I scholde assobre and fare wel.
 Bot so Fortune upon hire whiel
 On hih me deigneth noght to sette,
 Foreveremore I finde a lette.
 295 The boteler is noght mi frend,
 Which hath the keie be the bend;
 I mai wel wisshe and that is wast,
 For wel I wot, so freissh a tast,
 Bot if mi grace be the more,
- power
stupefied
where*
- perpetually*
- quenched
forbid; drowned*
- overwhelmed*
- absence; the person of [my] lady*
- before I know it*
- become
be enfeebled*
- pleasure; lost
relief (deliverance)*
- lack
relief*
- one draught [of love's drink]
become sober*
- difficulty (obstacle)*
- by the fastening cord
pointless*
- Unless*

- 300 I schal assaie neveremore. *attempt*
 Thus am I drunke of that I se, *what*
 For tastinge is defended me, *prohibited (denied)*
 And I can noght miselven stanche. *restrain*
 So that, mi fader, of this branche *aspect [of Gluttony]*
- 305 I am gultif, to telle trouthe.”
Confessor “Mi sone, that me thenketh routhe; *seems a pity to me*
 For lovedrunke is the meschief
 Above alle othre the most chief,
 If he no lusti thoght assaie,
- 310 Which mai his sori thurst allaie.
 As for the time yit it lisseth *assuages pain*
 To him which other joie misseth.
 Forthi, mi sone, aboven alle
 Thenk wel, hou so it thee befalle,
- 315 And kep thi wittes that thou hast,
 And let hem noght be drunke in wast. *futilely*
 Bot natheles ther is no wyht *person*
 That mai withstonde loves miht.
 Bot why the cause is, as I finde,
- 320 Of that ther is diverse kinde
 Of lovedrunke, why men pleigneth
 After the court which al ordeigneth,
 I wol thee tellen the manere;
 Nou lest, mi sone, and thou schalt hiere. *listen*

[TALE OF JUPITER AND THE TWO CASKS]

-  For the fortune of every chance *(see note)*
- 326 After the goddes pourveance
 To man it groweth from above,
 So that the sped of every love *success*
 Is schape there, er it befalle. *before it happens*
- 330 For Jupiter aboven alle,
 Which is of goddes sovereign,
 Hath in his celier, as men sein, *wine cellar*
 Tuo tonnes fulle of love drinke *casks*
 That maken many an herte sinke
- 335 And many an herte also to flete, *float*
 Or of the soure or of the swete. *Either*
 That on is full of such piment, *one; sweet, spiced wine*
 Which passeth all entendement *surpasses; understanding*
 Of mannes witt, if he it taste,
- 340 And makth a jolif herte in haste.
 That other biter as the galle, *bitter*
 Which makth a mannes herte palle, *grow faint*
 Whos drunkeschipec is a sieknesse.

	Thurgh fieling of the biternesse.	<i>suffering</i>
345	Cupide is boteler of bothe,	<i>chief wine servant</i>
	Which to the lieve and to the lothe	<i>beloved; hateful</i>
	Gifh of the swete and of the soure,	
	That some lawhe, and some loure.	<i>laugh; glower</i>
	Bot for so moche as he blind is,	
350	Fulofte time he goth amis	
	And takth the badde for the goode,	<i>bad [wine]</i>
	Which hindreth many a mannes fode	<i>comfort (emotional satisfaction)</i>
	Withoute cause, and forthreth eke.	<i>improves [it] also</i>
	So be ther some of love seke,	<i>sick</i>
355	Whiche oghte of reson to ben hole,	<i>well</i>
	And some comen to the dole	<i>bestowing cup</i>
	In happ and as hemselve leste	<i>With good fortune; themselves please</i>
	Drinke undeserved of the beste.	
	And thus this blinde boteler	
360	Gifh of the trouble in stede of cler	<i>turbid</i>
	And ek the cler in stede of trouble:	<i>murky</i>
	Lo, hou he can the hertes trouble,	<i>torment</i>
	And makth men drunke al upon chaunce	
	Withoute lawe of governance.	
365	If he drawe of the swete tonne,	<i>cask</i>
	Thanne is the sorwe al overronne	
	Of lovedrunke, and schalt noght greven	
	So to be drunken every even,	<i>evening</i>
	For al is thanne bot a game.	
370	Bot whanne it is noght of the same,	
	And he the biter tonne draweth,	
	Such drunkeschipe an herte gnaweth	
	And fiebleth al a mannes thoght,	<i>enfeeble</i>
	That betre him were have drunke noght	
375	And al his bred have eten dreie;	
	For thanne he lest his lusti weie	
	With drunkeschipe, and wot noght whider	
	To go, the weies ben so slider,	<i>slippery</i>
	In which he mai per cas so falle,	<i>by chance</i>
380	That he schal breke his wittes alle.	
	And in this wise men be drunke	
	After the drink that thei have drunke.	
	Bot alle drinken noght alike,	
	For som schal singe and som schal syke,	<i>sigh</i>
385	So that it me nothing merueilleth,	
	Mi sone, of love that thee eilleth;	
	For wel I knowe be thi tale,	
	That thou hast drunken of the duale,	<i>narcotic drink</i>
	Which biter is, til God thee sende	
390	Such grace that thou miht amende.	<i>get well</i>

Bot, sone, thou schalt bidde and preie
 In such a wise as I schal seie,
 That thou the lusti welle atteigne
 Thi wofull thurstes to restreigne
 395 Of love, and taste the swetnesse,
 As Bachus dede in his distresse,
 Whan bodiliche thurst him hente
 In strange londes where he wente.


When bodily thirst seized him

[PRAYER OF BACCHUS IN THE DESERT]

☞ This Bachus sone of Jupiter *(see note)*
 400 Was hote, and as he wente fer
 Be his fadres assignement *By; father's instructions*
 To make a werre in Orient, *war; East*
 And gret pouer with him he ladde,
 So that the heiere hond he hadde *upper hand*
 405 And victoire of his enemys, *over*
 And torneth homward with his pris, *glory*
 In such a contré which was dreie *barren (dry)*
 A meschief fell upon the weie.
 As he rod with his compainie
 410 Nyh to the strondes of Lubie, *near; shores of Libya*
 Ther myhte thei no drinke finde
 Of water nor of other kinde,
 So that himself and al his host
 Were of defalte of drinke almost *lack*
 415 Destruid, and thanne Bachus preide
 To Jupiter, and thus he seide:
 'O hihe fader, that sest al, *[you] who see all*
 To whom is reson that I schal
 Beseche and preie in every nede,
 420 Behold, mi fader, and tak hiede
 This wofull thurst that we ben inne
 To staunche, and grante ous for to winne, *succeed*
 And sauf unto the contré fare *safely; go*
 Wher that oure lusti loves are
 425 Waitende upon oure homcominge.'
 And with the vois of his preiyng,
 Which herd was to the goddes hihe,
 He syh anon tofore his yhe *before; eye*
 A wether, which the ground hath sporned; *sheep; who had scraped*
 430 And wher he hath it overtorned,
 Ther sprang a welle, freissh and cler,
 Wherof his oghne boteler
 After the lustes of his wille
 Was every man to drinke his fille.

- 435 And for this ilke grete grace
 Bachus upon the same place
 A riche temple let arere, *be raised*
 Which evere scholde stonde there
- 439 To thursti men in remembrance.
Confessor Forthi, mi sone, after this chance
 It sit thee wel to taken hiede
 So for to preie upon thi nede,
 As Bachus preide for the welle;
 And thenk, as thou hast herd me telle,
- 445 Hou grace he gradde and grace he hadde. *prayed for*
 He was no fol that ferst so radde, *counseled*
 For selden get a domb man lond. *silent person*
 Tak that proverbe, and understand
 That wordes ben of vertu grete.
- 450 Forthi to speke thou ne lete, *desist not*
 And axe and prei erli and late
 Thi thirst to quenche, and thenk algate, *assuredly*
 The boteler which berth the keie
 Is blind, as thou hast herd me seie.
- 455 And if it mihte so betyde, *happen*
 That he upon the blinde side
 Per cas the swete tonne arauhte, *cask presents itself*
 Than schalt thou have a lusti drauhte
 And waxe of lovedrunke sobre.
- 460 And thus I rede thou assobre *make sober*
 Thin herte in hope of such a grace,
 For drunkschipe in every place,
 To whether side that it torne,
 Doth harm and makth a man to sporne *trip*
- 465 And ofte falle in such a wise,
 Wher he per cas mai noght arise.

[TRISTRAM AND ISOLDE]

-  And for to loke in evidence *(see note)*
 Upon the sothe experience,
 So as it hath befalle er this,
- 470 In every mannes mouth it is
 Hou Tristram was of love drunke
 With Bele Ysolde, whan thei drunke *Fair Isolde*
 The drink which Brangwein hem betok, *gave them*
 Er that king Marc his eem hire tok *Before; uncle*
- 475 To wyve, as it was after knowe.
 And ek, mi sone, if thou wolt knowe,
 As it hath fallen overmore
 In loves cause, and what is more

Of drunkeschipe for to drede,
 480 As it whilom befell in dede,
 Wherof thou miht the betre eschuie
 Of drunke men that thou ne suie
 The compaignie in no manere,
 484 A gret ensample thou schalt hiere.

*better avoid
follow*

[MARRIAGE OF PIRITHOUS]

☞ This finde I write in poesie
 Of thilke faire Ipotacie,
 Of whos beauté ther as sche was
 Spak every man; and fell, per cas,
 That Pirotous so him spedde,
 490 That he to wyve hire scholde wedde,
 Wherof that he gret joie made.
 And for he wolde his love glade,
 Agein the day of mariage
 Be mouthe bothe and be message
 495 Hise frendes to the fest he preide,
 With gret worschipe and, as men seide,
 He hath this yonge ladi spoused.
 And whan that thei were alle housed,
 And set and served ate mete,
 500 Ther was no wyn which mai be gete,
 That ther ne was plenté ynouh:
 Bot Bachus thilke tonne drouh,
 Wherof be weie of drunkeschipe
 The greteste of the felaschipe
 505 Were oute of reson overtake;
 And Venus, which hath also take
 The cause most in special,
 Hath gove hem drinke forth withal
 Of thilke cuppe which exciteth
 510 The lust wherinne a man deliteth.
 And thus be double weie drunke,
 Of lust that ilke fyr funke
 Hath mad hem, as who seith, halfwode,
 That thei no reson understode,
 515 Ne to non other thing thei syhen,
 Bot hire, which tofore here yhen
 Was wedded thilke same day,
 That freisshe wif, that lusti may,
 On hire it was al that thei thoghten.
 520 And so ferforth here lustes soghten,
 That thei the whiche named were
 Centauri, ate feste there

(see note)

*wherever
by chance*

feast; invited

*fiery spark
half mad*

before their eyes

maiden

Of on assent, of on acord *of one mind; unanimously*
 This yonge wif, malgré hire lord, *despite*
 525 In such a rage awei forth ladden, *dragged*
 As thei whiche non insihte hadden
 Bot only to her drunke fare, *their drunken conduct*
 Which many a man hath mad misfare *suffered misfortune*
 In love als wel as other weie.
 530 Wherof, if I schal more seie
 Upon the nature of the vice,
 Of custume and of excercise
 The mannes grace hou it fordoth,
 A tale, which was whilom soth,
 535 Of fooles that so drunken were,
 I schal reherce unto thin ere. *ear*

[TALE OF GALBA AND VITELLIUS]

I rede in a cronique thus
 Of Galba and of Vitellus,
 The whiche of Spaigne bothe were
 540 The greteste of alle othre there,
 And bothe of o condicion
 ¶ After the disposicion *(see note)*
 Of glotonie and drunkeschipe.
 That was a sori felaschipe,
 545 For this thou miht wel understonde,
 That man mai wel noght longe stonde
 Which is wyndrunke of comun us, *commonly drunk on wine*
 For he hath lore the vertus *lost; natural abilities*
 Wherof reson him scholde clothe.
 550 And that was seene upon hem bothe.
 Men sein ther is non evidence,
 Wherof to knowe a difference
 Betwen the drunken and the wode, *mad*
 For thei be never nouthur goode;
 555 For wher that wyn doth wit aweie, *causes intelligence to wander*
 Wisdom hath lost the rihte weie,
 That he no maner vice dredeth. *So that; fears*
 No more than a blind man thredeth
 His nedle be the sonnes lyht,
 560 No more is reson thanne of myht,
 Whan he with drunkeschipe is blent. *blinded*
 And in this point thei weren schent, *destroyed*
 This Galba bothe and ek Vitelle,
 Upon the cause as I schal telle,
 565 Wherof good is to taken hiede.
 For thei tuo thurgh her drunkenhiede

- Of witles excitacioun
 Oppressede al the nacion
 Of Spaigne; for of fool usance,
 570 Which don was of continuance
 Of hem which alday drunken were,
 Ther was no wif ne maiden there,
 What so thei were, or faire or foule,
 Whom thei ne token to defoule,
 575 Wherof the lond was often wo:
 And ek in othre thinges mo
 Thei wroghten many a sondri wrong.
 Bot hou so that the dai be long,
 The derke nyht comth ate laste.
 580 God wolde noght thei scholden laste
 And schop the lawe in such a wise,
 That thei thurgh dom to the juisse
 Be dampned for to be forlore.
 Bot thei, that hadden ben tofore
 585 Enclin to alle drunkenesse,
 Here ende thanne bar witnesse;
 For thei in hope to assuage
 The peine of deth, upon the rage
 That thei the lasse scholden fiele,
 590 Of wyn let fille full a miele
 And dronken til so was befall
 That thei her strengthes losten alle
 Withouten wit of eny brain.
 And thus thei ben halfdede slain,
 595 That hem ne grieveth bot a lyte.
Confessor Mi sone, if thou be for to wyte
 In eny point which I have seid,
 Wherof thi wittes ben unteid,
 599 I rede clepe hem hom agein."
Amans "I schal do, fader, as ye sein,
 Als ferforth as I mai suffise;
 Bot wel I wot that in no wise
 The drunkschipe of love aweie
 I mai remue be no weie,
 605 It stant noght upon my fortune.
 Bot if you liste to comune
 Of the seconde Glotonie,
 Which cleped is Delicacie,
 Wherof ye spieken hier tofore,
 610 Beseche I wolde you therfore."
Confessor "Mi sone, as of that ilke vice,
 Which of alle othre is the norrice,
 And stant upon the retenue

foolish behavior
continually
By them who

endure

by judgment of punishment

mitigate

bowl

senses entirely

blame

untied

get rid of by

discuss
second [species of]
called

nurse

Of Venus, so as it is due,
 615 The propreté hou that it fareth
 The bok hierafter nou declareth.”

[DELICACY]

ii. *Delicie cum diuiciis sunt iura potentum,
 In quibus orta Venus excitat ora gule.
 Non sunt delicie tales, que corpora pascunt,
 Ex quibus impletus gaudia venter agit,
 Quin completus amor maiori munere gaudet,
 Cum data deliciis mens in amante satur.*¹

[Confessor] “Of this chapitre in which we trete

	There is yit on of such diete	
	To which no povere mai atteigne,	
620	For al is past of paindemeine	<i>pastries</i>
	And sondri wyn and sondri drinke,	
	Wherof that he wole ete and drinke.	
	Hise cokes ben for him affaited,	<i>cooks; controlled</i>
624	So that his body is awaited,	<i>taken care of (served)</i>
☞	That him schal lacke no delit,	<i>(see note)</i>
	Als ferforth as his appetit	
	Sufficeth to the metes hote.	<i>spicy foods</i>
	Wherof this lusti vice is hote	<i>called</i>
	Of Gule the Delicacie,	
630	Which al the hole progenie	<i>whole</i>
	Of lusti folk hath undertake	
	To feede, whil that he mai take	
	Richesses wherof to be founde.	
	Of Abstinence he wot no bounde,	<i>restraint (propriety)</i>
635	To what profit it scholde serve.	
	And yit phisique of his conserve	
	Makth many a restauracioun	
	Unto his recreacioun,	
	Which wolde be to Venus lief.	<i>pleasing</i>
640	Thus for the point of his relief	<i>in order to please him</i>
	The coc which schal his mete arraie,	<i>cook; food prepare</i>
	Bot he the betre his mouth assaie,	<i>Unless; tempt</i>
	His lordes thonk schal ofte lese,	<i>lose</i>
	Er he be served to the chese.	<i>cheese</i>
645	For ther mai lacke noght so lyte,	<i>small [a thing]</i>

¹ *Sensualities, along with riches, are the laws of the powerful, in which Venus, stirring, excites Gluttony's kisses. No sensualities feed the body and cause the filled stomach to give joy, which do not allow satiated love to take joy in a greater reward, when the mind sated with food yields to sensualities in loving.*

	That he ne fint anon a wyte; For bot his lust be fully served, Ther hath no wiht his thonk deserved. And yit for mannes sustenance,	<i>But; will find some fault</i>
650	To kepe and holde in governance, To him that wole his hele get Is non so good as comun mete. For who that loketh on the bokes,	<i>health ordinary food</i>
655	It seith, confeccion of cokes, A man him scholde wel advise Hou he it toke and in what wise. For who that useth that he knoweth,	<i>cooks be careful</i>
	Ful selden seknesse on him groweth; And who that useth metes strange,	<i>that which exotic foods</i>
660	Though his nature empeire and change It is no wonder, lieve sone, Whan that he doth agein his wone. For in phisique this I finde,	<i>should degenerate dear against; custom medical theory</i>
☞	Usage is the seconde kinde.	<i>Custom (see note)</i>

[DELICACY OF LOVERS]

665	And riht so changeth his astat He that of love is delicat. For though he hadde to his hond The beste wif of al the lond, Or the faireste love of alle,	<i>at his disposal</i>
670	Yit wolde his herte on othre falle And thenke hem mor delicious Than he hath in his oghne hous. Men sein it is nou ofte so; Avise hem wel, thei that so do.	
675	And for to speke in other weie, Fulofte time I have herd seie, That he which hath no love achieved, Him thenkth that he is noght relieved, Thogh that his ladi make him chiere,	
680	So as sche mai in good manere Hir honour and hir name save, Bot he the surplus mihte have. Nothing withstondende hire astat, Of love more delicat	<i>Unless</i>
685	He set hire chiere at no delit, Bot he have al his appetit. Mi sone, if it be with thee so, Tell me."	

Confessio Amantis "Myn holi fader, no:

- For delicat in such a wise
 690 Of love, as ye to me devise
 Ne was I nevere yit gultif; *guilty*
 For if I hadde such a wif
 As ye speke of, what scholde I more?
 For thanne I wolde neveremore
 695 For lust of eny wommanhiede
 Myn herte upon non other fiede. *feed*
 And if I dede, it were a wast. *did; waste*
 Bot al withoute such repast
 Of lust, as ye me tolde above,
 700 Of wif, or yit of other love,
 I faste, and mai no fode gete,
 So that for lacke of deinté mete,
 Of which an herte mai be fedd,
 I go fastende to my bedd. *fasting*
 705 Bot myhte I geten, as ye tolde,
 So mochel that mi ladi wolde
 Me fede with hir glad semblant, *happy countenance*
 Though me lacke al the remenant, *rest*
 Yit scholde I somdel ben abeched *fed (as mother bird her nestling)*
 710 And for the time wel refrechd.
 Bot certes, fader, sche ne doth;
 For in good feith, to telle soth,
 I trowe, thogh I scholde sterve, *believe; die*
 Sche wolde noght hire yhe swerve, *eye*
 715 Mine herte with o goodly lok
 To fede, and thus for such a cok
 I mai go fastinge everemo.
 Bot if so is that eny wo
 Mai fede a mannes herte wel,
 720 Therof I have at every meel
 Of plenté more than ynowh;
 Bot that is of himself so towh, *tough*
 Mi stomac mai it noght defie. *digest*
 Lo, such is the delicacie
 725 Of love, which myn herte fedeth.
 Thus have I lacke of that me nedeth.
 Bot for al this yit natheles
 I seie noght I am gylteles,
 That I somdel am delicat.
 730 For elles were I fulli mat, *defeated (checkmated)*
 Bot if that I som lusti stounde *opportunity*
 Of confort and of ese founde,
 To take of love som repast;
 For thogh I with the fulle tast

- 735 The lust of love mai noght fiele,
 Min hunger otherwise I kiele *allay*
 Of smale lustes whiche I pike, *steal*
 And for a time yit thei like, *please*
- 739 If that ye wisten what I mene.”
- Confessor** “Nou, goode sone, schrif thee clene *confess*
 Of suche deyntes as ben goode,
 Wherof thou takst thin hertes fode.”
- Confessio Amantis** “Mi fader, I you schal reherce,
 Hou that mi fodes ben diverse,
- 745 So as thei fallen in degré.
 O fiedinge is of that I se, *One; what*
 Another is of that I here, *hear*
 The thridde, as I schal tellen here,
 It groweth of min oghne thoght,
- 750 And elles scholde I live noght; *otherwise*
 For whom that failleth fode of herte,
 He mai noght wel the deth asterte. *escape*
- ☞ Of sihte is al mi ferste fode, *food (see note)*
 Thurgh which myn yhe of alle goode
- 755 Hath that to him is acordant, *him = my eye*
 A lusti fode sufficant.
 Whan that I go toward the place
 Wher I schal se my ladi face,
 Min yhe, which is loth to faste,
- 760 Beginth to hungre anon so faste,
 That him thenkth of on houre thre, *one*
 Til I ther come and he hire se. *he = my eye*
 And thanne after his appetit
 He takth a fode of such delit,
- 765 That him non other deynté nedeth.
 Of sondri sihtes he him fedeth.
 He seth hire face of such colour, *sees*
 That freisshere is than eny flour,
 He seth hire front is large and plein *forehead; broad; smooth*
- 770 Withoute frounce of eny grein, *wrinkle of any blemish*
 He seth hire yhen lich an hevene, *eyes like*
 He seth hire nase strauht and evene, *nose*
 He seth hire rode upon the cheke, *rosy complexion*
 He seth hire rede lippes eke,
- 775 Hire chyn acordeth to the face, *goes well with*
 Al that he seth is full of grace,
 He seth hire necke round and clene,
 Therinne mai no bon be sene,
 He seth hire handes faire and whyte;
- 780 For al this thing without wyte *blame*
 He mai se naked ate leste, *uncovered*


- So is it wel the more feste
 And wel the more Delicacie
 Unto the fiedinge of myn yhe.
 785 He seth hire schapthe forth withal, *likeness*
 Hire bodi round, hire middel smal, *shapely; waist thin*
 So wel begon with good array,
 Which passeth al the lust of Maii, *vitality*
 Whan he is most with softe schoures
 790 Ful clothed in his lusti floures.
 With suche sihtes by and by *sights perpetually*
 Min yhe is fed; bot finally,
 Whan he the port and the manere *bearing*
 Seth of hire wommanysshe chere, *behavior*
 795 Than hath he such delice on honde,
 Him thenkth he mihte stille stonde,
 And that he hath ful sufficance
 Of liflode and of sustenance
 As to his part foreveremo.
 800 And if it thoghte alle othre so,
 Fro thenne wolde he nevere wende,
 Bot there unto the worldes ende *depart*
 He wolde abyde, if that he mihte,
 And fieden him upon the syhte.
 805 For thogh I mihte stonden ay
 Into the time of Domesday
 And loke upon hire evere in on,
 Yit whanne I scholde fro hire gon, *eternally*
 Min yhe wolde, as thogh he faste,
 810 Ben hungerstorven al so faste,
 Til efte agein that he hire syhe.
 Such is the nature of myn yhe.
 Ther is no lust so deintefull,
 Of which a man schal noght be full,
 815 Of that the stomac underfongeth, *takes in*
 Bot evere in on myn yhe longeth.
 For loke hou that a goshauk tireth, *pulls*
 Riht so doth he, whan that he pireth *peers*
 And toteth on hire wommanhiede. *gazes*
 820 For he mai nevere fulli fiede *satisfy*
 His lust, bot evere aliche sore *desire*
 Him hungreth, so that he the more
 Desireth to be fed algate.
 And thus myn yhe is mad the gate,
 825 Thurgh which the deyntes of my thought
 Of lust ben to myn herte broght.
 Riht as myn yhe with his lok
 Is to myn herte a lusti coc *cook*

- Of loves fode delicat,
 Riht so myn ere in his estat,
 831 Wher as myn yhe mai nocht serve,
 Can wel myn hertes thonk deserve
 And fieden him fro day to day
 With suche deyntes as he may.
 835 For thus it is, that overal,
 Wher as I come in special,
 I mai hiere of mi ladi pris;
 I hiere on seith that sche is wys,
 Another seith that sche is good,
 840 And som men sein, of worthi blod
 That sche is come, and is also
 So fair, that nawher is non so;
 And som men preise hire goodli chiere.
 Thus every thing that I mai hiere,
 845 Which souneth to mi ladi goode,
 Is to myn ere a lusti foode.
 And ek min ere hath over this
 A deynté feste, whan so is
 That I mai hiere hirselve speke.
 850 For thanne anon mi faste I breke
 On suche wordes as sche seith,
 That full of trouthe and full of feith
 Thei ben, and of so good desport,
 That to myn ere gret confort
 855 Thei don, as thei that ben delices.
 For al the metes and the spices,
 That eny Lombard couthe make,
 Ne be so lusti for to take
 Ne so ferforth restauratif,
 860 I seie as for myn oghne lif,
 As ben the wordes of hire mouth.
 For as the wyndes of the south
 Ben most of alle debonaire,
 So whan hir list to speke faire,
 865 The vertu of hire goodly speche
 Is verraily myn hertes leche.
 And if it so befalle among,
 That sche carole upon a song,
 Whan I it hiere I am so fedd,
 870 That I am fro miself so ledd,
 As thogh I were in paradis.
 For certes, as to myn avis,
 Whan I here of hir vois the stevene,
 Me thenkth it is a blisse of hevene.


*ear; its (see note)**he = my ear**lady's renown
hear one say**nowhere
manners**concerns**foods**heart's physician**sound*

- 875 And ek in other wise also
 Fulofte time it falleth so,
 Min ere with a good pitance
 Is fedd of redinge of romance
 Of Ydoine and of Amadas,
 880 That whilom weren in mi cas,
 And eke of othre many a score,
 That loveden longe er I was bore.
 For whan I of here loves rede,
 Min ere with the tale I fede;
 885 And with the lust of here histoire
 Somtime I drawe into memoire
 Hou sorwe mai noght evere laste;
not last forever
 And so comth hope in ate laste,
 Whan I non other fode knowe.
 890 And that endureth bot a throwe,
little while
 Riht as it were a cherie feste;
cherry festival
 Bot for to compten ate leste,
Yet even so to say
 As for the while yit it eseth
soothes
 And somdel of myn herte appeseth.
 895 For what thing to myn ere spreadeth,
 Which is plesant, somdel it feedeth
 With wordes suche as he mai gete
 Mi lust, instede of other mete.
food
Amans Lo thus, mi fader, as I seie,
 900 Of lust the which myn yhe hath seie,
 And ek of that myn ere hath herd,
 Fulofte I have the betre ferd.
ferd
 And tho tuo bringen in the thridde,
 The which hath in myn herte amidde
 905 His place take, to arraie
 The lusti fode, which assaie
desirable; taste
 I mot; and nameliche on nyhtes,
must; at night
 Whan that me lacketh alle sihtes,
 And that myn heringe is aweie.
 910 Thanne is he redy in the weie
he = my thought
 Mi rere souper for to make,
late supper
 Of which myn hertes fode I take.
 ☞ This lusti cokes name is hote
cook's; called (see note)
 Thoght, which hath evere hise pottes hote
hot
 915 Of love buillende on the fyr
seething
 With fantasie and with desir,
 Of whiche er this fulofte he fedde
 Min herte, whanne I was abedde;
 And thanne he set upon my bord
placed; table
 920 Bothe every syhte and every word
 Of lust which I have herd or sein.

- Bot yit is noght mi feste al plein, *complete*
 Bot al of woldes and of wisshes,
 Therof have I my fulle disshes,
 925 Bot as of fieling and of tast,
 Yit mihte I nevere have o repast.
 And thus, as I have seid afor,
 I licke hony on the thorn,
 And as who seith, upon the bridel *bit*
 930 I chiewe, so that al is ydel *I champ [futilely]*
 As in effect the fode I have.
 Bot as a man that wolde him save *wishes to heal himself*
 Whan he is sek, be medicine, *sick, by*
 Riht so of love the famine
 935 I fonde in al that evere I mai
 To fiede and dryve forth the day,
 Til I mai have the grete feste,
 Which al myn hunger myhte areste. *stop*
 Lo suche ben mi lustes thre;
 940 Of that I thenke and hier and se *three desires (joys)*
 I take of love my fiedinge
 Withoute tasinge or fieling:
 And as the plover doth of eir *on air*
 I live, and am in good espeir *hope*
 945 That for no such delicacie
 I trowe I do no glotonie.
 And natheles to youre avis,
 Min holi fader, that be wis,
 I recomande myn astat
 950 Of that I have be delicat.” *entrust*
In respect to which
Confessor “Mi sone, I understonde wel
 That thou hast told hier everydel,
 And as me thenketh be thi tale,
 It ben delices wonder smale,
 955 Wherof thou takst thi loves fode.
 Bot, sone, if that thou understode
 What is to ben delicious, *[truly] voluptuous*
 Thou woldest noght be curious
 Upon the lust of thin astat
 960 To ben to sore delicat, *too greatly*
 Wherof that thou reson excede.
 For in the bokes thou myht rede,
 If mannes wisdom schal be suied, *followed*
 It oghte wel to ben eschuiet *avoided*
 965 In love als wel as other weie.
 For, as these holi bokes seie,
 The bodely delices alle
 In every point, hou so thei falle,

 Unto the soule don grievance. *(see note)*
 970 And for to take in remembrance,
 A tale acordant unto this,
 Which of gret understandinge is
 To mannes soule resonable,
 974 I thenke telle, and is no fable.

[TALE OF DIVES AND LAZARUS]

 Of Cristes word, who wole it rede, *(see note)*
 Hou that this vice is for to drede
 In th'evangile it telleth plein, *openly*
 Which mot algate be certein,
 For Crist Himself it berth witnesse.
 980 And thogh the clerk and the clergesse *clergy*
 In Latin tunge it rede and singe,
 Yit for the more knoulechinge
 Of trouthe, which is good to wite, *know*
 I schal declare as it is write
 985 In Engleissh, for thus it began.
 Crist seith: 'Ther was a riche man,
 A mihti lord of gret astat,
 And he was ek so delicat
 Of his clothing, that everyday
 990 Of pourpre and bisse he made him gay, *purple fabric; precious linen; himself*
 And eet and drank therto his fille
 After the lustes of his wille,
 As he which al stod in delice
 And tok non hiede of thilke vice.
 995 And as it scholde so betyde,
 A povere lazre upon a tyde *leper; time*
 Cam to the gate and axed mete.
 Bot there mihte he nothing gete *begged for food*
 His dedly hunger for to stanche,
 1000 For he, which hadde his fulle panche *belly*
 Of alle lustes ate bord,
 Ne deigneth noght to speke a word,
 Onliche a crumme for to give, *Even to give so much as a crumb*
 Wherof the povere myhte live
 1005 Upon the gifte of his almesse.
 Thus lai this povere in gret destresse *poor man*
 Acold and hungred ate gate,
 Fro which he mihte go no gate,
 So was he wofulli besein. *way*
 1010 And as these holi bokes sein, *provided for*
 The houndes comen fro the halle,
 Wher that this sike man was falle, *had fallen*

- And as he lay ther for to die,
 The woundes of his maladie
 1015 Thei licken for to don him ese.
 Bot he was full of such desese *bodily infirmity*
 That he mai noght the deth eschape,
 Bot as it was that time schape, *destined*
 The soule fro the bodi passeth,
 1020 And He whom nothing overpasseth,
 The hihe God, up to the hevene
 Him tok, wher He hath set him evene
 In Habrahammes barm on hyh, *Abraham's bosom*
 Wher he the hevene joie syh
 1025 And hadde al that he have wolde.
 And fell, as it befaller scholde, *it happened as happen it should*
 This riche man the same throwe *moment*
 With soudein deth was overthrowe, *overthrown*
 And forth withouten eny wente *any turning aside*
 1030 Into the helle straght he wente.
 The fend into the fyr him drouh,
 Wher that he hadde peine ynouh
 Of flamme which that evere brenneth.
 And as his yhe aboute renneth,
 1035 Toward the hevene he cast his lok,
 Wher that he syh and hiede tok
 Hou Lazar set was in his se *heavenly seat*
 Als ferr as evere he mihte se
 With Habraham; and thanne he preide *entreated*
 1040 Unto the patriarch and seide:
 "Send Lazar down fro thilke sete,
 And do that he his finger wete
 In water, so that he mai droppe
 Upon my tunge, for to stoppe
 1045 The grete hete in which I brenne."
 Bot Habraham answerde thenne
 And seide to him in this wise:
 "Mi Sone, thou thee miht avise
 And take into thi remembrance,
 1050 Hou Lazar hadde gret penance,
 Whyl he was in that other lif,
 Bot thou in al thi lust jolif
 The bodily delices soghtest.
 Forthi, so as thou thanne wroghtest,
 1055 Nou schalt thou take thi reward
 Of dedly peine hierafterward
 In helle, which schal evere laste;
 And this Lazar nou ate laste
 The worldes peine is overronne, *passed beyond*

- 1060 In hevene and hath his lif begonne
 Of joie, which is endeles.
 Bot that thou preidest natheles, *what you prayed for*
 That I schal Lazar to thee sende
 With water on his finger ende,
- 1065 Thin hote tunge for to kiele, *cool*
 Thou schalt no suche graces fiele; *taste (sense [with your tongue])*
 For to that foule place of sinne,
 Forevere in which thou schalt ben inne,
 Comth non out of this place thider,
- 1070 Ne non of you mai comen hider;
 Thus be yee parted nou atuo.”
 The riche ageinward cride tho: *rich man again*
 “O Habraham, sithe it so is,
 That Lazar mai noght do me this
- 1075 Which I have axed in this place,
 I wolde preie another grace.
 For I have yit of brethren fyve,
 That with mi fader ben alyve
 Togedre duellende in on hous;
- 1080 To whom, as thou art gracious,
 I preie that thou woldest sende
 Lazar, so that he mihte wende *proceed*
 To warne hem hou the world is went, *world turns*
 That afterward thei be noght schent *destroyed*
- 1085 Of suche peines as I drye. *suffer*
 Lo, this I preie and this I crie,
 Now I may noght miself amende.”
 The patriarch anon suiende *in response*
 To his preiere ansuerde nay,
- 1090 And seide him hou that everyday
 His brethren mihten knowe and hiere
 Of Moises on erthe hiere
 And of prophetes othre mo,
 What hem was best. And he seith no;
- 1095 Bot if ther mihte a man aryse
 Fro deth to lyve in such a wise,
 To tellen hem hou that it were,
 He seide hou thanne of pure fere
 Thei scholden wel be war therby. *cautioned*
- 1100 Quod Habraham: “Nay sikerly;
 For if thei nou wol noght obeie
 To suche as techen hem the weie,
 And alday preche and alday telle
 Hou that it stant of hevene and helle,
- 1105 Thei wol noght thanne taken hiede,
 Thogh it befelle so in dede

- That eny ded man were arered,
 To ben of him no betre lered
 Than of another man alyve.”
- Confessor** If thou, mi sone, canst descryve
- 1111 This tale, as Crist Himself it tolde,
 Thou schalt have cause to beholde,
 To se so gret an evidence,
 Wherof the sothe experience
- 1115 Hath schewed openliche at ye,
 That bodili delicacie
 Of him which geveth non almesse
 Schal after falle in gret destresse,
 And that was sene upon the riche.
- 1120 For he ne wolde unto his liche
 A crumme given of his bred.
 Thanne afterward, whan he was ded,
 A drope of water him was werned.
- Thus mai a mannes wit be lerned
- 1125 Of hem that so delices taken;
 Whan thei with deth ben overtaken,
 That erst was swete is thanne sour.
 Bot he that is a governour
 Of worldes good, if he be wys,
- 1130 Withinne his herte he set no pris
 Of al the world, and yit he useth
 The good that he nothing refuseth,
 As he which lord is of the thinges.
 The nouches and the riche ringes,
- 1135 The cloth of gold and the perrie
 He takth, and yit delicacie
 He leveth, thogh he were al this.
 The beste mete that ther is
 He ett, and drinkth the beste drinke;
- 1140 Bot hou that evere he ete or drinke,
 Delicacie he put aweie,
 As he which goth the rihte weie
 Noght only for to fiede and clothe
 His bodi, bot his soule bothe.
- 1145 Bot thei that taken otherwise
 Here lustes, ben none of the wise;
 And that whilom was schewed eke,
 If thou these olde bokes seke,
- 1150 Als wel be reson as be kinde,
 Of olde ensample as men mai finde.

resurrected
instructed

eye

made evident by the rich man
(Lazarus') body

refused

value

[so] that; denies [himself]
As he [behaves] who is lord
brooches

precious stones

even though he should wear

seek

[NERO'S SENSUALITY]

- What man that wolde him wel advise,
 Delicacie is to despise,
 Whan kinde acordeth noght withal;
 1154 Wherof ensample in special
 ☞ Of Nero whilom mai be told, *(see note)*
 Which agein kinde manyfold *nature*
 Hise lustes tok, til ate laste
 That God him wolde al overcaste;
 Of whom the cronique is so plein,
 1160 Me list no more of him to sein.
 And natheles for glotonie
 Of bodili Delicacie,
 To knowe his stomak hou it ferde,
 Of that no man tofore herde,
 1165 Which he withinne himself bethoghte,
 A wonder soubtil thing he wroghte. *devised*
 Thre men upon eleccioun
 Of age and of complexioun
 Lich to himself be alle weie
 1170 He tok towards him to pleie,
 And ete and drinke als wel as he.
 Therof was no diversité.
 For every day whan that thei eete,
 Tofore his oghne bord thei seete,
 1175 And of such mete as he was served,
 Although thei hadde it noght deserved,
 Thei token service of the same.
 Bot afterward al thilke game
 Was into wofull ernest torned;
 1180 For whan thei weren thus sojorned,
 Withinne a time at after mete *following the noon meal*
 Nero, which hadde noght forgete
 The lustes of his frele astat,
 As he which al was delicat,
 1185 To knowe thilke experience,
 The men lete come in his presence.
 And to that on the same tyde, *one; time*
 A courser that he scholde ryde *horse*
 Into the feld, anon he bad; *commanded*
 1190 Wherof this man was wonder glad,
 And goth to prike and prance aboute.
 That other, whil that he was oute,
 He leide upon his bedd to slepe;
 The thridde, which he wolde kepe
 1195 Withinne his chambre, faire and softe

- He goth now down nou up fulofte,
 Walkende a pass, that he ne slepte,
 Til he which on the courser lepte
 Was come fro the field agein.
 1200 Nero thanne, as the bokes sein,
 These men doth taken alle thre
 And slouh hem, for he wolde se
 The whos stomak was best defied. *The [one] whose; digested*
 And whanne he hath the sothe tryed,
 1205 He fond that he which goth the pass *walked about*
 Defyed best of alle was, *Digested*
 Which afterward he usede ay.
 And thus what thing unto his pay *pleasure*
 Was most plesant, he lefte non.
 1210 With every lust he was begon,
 Wherof the bodi myhte glade,
 For he non abstinence made; *self-denial*
 Bot most above alle erthli thinges
 Of wommen unto the likinges
 1215 Nero sette al his hole herte, *whole*
 For that lust scholde him noght asterte. *pleasure; not escape him*
 Whan that the thirst of love him cawhte,
 Wher that him list he tok a drauhte,
 He spareth nouthur wif ne maide,
 1220 That such another, as men saide,
 In al this world was nevere yit.
 He was so drunke in al his wit
 Thurgh sondri lustes whiche he tok,
 That evere, whil ther is a bok,
 1225 Of Nero men schul rede and singe
 Unto the worldes knowlechinge,
 Mi goode Sone, as thou hast herd.
 Forevere yit it hath so ferd,
 Delicacie in loves cas
 1230 Withoute reson is and was;
 For wher that love his herte set,
 Him thenkth it myhte be no bet;
 And thogh it be noght fulli mete, *proper*
 1234 The lust of love is evere swete.
Confessor Lo, thus togedre of felaschipe
 Delicacie and drunkschipe,
 Wherof reson stant out of herre, *order (off the hinges)*
 Have mad full many a wisman erre *err*
 In loves cause most of alle.
 1240 For thanne hou so that evere it falle,
 Wit can no reson understonde,
 Bot let the governance stonde

- To Will, which thanne wext so wylde, *grows so wild*
 That he can noght himselve schylde *protect*
 1245 Fro no peril, bot out of feere *without fear*
 The weie he secheth hiere and there,
 Him recheth noght upon what syde.
 For oftetime he goth beside, *astray*
 And doth such thing withoute drede *fearlessly*
 1250 Wherof him oghte wel to drede. *afraid*
 Bot whan that love assoteth sore, *infatuates sorely*
 It passeth alle mennes lore; *teaching*
 What lust it is that he ordeigneth,
 Ther is no mannes miht restreigneth,
 1255 And of the godd takth he non hiede. *good*
 Bot laweles withoute drede,
 His pourpos for he wolde achieve
 Ageins the pointz of the believe, *faith*
 He tempteth hevene and erthe and helle,
 1260 Hierafterward as I schal telle."

[SORCERY AND WITCHCRAFT]

- iii. *Dum stimulaturs amor, quicquid iubet orta voluptas,
 Audet et aggreditur, nulla timenda timens.
 Omne quod astra queunt herbarum siue potestas,
 Seu vigor inferni, singula temptat amans.
 Quod nequit ipse deo mediante parare sinistrum,
 Demonis hoc magica credulus arte parat.
 Sic sibi non curat ad opus que recia tendit,
 Dummodo nudatam prendere possit auem.¹*

[Confessor] "Who dar do thing which love ne dar?

- To love is every lawe unwar,
 Bot to the lawes of his heste *command (see note)*
 The fisch, the foul, the man, the beste
 1265 Of al the worldes kinde louteth. *bows*
 For love is he which nothing douteth. *fears*
 ¶ In mannes herte where he sit,
 He compteth noght toward his wit *reckons not in*
 The wo no more than the wele, *woe; gladness*
 1270 No more the hete than the chele, *heat; cold*
 No mor the wete than the dreie,


¹ While love prods, whatever rising voluptuousness commands, it dares and advances toward, fearing nothing that ought to be feared. Everything that the stars or the power of herbs may do, or the force of the infernal regions, the lover tries them all. What sinister things he is not able to perform with God's help, he performs what he can by believing in the devil's magic art. Thus he gives no care to what things his net gathers for the work, provided that he might be able to seize the bird plucked naked.

- No mor to live than to deie,
 So that tofore ne behinde *neither before or behind (i.e., nowhere)*
 He seth nothing, bot as the blinde
 1275 Withoute insyhte of his corage *heart*
 He doth merveilles in his rage.
 To what thing that he wole him drawe,
 Ther is no God, ther is no lawe,
 Of whom that he takth eny hiede;
 1280 Bot as Baiard the blinde stede,
 Til he falle in the dich amidde, *middle of the ditch*
 He goth ther no man wole him bidde; *where; command*
 He stant so ferforth out of reule,
 Ther is no wit that mai him reule.
 1285 And thus to telle of him in soth,
 Ful many a wonder thing he doth,
 That were betre to be laft,
 Among the whiche is wicchecraft,
 That som men clepen Sorcerie, *call*
 1290 Which for to winne his druerie *paramour*
 With many a circumstance he useth,
 Ther is no point which he refuseth.
- ☞ The craft which that Saturnus fond, *invented (see note)*
 To make prickes in the sond, *sand*
 1295 That Geomance cleped is, *Divination by Earth is called*
 Fulofte he useth it amis;
 And of the flod his Ydromance, *Divination by Water*
 And of the fyr the Piromance, *Divination by Fire*
 With questions ech on of tho *those*
 1300 He tempteth ofte, and ek also
 Aeremance in juggement *Divination by Air*
 To love he bringth of his assent.
 For these craftes, as I finde,
 A man mai do be weie of kinde,
 1305 Be so it be to good entente,
 Bot he goth al another wente. *Unless; direction*
 For ratherer he scholde faile,
 With Nigromance he wole assaile *Divination with the dead; venture*
 To make his incantacioun
 1310 With hot subfumigacioun. *smoky incense*
 Thilke art which Spatula is hote, *Divination with bones is called*
 And used is of comun rote *usage*
 Among paiens, with that craft ek *pagans*
 Of which is auctor Thosz the Grek, *originator*
 1315 He worcheth on and on be rowe: *one after the other in order*
 Razel is noght to him unknowe,
 Ne Salomones Candarie,
 His Ydeac, his Eutonye;

- The figure and the bok withal
 1320 Of Balamuz, and of Ghenbal
 The seal, and therupon th'ymage *moreover*
 Of Thebith, for his advantage
 He takth, and somewhat of Gibiere,
 Which helplich is to this matiere.
 1325 Babilla with hire sonnes sevene,
 Which hath renonced to the hevene,
 With cernes bothe square and rounde, *figures*
 He traceth ofte upon the grounde,
 Makende his invocacioun;
 1330 And for full enformacioun
 The scole which Honorius
 Wrot, he poursuieth: and lo, thus
 Magique he useth for to winne
 His love, and spareth for no sinne.
 1335 And over that of his sotie, *foolishness*
 Riht as he secheth sorcerie
 Of hem that ben magiciens,
 Riht so of the naturiens *astrologers*
 Upon the sterres from above
 1340 His weie he secheth unto love, *seeks*
 Als fer as he hem understondeth. *them*
 In many a sondry wise he fondeth:
 He makth ymage, he makth sculpture,
 He makth writinge, he makth figure,
 1345 He makth his calculacions,
 He makth his demonstracions;
 His houres of astronomie *astronomy (and astrology)*
 He kepeth as for that partie
 Which longeth to th'inspeccion *pertains to*
 1350 Of love and his affeccion; *its*
 He wolde into the helle seche *hell*
 The Devel himselve to beseche,
 If that he wiste for to spede *he (the devil) knew how to succeed*
 To gete of love his lusti mede. *love's desired results*
 1355 Wher that he hath his herte set,
 He bede nevere fare bet *would ask never to fare better*
 Ne wite of other hevene more. *Nor know*
Confessor Mi sone, if thou of such a lore *teaching*
 1359 Hast ben er this, I red thee leve." *before; advise; desist*
Amans "Min holi fader, be youre leve
 Of al that ye have spoken hiere
 Which toucheth unto this matiere,
 To telle soth riht as I wene, *understand*
 I wot noght o word what ye mene.
 1365 I wol noght seie, if that I couthe,

- That I nolde in mi lusti youthe *did not wish*
 Benethe in helle and ek above
 To winne with mi ladi love
 Don al that evere that I mihte; *To do*
 1370 For therof have I non insihte
 Wher afterward that I become,
 To that I wonne and overcome *Provided that I won*
 Hire love, which I most coveite.”
Confessor “Mi sone, that goth wonder streite, *oppressively*
 1375 For this I mai wel telle soth,
 Ther is no man the which so doth,
 For al the craft that he can caste, *Despite; skill; devise*
 That he n’abeith it ate laste. *does not pay for it*
 For often he that wol beguile
 1380 Is guiled with the same guile, *beguiled*
 And thus the guilour is beguiled.
 As I finde in a bok compiled
 To this matiere an old histoire,
 The which comth nou to mi memoire,
 1385 And is of gret essamplerie
 Agein the vice of Sorcerie,
 Wherof non ende mai be good.
 Bot hou whilom therof it stod,
 A tale which is good to knowe
 1390 To thee, mi sone, I schal beknowe. *reveal*

[TALE OF ULYSSES AND TELEGONUS]

- Among hem which at Troie were, *those who*
 1385  Uluxes ate siege there *(see note)*
 Was on be name in special, *one by*
 Of whom yit the memorial
 1395 Abit, for whyl ther is a mouth, *Remains*
 Forevere his name schal be couth. *known*
 He was a worthi knyht and king
 And clerk knowende of every thing.
 He was a gret rethorien,
 1400 He was a gret magicien;
 Of Tullius the rethorique, *Cicero*
 Of King Zorastes the magique,
 Of Tholomé th’astronomie,
 Of Plato the philosophie,
 1405 Of Daniel the slepi dremes, *[interpretation of] sleepy dreams*
 Of Neptune ek the water stremes, *i.e., navigation*
 Of Salomon and the proverbes,
 Of Macer al the strengthe of herbes,
 And the phisique of Ypocras, *Hippocrates*

- 1410 And lich unto Pictagoras
 Of surgerie he knew the cures.
 Bot somewhat of his aventures,
 Which schal to mi matiere acorde,
 To thee, mi sone, I wol recorde.
- 1415 This king, of which thou hast herd sein,
 Fro Troie as he goth hom agein
 Be schipe, he fond the see divers, *unfavorable*
 With many a wyndi storm revers. *adverse*
 Bot he thurgh wisdom that he schapeth
- 1420 Ful many a gret peril ascapeth,
 Of whiche I thenke tellen on,
 Hou that malgré the nedle and ston *despite the compass*
 Wynddrive he was al soudeinly
 Upon the strondes of Cilly, *shores of Sicily*
- 1425 Wher that he moste abyde a whyle.
 Tuo queenes weren in that yle
 Calipsa named and Circes;
 And whan thei herde hou Uluxes *shore*
 Is londed ther upon the ryve, *immediately (gladly)*
- 1430 For him thei senden als so blive.
 With him suche as he wolde he nam *took*
 And to the court to hem he cam.
 Thes queenes were as tuo goddesses
 Of art magique sorceresses,
- 1435 That what lord comth to that rivage, *coast*
 Thei make him love in such a rage *to become so madly in love*
 And upon hem assote so,
 That thei wol have, er that he go,
 Al that he hath of worldes good.
- 1440 Uluxes wel this understod:
 Thei couthe moche, he couthe more. *knew*
 Thei schape and caste agein him sore *vigorously*
 And wroghte many a soutil wyle, *plot (scheme)*
 Bot yit thei mihte him noght beguile.
- 1445 Bot of the men of his navie
 Thei tuo forschope a gret partie, *transformed*
 Mai non of hem withstonde here hestes; *their commands*
 Som part thei schopen into bestes, *turned*
 Som part thei schopen into foules, *birds*
- 1450 To beres, tigres, apes, oules, *bears; owls*
 Or elles be som other weie.
 Ther myhte hem nothing desobeie, *them (Calypso and Circe) in nothing*
 Such craft thei hadde above kinde. *beyond nature*
 Bot that art couthe thei noght finde
- 1455 Of which Uluxes was deceived,
 That he ne hath hem alle weyed, *avoided*

- And broght hem into such a rote *condition*
 That upon him thei bothe assote; *doted*
 And thurgh the science of his art *cleverness*
 1460 He tok of hem so wel his part *share (spoils)*
 That he begat Circes with childe. *impregnated*
 He kepte him sobre and made hem wilde, *himself; them*
 He sette himselfe so above
 That with here good and with here love, *their wealth*
 1465 Who that therof be lief or loth,
 Al quit into his schip he goth. *exempt from their power*
 Circes toswolle bothe sides *swollen up*
 He lefte, and waiteth on the tydes, *foam*
 And straght thurghout the salte fom
 1470 He takth his cours and comth him hom,
 Where as he fond Penolopé.
 A betre wif ther mai non be,
 And yit ther ben ynowhe of goode. *are plenty of excellent ones*
 Bot who hir goodschipe understode
 1475 Fro ferst that sche wifhode tok,
 Hou many loves sche forsok
 And hou sche bar hire al aboute, *carried herself*
 Ther whiles that hire lord was oute,
 He mihte make a gret avant *make a great boast*
 1480 Amonges al the remenant
 That sche was on of al the beste. *one of the very best*
 Wel myhte he sette his herte in reste,
 This king, whan he hir fond in hele. *[good] health (prosperity)*
 For as he couthe in wisdom dele,
 1485 So couthe sche in wommanhiede. *womanliness*
 And whan sche syh withoute drede
 Hire lord upon his oghne ground,
 That he was come sauf and sound,
 In al this world ne mihte be
 1490 A gladdere womman than was sche.
 The fame, which mai noght ben hidd,
 Thurghout the lond is sone kidd, *soon made known*
 Here king is come hom agein: *Their*
 Ther mai no man the fulle sein, *entirely tell*
 1495 Hou that thei weren alle glade,
 So mochel joie of him thei made.
 The presens every day be newed, *presents; were produced*
 He was with giftes al besnewed; *showered*
 The poeple was of him so glad,
 1500 That thogh non other man hem bad,
 Taillage upon himself thei sette, *ordered them to*
 And as it were of pure dette *Taxation; themselves*
 Thei geve here goodes to the king:

- This was a glad hom welcomyng.
 1505 Thus hath Uluxes what he wolde, *desired*
 His wif was such as sche be scholde,
 His poeple was to him sougit, *subject*
 Him lacketh nothing of delit. *pleasure*
 Bot Fortune is of such a sleyhte, *deceit*
 1510 That whan a man is most on heyhte,
 Sche makth him rathest for to falle: *most swiftly*
 Ther wot no man what schal befallē,
 ☞ The happes over mannes hed *chance possibilities; head (see note)*
 Ben honged with a tendre thred.
 1515 That proved was on Uluxes,
 For whan he was most in his pes, *peaceful security*
 Fortune gan to make him werre *war*
 And sette his welthe al out of herre. *out of killer*
 Upon a dai as he was merie, *when*
 1520 As thogh ther mihte him nothing derie,
 Whan nyht was come, he goth to bedde, *harm*
 With slep and bothe his yhen fedde. *eyes*
 And while he slepte, he mette a swevene: *dreamt; dream*
 Him thoghte he syh a stature evenē, *saw a comely form*
 1525 Which brihtere than the sonne schon;
 A man it semeth was it non,
 Bot yit it was as in figure
 Most lich to mannyssh creature, *human*
 Bot as of beauté hevenelich
 1530 It was most to an angel lich. *like*
 And thus betwen angel and man
 Beholden it this king began,
 And such a lust tok of the sihte, *desire*
 That fain he wolde, if that he mihte, *eagerly*
 1535 The forme of that figure embrace;
 And goth him forth toward the place,
 Wher he sih that ymage tho,
 And takth it in his armes tuo, *two*
 And it embraceth him agein
 1540 And to the king thus gan it sein:
 ‘Uluxes, understond wel this,
 The tokne of oure aqueintance is
 Hierafterward to mochel tene. *intimate fellowship*
 The love that is ous betuene, *grief (chagrin, misfortune)*
 1545 Of that we nou such joie make,
 That on of ous the deth schal take, *one of us*
 Whan time comth of destiné —
 It may non other wise be.’
 Uluxes tho began to preie *then*
 1550 That this figure wolde him seie

- What wyht he is that seith him so. *person (creature); tells*
 This wyht upon a spere tho
 A pensel which was wel begon, *pennant; undertaken*
 Embrouded, scheweth him anon:
 1555 Thre fisshes alle of o colour *one*
 In manere as it were a tour *tower*
 Upon the pensel were wrought. *pennant; embroidered*
 Uluxes kneu this tokne noght, *heraldic emblem*
 And preith to wite in som partie
 1560 What thing it myhte signefie.
 'A signe it is,' the wyht ansuerde,
 'Of an empire,' and forth he ferde *royal estate; departed*
 Al sodeinly, whan he that seide.
 Uluxes out of slep abreide, *started*
 1565 And that was riht agein the day, *just prior to*
 That lengere slepen he ne may.
 ☞ Men sein, a man hath knowleching *understanding (knowledge) (see note)*
 Save of himself of alle thing; *Except*
 His oghne chance no man knoweth, *fate (destiny, circumstance)*
 1570 Bot as Fortune it on him throweth. *casts (as with dice)*
 Was nevere yit so wys a clerk,
 Which mihte knowe al Goddes werk,
 Ne the secret which God hath set
 Agein a man mai noght be let. *hinder*
 1575 Uluxes, thogh that he be wys,
 With al his wit in his avis,
 The mor that he his swevene acompteth, *dream considers*
 The lasse he wot what it amonteth.
 For al his calculacion, *Despite*
 1580 He seth no demonstracion *saw*
 Al pleinely for to knowe an ende.
 Bot natheles hou so it wende,
 He dradde him of his oghne sone.
 That makth him wel the more astone, *upset*
 1585 And schop therfore anon withal,
 So that withinne castel wall
 Thelamachum his sone he schette, *Telemachus; imprisoned*
 And upon him strong warde he sette. *guard*
 The sothe furtherhe he ne knew, *truth*
 1590 Til that Fortune him overthreu.
 Bot natheles for sikernesse, *security*
 Wher that he mihte wite and gesse
 A place strengest in his lond,
 Ther let he make of lym and sond *ordered to be made; lime and sand (cement)*
 1595 A strengthe where he wolde duelle; *stronghold*
 Was nevere man yit herde telle
 Of such another as it was.

- And for to strengthe him in that cas,
 Of al his lond the sekereste
 1600 Of servantz and the worthieste,
 To kepen him withinne warde,
 He sette his bodi for to warde;
 And made such an ordinance,
 For love ne for aqueintance,
 1605 That were it erly, were it late,
 Thei scholde lete in ate gate
 No maner man, what so betydde,
 Bot if so were himself it bidde.
 Bot al that myhte him noght availe,
 1610 For whom Fortune wole assaile,
 Ther mai be non such resistance
 Which mihte make a man defence;
 Al that schal be mot falle algate.
 This Circes, which I spak of late,
 1615 On whom Uluxes hath begete
 A child, thogh he it have forgete,
 Whan time com, as it was wone,
 Sche was delivered of a sone,
 Which cleped is Thelogonus.
 1620 This child, whan he was bore thus,
 Aboute his moder to ful age,
 That he can reson and langage,
 In good astat was drawe forth.
 And whan he was so mochel worth
 1625 To stonden in a mannes stede,
 Circes his moder hath him bede
 That he schal to his fader go,
 And tolde him al togedre tho
 What man he was that him begat.
 1630 And whan Thelogonus of that
 Was war and hath ful knowleching
 Hou that his fader was a king,
 He preith his moder faire this,
 To go wher that his fader is;
 1635 And sche him granteth that he schal,
 And made him redi forth withal.
 It was that time such usance,
 That every man the conoiscance
 Of his contré bar in his hond,
 1640 Whan he wente into strange lond;
 And thus was every man therfore
 Wel knowe, wher that he was bore.
 For espiaile and mistrowinges
 Thei dede thanne suche thinges,
- protect*
most certain
most noble
guarded condition
protect
whatever might happen
ordered
afflict
protect a man
must happen anyway
forgotten
as inevitably happened
called
knows
place
bidden
aware
custom
emblem of allegiance
born
Because of spying; distrust

- 1645 That every man mai other knowe.
 So it befell that ilke throwe *at that time*
 Thelogonus as in this cas;
 Of his contré the signe was
 Thre fisshes, whiche he scholde bere
- 1650 Upon the penon of a spere. *pennant mounted on a spear*
 And whan that he was thus arraied
 And hath his harneis al assaied, *gear; made ready*
 That he was redy everydel,
 His moder bad him farewel,
- 1655 And seide him that he scholde swithe *swiftly*
 His fader griete a thousand sithe. *greet; times*
 Thelogonus his moder kiste
 And tok his leve, and wher he wiste *knew*
 His fader was, the weie nam, *took*
- 1660 Til he unto Nachaie cam, *Ithaca (Achaea)*
 Which of that lond the chief cité
 Was cleped, and ther axeth he *called; asked*
 Wher was the king and hou he ferde.
 And whan that he the sothe herde,
- 1665 Wher that the king Uluxes was,
 Alone upon his hors gret pas *at a swift gait*
 He rod him forth, and in his hond
 He bar the signal of his lond *emblem*
 With fisshes thre, as I have told.
- 1670 And thus he wente unto that hold,
 Wher that his oghne fader duelleth.
 The cause why he comth he telleth
 Unto the kepers of the gate,
 And wolde have comen in therate,
- 1675 Bot schortli thei him seide nay. *curtly*
 And he als faire as evere he may
 Besoghte and tolde hem ofte this,
 Hou that the king his fader is.
 Bot they with proude wordes grete
- 1680 Begunne to manace and threte, *threaten*
 Bot he go fro the gate faste, *Unless*
 Thei wolde him take and sette faste. *seize; imprison*
 Fro wordes unto strokes thus
 Thei felle, and so Thelogonus
- 1685 Was sore hurt and welnyh ded;
 Bot with his scharpe speres hed
 He makth defence, hou so it falle,
 And wan the gate upon hem alle, *took; despite all of them*
 And hath slain of the beste fyve;
- 1690 And thei ascriden als so blyve *raised the battle cry immediately*
 Thurghout the castell al aboute.

- On every syde men come oute,
 Wherof the kinges herte afflihte,
 And he with al the haste he mihte
 1695 A spere cauhte and out he goth,
 As he that was nyh wod for wroth.
 He sih the gates ful of blod,
 Thelogonus and wher he stod
 He sih also, bot he ne knew
 1700 What man it was, and to him threw
 His spere, and he sterte out asyde.
 Bot destiné, which schal betide,
 Befell that ilke time so,
 Thelogonus knew nothing tho
 1705 What man it was that to him caste,
 And while his oghne spere laste,
 With al the signe therupon
 He caste unto the king anon,
 And smot him with a dedly wounde.
 1710 Uluxes fell anon to grounde;
 Tho every man, 'The king! the king!'
 Began to crie, and of this thing
 Thelogonus, which sih the cas,
 On knes he fell and seide, 'Helas!
 1715 I have min oghne fader slain.
 Nou wolde I deie wonder fain,
 Nou sle me who that evere wile,
 For certes it is riht good skile.'
 He crith, he wepth, he seith therfore,
 1720 'Helas, that evere was I bore,
 That this unhappi destiné
 So wofulli comth in be me!'
 This king, which yit hath lif ynouh,
 His herte agein to him he drouh,
 1725 And to that vois an ere he leide
 And understod al that he seide,
 And gan to speke, and seide on hih,
 'Bring me this man.' And whan he sih
 Thelogonus, his thoght he sette
 1730 Upon the swevene which he mette,
 And axeth that he myhte se
 His spere, on which the fisshes thre
 He sih upon a pensel wrought.
 Tho wiste he wel it faileth noght,
 1735 And badde him that he telle scholde
 Fro whenne he cam and what he wolde.
 Thelogonus in sorghe and wo
 So as he mihte tolde tho
- trembled (was disturbed)*
- nearly insane for anger*
- at him*
lept aside
shall inevitably come
- then*
- Then*
- gladly*
the reasonable thing to do
- to himself*
ear
- loudly*
- dream; dreamt*
- Then knew; it (the dream)*
- sorrow; woe*

- Unto Uluxes al the cas,
 1740 Hou that Circes his moder was,
 And so forth seide him everydel, *told him everything*
 Hou that his moder gret him wel, *sent greetings to him*
 And in what wise sche him sente.
 Tho wiste Uluxes what it mente, *knew*
- 1745 And tok him in hise armes softe,
 And al bledende he kest him ofte, *bleeding; kissed*
 And seide, 'Sone, whil I live,
 This infortune I thee forgive.'
 After his other sone in haste
- 1750 He sende, and he began him haste
 And cam unto his fader tyt. *swiftly*
 Bot whan he sih him in such plit,
 He wolde have ronne upon that other
 Anon, and slain his oghne brother,
- 1755 Ne hadde be that Uluxes
 Betwen hem made acord and pes, *peace*
 And to his heir Thelamachus
 He bad that he Thelogonus
 With al his pouer scholde kepe, *power; look after*
- 1760 Til he were of his woundes depe
 Al hol, and thanne he scholde him give
 Lond wher upon he mihte live.
 Thelamachus, whan he this herde,
 Unto his fader he ansuerde
- 1765 And seide he wolde don his wille.
 So duelle thei togedre stille,
 These brethren, and the fader sterveth. *died*
 Lo, wherof sorcerie serveth.
- Thurgh sorcerie his lust he wan, *desire*
 1770 Thurgh sorcerie his wo began, *woe*
 Thurgh sorcerie his love he ches, *chose*
 Thurgh sorcerie his lif he les; *lost*
 The child was gete in sorcerie, *begotten through*
 The which dede al this felonie.
- 1775 Thing which was agein kynde wrought,
 Unkindeliche it was aboght: *paid for*
 The child his oghne fader slowh, *slew*
 That was unkindeschipe ynowh. *unnaturalness*
 Forthi tak hiede hou that it is
- 1780 So for to winne love amis, *in the wrong way*
 Which endeth al his joie in wo.
 For of this art I finde also,
 That hath be do for loves sake,
 Wherof thou miht ensample take,
- 1785 A gret cronique imperial, *chronicle*

Which evere into memorial
 Among the men, hou so it wende,
 Schal duelle to the worldes ende.

[TALE OF NECTANABUS]

- The Hihe Creatour of thinges,
 1790 Which is the King of alle Kinges, *Who*
 Ful many a wonder worldes chance *wonder of the world's happenings*
 Let slyden under His suffrance: *Allowed to happen*
- ☞ Ther wot no man the cause why,
 Bot He the which is almyhty. *knows (see note)*
- 1795 And that was proved whilom thus, *Except*
 Whan that the king Nectanabus, *once*
 Which hadde Egipte for to lede,
 Bot for he sih tofor the dede
 Thurgh magique of his sorcerie,
 1800 Wherof he couthe a gret partie,
 Hise enemys to him comende, *approaching*
 Fro whom he mihte him noght defende,
 Out of his oghne lond he fledde;
 And in the wise as he him dredde
 1805 It fell, for al his wicchecraft, *feared*
 So that Egipte him was beraft, *despite all*
 And he disguised fledde aweie
 Be schipe, and hield the rihte weie *direct way*
 To Macedoine, wher that he
 1810 Aryveth ate chief cité.
 Thre yomen of his chambre there
 Al only for to serve him were,
 The whiche he trusteth wonder wel,
 For thei were trewe as eny stiel. *steel*
- 1815 And hapneth that thei with him ladde
 Part of the beste good he hadde. *wealth*
 Thei take logginge in the toun *lodging*
 After the disposicion
 Wher as him thoghte best to duelle.
 1820 He axeth thanne and herde telle
 Hou that the king was oute go
 Upon a werre he hadde tho; *war*
 Bot in that cité thanne was
 The queene, which Olimpias
 1825 Was hote, and with sollempneté *called*
 The feste of hir nativité, *birthday celebration*
 As it befell, was thanne holde;
 And for hire list to be beholde
 And preised of the poeple aboute, *since it pleased her to be beheld*

- 1830 Sche schop hir for to riden oute *prepared herself*
 At after mete al openly. *after supper; publicly*
 Anon were alle men redy,
 And that was in the monthe of Maii,
 This lusti queene in good arrai
- 1835 Was set upon a mule whyt.
 To sen it was a gret delit
 The joie that the cité made;
 With freisshe thinges and with glade
 The noble toun was al behonged, *bedecked*
- 1840 And every wiht was sore alonged *person; sorely longing*
 To se this lusti ladi ryde.
 Ther was gret merthe on alle syde.
 Wher as sche passeth be the strete,
 Ther was ful many a tymber bete *timbrel beaten*
- 1845 And many a maide carolende. *singing and dancing*
 And thus thurghout the toun pleiende *playing*
 This queene unto a pleine rod, *onto the green park rode*
 Wher that sche hoved and abod *paused; waited*
 To se diverse game pleie,
- 1850 The lusti folk jouste and tourneie;
 And so forth every other man,
 Which pleie couthe, his pley began, *Who knew a sport*
 To plese with this noble queene.
 Nectanabus cam to the grene
- 1855 Amonges othre and drouh him nyh. *near*
 Bot whan that he this ladi sih *saw*
 And of hir beauté hiede tok,
 He couthe noght withdrawe his lok
 To se noght elles in the field, *anything else*
- 1860 Bot stod and only hire behield.
 Of his clothinge and of his gere
 He was unlich alle othre there,
 So that it hapneth ate laste,
 The queene on him hire yhe caste, *eye*
- 1865 And knew that he was strange anon. *immediately knew; foreign*
 Bot he behield hire evere in on *continually*
 Withoute blenchinge of his chere. *turning his face away*
 Sche tok good hiede of his manere,
 And wondreth why he dede so,
- 1870 And bad men scholde for him go.
 He cam and dede hire reverence,
 And sche him axeth in cilence *quietly*
 Fro whenne he cam and what he wolde. *what his purpose was*
 And he with sobre wordes tolde,
- 1875 And seith, 'Ma dame, a clerk I am, *scholar*
 To you and in message I cam, *And I came to you with a message*

- The which I mai noght tellen hiere;
 Bot if it liketh you to hiere,
 It mot be seid al prively,
 1880 Wher non schal be bot ye and I.
 Thus for the time he tok his leve.
 The dai goth forth til it was eve,
 That every man mot lete his werk. *must leave*
 And sche thoghte evere upon this clerk,
 1885 What thing it is he wolde mene,
 And in this wise abod the queene
 And passeth over thilke nyht *[thus] gets through the night*
 Til it was on the morwe liht.
 Sche sende for him, and he com,
 1890 With him his astellabre he nom, *astrolabe; brought*
 Which was of fin gold precious
 With pointz and cercles merveilous;
 And ek the hevenely figures
 Wroght in a bok ful of peintures *pictures*
 1895 He tok this ladi for to schewe, *brought; show*
 And tolde of ech of hem be rewe *in order*
 The cours and the condicion.
 And sche with gret affeccion *excitement (feeling)*
 Sat stille and herde what he wolde.
 1900 And thus whan he sih time, he tolde *saw the right moment*
 And feigneth with hise wordes wise
 A tale, and seith in such a wise: *in this manner*
 “Ma dame, bot a while ago,
 Wher I was in Egipte tho, *then*
 1905 And radde in scole of this science, *read (studied)*
 It fell into mi conscience
 That I unto the temple wente,
 And ther with al myn hole entente *whole*
 As I mi sacrifice dede, *performed*
 1910 On of the goddes hath me bede *One; commanded*
 That I you warne prively, *advise secretly*
 So that ye make you redy, *yourself*
 And that ye be nothing agast; *affrighted*
 For he such love hath to you cast, *set upon you*
 1915 That ye schul ben his oghne diere, *precious love*
 And he schal be your beddefiere, *lover (bedfellow)*
 Til ye conceive and be with childe.’
 And with that word sche wax al mylde, *grew quiet*
 And somdel red becam for schame,
 1920 And axeth him that goddes name,
 Which so wol don hire compainie.
 And he seide, ‘Amos of Lubie.’ *Hammon of Libya*
 And sche seith, ‘That mai I noght lieve, *believe*

- Bot if I sihe a betre prieve.' *see; proof*
 1925 'Ma dame,' quod Nectanabus,
 'In tokne that it schal be thus,
 This nyht for enformacion
 Ye schul have an avision, *prophetic dream*
 That Amos schal to you appiere,
 1930 To schewe and teche in what manere
 The thing schal afterward befall.
 Ye oghten wel aboven alle
 To make joie of such a lord,
 For whan ye ben of on acord, *you are conjoined*
 1935 He schal a sone of you begete,
 Which with his swerd schal winne and gete *conquer*
 The wyde world in lengthe and brede. *far and wide*
 Alle erthli kinges schull him drede, *fear him*
 And in such wise, I you behote, *promise*
 1940 The god of erthe he schal be hote.' *called*
 'If this be soth,' tho quod the queene,
 'This nyht, thou seist, it schal be sene.
 And if it falle into mi grace,
 Of god Amos that I pourchace *manage*
 1945 To take of him so gret worschipe, *honor*
 I wol do thee such ladischipe, *benevolence*
 Wherof thou schalt foreveremo
 Be riche.' And he hir thonketh tho,
 And tok his leve and forth he wente.
 1950 Sche wiste litel what he mente, *knew; intended*
 For it was guile and sorcerie,
 Al that sche tok for prophecie.
 Nectanabus thurghout the day,
 Whan he cam hom wher as he lay,
 1955 His chambre be himselve tok,
 And overtorneth many a bok,
 And thurgh the craft of artemage
 Of wex he forgeth an ymage. *magic*
 He loketh his equacions *wax; shaped*
 1960 And ek the constellacions,
 He loketh the conjunccions,
 He loketh the recepcions, *reciprocal effect of planets*
 His signe, his houre, his ascendent,
 And drawth fortune of his assent:
 1965 The name of queene Olimpias
 In thilke ymage write was
 Amiddes in the front above.
 And thus to winne his lust of love
 Nectanabus this werk hath diht; *prepared*
 1970 And whan it cam withinne nyht,

- That every wyht is falle aslepe,
 He thoghte he wolde his time kepe,
 As he which hath his houre apointed.
 And thanne ferst he hath enoignted
 1975 With sondri herbes that figure,
 And therupon he gan conjure,
 So that thurgh his enchantement
 This ladi, which was innocent
 And wiste nothing of this guile,
 1980 Mette, as sche slepte thilke while,
 Hou fro the hevene cam a lyht
 Which al hir chambre made lyht.
 And as sche loketh to and fro,
 Sche sih, hir thoghte, a dragoun tho,
 1985 Whos scherdes schynen as the sonne,
 And hath his softe pas begonne
 With al the chiere that he may
 Toward the bedd ther as sche lay,
 Til he cam to the beddes side.
 1990 And sche lai stille and nothing cride,
 For he dede alle his thinges faire
 And was courteis and debonaire.
 And as he stod hire fasteby,
 His forme he changeth sodeinly,
 1995 And the figure of man he nom,
 To hire and into bedde he com,
 And such thing there of love he wroghte,
 Wherof, so as hire thanne thoghte,
 Thurgh likinge of this god Amos
 2000 With childe anon hire wombe aros,
 And sche was wonder glad withal.
 Nectanabus, which causeth al
 Of this metrede the substance,
 Whan he sih time, his nigromance
 2005 He stinte and nothing more seide
 Of his carecte, and sche abreide
 Out of hir slep, and lieveth wel
 That it is soth thanne everydel
 Of that this clerk hire hadde told,
 2010 And was the gladdere manyfold
 In hope of such a glad metrede,
 Which after schal befalle in dede.
 Sche longeth sore after the dai,
 That sche hir swevene telle mai
 2015 To this guilour in priveté,
 Which kneu it als so wel as sche.
 And natheles on morwe sone
- anointed*
- Dreamed*
- saw, it seemed to her
scales shone; sun*
- with propriety*
- close to her*
- took*
- dream*
- stopped
charm; started
believed*
- dream
deed*
- dream
deceiver
Who knew
soon*

- Sche lefte alle other thing to done,
 And for him sende, and al the cas
 2020 Sche tolde him plainly as it was,
 And seide hou thanne wel sche wiste
 That sche his wordes mihte triste, *might trust*
 For sche fond hire avisioun
 Riht after the condicion
 2025 Which he hire hadde told tofore;
 And preide him hertely therfore
 That he hire holde covenant *keep his promise with her*
 So forth of al the remenant,
 That sche may thurgh his ordinance
 2030 Toward the god do such plesance,
 That sche wakende myhte him kepe *receive*
 In such wise as sche mette aslepe. *dreamt in sleep*
 And he, that couthe of guile ynouh,
 Whan he this herde, of joie he louh, *laughed*
 2035 And seith, 'Ma dame, it schal be do.
 Bot this I warne you therto:
 This nyht, whan that he comth to pleie,
 That ther be no lif in the weie
 Bot I, that schal at his likinge
 2040 Ordeine so for his cominge,
 That ye ne schull noght of him faile.
 For this, ma dame, I you consaile,
 That ye it kepe so privé,
 That no wiht elles bot we thre
 2045 Have knowlechinge hou that it is;
 For elles mihte it fare amis,
 If ye dede oght that scholde him grieve.'
 And thus he makth hire to believe,
 And feigneth under guile feith.
 2050 Bot natheles al that he seith
 Sche troweth; and agein the nyht
 Sche hath withinne hire chambre dyht, *believes; in preparation for*
 Wher as this guilour faste by *prepared*
 Upon this god schal prively *secretly*
 2055 Awaite, as he makth hire to wene. *Serve (wait upon); think*
 And thus this noble gentil queene,
 Whan sche most trusteth, was deceived.
 The nyht com, and the chambre is weyved, *emptied*
 Nectanabus hath take his place,
 2060 And whan he sih the time and space,
 Thurgh the decepte of his magique
 He put him out of mannes like, *likeness*
 And of a dragoun tok the forme,
 As he which wolde him al conforme

- 2065 To that sche sih in swevene er this; *what she saw; dream before*
 And thus to chambre come he is.
 The queene lay abedde and sih,
 And hopeth evere, as he com nyh, *continually believes*
 That he god of Luby were,
- 2070 So hath sche wel the lasse fere. *fear*
 Bot for he wold hire more assure, *reassure*
 Yit eft he changeth his figure,
 And of a wether the liknesse *sheep*
 He tok, in signe of his noblesse
- 2075 With large hornes for the nones. *for the occasion*
 Of fin gold and of riche stones
 A corone on his hed he bar,
 And soudeinly, er sche was war,
 As he which alle guile can, *knows*
- 2080 His forme he torneth into man,
 And cam to bedde, and sche lai stille,
 Wher as sche soffreth al his wille, *desire*
 As sche which wende noght misdo. *who thought nothing done amiss*
 Bot natheles it hapneth so,
- 2085 Althogh sche were in part deceived,
 Yit for al that sche hath conceived
 The worthieste of alle kiththe, *offspring*
 Which evere was tofore or siththe *since*
 Of conqueste and chivalerie;
- 2090 So that thurgh guile and sorcerie
 Ther was that noble knyht begunne, *i.e., Alexander*
 Which al the world hath after wunne. *conquered*
 Thus fell the thing which falle scholde.
 Nectanabus hath that he wolde:
- 2095 With guile he hath his love sped,
 With guile he cam into the bed,
 With guile he goth him out agein.
 He was a schrewed chamberlein,
 So to beguile a worthi queene,
- 2100 And that on him was after seene. *made evident*
 Bot natheles the thing is do.
 This false god was sone go,
 With his deceipte and hield him clos,
 Til morwe cam, that he aros. *And with his deceit kept hidden*
morning came, when
- 2105 And tho, whan time and leisir was, *then*
 The queene tolde him al the cas,
 As sche that guile non supposeth;
 And of tuo pointz sche him opposeth. *happence*
questions
One
- 2110 Wol come agein, and overmore, *secondly*
 Hou sche schal stonden in acord

- With king Philippe hire oghne lord,
 Whan he comth hom and seth hire grone. *sees; give birth*
 'Ma dame,' he seith, 'let me alone: *leave it to me*
 2115 As for the god I undertake *promise*
 That whan it liketh you to take
 His compaignie at eny throwe, *any time*
 If I a day tofore it knowe, *before*
 He schal be with you on the nyht;
 2120 And he is wel of such a myht
 To kepe you from alle blame. *disgrace*
 Forthi conforte you, ma dame,
 Ther schal non other cause be.' *consequence*
 Thus tok he leve and forth goth he.
 2125 And tho began he for to muse
 Hou he the queene mihte excuse
 Toward the king of that is falle,
 And fond a craft amonges alle,
 Thurgh which he hath a see foul daunted, *sea fowl taken control of*
 2130 With his magique and so enchaunted,
 That he flyh forth, whan it was nyht,
 Unto the kinges tente riht,
 Wher that he lay amidde his host. *army*
 And whanne he was aslepe most, *fully asleep*
 2135 With that the see foul to him broghte *By means of what*
 And othre charmes, whiche he wroghte
 At hom withinne his chambre stille,
 The king he torneth at his wille,
 And makth him for to dreme and se
 2140 The dragoun and the priveté *secret*
 Which was betuen him and the queene.
 And over that he made him wene *think*
 In swevene, hou that the god Amos, *dream*
 Whan he up fro the queene aros,
 2145 Tok forth a ring, wherinne a ston
 Was set, and grave therupon *engraved*
 A sonne, in which, whan he cam nyh, *sun*
 A leoun with a swerd he sih. *lion; saw*
 And with that priente, as he tho mette, *impression; dreamed*
 2150 Upon the queenes wombe he sette
 A seal, and goth him forth his weie.
 With that the swevene wente aweie,
 And tho began the king awake
 And sigheth for his wyves sake,
 2155 Wher as he lay withinne his tente,
 And hath gret wonder what it mente.
 With that he hasteth him to ryse
 Anon, and sende after the wise, *wisemen*

- Among the whiche ther was on,
 2160 A clerke, his name is Amphion. *scholar*
 Whan he the kinges swevene herde,
 What it betokneth he ansuerde,
 And seith, 'So siker as the lif, *As certain as life itself*
 A god hath leie be thi wif, *lain*
 2165 And gete a sone, which schal winne *begotten*
 The world and al that is withinne.
 As leon is the king of bestes, *animals (beasts)*
 So schal the world obeie his hestes, *commands*
 Which with his swerd schal al be wonne,
 2170 Als ferr as schyneth eny sonne.' *sun*
 The king was doubtif of this dom; *interpretation*
 Bot natheles, whan that he com
 Agein into his oghne lond,
 His wif with childe gret he fond.
 2175 He mihte noght himselve stiere, *control himself*
 That he ne made hire hevy chiere;
 Bot he which couthe of alle sorwe,
 Nectanabus, upon the morwe
 Thurgh the deceipte and nigromance
 2180 Tok of a dragoun the semblance,
 And wher the king sat in his halle,
 Com in rampende among hem alle
 With such a noise and such a rore,
 That thei agast were also sore *aghast with fear*
 2185 As thogh thei scholde deie anon. *die immediately*
 And natheles he grieveth non, *harms none*
 Bot goth toward the deyss on hih; *dais*
 And whan he cam the queene nyh, *near*
 He stinte his noise, and in his wise
 2190 To hire he profreth his servise,
 And leith his hed upon hire barm; *bosom*
 And sche with goodly chiere hire arm
 Aboute his necke ageinward leide, *in return laid*
 And thus the queene with him pleide
 2195 In sihte of alle men aboute.
 And ate laste he gan to loute *bend down*
 And obeissance unto hire make, *paid homage to her (formally bowed)*
 As he that wolde his leve take.
 And sodeinly his lothly forme
 2200 Into an egle he gan transforme,
 And flyh and sette him on a raile; *perched on a railing*
 Wherof the king hath gret mervaille,
 For there he pruneth him and piketh,
 As doth an hauk whan him wel liketh,
 2205 And after that himself he schok,

- Wherof that al the halle quok,
 As it a terremote were. *earthquake*
 Thei seiden alle, god was there:
 In such a res and forth he flyh. *violent motion; flew*
- 2210 The king, which al this wonder syh,
 Whan he cam to his chambre alone,
 Unto the queene he made his mone *lament*
 And of forgivenesse hir preide;
 For thanne he knew wel, as he seide,
- 2215 Sche was with childe with a godd.
 Thus was the king withoute rodd *whipping stick*
 Chastised, and the queene excused
 Of that sche hadde ben accused.
 And for the gretere evidence,
- 2220 Yit after that in the presence
 Of king Philipp and othre mo,
 Whan thei ride in the fieldes tho,
 A phesant cam before here yhe, *pheasant; their eyes*
 The which anon as thei hire syhe,
- 2225 Fleende let an ey down falle, *egg*
 And it tobrak tofore hem alle.
 And as thei token therof kepe,
 Thei syhe out of the schelle crepe
 A litel serpent on the ground,
- 2230 Which rampeth al aboute round, *creeps*
 And in agein it wolde have wonne, *returned*
 Bot for the brennyng of the sonne
 It myhte noght, and so it deide.
 And therupon the clerkes seide,
- 2235 'As the serpent, whan it was oute,
 Went envirooun the schelle aboute *around*
 And mihte noght torne in agein,
 So schal it fallen in certain:
 This child the world schal environe, *circumnavigate*
- 2240 And above alle the corone
 Him schal befalle, and in yong age
 He schal desire in his corage,
 Whan al the world is in his hond,
 To torn agein into the lond
- 2245 Wher he was bore, and in his weie
 Homward he schal with puison deie.'
 The king, which al this sihe and herde, *saw*
 Fro that dai forth, hou so it ferde,
 His jalousie hath al forgete.
- 2250 Bot he which hath the child begete,
 Nectanabus, in priveté
 The time of his nativité

- Upon the constellacioun
 Awaiteth, and relacion *Observes; [a] discourse*
 2255 Makth to the queene hou sche schal do,
 And every houre apointeth so, *prescribes*
 That no mynut therof was lore. *lost*
 So that in due time is bore
 This child, and forth with therupon
 2260 Ther felle wondres many on
 Of terremote universiel. *earthquake*
 The sonne tok colour of stiel *assumed; steel*
 And loste his lyht; the wyndes blewe
 And manye strengthes overthrewe. *strongholds*
 2265 The see his propre kinde changeth, *sea its own nature*
 And al the world his forme strangeth; *alters its form*
 The thonder with his fyri leveine *lightning*
 So cruel was upon the hevene,
 That every erthli creature
 2270 Tho thoghte his lif in aventure. *Then; its life in peril*
 The tempeste ate laste cesseth,
 The child is kept, his age encresseth, *watched over (nurtured)*
 And Alisandre his name is hote, *called*
 To whom Calistre and Aristote *Callisthenes; Aristotle*
 2275 To techen him philosophie
 Entenden, and astronomie,
 With othre thinges whiche he couthe
 Also, to teche him in his youthe
 Nectanabus tok upon honde.
 2280 Bot every man mai understonde,
 Of sorcerie hou that it wende,
 It wole himselve prove at ende,
 And namely for to beguile
 A lady, which withoute guile
 2285 Supposeth trouthe al that sche hiereth.
 Bot often he that evele stiereth *poorly steers*
 His schip is dreynt therinne amidde,
 And in this cas riht so betidde. *just so it happened*
 Nectanabus upon a nyht,
 2290 Whan it was fair and sterre lyht,
 This yonge lord ladde up on hih
 Above a tour, wher as he sih *tower*
 The sterres suche as he acompteth, *just as he recounts*
 And seith what ech of hem amonteth,
 2295 As thogh he knewe of alle thing;
 Bot yit hath he no knowleching
 What schal unto himself befall.
 Whan he hath told his wordes alle,
 This yonge lord thanne him opposeth, *questions*

- 2300 And axeth if that he supposeth
 What deth he schal himselve deie.
 He seith, 'Or Fortune is aweie *Either; mistaken*
 And every sterre hath lost his wone, *character (place)*
 Or elles of myn oghne sone
- 2305 I schal be slain, I mai noght fle.' *escape*
 Thoghte Alisandre in priveté,
 'Hierof this olde dotard lieth,' *In this instance; fool lies*
 And er that other oght aspieth, *before*
 Al sodeinliche his olde bones *i.e., whole body*
- 2310 He schof over the wal at ones, *shoved*
 And seith him, 'Ly down there apart:
 Wherof nou serveth al thin art? *Lie at some distance apart*
 Thou knewe alle othre mennes chance *fate*
 And of thiself hast ignorance.
- 2315 That thou hast seid amonges alle
 Of thi persone, is noght befallé.' *has not come to pass*
 Nectanabus, which hath his deth,
 Yit while him lasteth lif and breth
 To Alisandre he spak and seide
- 2320 That he with wrong blame on him leide. *rebuke*
 Fro point to point and al the cas
 He tolde, hou he his sone was.
 Tho he, which sory was ynowh, *Then; who*
 Out of the dich his fader drouh, *drew*
- 2325 And tolde his moder hou it ferde
 In conseil; and whan sche it herde *private*
 And kneu the toknes whiche he tolde,
 Sche nyste what sche seie scholde, *knew not*
 Bot stod abayssht as for the while
- 2330 Of his magique and al the guile.
 Sche thoghte hou that sche was deceived,
 That sche hath of a man conceived,
 And wende a god it hadde be.
 Bot natheles in such degré,
- 2335 So as sche mihte hire honour save,
 Sche schop the body was begrave. *made arrangements so that; buried*
 And thus Nectanabus aboghte *paid for*
 The sorcerie which he wroghte.
 Thogh he upon the creatures
- 2340 Thurgh his carectes and figures *charms*
 The maistrie and the pouer hadde,
 His creatour to noght him ladde,
 Agein whos lawe his craft he useth,
 Whan he for lust his god refuseth,
- 2345 And tok him to the dievles craft. *devil's*
 Lo, what profit him is belaft: *rendered*

- That thing thurgh which he wende have stonde, *thought to have*
 Ferst him exilede out of londe
 Which was his oghne, and from a king
 2350 Made him to ben an underling;
 And siththen to deceive a queene,
 That torneth him to mochel teene; *grief*
 Thurgh lust of love he gat him hate,
 That ende couthe he noght abate. *stop*
 2355 His olde sleyhtes whiche he caste,
 Yonge Alisandre hem overcaste: *overturned*
 His fader, which him misbegat,
 He slouh; a gret mishap was that. *killed*
 Bot for o mis another mys *one evil (crime); evil (crime)*
 2360 Was yolde, and so fulofte it is. *given in return*
 Nectanabus his craft miswente, *twisted awry*
 So it misfell him er he wente. *before he died*
 I not what helpeth that clergie *learning*
 Which makth a man to do folie, *folly*
 2365 And nameliche of nigromance,
 Which stant upon the mescreance. *heresy (treachery)*

[ZOROASTER]

- ☞ And for to se more evidence, *(see note)*
 Zorastes, which th'experience *Zoroaster*
 Of art magique ferst forth drouh,
 2370 Anon as he was bore, he louh, *laughed*
 Which tokne was of wo suinge. *sign; ensuing woe*
 For of his oghne controvinge
 He fond magique and tauhte it forth;
 Bot al that was him litel worth,
 2375 For of Surrie a worthi king *Assyria*
 Him slou, and that was his endyng.
 Bot yit thurgh him this craft is used,
 And he thurgh al the world accused,
 For it schal nevere wel achieve *turn out well*
 2380 That stant noght riht with the believe. *in accord with the [true] faith*
 Bot lich to wolle is evele sponne, *wool; poorly spun*
 Who lest himself hath litel wonne, *loses*
 And ende proveth every thing.

[SAUL AND THE WITCH]

- 2384 Saul, which was of Juys king, *king of the Jews*
 ☞ Up peine of deth forbad this art, *(see note)*
 And yit he tok therof his part.
 The Phitonesse in Samarie

Gaf him conseil be Sorcerie,
 Which after fell to mochel sorwe,
 2390 For he was slain upon the morwe.
Confessor To conne moche thing it helpeth, *learn*
 Bot of to mochel no man yelpeth. *boasts*
 So for to loke on every side,
 Magique mai noght wel betyde.
 2395 Forthi, my sone, I wolde rede *advise*
 That thou of these ensamples drede,
 That for no lust of erthli love
 Thou seche so to come above,
 Wherof as in the worldes wonder
 2400 Thou schalt forevere be put under.”

[ALEXANDER AND ARISTOTLE]

Amans “Mi goode fader, grant mercy,
 Forevere I schal be war therby.
 Of love what me so befalle,
 Such Sorcerie aboven alle
 2405 Fro this dai forth I schal eschuie,
 That so ne wol I noght poursuiue
 Mi lust of love for to seche.
 Bot this I wolde you beseche,
 Beside that me stant of love, *Apart from my concerns with love*
 2410 As I you herde speke above
 Hou Alisandre was betawht *entrusted*
 To Aristotle, and so wel tawht
 Of al that to a king belongeth,
 Wherof min herte sore longeth
 2415 To wite what it wolde mene.
 For be reson I wolde wene
 That if I herde of thinges strange,
 Yit for a time it scholde change
 2419 Mi peine, and lisse me somdiel.” *comfort me somewhat*
Confessor “Mi goode sone, thou seist wel.
 For wisdom, hou that evere it stonde,
 To him that can it understonde
 Doth gret profit in sondri wise;
 Bot touchende of so hih aprise,
 2425 Which is noght unto Venus knowe,
 I mai it noght miselve knowe,
 Which of hir court am al forthdrawe
 And can nothing bot of hir lawe.
 Bot natheles to knowe more
 2430 Als wel as thou me longeth sore;
 And for it helpeth to comune, *since; discuss*

Al ben thei noght to me comune,
The scoles of philosophie,
Yit thenke I for to specefie,
2435 In boke as it is comprehended,
Wherof thou mihtest ben amended.
For thogh I be noght al cunnyng
Upon the forme of this wrytyng,
Som part therof yit have I herd,
2440 In this matiere hou it hath ferd.”

Although they are not

improved

EXPLICIT LIBER SEXTUS



CONFESSIO AMANTIS: BOOK 7 (EDUCATION OF THE KING)

INCIPIT LIBER SEPTIMUS

i. *Omnibus in causis sapiens doctrina salutem
 Consequitur, nec habet quis nisi doctus opem.
 Naturam superat doctrina, viro quod et ortus
 Ingenii docilis non dedit, ipsa dabit.
 Non ita discretus hominum per climata regnat,
 Quin, magis ut sapiat, indiget ipse scole.¹*

[Confessor] “I, Genius, the prest of love,

Mi sone, as thou hast preid above

since; entreated

That I the scole schal declare

Of Aristotle and ek the fare

[educational] circumstances

5 Of Alisandre, hou he was tauht,

I am somdel therof destrauht,

perturbed

For it is noght to the matiere

Of love, why we sitten hiere

¶ To schryve, so as Venus bad.

(see note)

10 Bot natheles, for it is glad

So as thou seist, for thin aprise

instruction

To hiere of suche thinges wise,

Wherof thou myht the time lisse,

relieve

So as I can, I schal thee wisse.

inform (guide)

15 For wisdom is at every throwe

circumstance

Above alle other thing to knowe

In loves cause and elleswhere.

Forthi, my sone, unto thin ere,

perception

Though it be noght in the registre

book of rules

20 Of Venus, yit of that Calistre

what Callisthenes

And Aristotle whylom write

once wrote

To Alisandre, thou schalt wite.

know

¹ *In every matter, wise doctrine gains well-being, nor does anyone except the learned man acquire wealth. Doctrine surpasses nature; whatever ancestry ripe for learning does not provide a clever man, doctrine will give him. No man of discretion rules anywhere in the world's regions who would not impoverish himself by schooling in order to learn more.*

- Bot for the lores ben diverse, *teachings*
 I thenke ferst to thee reherce
 25 The nature of Philosophie, *learning*
 Which Aristotle of his clergie,
 Wys and expert in the sciences, *categories (branches of learning)*
 Declareth thilke intelligences,
 As of thre pointz in principal.
 30 Wherof the ferste in special
 Is Theorique, which is groundred
 On him which al the world hath founded,
 Which comprehendeth al the lore. *understands all matters of wisdom*
 And for to loken overmore,
 35 Next of sciences the seconde
 Is Rethorique, whos faconde *skill in language*
 Above alle othre is eloquent.
 To telle a tale in juggement *present a case at trial*
 So wel can no man speke as he.
 40 The laste science of the thre
 It is Practique, whos office *separates*
 The vertu tryeth fro the vice, *disposition*
 And techeth upon goode thewes *scoundrels*
 To fle the compaignie of schrewes,
 45 Which stant in disposicion *Which (i.e., Practique); disposal*
 Of mannes free eleccion. *choice*
 Practique enformeth ek the reule,
 Hou that a worthi king schal reule
 His realme bothe in werre and pes. *kingdom; war; peace*
 50 Lo, thus danz Aristotiles *don (professor)*
 These thre sciences hath divided
 And the nature also decided,
 Wherof that ech of hem schal serve.
 The ferste, which is the conserve
 55 And kepere of the remenant,
 As that which is most sufficant
 And chief of the Philosophie,
 If I therof schal specefie
 So as the Philosophre tolde, *(i.e., Aristotle)*
 60 Nou herkne, and kep that thou it holde." *listen; mark (be sure)*

[THEORY, THE FIRST POINT OF PHILOSOPHY]

- ii. *Prima creatorem dat scire sciencia summum:*
Qui caput agnoscit, sufficit illud ei.

*Plura viros quandoque iuuat nescire, set illud
Quod videt expediens, sobrius ille sapit.*¹

[**Confessor**] “Of Theorique principal

The Philosophre in special

particular

The propretees hath determined,

As thilke which is enlumined

65 Of wisdom and of hih prudence

high

☞ Above alle othre in his science.

(see note)

And stant departed upon thre,

The ferste of which in his degré

Is cleped in Philosophie

called

70 The science of Theologie;

That other named is Phisique,

second

The thridde is seid Mathematique.

called

[**THEOLOGY**]

Theologie is that science

Which unto man gifth evidence

75 Of thing which is noght bodely,

physical

Wherof men knowe redely

The hihe almyhti Trinité,

Which is o God in unité

Withouten ende and beginnyng

80 And creatour of alle thinge,

Of hevene, of erthe and ek of helle.

Wherof, as olde bokes telle,

The Philosophre in his resoun

(i.e., Aristotle)

Wrote upon this conclusioun,

85 And of his wrytinge in a clause

He clepeth God the ferste cause,

Which of Himself is thilke good,

Withoute whom nothing is good,

Of which that every creature

90 Hath his beinge and his nature.

Has come into existence

☞ After the beinge of the thinges

essential nature (see note)

Ther ben thre formes of beinges:

entities

Thing which began and ende schal,

That thing is cleped temporal;

95 Ther is also be other weie

Thing which began and schal noght deie,

¹ *The first branch of learning allows one to know the highest creator: who recognizes the head, that suffices for him. Not knowing more than that is sometimes good for men; but what he sees useful, he very prudently comes to know.*

- As soules, that ben spiritiel:
 Here beinge is perpetual. *Their manner of existence (essence)*
 Bot ther is on above the sonne, *one; sun*
 100 Whos time nevere was begonne,
 And endeles schal evere be;
 That is the God, whos magesté
 Alle othre thinges schal governe,
 And His beinge is sempiterné.
 105 The God, to whom that al honour
 Belongeth, He is creatour,
 And othre ben Hise creatures.
 The God commandeth the natures
 That thei to Him obeien alle;
 110 Withouten Him, what so befallé,
 Her myht is non, and He mai al. *Their*
 The God was evere and evere schal, *intention*
 And thei begonne of His assent;
 The times alle be present
 115 To God, to hem and alle unknowe,
 Bot what Him liketh that thei knowe.
 Thus bothe an angel and a man,
 The whiche of al that God began
 Be chief, obeien Goddes myht,
 120 And he stant endeles upriht.
 To this science ben privé
 The clerks of divinité,
 The whiche unto the poeple prechen
 The feith of holi cherche and techen,
 125 Which in som cas upon believe *faith*
 Stant more than thei conne prieve *prove*
 Be weie of argument sensible. *determinant argument (logic)*
 Bot natheles it is credible,
 And doth a man gret meede have, *causes one to have; reward*
 130 To him that thenkth himself to save.
 Theologie in such a wise
 Of hih science and hih aprise *lofty wisdom; learning*
 Above alle othre stant unlike,
 134 And is the ferste of Theorique.

[PHYSICS]

- ☞ Phisique is after the secounde, *(see note)*
 Thurgh which the Philosophre hath founde
 To techen sondri knowlechinges
 Upon the bodiliche thinges. *entities*
 Of man, of beste, of herbe, of ston,
 140 Of fisch, of foughl, of everychon *birds*

	That ben of bodely substance,	<i>physical (material)</i>
	The nature and the circumstance	
	Thurgh this science it is ful soght,	<i>fully investigated</i>
144	Which vailleth and which vailleth noght.	<i>is beneficial/profits</i>

[MATHEMATICS]

☞	The thridde point of Theorique,	<i>(see note)</i>
	Which cleped is Mathematique,	
	Devided is in sondri wise	
	And stant upon diverse aprise.	<i>fields of learning</i>
	The ferst of whiche is Arsmetique,	<i>art of measuring (calculating)</i>
150	And the secounde is seid Musique,	<i>called</i>
	The thridde is ek Geometrie,	
	Also the ferthe Astronomie.	
	Of Arsmetique the matiere	
	Is that of which a man mai liere	<i>learn</i>
155	What Algorisme in nombre amonteth,	<i>computing with Arabic numbers signifies</i>
	Whan that the wise man acompteth	<i>computes</i>
	After the formel propreté	
	Of Algorismes abecé.	<i>the A,B,Cs of Arabic numbering</i>
	Be which multiplicacioun	
160	Is mad and diminucioun	
	Of sommes be th'experience	
	Of this art and of this science.	
☞	The seconde of Mathematique,	<i>(see note)</i>
	Which is the science of Musique,	
165	That techeth upon Armonie	<i>Art of Composition (Harmony)</i>
	A man to make melodie	
	Be vois and soun of instrument	
	Thurgh notes of acordement,	<i>harmony</i>
	The whiche men pronounce alofte,	<i>aloud</i>
170	Nou scharpe notes and nou softe,	<i>piercing; gentle</i>
	Nou hihe notes and nou lowe,	
	As be the gamme a man mai knowe,	<i>musical scale</i>
	Which techeth the prolacion	<i>combination and rhythmic arrangement</i>
174	Of note and the condicion.	<i>quality</i>
☞	Mathematique of his science	<i>(see note)</i>
	Hath yit the thridde intelligence	
	Full of wisdom and of clergie	
	And cleped is Geometrie,	
	Thurgh which a man hath thilke sleyhte,	<i>expertise (skill in calculation)</i>
180	Of lengthe, of brede, of depthe, of heyhte	
	To knowe the proporcion	
	Be verrai calculacion	
	Of this science; and in this wise	

- 185 These olde philosophres wise,
 Of al this worldes erthe round,
 Hou large, hou thikke was the ground,
 Controevden th'experience; *Discovered by observation*
 The cercle and the circumference
 Of everything unto the hevene;
 190 Thei setten point and mesure evene.
 Mathematique above th'erthe
 Of hyh science hath yit the ferthe, *fourth*
 Which spekth upon Astronomie *allows understanding of*
 And techeth of the sterres hihe, *teaches about*
 195 Beginnynge upward fro the mone. *moon*
 Bot ferst, as it was for to done,
 This Aristotle in other thing
 Unto this worthi yonge king
 The kinde of every element *nature*
 200 Which stant under the firmament,
 Hou it is mad and in what wise, *made; manner*
 Fro point to point he gan devise."

[FOUR-FOLD CREATION]

- iii. *Quatuor omnipotens elementa creavit origo,
 Quatuor et venti partibus ora dabat.
 Nostraque quadruplici complexio sorte creatur.
 Corpore sicque suo stat variatus homo.*¹

- [Confessor] "Tofore the creacion
 Of eny worldes stacion,
 205 Of hevene, of erthe, or eke of helle,
 So as these olde bokes telle,
 As soun tofore the song is set *sound before*
 And yit thei ben togedre knet, *knit*
 ¶ Riht so the hihe pourveance *(see note)*
 210 Tho hadde under his ordinance
 A gret substance, a gret matiere,
 Of which he wolde in his manere
 These othre thinges make and forme.
 For yit withouten eny forme
 215 Was that matiere universal,
 Which hihte ylem in special. *is called hyle (primordial matter)*
 Of ylem, as I am enformed,
 These elementz ben mad and formed,

¹ *The omnipotent Beginning created the four elements and gave mouths to the regions of the four winds. Our constitution too is fashioned in a four-fold manner, and thus in his body man exists in a varied state.*

Of ylem elementz thei hote *are called*
 220 After the Scolle of Aristote,
 Of whiche if more I schal reherce,
 Foure elementz ther ben diverse.

[FOUR ELEMENTS]

☞ The ferste of hem men erthe calle, *(see note)*
 Which is the lowest of hem alle,
 225 And in his forme is schape round, *its*
 Substantial, strong, sadd and sound, *firmly established and undivided*
 As that which mad is sufficient *created*
 To bere up al the remenant.
 For as the point in a compas
 230 Stant evene amiddes, riht so was *right in the middle*
 This erthe set and schal abyde,
 ☞ That it may swerve to no side, *(see note)*
 And hath his centre after the lawe
 Of kinde, and to that centre drawe *nature; to fall toward that center*
 235 Desireth every worldes thing,
 If ther ne were no lettyng. *obstruction*
 ☞ Above th'erthe kepeth his bounde *(see note)*
 The water, which is the secounde
 Of elementz, and al withoute
 240 It environeth th'erthe aboute.
 Bot as it scheweth, noght forthei *nevertheless*
 This soubtil water myhtely, *thin (pure)*
 Thogh it be of himselve softe, *itself*
 The strengthe of th'erthe perceth ofte; *fortified matter*
 245 For riht as veines ben of blod
 In man, riht so the water flod
 Th'erthe of his cours maketh ful of veines,
 Als wel the helles as the pleines. *hills; plains*
 And that a man may sen at ye, *eye*
 250 For wher the hulles ben most hyhe, *hills; high*
 Ther mai men welle stremes finde.
 So proveth it be weie of kinde *explains*
 The water heyher than the lond.
 ☞ And over this nou understond, *(see note)*
 255 Air is the thridde of elementz,
 Of whos kinde his aspiementz *nature its breathing*
 Taketh every lifissh creature, *living*
 The which schal upon erthe endure.
 For as the fissh, if it be dreie,
 260 Mot in defaute of water deie, *Must for lack of*
 Riht so withouten air on lyve

- No man ne beste myhte thryve,
The which is mad of fleissh and bon.
264 There is outake of alle non. *exempted*
☞ This air in periferies thre *atmospheric layers (see note)*
Divided is of such degré,
Benethe is on and on amidde, *one*
To whiche above is set the thridde,
And upon the divisions
270 There ben diverse impressions
Of moist and ek of drye also,
Whiche of the sonne bothe tuo
Ben drawe and haled upon hy, *raised*
And maken cloudes in the sky,
275 As schewed is at mannes sihte;
Wherof be day and ek be nyhte
After the times of the yer
Among ous upon erthe her
279 In sondri wise thinges falle.
☞ The ferste periferie of alle *(see note)*
Engendreth myst and overmore
The dewes and the frostes hore,
After thilke intersticion *interstice (slot)*
284 In whiche thei take impression.
☞ Fro the seconde, as bokes sein, *(see note)*
The moiste dropes of the reyn
Descenden into middilerthe,
And tempreth it to sed and erthe,
And doth to springe grass and flour. *causes to flower*
290 And ofte also the grete schour
Out of such place it mai be take, *taken*
That it the forme schal forsake
Of reyn, and into snow be torned; *rain*
And ek it mai be so sojourned
295 In sondri places up alofte,
That into hail it torneth ofte.
☞ The thridde of th'air after the lawe *(see note)*
Thurgh such matiere as up is drawe
Of dreie thing, as it is ofte,
300 Among the cloudes upon lofte,
And is so clos, it may noght oute;
Thanne is it chased sore aboute,
Til it to fyr and leyt be falle, *lightning*
And thanne it brekth the cloudes alle,
305 The whiche of so gret noyse craken,
That thei the feerful thonder maken.
The thonderstrok smit er it leyte, *The lightning bolt strikes before it flashes*

	And yit men sen the fyr and leyte,	<i>light</i>
	The thonderstrok er that men hiere:	<i>before they hear the thunder</i>
310	So mai it wel be proeved hiere	
	In thing which schewed is fro feer,	<i>is perceived from a distance</i>
	A mannes yhe is there nerr	<i>[That]; eye; nearer</i>
	Thanne is the soun to mannes ere.	<i>sound; ear</i>
	And natheles it is gret feere	<i>fear</i>
315	Bothe of the strok and of the fyr,	
	Of which is no recoverir	<i>safety (shelter)</i>
	In place wher that thei descende,	
	Bot if God wolde His grace sende.	<i>Unless</i>
☞	And for to speken over this,	<i>(see note)</i>
320	In this partie of th'air it is	
	That men fulofte sen be nyhte	<i>see by night</i>
	The fyr in sondri forme alyhte.	
	Somtime the fyrdrake it semeth,	<i>fiery dragon</i>
	And so the lewed poeple it demeth;	<i>ignorant; judge</i>
325	Somtime it semeth as it were	
	A sterre, which that glydeth there:	<i>meteorite</i>
	Bot it is nouthur of the tuo,	<i>neither</i>
	The Philosophre telleth so,	<i>i.e., Aristotle</i>
	And seith that of impressions	
330	Thurgh diverse exalacions	<i>vaporous emanations</i>
	Upon the cause and the matiere	
	Men sen diverse forme appiere	<i>come into being</i>
	Of fyr, the whiche hath sondri name.	<i>many names</i>
	Assub, he seith, is thilke same,	<i>A falling star</i>
335	The which in sondry place is founde,	
	Whanne it is falle down to grounde,	
	So as the fyr it hath aneled,	<i>kindled</i>
	Lich unto slym which is congeled.	
	Of exalacion I finde	
340	Fyr kinled of the same kinde,	<i>ignited</i>
	Bot it is of another forme;	
	Wherof, if that I schal conforme	
	The figure unto that it is,	
	These olde clerkes tellen this,	
345	That it is lik a got skippende,	<i>skipping goat</i>
	And for that it is such semende,	
	It hatte <i>Capra saliens</i> .	<i>is called "leaping goat"</i>
	And ek these astronomiens	<i>astronomers</i>
	Another fyr also, be nyhte	
350	Which scheweth him to mannes syhte,	<i>itself</i>
	Thei clepen Eges, the which brenneth	<i>St. Elmo's fire</i>
	Lik to the corrant fyr that renneth	<i>running</i>
	Upon a corde, as thou hast sein,	

- Whan it with poudre is so besein *provided (furnished)*
 355 Of sulphre and othre thinges mo. *more*
 Ther is another fyr also,
 Which semeth to a mannes yhe *eye*
 Be nyhtes time as thogh ther flyhe *By; flies*
 A dragon brennende in the sky, *burning*
 360 And that is cleped proprely *called*
 Daaly, wherof men sein fulofte, *say*
 'Lo, wher the fyr drake alofte
 Fleth up in th'air!' and so thei demen. *reckon*
 Bot why the fyres suche semen
 365 Of sondri formes to beholde,
 The wise Philosophre tolde, *i.e., Aristotle*
 So as tofore it hath ben herd.
- Confessor** Lo thus, my sone, hou it hath ferd: *happens*
 Of air the due propreté
 370 In sondri wise thou myht se, *ways*
 And hou under the firmament
 It is ek the thridde element,
 Which environeth bothe tuo, *surrounds*
 374 The water and the lond also.
- ☞ And for to tellen overthis *(see note)*
 Of elementz which the ferthe is,
 That is the fyr in his degré,
 Which environeth th'other thre
 And is withoute moist al drye. *lacking moisture*
 380 Bot lest nou what seith the clergie; *hear; learned traditions*
 For upon hem that I have seid
 The creatour hath set and leid
 The kinde and the complexion *nature; constitution*
 Of alle mennes nacion.
- 385 Foure elementz sondri ther be, *diverse*
 Lich unto whiche of that degré *Like*
 Among the men ther ben also
 Complexions foure and no mo,
 Wherof the Philosophre treteth,
 390 That he nothing behinde leteth, *[Such] that; leaves*
 And seith hou that thei ben diverse,
 So as I schal to thee reherse.

[FOUR COMPLEXIONS]

- He which natureth every kinde, *gives particular traits to*
 The myhti God, so as I finde,
 395 Of man, which is his creature,
 Hath so devided the nature,
 ☞ That non til other wel acordeth; *(see note)*

- And be the cause it so discordeth,
 The lif which fieleth the seknesse *illness*
 400 Mai stonde upon no sekernesse. *certitude*
 Of th'erthe, which is cold and drye,
 The kinde of man Malencolie
 Is cleped, and that is the ferste, *Is called*
 The most ungoodlich and the werste; *unhappy (unfortunate)*
 405 For unto loves werk on nyht
 Him lacketh bothe will and myht:
 No wonder is, in lusty place
 Of love though he lese grace. *should lose*
 What man hath that complexion,
 410 Full of ymaginacion
 Of dredes and of wrathful thoghtes,
 He fret himselven al to noghtes. *wears himself out; nothing*
 The water, which is moyste and cold,
 415 Makth Fleume, which is manifold *Phlegm (see note)*
 Forgetel, slou and wery sone *Forgetful; slow; weary*
 Of everything which is to done.
 He is of kinde sufficant
 To holde love his covenant, *perform sexually*
 Bot that him lacketh appetit,
 420 Which longeth unto such delit. *is appropriate*
 425 What man that takth his kinde of th'air, *nature (see note)*
 He schal be lyht, he schal be fair,
 For his complexion is blood. *sanguine*
 Of alle ther is non so good,
 425 For he hath bothe will and myht
 To plese and paie love his riht: *pay; its just desserts*
 Wher as he hath love undertake,
 Wrong is if that he be forsake.
 430 The fyr of his condicion *(see note)*
 Appreth the complexion *Is a characteristic symptom of the constitution*
 Which in a man is Colre hote, *Choler called*
 Whos propretes ben dreie and hote.
 It makth a man ben enginous *ingenious (cunning)*
 And swift of fote and ek irous; *irascible*
 435 Of contek and folhastifnesse *quarreling*
 He hath a riht gret besnesse,
 To thenke of love and litel may. *And have little ability to think about love*
 Though he behote wel a day, *promises well by day*
 On nyht whan that he wole assaie, *exert himself*
 440 He may ful evele his dette paie. *poorly perform sexually*
 445 After the kinde of th'element, *(see note)*
 Thus stant a mannes kinde went *natural inclination*
 As touchende his complexion,

- Upon sondri division
 445 Of dreie, of moiste, of chele, of hete, *cold; hot*
 And ech of hem his oghne sete *habitation*
 Appropred hath withinne a man.
 And ferst to telle as I began,
 ¶ The splen is to Malencolie *(see note)*
 450 Assigned for herbergerie. *lodging*
 ¶ The moiste Fleume with his cold *Phlegm (see note)*
 Hath in the lunges for his hold
 Ordeined him a propre stede, *place*
 454 To duelle ther as he is bede. *prescribed [to do]*
 ¶ To the Sanguin complexion *(see note)*
 Nature of hire inspeccion
 A propre hous hath in the livere *liver*
 For his duellinge mad delivere. *free (unencumbered)*
 ¶ The dreie Colre with his hete *heat*
 460 Be weie of kinde his propre sete *residence*
 Hath in the galle, wher he duelleth, *gall bladder*
 So as the Philosophre telleth.

[FOUR SERVANTS OF THE HEART]

- ¶ Nou over this is for to wite, *know (see note)*
 As it is in Phisique write
 465 Of livere, of lunge, of galle, of splen,
 Thei alle unto the herte ben
 Servantz, and ech in his office
 Entendeth to don him service, *Strives*
 As he which is chief lord above.
 470 The livere makth him for to love,
 The lunge gifth him weie of speche,
 The galle serveth to do wreche, *causes one to inflict harm*
 The splen doth him to lawhe and pleie, *laugh*
 Whan al unclennesse is aweie. *disease*
 475 Lo, thus hath ech of hem his dede. *its behavior (function)*
 And to sustienen hem and fede
 In time of recreacion,
 Nature hath in creacion
 The stomach for a comun coc *cook*
 480 Ordeined, so as seith the boc.
 The stomach coc is for the halle,
 And builleth mete for hem alle, *cooks food*
 To make hem myhty for to serve
 The herte, that he schal nocht sterve, *die (starve)*
 485 For as a king in his empire
 Above alle othre is lord and sire,

- So is the herte principal, *the governor*
 To whom reson in special
 Is gove as for the governance. *given*
 490 And thus nature his pourveance *preparations*
 Hath mad for man to liven hiere;
 Bot God, which hath the soule diere, *holds the soul dearly*
 Hath formed it in other wise.
 That can no man pleinli devise;
 495 Bot as the clerkes ous enforme,
 That lich to God it hath a forme,
 Thurgh which figure and which liknesse
 The soule hath many an hyh noblesse *lofty perfection (excellence)*
 Appropred to his oghne kinde. *Characteristic of its own*
 500 Bot ofte hir wittes be mad blinde
 Al onliche of this ilke point, *entirely because of*
 That hir abydinge is conjoint *their destiny*
 Forth with the bodi for to duelle.
 That on desireth toward helle, *one yearns for*
 505 That other upward to the hevene;
 So schul thei nevere stonde in evene,
 Bot if the fleissh be overcome
 And that the soule have holi nome *wholly taken over*
 The governance, and that is selde, *seldom*
 510 Whil that the fleissh him mai bewelde. *may dominate him*
 Al erthli thing which God began
 Was only mad to serve man;
 Bot He the soule al only made
 Himselfen for to serve and glade. *please*
 515 Alle othre bestes that men finde
 Thei serve unto here oghne kinde;
 Bot to reson the soule serveth,
 Wherof the man His thonk deserveth *God's blessing obtains*
 And get him with hise werkes goode *gets [for] himself by*
 520 The perdurable lyves foode. *eternal life's*

[FOUR DIVISIONS OF THE WORLD]

- Of what matiere it schal be told,
 525 A tale lyketh manyfold *pleases (see note)*
 The betre, if it be spoke plein:
 Thus thinke I for to torne agein
 And telle plenerly therfore *more completely*
 Of th'erthe, wherof nou tofore
 I spak, and of the water eke,
 So as these olde clerkes spieke,
 And sette proprely the bounde
 530 After the forme of mappemounde, *map of the world*

- Thurgh which the ground be pourparties *by sections*
 Departed is in thre parties,
 That is Asie, Aufrique, Europe,
 The whiche under the hevene cope, *mantle of heaven*
 535 Als ferr as streccheth eny ground,
 Begripeth al this erthe round. *Comprise*
 Bot after that the hihe wrieche *vengeance*
 The water weies let out seche
 And overgo the helles hye, *high hills*
 540 Which every kinde made dye *brought death to every creature*
 That upon middelerthe stod,
 Outake Noe and his blod — *Except; kin*
 His sones and his doughtres thre —
 Thei were sauf and so was he.
 545 Here names, who that rede rihte, *Their; understands correctly*
 Sem, Cam, Japhet the brethren hihte; *were called*
 And whanne thilke almyhty hond
 Withdrouh the water fro the lond,
 And al the rage was aweie *flood*
 550 And erthe was the mannes weie,
 The sones thre, of whiche I tolde,
 Riht after that hemselfe wolde,
 This world departe thei begonne. *According to what they themselves*
divided
 ☞ Asie, which lay to the sonne *sun (see note)*
 555 Upon the marche of Orient, *region of the East*
 Was graunted be comun assent
 To Sem, which was the sone eldeste;
 For that partie was the beste *greatest*
 And double as moche as othre tuo,
 560 And was that time bounded so *set with boundaries*
 Wher as the flod which men Nil calleth *Nile*
 Departeth fro his cours and falleth
 Into the See Alexandrine, *(see note)*
 Ther takth Asie ferst seisine *possession*
 565 Toward the West, and over this
 Of Canahim wher the flod is
 Into the Grete See rennende; *Mediterranean running*
 Fro that into the worldes ende
 Estward, Asie it is algates, *in every way (continuously)*
 570 Til that men come unto the gates
 Of Paradis, and there ho. *stops (whoa!)*
 And schortly for to speke it so,
 Of Orient in general
 574 Withinne his bounde Asie hath al.
 ☞ And thanne upon that other syde *(see note)*
 Westward, as it fell thilke tyde, *befell at that time*
 The brother which was hote Cham *called*

- Upon his part Aufrique nam. *took*
 Japhet Europe tho tok he,
 580 Thus parten thei the world on thre.
 Bot yit ther ben of londes fele *many*
 In Occident as for the chele, *the West; cold*
 In Orient as for the hete, *the East; heat*
 Which of the poeple be forlete *abandoned*
 585 As lond desert that is unable, *not usable*
 For it mai noght ben habitable.
- ☞ The water eke hath sondri bounde, *demarcations (see note)*
 After the lond wher it is founde,
 And takth his name of thilke londes *its; the same lands*
 590 Wher that it renneth on the strondes: *along the shore*
 Bot thilke see which hath no wane *limits*
 Is cleped the gret Occeane, *called; Ocean*
 Out of the which arise and come
 The hyhe flodes alle and some. *high tides*
 595 Is non so litel welle spring,
 Which ther ne takth his beginnyng,
 And lich a man that haleth breth *its origin*
 Be weie of kinde, so it geth *draws breath*
 Out of the see and in agein, *According to nature; goes*
 600 The water, as the bokes sein. *ocean*
 ☞ Of elementz the propretes *tell*
 Hou that thei stonden be degres, *(see note)*
 As I have told, nou myht thou hiere, *hear*
 Mi goode sone, al the matiere
 605 Of erthe, of water, air, and fyr.
 And for thou saist that thi desir
 Is for to witen overmore
 The forme of Aristotles lore, *teaching*
 He seith in his entendement, *discourse*
 610 That yit ther is an element
 Above the foure, and is the fifte,
 Set of the hihe Goddes gifte,
 The which that orbis cleped is. *sphere*
 And therupon he telleth this,
 615 That as the schelle hol and sound
 Encloseth al aboute round
 What thing withinne an ey belongeth, *egg*
 Riht so this orbis underfongeth *sphere; contains*
 These elementz alle everychon,
 620 Which I have spoke of on and on. *one by one*
 Bot overthis nou tak good hiede,
 Mi sone, for I wol procede
 To speke upon Mathematique,
 Which grounded is on Theorique.

- 625 The science of Astronomie
 I thinke for to specefie, *explicate*
 Withoute which, to telle plein,
 Alle othre science is in vein
 Toward the scole of erthli thinges.
- 630 For as an egle with his winges
 Fleth above alle that men finde,
 So doth this science in his kinde.” *its nature*

[ASTRONOMY]

- iv. Lege planetarum magis inferiora reguntur,
 Ista set interdum regula fallit opus.
 Vir mediante deo sapiens dominabitur astris,
 Fata nec immerito quid nouitatis agunt.*¹

[Confessor] “Benethe upon this erthe hiere


- Of alle thinges the matiere,
 635 As tellen ous thei that ben lerned,
 Of thing above it stant governed,
 That is to sein of the planetes.
 The cheles bothe and ek the hetes, *cold weather; hot*
- ☞ The chances of the world also, *(see note)*
 640 That we fortune clepen so, *call*
 Among the mennes nacion
 Al is thurgh constellacion,
 Wherof that som man hath the wele, *good fortune*
 And som man hath deseses fele *distresses many*
- 645 In love als wel as othre thinges.
 The stat of realmes and of kinges
 In time of pes, in time of werre
 It is conceived of the sterre: *caused by*
 And thus seith the naturien *natural philosopher*
 650 Which is an astronomien. *astronomer/astrologer*
 Bot the divin seith otherwise, *theologian*
 That if men weren goode and wise
 And plesant unto the Godhede,
 Thei scholden nought the sterres drede. *fear*
- 655 For o man, if him wel befalle, *if he is lucky*
 Is more worth than ben thei alle
 Towardes Him that weldeth al. *affects*
 Bot yit the lawe original,
 Which He hath set in the natures,

¹ Things lower down are ruled by the law of the planets, and sometimes that governance foils endeavor. With God's intervention the wise man will rule the stars, and the fates will not cause anything suddenly unfavorable.

- 660 Mot worchen in the creatures, *Must*
 That therof mai be non obstacle,
 Bot if it stonde upon miracle
 Thurgh preiere of som holy man.
 And forthi, so as I began
- 665 To speke upon Astronomie,
 As it is write in the clergie, *in learned sources*
 To telle hou the planetes fare,
 Som part I thenke to declare,
 Mi sone, unto thin audience. *hearing*
- 670 Astronomie is the science
 Of wisdom and of hih connyng,
 Which makth a man have knowleching
 Of sterres in the firmament, *advanced learning*
 Figure, cercle, and moevement *stars*
- 675 Of ech of hem in sondri place,
 And what between hem is of space,
 Hou so thei moeve or stonde faste,
 Al this it telleth to the laste. *discloses*
 Assembled with Astronomie *Associated*
- 680 Is ek that ilke Astrologie,
 The which in juggementz acompteth *evaluates*
 Th'effect, what every sterre amonteth, *signifies*
 And hou thei causen many a wonder
 To tho climatz that stonde hem under. *regions*
- 685 And for to telle it more plein,
 These olde philosophres sein
 That orbis, which I spak of err, *sphere; spoke of earlier*
 Is that which we fro th'erthe a ferr *afar*
 Beholde, and firmament it calle,
- 690 In which the sterres stonden alle,
 Among the whiche in special
 Planetes sefne principal *seven*
 Ther ben, that mannes sihte demeth, *regards*
 Bot th'orizonte, as to ous semeth. *Beyond the celestial vault*
- 695 And also ther ben signes twelve.
 Whiche have her cercles be hemselve
 Compassed in the zodiaque, *spheres by themselves*
 In which thei have here places take. *their*
 And as thei stonden in degré,
- 700 Here cercles more or lasse be,
 Mad after the proporcion
 Of th'erthe, whos condicion
 Is set to be the foundement
 To sustiene up the firmament.
- 705 And be this skile a man mai knowe, *by*
 The more that thei stonden lowe,

	The more ben the cercles lasse;	<i>smaller</i>
	That causeth why that some passe	
	Here due cours tofore another.	<i>before</i>
710	Bot nou, mi lieve dere brother,	
	As thou desirest for to wite	
	What I finde in the bokes write,	
	To telle of the planetes sevene,	
	Hou that thei stonde upon the hevene	
715	And in what point that thei ben inne,	
	Tak hiede, for I wol beginne,	
	So as the Philosophre tauhte	<i>taught</i>
	To Alisandre and it betauhte,	<i>commended</i>
	Wherof that he was fulli tawht	<i>instructed</i>
720	Of wisdom, which was him betawht.	<i>entrusted</i>

[SEVEN PLANETS]

	Benethe alle othre stant the mone,	<i>At the base of (see note)</i>
	The which hath with the see to done.	
	Of flodes hihe and ebbes lowe	<i>ocean</i>
	Upon his change it schal be knowe.	<i>tides</i>
725	And every fissh which hath a schelle	
	Mot in his governance duelle,	
	To wexe and wane in his degré,	
	As be the mone a man mai se;	
	And al that stant upon the grounde	
730	Of his moisture it mot be founde.	
	Alle othre sterres, as men finde,	
	Be schynende of here oghne kinde	
	Outake only the monelyht,	<i>Except</i>
	Which is noght of himselve bright,	
735	Bot as he takth it of the sonne.	<i>receives it from</i>
	And yit he hath noght al fulwonne	
	His lyht, that he nys somdiel derk;	<i>so that; is not</i>
	Bot what the lette is of that werk	<i>difficulty</i>
	In Almageste it telleth this:	<i>i.e., Ptolemy's astronomical treatise</i>
740	The mones cercle so lowe is,	<i>close to earth</i>
	Wherof the sonne out of his stage	
	Ne seth him noght with full visage,	
	For he is with the ground beschaded,	<i>overshadowed</i>
	So that the mone is somdiel faded	
745	And may noght fully schyne cler.	
	Bot what man under his pouer	
	Is bore, he schal his places change	<i>born</i>
	And seche manye londes strange.	
	And as of this condicion	
750	The mones disposicion	

	Upon the lond of Alemaigne	<i>Germany</i>
	Is set, and ek upon Bretaigne,	
	Which nou is cleped Engeland;	
754	For thei travaile in every lond.	<i>labor</i>
☞	Of the planetes the secounde	<i>(see note)</i>
	Above the mone hath take his bounde,	<i>its planetary orbit</i>
	Mercurie, and his nature is this,	
	That under him who that bore is,	<i>born</i>
	In boke he schal be studious	<i>zealous</i>
760	And in wrytinge curious,	
	And slouh and lustles to travaile	<i>sluggish</i>
	In thing which elles myhte availe:	<i>prosper (be sufficient)</i>
	He loveth ese, he loveth reste,	
	So is he noght the worthieste;	
765	Bot yit with somdiel besinesse	<i>diligence (industry)</i>
	His herte is set upon richesse.	
	And as in this condicion,	
	Th'effect and disposicion	
	Of this planete and of his chance	<i>its influences</i>
770	Is most in Burgoigne and in France.	
☞	Next to Mercurie, as wol befallē,	<i>as it so happens (see note)</i>
	Stant that planete which men calle	
	Venus, whos constellacion	
	Governeth al the nacion	
775	Of lovers, wher thei spiede or non,	<i>whether; succeed or not</i>
	Of whiche I trowe thou be on:	<i>one</i>
	Bot whiderward thin happes wende,	<i>fortunes turn</i>
	Schal this planete schewe at ende,	
	As it hath do to many mo,	
780	To some wel, to some wo.	<i>gladness (bliss); woe</i>
	And natheles of this planete	
	The moste part is softe and swete;	<i>benevolent; pleasurable</i>
	For who that therof takth his berthē,	
	He schal desire joie and merthe,	
785	Gentil, courteis, and debonaire,	
	To speke his wordes softe and faire,	
	Such schal he be be weie of kinde,	<i>by; nature</i>
	And overal wher he may finde	
	Plesance of love, his herte boweth	
790	With al his myht and there he woweth.	<i>woos</i>
	He is so ferforth amourous,	<i>to such a degree</i>
	He not what thing is vicious	<i>knows not</i>
	Touchende love, for that lawe	
	Ther mai no maner man withdrawe,	
795	The which venerien is bore	<i>is born under Venus</i>
	Be weie of kinde, and therefore	
	Venus of love the goddesse	



	Is cleped: bot of wantounesse	<i>called</i>
	The climat of hir lecherie	<i>region of influence</i>
800	Is most commun in Lombardie.	
☞	Next unto this planete of love	<i>(see note)</i>
	The brighte sonne stant above,	
	Which is the hindrere of the nyht	
	And forthrere of the daies lyht,	
805	As he which is the worldes ye,	<i>eye</i>
	Thurgh whom the lusti compaignie	
	Of foules be the morwe singe,	<i>birds at</i>
	The freisshe floures sprede and springe,	
	The hihe tre the ground beschadeth,	<i>tall; shades</i>
810	And every mannes herte gladeth.	<i>makes glad</i>
	And for it is the hed planete,	<i>principal</i>
	Hou that he sitteth in his sete,	
	Of what richesse, of what nobleie,	
814	These bokes telle, and thus thei seie.	
☞	Of gold glistrende spoke and whiel	<i>(see note)</i>
	The sonne his carte hath faire and wiel,	
	In which he sitt, and is coroned	
	With brighte stones environed;	<i>all around</i>
	Of whiche if that I speke schal,	
820	Ther be tofore in special	
	Set in the front of his corone	
	Thre stones, whiche no persone	
	Hath upon erthe, and the ferste is	
	Be name cleped licuchis;	<i>By name called lychnites(?)</i>
825	That othre tuo be cleped thus,	
	Astrices and ceramius.	<i>Cat's eye; thunderstone</i>
	In his corone also behinde,	
	Be olde bokes as I finde,	
	Ther ben of worthi stones thre	
830	Set ech of hem in his degré,	
	Wherof a cristall is that on,	
	Which that corone is set upon;	
	The seconde is an adamant;	<i>diamond</i>
	The thridde is noble and avenant,	<i>beautiful (pleasant)</i>
835	Which cleped is ydriades.	
	And over this yit natheles	
	Upon the sydes of the werk,	
	After the wrytinge of the clerk,	
	Ther sitten fyve stones mo:	
840	The smaragdine is on of tho,	<i>emerald</i>
	Jaspis and elitropius	<i>Jasper; heliotrope</i>
	And dendides and jacinctus.	<i>(see note)</i>
	Lo, thus the corone is beset,	
	Wherof it schyneth wel the bet;	


- 845 And in such wise his liht to sprede
 Sit with his diademe on hede
 The sonne schynende in his carte.
 And for to lede him swithe and smarte
 After the bryhte daies lawe,
- 850 Ther ben ordeined for to drawe
 Foure hors his char and him withal, *chariot*
 Wherof the names telle I schal:
 Eritheus the ferste is hote, *called*
 The which is red and schyneth hote,
- 855 The seconde Acteos the bryhte,
 Lampes the thridde coursier hihte, *is called*
 And Philogeus is the ferthe,
 That bringen lyht unto this erthe,
 And gon so swift upon the hevene,
- 860 In foure and twenty houres evene
 The carte with the bryhte sonne
 Thei drawe, so that overronne
 Thei have under the cercles hihe
 Al middelerthe in such an hye. *haste*
- 865 And thus the sonne is overal
 The chief planete imperial,
 Above him and benethe him thre:
 And thus between hem regneth he,
 As he that hath the middel place
- 870 Among the sevene, and of his face
 Be glade alle erthly creatures,
 And taken after the natures
 Here ese and recreacion.
 And in his constellacion
- 875 Who that is bore in special,
 Of good will and of liberal
 He schal be founde in alle place,
 And also stonde in mochel grace
 Toward the lordes for to serve
- 880 And gret profit and thonk deserve.
 And over that it causeth yit
 A man to be soubtil of wit
 To worche in gold, and to be wys
 In everything which is of pris. *value*
- 885 Bot for to speken in what cost *region*
 Of al this erthe he regneth most
 As for wisdom, it is in Grece,
 Wher is aproped thilke spiece. *characteristic; attribute*
- ☞ Mars the planete bataillous *excelling in combat (see note)*
- 890 Next to the sonne glorious
 Above stant, and doth mervailles

- Upon the fortune of batailes.
 The conquerours be daies olde
 Were unto this planete holde. *loyal (beholden)*
 895 Bot who that his nativité
 Hath take upon the propreté
 Of Martes disposicioun
 Be weie of constellacioun,
 He schal be fiers and folhastif *impetuous; foolhardy*
 900 And desirous of werre and strif. *war*
 Bot for to telle redely
 In what climat most comunly
 That this planete hath his effect,
 Seid is that he hath his aspect *influence*
 905 Upon the Holi Lond so cast,
 That there is no pes stedefast. *peace*
 ☞ Above Mars upon the hevene, *(see note)*
 The sexte planete of the sevene,
 Stant Jupiter the delicat, *sensual (luxurious)*
 910 Which causeth pes and no debat.
 For he is cleped that planete
 Which of his kinde softe and swete
 Attempreth al that to him longeth;
 And whom this planete underfongeth *Tempers; pertains*
 915 To stonde upon his regiment, *takes in*
 He schal be meke and pacient *Under the control of its planetary influence*
 And fortunat to marchandie *lucky in commercial business*
 And lusti to delicacie *eager for pleasure (luxury)*
 In everything which he schal do.
 920 This Jupiter is cause also
 Of the science of lyhte werkes, *easy (frivolous?)*
 And in this wise tellen clerkes
 He is the planete of delices. *pleasures (delights)*
 Bot in Egipte of his offices
 925 He regneth most in special:
 For ther be lustes overal
 Of al that to this lif befalleth;
 For ther no stormy weder falleth,
 Which myhte grieve man or beste, *i.e., every living creature*
 930 And ek the lond is so honeste *excellent (rich)*
 That it is plentevous and plein,
 Ther is non ydel ground in vein;
 And upon such felicité
 934 Stant Jupiter in his degré.
 ☞ The heyeste and aboven alle *(see note)*
 Stant that planete which men calle
 Saturnus, whos complexion
 Is cold, and his condicion

- Causeth malice and cruauté
 940 To him the whos nativité
 Is set under his governance.
 For alle hise werkes ben grevance
 And enemy to mannes hele, *happiness (comfort)*
 In what degré that he schal dele. *In whatever way he (Saturn) is involved*
 945 His climat is in Orient, *the East*
 Wher that he is most violent.
 Of the planetes by and by,
 Hou that thei stonde upon the sky,
 Fro point to point as thou myht hierie,
 950 Was Alisandre mad to liere. *made to learn*
 Bot overthis touchende his lore,
 Of thing that thei him tawhte more
 Upon the scoles of clergie *schools of learning*
 954 Now herkne the philosophie.



[TWELVE SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC]

-  He which departeth dai fro nyht, *(see note)*
 That on derk and that other lyht, *The one*
 Of sevene daies made a weke,
 A monthe of foure wekes eke
 He hath ordeigned in His lawe,
 960 Of monthes tuelle and ek forthdrawe
 He hath also the longe yeer.
 And as He sette of his pouer *power*
 Acordant to the daies sevene
 Planetes sevene upon the hevene,
 965 As thou tofore hast herd devise,
 To speke riht in such a wise,
 To every monthe be Himselfe
 Upon the hevene of signes tuelle
 He hath after His ordinal *book of rules*
 970 Assigned on in special, *one [month]*
 Wherof, so as I schal rehersen,
 The tydes of the yer diversen. *vary*
 Bot plainly for to make it knowe
 Hou that the signes sitte arowe, *are ordered*
 975 Ech after other be degré
 In substance and in propreté
 The zodiaque comprehendeth
 Withinne his cercle, as it appendeth. *its; as is proper*
 The ferste of whiche natheles *(see note)*
 980 Be name is cleped Aries,
 Which lich a wether of stature *sheep*
 Resembled is in his figure.

	And as it seith in Almageste, Of sterres tuelve upon this beste	<i>sign of the zodiac (beast)</i>
985	Ben set, wherof in his degré The wombe hath tuo, the heved hath thre, The tail hath sevene, and in this wise, As thou myht hiere me devise, Stant Aries, which hot and drye	<i>belly; head</i>
990	Is of himself, and in partie He is the receipte and the hous Of myhty Mars the bataillous. And overmore ek, as I finde, The Creatour of alle kinde	<i>refuge</i>
995	Upon this signe ferst began The world, whan that He made man. And of this constellacioun The verray operacioun Availeth, if a man therinne	<i>true influence</i> <i>Is propitious; in [that sign]</i>
1000	The pourpos of his werk beginne. For thanne he hath of propreté Good sped and gret felicité. The tuelve monthes of the yeer Attitled under the pouer	<i>intrinsically</i> <i>Assigned; power</i>
1005	Of these tuelve signes stonde; Wherof that thou schalt understonde This Aries on of the tuelve Hath March attitled for himselve, Whan every bridd schal chese his make,	<i>assigned</i> <i>bird; choose its mate</i>
1010	And every neddre and every snake And every reptil which mai moeve, His myht assaieth for to proeve, To crepen out agein the sonne, Whan ver his seson hath begonne.	<i>adder</i> <i>attempts</i> <i>spring its</i> <i>(see note)</i>
 1016	Taurus the seconde after this Of signes, which figured is Unto a bole, is dreie and cold; And as it is in bokes told, He is the hous appourtienant	<i>bull; dry</i> <i>pertaining</i>
1020	To Venus, somdiel discordant. This bole is ek with sterres set, Thurgh whiche he hath hise hornes knet Unto the tail of Aries, So is he noght ther sterreles.	<i>somewhat</i> <i>bull</i> <i>linked</i> <i>without stars</i>
1025	Upon his brest ek eyhtetiene He hath, and ek, as it is sene, Upon his tail stonde othre tuo. His monthe assigned ek also	<i>eighteen</i>

- Is Averil, which of his schoures
 1030 Ministreth weie unto the floures. *April*
 The thridde signe is Gemini, *Provides*
 Which is figured redely
- ☞ Lich to tuo twinnes of mankinde, *(see note)*
 That naked stonde; and as I finde,
- 1035 Thei be with sterres wel bego: *well endowed*
 The heved hath part of thilke tuo
 That schyne upon the boles tail, *bull's*
 So be thei bothe of o parail; *one make-up*
 But on the wombe of Gemini
- 1040 Ben fyve sterres noght forthi, *nevertheless*
 And ek upon the feet be tweie,
 So as these olde bokes seie,
 That wise Tholomeus wrot. *Ptolemy*
 His propre monthe wel I wot
- 1045 Assigned is the lusti Maii,
 Whanne every brid upon his lay *song*
 Among the griene leves singeth, *green leaves*
 And love of his pointure stingeth *with his pricking*
 After the lawes of nature
- 1050 The youthe of every creature.
- ☞ Cancer after the reule and space *assigned position (see note)*
 Of signes halt the ferthe place.
 Like to the crabbe he hath semblance,
 And hath unto his retienance *retinue*
- 1055 Sextiene sterres, wherof ten,
 So as these olde wise men
 Describe, he berth on him tofore, *Describe*
 And in the middel tuo be bore,
 And foure he hath upon his ende.
- 1060 Thus goth he sterred in his kende, *nature*
 And of himself is moiste and cold,
 And is the propre hous and hold
 Which appartieneth to the mone, *moon*
 And doth what longeth him to done.
- 1065 The monthe of Juin unto this signe
 Thou schalt after the reule assigne.
 The fite signe is Leo hote, *called*
 Whos kinde is schape dreie and hote,
- ☞ In whom the sonne hath herbergage. *lodging (see note)*
 1070 And the semblance of his ymage
 Is a leoun, which in baillie *keeping*
 Of sterres hath his pourpartie: *share*
 The foure, whiche as Cancer hath
 Upon his ende, Leo tath *takes*

- 1075 Upon his heved, and thanne nest *next*
 He hath ek foure upon his brest,
 And on upon his tail behinde,
 In olde bokes as we finde.
 His propre monthe is Juy l be name,
- 1080 In which men pleien many a game.
- ☿ After Leo Virgo the nexte *(see note)*
 Of signes cleped is the sexte,
 Wherof the figure is a maide; *virgin*
 And as the Philosophre saide,
- 1085 Sche is the welthe and the risinge,
 The lust, the joie and the likinge
 Unto Mercurie; and soth to seie
 Sche is with sterres wel beseie, *endowed*
 Wherof Leo hath lent hire on, *one*
- 1090 Which sit on hih hir heved upon, *head*
 Hire wombe hath fyve, hir feet also
 Have other fyve: and overmo
 Touchende as of complexion,
 Be kindly disposicion
- 1095 Of dreie and cold this maiden is.
 And for to tellen over this
 Hir monthe, thou schalt understonde,
 Whan every feld hath corn in honde
 And many a man his bak hath plied,
- 1100 Unto this signe is Augst applied. *August*
 After Virgo to reknen evene
 Libra sit in the nombre of sevene,
- ☿ Which hath figure and resemblance *(see note)*
 Unto a man which a balance *scale*
- 1105 Berth in his hond as for to weie: *weigh*
 In boke and as it mai be seie, *seen*
 Diverse sterres to him longeth,
 Wherof on hevede he underfongeth *head; undertakes*
 Ferst thre, and ek his wombe hath tuo,
- 1110 And down benethe eighte othre mo.
 This signe is hot and moiste bothe,
 The whiche thinges be noght lothe *unappealing*
 Unto Venus, so that alofte
 Sche resteth in his hous fulofte, *often times*
- 1115 And ek Saturnus often hyed *exalted*
 Is in this signe and magnefied. *in its exaltation*
 His propre monthe is seid Septembre,
 Which gifth men cause to remembre,
 If eny sor be left behinde *any hurt*
- 1120 Of thing which grieve mai to kinde.

-  Among the signes upon heichte *on high (see note)*
 The signe which is nombred eighte
 Is Scorpio, which as feloun *treacherous evildoer*
 Figured is a scorioun.
- 1125 Bot for al that yit natheles
 Is Scorpio noght sterreles; *without stars*
 For Libra granteth him his ende *tail*
 Of eighte sterres, wher he wende,
 The whiche upon his heved assised *arranged on his head*
- 1130 He berth, and ek ther ben divided
 Upon his wombe sterres thre,
 And eighte upon his tail hath he.
 Which of his kinde is moiste and cold
 And unbehovely manyfold; *unfittingly*
- 1135 He harmeth Venus and empeireth,
 Bot Mars unto his hous repeireth,
 Bot war whan thei togedre duellen. *beware*
 His propre monthe is, as men tellen,
 Octobre, which bringth the kalende *prelude*
 1140 Of wynter, that comth next suiende. *following*
-  The nynthe signe in nombre also,
 Which folweth after Scorpio,
 Is cleped Sagittarius,
 The whos figure is marked thus,
- 1145 A monstre with a bowe on honde,
 On whom that sondri sterres stonde,
 Thilke eighte of whiche I spak tofore,
 The whiche upon the tail ben bore
 Of Scorpio, the heved al faire
- 1150 Bespreden of the Sagittaire; *Studded [with stars]*
 And eighte of othre stonden evene
 Upon his wombe, and othre sevene
 Ther stonde upon his tail behinde.
 And he is hot and dreie of kinde. *by nature*
- 1155 To Jupiter his hous is fre,
 Bot to Mercurie in his degré,
 For thei ben noght of on assent,
 He worcheth gret empeirement. *harm*
 This signe hath of his propreté
- 1160 A monthe, which of dueté
 After the sesoun that befallenth
 The plowed oxe in wynter stalleth;
 And fyr into the halle he bringeth,
 And thilke drinke of which men singeth,
- 1165 He torneth must into the wyn. *unfermented grape juice*
 Thanne is the larder of the swyn; *slaughter of the pigs*

- That is Novembre which I meene,
Whan that the lef hath lost his greene.
- ☞ The tenthe signe, dreie and cold, *(see note)*
1170 The which is Capricornus told, *called*
Unto a got hath resemblance: *goat*
For whos love and whos aqueintance *fellowship*
Withinne hise houses to sojorne
It liketh wel unto Satorne,
1175 Bot to the mone it liketh noght, *moon; is displeasing*
For no profit is there wrought.
This signe as of his propreté
Upon his heved hath sterres thre,
And ek upon his wombe tuo,
1180 And tweie upon his tail also.
Decembre after the yeeres forme,
So as the bokes ous enforme,
With daies schorte and nyhtes longe
This ilke signe hath underfonge. *same; claimed*
- 1185 Of tho that sitte upon the hevene
Of signes in the nombre ellevene
- ☞ Aquarius hath take his place, *(see note)*
And stant wel in Satornes grace,
Which duelleth in his herbergage, *lodging*
1190 Bot to the sonne he doth outrage. *injury (outrage)*
This signe is verrailly resembled
Lich to a man which halt assembled *who has brought together*
In eyther hand a water spoute,
Wherof the stremes rennen oute. *run*
1195 He is of kinde moiste and hot, *by nature*
And he that of the sterres wot
Seith that he hath of sterres tuo
Upon his heved, and ben of tho *head*
That Capricorn hath on his ende;
1200 And as the bokes maken mende, *mention*
That Tholomeus made himselfe,
He hath ek on his wombe tuelve,
And tweie upon his ende stonde.
Thou schalt also this understonde,
1205 The frosti colde Janever,
Whan comen is the newe yeer,
That Janus with his double face
In his chaire hath take his place
And loketh upon bothe sides,
1210 Somdiel toward the wynter tydes,
Somdiel toward the yeer suiende, *to come (following)*
That is the monthe belongende

- Unto this signe, and of his dole *contribution (alms giving)*
 He gifth the ferste primerole. *primrose*
- 1215 The tuelfthe, which is last of alle
 Of signes, Piscis men it calle,
- ☞ The which, as telleth the scripture, *(see note)*
 Berth of tuo fisshes the figure.
 So is he cold and moiste of kinde,
- 1220 And ek with sterres, as I finde,
 Beset in sondri wise, as thus:
 Tuo of his ende Aquarius
 Hath lent unto his heved, and tuo
 This signe hath of his oghne also
- 1225 Upon his wombe, and over this
 Upon his ende also ther is
 A nombre of twenty sterres bryghte,
 Which is to sen a wonder sighte.
 Toward this signe into his hous
- 1230 Comth Jupiter the glorious,
 And Venus ek with him acordeth
 To duellen, as the bok recordeth.
 The monthe unto this signe ordeined
 Is Februer, which is bereined, *supplied with rain*
- 1235 And with londflodes in his rage
 At fordes letteth the passage. *obstructs*
 Nou hast thou herd the propreté
 Of signes, bot in his degré
 Albumazar yit over this
- 1240 Seith, so as th'erthe parted is
 In foure, riht so ben divided
 The signes twelve and stonde assised, *put in place*
 That ech of hem for his partie
 Hath his climat to justefie. *region*
- 1245 Wherof the ferst regiment
 Toward the part of Orient
 From Antioche and that contré
 Governed is of signes thre,
 That is Cancer, Virgo, Leo:
- 1250 And toward Occident also
 From Armenie, as I am lerned, *Armenia*
 Of Capricorn it stant governed,
 Of Pisces and Aquarius:
 And after hem I finde thus,
- 1255 Southward from Alisandre forth *Alexandria*
 Tho signes whiche most ben worth *significant*
 In governance of that doaire,
 Libra thei ben and Sagittaire
 With Scorpio, which is conjoint *control of that region entitled to them*

- 1260 With hem to stonde upon that point.
 Constantinople the cité,
 So as the bokes tellen me,
 The laste of this division
 Stant untoward Septemtrion, *not in a northerly direction*
- 1265 Wher as be weie of pourveance
 Hath Aries the governance
 Forth with Taurus and Gemini.
 Thus ben the signes propreli
 Divided, as it is reherced,
- 1270 Wherof the londes ben diversed. *differentiated*

[FIFTEEN STARS]


- Confessor** Lo thus, mi sone, as thou myht hiere, *hear*
 Was Alisandre mad to liere *caused to learn*
 Of hem that weren for his lore. *About those; instruction*
 Bot nou to loken overmore,
- 1275 Of othre sterres hou thei fare
 I thenke hierafter to declare,
 So as king Alisandre in youthe
 Of him that suche thinges couthe *By he who knew such things*
 Enformed was tofore his yhe *eye*
- 1280 Be nyhte upon the sterres hihe.
 Upon sondri creacion
 Stant sondri operacion,
 Som worcheth this, som worcheth that; *(see note)*
- 1284 The fyr is hot in his astat
 And brenneth what he mai atteigne, *reach*
 The water mai the fyr restreigne,
 The which is cold and moist also.
 Of other thing it farth riht so
 Upon this erthe among ous hiere;
- 1290 And for to speke in this manere,
 Upon the hevene, as men mai finde,
 The sterres ben of sondri kinde
 And worchen manye sondri thinges
 To ous, that ben here underlinges.
- 1295 Among the whiche forth withal
 Nectanabus in special,
 Which was an astronomien
 And ek a gret magicien,
 And undertake hath thilke emprise
- 1300 To Alisandre in his aprise *teaching*
 As of magique naturel
 To knowe, enformeth him somdel
 Of certein sterres what thei mene;

- Of whiche, he seith, ther ben fiftene,
 1305 And sondrily to everich on
 A gras belongeth and a ston, *plant pertains to*
 Wherof men worchen many a wonder
 To sette thing bothe up and under.
- ☞ To telle riht as he began, *(see note)*
 1310 The ferste sterre Aldeboran, *(brightest star in Taurus)*
 The cliereste and the moste of alle,
 Be rihte name men it calle;
 Which lich is of condicion
 To Mars, and of complexion
 1315 To Venus, and hath therupon
 Carbunculum his propre ston: *Ruby*
 His herbe is anabulla named, *Its; spurge (wartweed)*
 Which is of gret vertu proclaimed.
- ☞ The seconde is noght vertules; *not without power (see note)*
 1320 Clota or elles Pliades *(the Seven Sisters)*
 It hatte, and of the mones kinde
 He is, and also this I finde,
 He takth of Mars complexion: *receives*
 And lich to such condicion
 1325 His ston appropred is cristall, *The stone attributed [to him]*
 And ek his herbe in special
 The vertuous fenele it is.
- ☞ The thridde, which comth after this, *(see note)*
 Is hote Algol the clere rede, *(brightest star in Perseus)*
 1330 Which of Satorne, as I may rede,
 His kinde takth, and ek of Jove
 Complexion to his behove. *for his benefit*
 His propre ston is dyamant, *diamond*
 Which is to him most acordant;
 1335 His herbe, which is him betake, *allotted to him*
 Is hote eleborum the blake. *called hellebore*
- ☞ So as it falleth upon lot, *(see note)*
 The ferthe sterre is Alhaiot, *Capella*
 Which in the wise as I seide er *manner; before*
 1340 Of Satorne and of Jupiter
 Hath take his kinde; and therupon
 The saphir is his propre ston,
 Marrubium his herbe also, *common or white horehound*
 1344 The whiche acorden bothe tuo.
- ☞ And Canis Major in his like *Sirius (the dog star) (see note)*
 The fifte sterre is of magique,
 The whos kinde is Venerien, *nature pertains to Venus*
 As seith this astronomien.
 His propre ston is seid berille, *beryl*

- 1350 Bot for to worche and to fulfille
 Thing which to this science falleth,
 Ther is an herbe which men calleth
 Saveine, and that behoveth nede *Juniper berries*
- 1354 To him that wole his pourpos spede. *advance*
- ☞ The sexte suiende after this *following (see note)*
 Be name Canis Minor is; *By; Algomeiza (Procyon)*
 The which sterre is Mercurial
 Be weie of kinde, and forth withal,
 As it is writen in the carte, *treatise*
- 1360 Complexion he takth of Marte. *Mars*
 His ston and herbe, as seith the Scole, *School [of Aristotle]*
 Ben achates and primerole. *agate; primrose*
- ☞ The sefnthe sterre in special *(see note)*
 Of this science is Arial,
- 1365 Which sondri nature underfongeth.
 The ston which propre unto him longeth,
 Gorgonza proprely it hihte:
 His herbe also, which he schal rihte
 Upon the worching as I mene,
- 1370 Is celidoine freissh and grene.
- ☞ Sterre Ala Corvi upon heihte *[in the constellation Corvus] (see note)*
 Hath take his place in nombre of eghte,
 Which of his kinde mot parforne
 The will of Marte and of Satorne:
- 1375 To whom lapacia the grete *lappacium maius*
 Is herbe, bot of no beyete; *profit*
 His ston is honochinus hote, *onyx*
 Thurgh which men worchen gret riote.
- ☞ The nynthe sterre faire and wel *(see note)*
 Be name is hote Alaezel, *called Spica*
 Which takth his propre kinde thus
 Bothe of Mercurie and of Venus.
 His ston is the grene amyraude, *emerald*
 To whom is goven many a laude. *great praise*
- 1385 Salge is his herbe appourtenant *Sage*
- ☞ Aboven al the remenant *(see note)*
 The tenthe sterre is Almareth, *Arcturus*
 Which upon lif and upon deth
 Thurgh kinde of Jupiter and Mart
- 1390 He doth what longeth to his part.
 His ston is jasse, and of planteine *jasper*
 He hath his herbe soveraine.
- ☞ The sterre ellefthe is Venenas, *Benenais (second star in Ursa Major) (see note)*
 The whos nature is as it was
- 1395 Take of Venus and of the mone,

- In thing which he hath for to done.
 Of adamant is that perrie *lodestone (magnet); stone*
 In which he worcheth his maistrie;
 Thilke herbe also which him befalleth,
 1400 Cicorea the bok it calleth. *Chicory*
- ☞ Alpheta in the nombre sit, *Alphecca (Gemma, in Corona Borealis) (see note)*
 And is the tuelfthe sterre yit;
 Of Scorpio which is governed,
 And takth his kinde, as I am lerned;
 1405 And hath his vertu in the ston
 Which cleped is topazion: *topaz*
 His herbe propre is rosmarine, *rosemary*
 Which schapen is for his covine. *suted; its character (nature)*
- ☞ Of these sterres, whiche I mene, *(see note)*
 1410 Cor Scorpionis is thritiene; *Calbalacrab (Antares, Scorpio's heart)*
 The whos nature Mart and Jove
 Have goven unto his behove. *given for his benefit (use)*
 His herbe is aristologie, *(a medicinal plant)*
 Which folweth his astronomie.
- 1415 The ston which that this sterre alloweth,
 Is sardis, which unto him boweth. *has as an attribute*
- ☞ The sterre which stant next the laste, *(see note)*
 Nature on him this name caste
 And clepeth him Botercadent;
 1420 Which of his kinde obedient *by its nature*
 Is to Mercurie and to Venus.
 His ston is seid crisolitus,
 His herbe is cleped satireie, *savory*
- 1424 So as these olde bokes seie.
- ☞ Bot nou the laste sterre of alle *(see note)*
 The tail of Scorpio men calle,
 Which to Mercurie and to Satorne
 Be weie of kinde mot retorne
 After the preparacion *previous setting in order*
 1430 Of due constellacion.
- The calcedoine unto him longeth, *chalcedony*
 Which for his ston he underfongeth;
 Of majorane his herbe is grounded. *possesses*
 Thus have I seid hou thei be founded, *marjoram*
- 1435 Of every sterre in special,
 Which hath his herbe and ston withal,
 As Hermes in his bokes olde
 Witnesse berth of that I tolde.

[AUTHORS OF ASTRONOMY]

-  The science of Astronomie, *(see note)*
 1440 Which principal is of clergie *learning*
 To dieme betwen wo and wel *distinguish*
 In thinges that be naturel,
 Thei hadde a gret travail on honde
 That made it ferst ben understonde;
 1445 And thei also which overmore
 Here studie sette upon this lore, *Their; teaching*
 Thei weren gracious and wys
 And worthi for to bere a pris.
 And whom it liketh for to wite
 1450 Of hem that this science write,
 On of the ferste which it wrot
 After Noe, it was Nembrot, *Noah*
 To his disciple Ychonithon
 And made a bok forth therupon
 1455 The which Megaster cleped was.
 Another auctor in this cas
 Is Arachel, the which men note;
 His bok is Abbategnyh hote. *Ptolemy*
 Danz Tholomé is noght the leste,
 1460 Which makth the bok of Almageste;
 And Alfraganus doth the same,
 Whos bok is Chatemuz be name.
 Gebuz and Alpetragus eke
 Of Planisperie, which men seke,
 1465 The bokes made: and over this
 Ful many a worthi clerc ther is,
 That writen upon this clergie
 The bokes of Altemetrie, *science of measuring altitude*
 Planemetrie and ek also, *Plane geometry*
 1470 Whiche as belongen bothe tuo,
 So as thei ben naturiens,
 Unto these Astronomiens.
 Men sein that Habraham was on;
 Bot whether that he wrot or non, *Abraham; one*
 1475 That finde I noght; and Moises *Moses*
 Ek was another: bot Hermes
 Above alle othre in this science
 He hadde a gret experience;
 Thurgh him was many a sterre assised,
 1480 Whos bokes yit ben auctorized. *put in place (located)*
 I mai noght knowen alle tho *regarded as correct (trustworthy)*
 That writen in the time tho
 Of this science; bot I finde,

- Of jugement be weie of kinde
 1485 That in o point thei alle acorden:
 Of sterres whiche thei recorden
 That men mai sen upon the hevene,
 Ther ben a thousand sterres evene
 And tuo and twenty, to the syhte
 1490 Whiche aren of himself so bryhte, *are of themselves*
 That men mai dieme what thei be, *discern*
 The nature and the propreté.
 Nou hast thou herd, in which a wise
 These noble philosophres wise
 1495 Enformeden this yonge king,
 And made him have a knowleching
 Of thing which ferst to the partie
 Belongeth of Philosophie,
 Which Theorique cleped is,
 1500 As thou tofore hast herd er this.
 Bot nou to speke of the secounde,
 Which Aristotle hath also founde,
 And techeth hou to speke faire,
 Which is a thing full necessaire
 1505 To contrepeise the balance, *counterweight (balance)*
 Wher lacketh other sufficance.”

[RHETORIC, THE SECOND PART OF PHILOSOPHY]

- v. *Compositi pulcra sermonis verba placere*
Principio poterunt, veraque fine placent.
Herba, lapis, sermo, tria sunt virtute repleta,
Vis tamen ex verbi pondere plura facit.¹

- [Confessor] “Above alle erthli creatures
 The hihe makere of natures
 The word to man hath gove alone, *spoken language; given*
 1510 So that the speche of his persone,
 ¶ Or for to lese or for to winne, *lose (see note)*
 The hertes thoght which is withinne
 Mai schewe, what it wolde mene;
 And that is noghwhere elles sene *nowhere*
 1515 Of kinde with non other beste. *creature*
 So scholde he be the more honeste, *Thus*
 To whom God gaf so gret a gifte,
 And loke wel that he ne schifte *adapt*

¹ *Lovely words of crafted speech can please at the beginning, but true ones please at the end. Herb, stone, speech are all three full of power; but the force from the weight of a word does more.*

	Hise wordes to no wicked us;	<i>purpose</i>
1520	For word the techer of vertus Is cleped in Philosophie. ¹ Wherof touchende this partie, Is Rethorique the science Appropred to the reverence	<i>Dedicated to (Reserved for)</i>
1525	Of wordes that ben resonable. And for this art schal be vailable With goodli wordes for to like, It hath Gramaire, it hath Logique, That serven bothe unto the speche.	<i>beneficial</i>
1530	Gramaire ferste hath for to teche To speke upon congruité. Logique hath eke in his degré Betwen the trouthe and the falshode The pleine wordes for to schode,	<i>correctness</i>
1535	So that nothing schal go beside, That he the riht ne schal decide, Wherof full many a gret debat Reformed is to good astat, And pes sustiened up alofte	<i>declare</i>
1540	With esy wordes and with softe, Wher strengthe scholde lete it falle. The Philosophre amonges alle Forthi commendeth this science, Which hath the reule of eloquence.	<i>peace</i>
1545	In ston and gras vertu ther is, Bot yit the bokes tellen this, That word above alle erthli thinges Is vertuous in his doinges, Wher so it be to evele or goode.	<i>power</i>
1550	For if the wordes semen goode And ben wel spoke at mannes ere, Whan that ther is no trouthe there, Thei don fulofte gret deceipte; For whan the word to the conceipte	<i>powerful; its activities</i> <i>Whether</i>
1555	Descordeth in so double a wise, Such Rethorique is to despise In every place, and for to drede. For of Uluxes thus I rede, As in the bok of Troie is founde,	<i>deceitful a manner</i>
1560	His eloquence and his facounde Of goodly wordes whiche he tolde, Hath mad that Anthenor him solde	<i>linguistic facility</i>

¹ Lines 1520–21: *For in Philosophy, language (proper word use) is called the teacher of virtue*

- The toun, which he with tresoun wan. *conquered*
 Word hath beguiled many a man;
 1565 With word the wilde beste is daunted,
 With word the serpent is enchaunted,
 Of word among the men of armes
 Ben woundes heeled with the charmes,
 Wher lacketh other medicine;
 1570 Word hath under his discipline
 Of sorcerie the karectes. *written charms*
 The wordes ben of sondri sectes,
 Of evele and eke of goode also;
 The wordes maken frend of fo, *friend; foe*
 1575 And fo of frend, and pes of werre, *peace; war*
 And werre of pes, and out of herre *from disorder*
 The word this worldes cause entriketh, *beguiles*
 And reconsileth whan him liketh. *it pleases him*
 The word under the coupe of hevene *vault*
 1580 Set everything or odde or evene; *either; or*
 With word the hihe God is plesed,
 With word the wordes ben appesed, *alleviated (allayed)*
 The softe word the loude stilleth;
 Wher lacketh good, the word fulfillleth,
 1585 To make amendes for the wrong;
 Whan wordes medlen with the song,
 It doth plesance wel the more.
-  Bot for to loke upon the lore
 Hou Tullius his Rethorique *Cicero*
 1590 Componeth, ther a man mai pike *Constructs; select (see note)*
 Hou that he schal hise wordes sette,
 Hou he schal lose, hou he schal knette, *release; construe [an argument]*
 And in what wise he schal pronounce
 His tale plein withoute frounce. *ambiguity*
 1595 Wherof ensample if thou wolt seche,
 Tak hiede and red whilom the speche
 Of Julius and Cithero, *[Caesar]; Cicero*
 Which consul was of Rome tho, *Who; then*
 Of Catoun eke and of Cillene, *Cato; Silanus*
 1600 Behold the wordes hem betwene,
 Whan the tresoun of Cateline
 Descoevered was, and the covine *conspiracy (collusion)*
 Of hem that were of his assent *were associated [with him]*
 Was knowe and spoke in parlement,
 1605 And axed hou and in what wise
 Men scholde don hem to juise. *bring them to justice*
 Cillenus ferst his tale tolde,
 To trouthe and as he was beholde, *was bound in duty*
 The comun profit for to save,

- 1610 He seide hou tresoun scholde have
A cruel deth; and thus thei spieke,
The consul bothe and Catoun eke,
And seiden that for such a wrong
Ther mai no peine be to strong. *punishment*
- 1615 Bot Julius with wordes wise
His tale tolde al otherwise,
As he which wolde her deth respite,
And fondeth hou he mihte excite
The jugges thurgh his eloquence
- 1620 Fro deth to torne the sentence
And sette here hertes to pité.
Nou tolden thei, nou tolde he; *spoke*
Thei spieken plein after the lawe,
Bot he the wordes of his sawe *speech*
- 1625 Coloureth in another weie
Spekende, and thus between the tweie,
To trete upon this juggement,
Made ech of hem his argument.
Wherof the tales for to hiere,
- 1630 Ther mai a man the scole liere *learn*
Of Rethoriques eloquences,
Which is the secounde of sciences
Touchende to Philosophie;
Wherof a man schal justifie
- 1635 Hise wordes in disputeisoun,
And knette upon conclusioun *construct*
His argument in such a forme,
Which mai the pleine trouthe enforme
And the soubtil cautele abate,
- 1640 Which every trewman schal debate.” *deceitfulness*
true man; combat

[PRACTICE, THE THIRD PART OF PHILOSOPHY]

vi. *Practica quemque statum pars tercia Philosophie*
Ad regimen recte ducit in orbe vie:
Set quanto maior Rex est, tanto magis ipsum
*Hec scola concernit, qua sua regna regat.*¹

[Confessor] “The ferste, which is Theorique,
And the secounde Rethorique,
Sciences of Philosophie,
I have hem told as in partie,

¹ *Practice, the third part of Philosophy, guides each estate on earth by its regimen of a good life; but by as much as a King is greater, by that much the more this study, by which he rules his kingdom, pertains to him.*

- 1645 So as the Philosophre it tolde
To Alisandre: and nou I wolde
☞ Telle of the thridde what it is, *(see note)*
The which Practique cleped is.
Practique stant upon thre thinges
- 1650 Toward the governance of kinges;
Wherof the ferst Etique is named, *Ethics*
The whos science stant proclaimed
To teche of vertu thilke reule,
Hou that a king himself schal reule
- 1655 Of his moral condicion
With worthi disposicion
Of good livinge in his persone,
Which is the chief of his corone.
It makth a king also to lerne
- 1660 Hou he his bodi schal governe,
Hou he schal wake, hou he schal slepe,
Hou that he schal his hele kepe *health maintain*
In mete, in drinke, in clothinge eke: *food; also*
Ther is no wisdom for to seke
- 1665 As for the reule of his persone,
The which that this science alone
Ne techeth as be weie of kinde, *nature*
That ther is nothing left behinde.
That other point which to Practique
- 1670 Belongeth is Iconomique, *Economics*
Which techeth thilke honesté
Thurgh which a king in his degré
His wif and child schal reule and guie, *govern; rule*
So forth with al the companie
- 1675 Which in his houshold schal abyde,
And his astat on every syde
In such manere for to lede,
That he his houshold ne mislede.
Practique hath yit the thridde aprise, *field of instruction*
- 1680 Which techeth hou and in what wise
Thurgh hih pourveied ordinance
A king schal sette in governance
His realme, and that is Policie,
Which longeth unto regalie *pertains to kingship*
- 1685 In time of werre, in time of pes,
To worschipe and to good encess *honor*
Of clerk, of kniht and of marchant,
And so forth of the remenant
Of al the comun poeple aboute,
- 1690 Withinne burgh and eke withoute, *In town and out (i.e., everywhere)*
Of hem that ben artificiers, *craftsmen (tradesmen, workmen)*

- Whiche usen craftes and mestiers, *professions*
 Whos art is cleped mechanique. *craft (occupation)*
 And though thei ben noght alle like,
 1695 Yit natheles, hou so it falle,
 O lawe mot governe hem alle,
 Or that thei lese or that thei winne, *lose*
 After th'astat that thei ben inne.
 Lo, thus this worthi yonge king
 1700 Was fulli tauht of everything,
 Which mihte give entendement *understanding*
 Of good reule and good regiment
 To such a worthi prince as he.
 Bot of verray necessité
 1705 The Philosophre him hath betake *prescribed*
 Fyf pointz, whiche he hath undertake *Five*
 To kepe and holde in observance,
 As for the worthi governance
 Which longeth to his regalie, *royal status*
 1710 After the reule of Policie."

[TRUTH, THE FIRST PART OF POLICY]

- vii. *Moribus ornatus regit hic qui regna moderna,*
Cercius expectat ceptra futura poli.
Et quia veridica virtus supereminet omnes,
*Regis ab ore boni fabula nulla sonat.*¹

- [Confessor] "To every man behoveth lore, *learning is necessary*
 Bot to no man belongeth more
 Than to a king, which hath to lede *guide*
 1714 The poeple; for of his kinghede *royal power*
 ☞ He mai hem bothe save and spille. *destroy (see note)*
 And for it stant upon his wille,
 It sit him wel to ben avised,
 And the vertus whiche are assised *appointed*
 Unto a kinges regiment,
 1720 To take in his entendement.
 Wherof to tellen, as thei stonde,
 Hierafterward nou woll I fonde. *ascertain*
 Among the vertus on is chief, *one*
 And that is Trouthe, which is lief *Fidelity (Troth); dear*
 1725 To God and ek to man also.
 And for it hath ben evere so,

¹ *He who rules modern kingdoms adorned with virtues more securely looks toward the future rule above. And because truth-telling stands above all virtues, so no lying fable is heard from the mouth of a good king.*

- Tawhte Aristotle, as he wel couthe, *knew how to do*
 To Alisandre, hou in his youthe
 He scholde of Trouthe thilke grace
 1730 With al his hole herte embrace, *whole*
 So that his word be trewe and plein,
 Toward the world and so certein
 That in him be no double speche.
 For if men scholde trouthe seche
 1735 And founde it noght withinne a king,
 It were an unsittende thing. *unseemly (inappropriate)*
 The word is tokne of that withinne,
 Ther schal a worthi king beginne
 To kepe his tunge and to be trewe,
 1740 So schal his pris ben evere newe. *repute; fresh*
 Advise him every man tofore,
 And be wel war, er he be swore,
 For afterward it is to late,
 If that he wole his word debate. *bound by solemn compact*
 1745 For as a king in special
 Above all othre is principal
 Of his pouer, so scholde he be
 Most vertuous in his degré;
 And that mai wel be signefied
 1750 Be his corone and specified. *By*
 ¶ The gold betokneth excellence, *(see note)*
 That men schull don him reverence
 As to here liege sovereign.
 The stones, as the bokes sein,
 1755 Commended ben in treble wise:
 Ferst thei ben harde, and thilke assisse *this distinctive feature*
 Betokneth in a king constance, *Symbolizes; constancy*
 So that ther schal no variance
 Be founde in his condicion;
 1760 And also be descripcion
 The vertu which is in the stones
 A verrai signe is for the nones
 Of that a king schal ben honeste
 And holde trewly his beheste *promise*
 1765 Of thing which longeth to kinghede. *pertains to royalty*
 The bryhte colour, as I rede,
 Which in the stones is schynende, *shining*
 Is in figure betoknende
 The cronique of this worldes fame, *report*
 1770 Which stant upon his goode name.
 The cercle which is round aboute
 Is tokne of al the lond withoute,

- Which stant under his gerarchie,
 That he it schal wel kepe and guye.
 1775 And for that Trouthe, hou so it falle,
 Is the vertu sovereign of alle,
 That longeth unto regiment,
 A tale, which is evident
 Of trouthe in comendacioun,
 1780 Toward thin enformacion,
 Mi sone, hierafter thou schalt hiere
 Of a cronique in this matiere.
- rule*
rule (guide)
[most] sovereign

[ESDRAS ON THE KING, WINE, WOMEN, AND TRUTH]

- As the cronique it doth reherce,
 A soldan whilom was of Perce,
 1785 Which Daires hihte, and Ytaspi
 His fader was; and soth it is
 That thurgh wisdom and hih prudence
 Mor than for eny reverence
 Of his lignage as be descente
 1790 The regne of thilke empire he hente.
 And as he was himselve wys,
 The wisemen he hield in pris
 And soghte hem oute on every side,
 That toward him thei scholde abide.
 1795 Among the whiche thre ther were
 That most service unto him bere,
 As thei which in his chambre lyhen
 And al his conseil herde and syhen.
 Here names ben of strange note,
 1800 Arpaghes was the ferste hote,
 And Manachaz was the secounde,
 Zorobabel, as it is founde
 In the cronique, was the thridde.
 This soldan, what so him betidde,
 1805 To hem he triste most of alle,
 Wherof the cas is so befall:
 This lord, which hath conceiptes depe,
 Upon a nyht whan he hath slepe,
 As he which hath his wit desposed,
 1810 Touchende a point hem hath opposed.
 The kinges question was this:
 Of thinges thre which strengest is,
 The wyn, the womman, or the king?
 And that thei scholde upon this thing
 1815 Of here ansuere avised be,
 He gaf hem fulli daies thre,
- sultan; Persia*
Darius was called
true (see note)
seized
esteem
showed
was called
those he trusted
concepts (thoughts)
made up his mind
put the question
most powerful
their; take counsel

- And hath behote hem be his feith *promised*
 That who the beste reson seith,
 He schal resceive a worthi mede. *reward*
- 1820 Upon this thing thei token hiede *took heed*
 And stoden in desputeison, *controversial debate*
 That be diverse opinion
 Of argumentz that thei have holde
 Arpaghes ferst his tale tolde,
- 1825 And seide hou that the strengthe of kinges
 Is myhtiest of alle thinges.
 For king hath pouer over man,
 And man is he which reson can,
 As he which is of his nature
- 1830 The moste noble creature
 Of alle tho that God hath wroght;
 And be that skile it semeth noght,
 He seith, that eny erthly thing
 Mai be so myhty as a king.
- 1835 A king mai spille, a king mai save, *destroy*
 A king mai make of lord a knave
 And of a knave a lord also.
 The pouer of a king stant so,
 That he the lawes overpasseth; *surpasses*
- 1840 What he wol make lasse, he lasseth, *lessens*
 What he wol make more, he moreth; *increases*
 And as the gentil faucon soreth,
 He fleth, that no man him reclameth; *calls him back*
 Bot he alone alle othre tameth,
- 1845 And stant himself of lawe fre. *free from law (unchallengeable)*
 Lo, thus a kinges myht, seith he,
 So as his reson can argue, *account; make clear*
 Is strengest and of most value.
 Bot Manachaz seide otherwise,
- 1850 That wyn is of the more emprise; *greater potency*
 And that he scheweth be this weie.
 The wyn fulofte takth aweie
 The reson fro the mannes herte;
 The wyn can make a krepel sterte,
- 1855 And a delivere man unwelde; *cripple leap*
 It makth a blind man to behelde; *vigorous; weak*
 And a bryht yhed seme derk; *to have eyesight*
 It makth a lewed man a clerk; *bright-eyed [person]; scholar*
 And fro the clerkes the clergie *ignorant (lay)*
 It takth aweie, and couardie *learning*
- 1860 It torneth into hardiesse;
 Of avarice it makth largesse. *generosity*
 The wyn makth ek the goode blod,

- In which the soule which is good
 1865 Hath chosen hire a resting place,
 Whil that the lif hir wole embrace.
 And be this skile Manachas *logic*
 Ansuered hath upon this cas,
 And seith that wyn be weie of kinde *nature*
 1870 Is thing which mai the hertes binde
 Wel more than the regalie.
 Zorobabel for his partie
 Seide, as him thoghte for the beste,
 That wommen ben the myhtieste.
 1875 The king and the vinour also *vintner*
 Of wommen comen bothe tuo; *From*
 And ek he seide hou that manhede
 Thurgh strengthe unto the wommanhede
 Of love, wher he wole or non,
 1880 Obeie schal; and therupon,
 To schewe of wommen the maistrie,
 A tale which he syh with yhe *eye*
 As for ensample he tolde this:
 ¶ Hou Apemen, of Besazis *(see note)*
 1885 Which dowhter was, in the paleis
 Sittende upon his hihe deis,
 Whan he was hotest in his ire *anger*
 Toward the grete of his empire,
 Cirus the king tirant sche tok,
 1890 And only with hire goodly lok
 Sche made him debonaire and meke, *meek*
 And be the chyn and be the cheke *by*
 Sche luggeth him riht as hir liste, *dragged him; it pleased her*
 That nou sche japeth, nou sche kiste, *fondles; kissed*
 1895 And doth with him what evere hir liketh;
 Whan that sche loureth, thanne he siketh, *it pleases her*
 And whan sche gladeth, he is glad: *scowls; sighs*
 And thus this king was overlad *overwhelmed*
 With hire which his lemman was. *By; lover*
 1900 Among the men is no solas,
 If that ther be no womman there;
 For bot if that the wommen were,
 This worldes joie were aweie:
 Thurgh hem men finden out the weie
 1905 To knihthode and to worldes fame;
 Thei make a man to drede schame, *fear*
 And honour for to be desired.
 Thurgh the beauté of hem is fyred *forged*
 The dart of which Cupide throweth,
 1910 Wherof the jolif peine groweth,

Which al the world hath under fote.
 A womman is the mannes bote, *deliverance (remedy)*
 His lif, his deth, his wo, his wel;
 And this thing mai be schewed wel,
 1915 Hou that wommen ben goode and kinde,
 For in ensample this I finde.

[TALE OF ALCESTIS]

☞ Whan that the duk Ametus lay *Admetus (see note)*
 Sek in his bedd, that every day *Sick*
 Men waiten whan he scholde deie,
 1920 Alceste his wif goth for to preie,
 As sche which wolde thonk deserve, *goodwill attain*
 With sacrifice unto Minerve,
 To wite ansuere of the goddesse *know*
 Hou that hir lord of his seknesse,
 1925 Wherof he was so wo besein, *woefully afflicted*
 Recovere myhte his hele agein. *health*
 Lo, thus sche cride and thus sche preide,
 Til ate laste a vois hir seide,
 That if sche wolde for his sake
 1930 The maladie soffre and take,
 And deie himself, he scholde live.
 Of this ansuere Alceste hath give
 Unto Minerve gret thonkinge,
 So that hir deth and his livinge
 1935 Sche ches with al hire hole entente,
 And thus acorded hom sche wente.
 Into the chambre and whan sche cam,
 Hire housebonde anon sche nam *took*
 In bothe hire armes and him kiste,
 1940 And spak unto him what hire liste; *what she wished*
 And therupon withinne a throwe
 This goode wif was overthrowe
 And deide, and he was hool in haste. *immediately well*
 So mai a man be reson taste,
 1945 Hou next after the God above
 The trouthe of wommen and the love,
 In whom that alle grace is founde,
 Is myhtiest upon this grounde *earth*
 And most behovely manyfold. *most necessary many times over*
 1950 Lo, thus Zorobabel hath told
 The tale of his opinion.
 Bot for final conclusion
 What strengest is of erthli thinges,
 The wyn, the wommen, or the kinges,

- 1955 He seith that trouthe above hem alle
Is myhtiest, hou evere it falle.
The trouthe, hou so it evere come,
Mai for nothing ben overcome;
It mai wel soffre for a throwe, *time*
- 1960 Bot ate laste it schal be knowe. *known*
The proverbe is, who that is trewe,
Him schal his while nevere rewe. *regret*
For hou so that the cause wende,
The trouthe is schameles at ende,
- 1965 Bot what thing that is troutheles,
It mai noght wel be schameles,
And schame hindreth every wyht. *creature*
So proveth it, ther is no myht
Withoute trouthe in no degré.
- 1970 And thus for trouthe of his decre
Zorobabel was most commended,
Wherof the question was ended, *inquiry*
And he resceived hath his mede: *reward*
For trouthe, which to mannes nede
- 1975 Is most behoveliche overal. *useful (profitable)*
Forthi was trouthe in special
The ferst point in observance
Betake unto the governance
Of Alisandre, as it is seid:
- 1980 For therupon the ground is leid
Of every kinges regiment,
As thing which most convenient
Is for to sette a king in evene *settle (situate); at rest*
Bothe in this world and ek in hevene.”



[LARGESS, THE SECOND PART OF POLICY]

- viii. *Absit Avaricia, ne tangat regia corda,
Eius enim spoliis excoriatur humus.
Fama colit largum volitans per secula Regem,
Dona tamen licitis sunt moderanda modis.*¹

[Confessor] “Next after Trouthe the secounde,

- 1986 In Policie as it is founde,
Which serveth to the worldes fame
In worschipe of a kinges name,
Largesse it is, whos privilege *Generosity (Munificence)*

¹ *Let Avarice be absent, lest it touch the royal heart, for the ground is stripped bare by its plunderings. Flying through the ages, fame honors a liberal King; but gifts must be moderated by appropriate means.*

-  Ther mai non Avarice abregge. *reduce in strength (see note)*
 1991 The worldes good was ferst comune, *held in common*
 Bot afterward upon fortune
 Was thilke comun profit cessed, *quelled*
 For whan the poeple stod encresced
 1995 And the lignages woxen grete,
 Anon for singulier begete *Soon; private gain*
 Drouh every man to his partie;
 Wherof cam in the ferste envie
 With gret debat and werres stronge,
 2000 And laste among the men so longe,
 Til no man wiste who was who, *knew*
 Ne which was frend ne which was fo,
 Til ate laste in every lond
 Withinne herself the poeple fond
 2005 That it was good to make a king,
 Which mihte appesen al this thing *resolve (settle)*
 And give riht to the lignages *justice*
 In partinge of here heritages *division; their*
 And ek of al here other good.
 2010 And thus above hem alle stod
 The king upon his regalie, *royal power*
 As he which hath to justifie
 The worldes good fro covoitise.
 So sit it wel in alle wise
 2015 A king betwen the more and lesse
 To sette his herte upon largesse
 Toward himself and ek also
 Toward his poeple; and if noght so,
 That is to sein, if that he be
 2020 Toward himselven large and fre
 And of his poeple take and pile, *rob; pillage*
 Largesse be no weie of skile, *by; logic*
 It mai be seid, bot Avarice, *but rather*
 Which in a king is a gret vice.
 2025 A king behoveth ek to fle *is constrained also*
 The vice of Prodegalité, *excessive extravagance*
 That he mesure in his expence *moderation*
 So kepe, that of indigence *from poverty*
 He mai be sauf; for who that nedeth,
 2030 In al his werk the worse he spedeth.
 As Aristotle upon Chaldee *(see note)*
 Ensampl of gret auctorité
 Unto king Alisandre tauhte
 Of thilke folk that were unsauhte *out of accord (hostile)*
 2035 Toward here king for his pilage.
 Wherof he bad, in his corage

- That he unto thre pointz entende,
 Wher that he wolde his good despende.
 Ferst scholde he loke, hou that it stod,
 2040 That al were of his oghne good
 The giftes whiche he wolde give,
 So myhte he wel the betre live.
 And ek he moste taken hiede
 If ther be cause of eny nede,
 2045 Which oghte for to be defended,
 Er that his goodes be despended.
 He mot ek, as it is befallē, *must also*
 Amonges othre thinges alle *merits*
 Se the decertes of his men;
 2050 And after that thei ben of ken *according to how; kinship*
 And of astat and of merite,
 He schal hem largeliche aquite,
 Or for the werre, or for the pes,
 That non honour falle in descres
 2055 Which mihte torne into defame,
 Bot that he kepe his goode name,
 So that he be noght holde unkinde.
 For in cronique a tale I finde,
 Which spekth somdiel of this matiere,
 2060 Hierafterward as thou schalt hiere.


[TALE OF JULIUS AND THE POOR KNIGHT]

- ☞ In Rome, to poursuie his riht, *pursue; privilege (see note)*
 Ther was a worthi povere kniht,
 Which cam alone for to sein
 His cause, when the court was plein, *duly constituted*
 2065 Wher Julius was in presence.
 And for him lacketh of despence, *because; cash flow*
 Ther was with him non advocat *counsel (attorney)*
 To make ple for his astat. *To plead*
 Bot thogh him lacke for to plede,
 2070 Him lacketh nothing of manhede;
 He wiste wel his pours was povere, *knew*
 Bot yit he thoghte his riht recovere, *restore*
 And openly poverté alleide, *pleaded*
 To th'emperour and thus he seide:
 2075 'O Julius, lord of the lawe,
 Behold, mi conseil is withdrawe *legal counselor*
 For lacke of gold; do thin office
 After the lawes of justice.
 Help that I hadde conseil hiere
 2080 Upon the trouthe of mi matiere.'

case

- And Julius with that anon
 Assigned him a worthi on, *Assigned [for service]; one*
 Bot he himself no word ne spak.
 This kniht was wroth and fond a lak *outraged; fault*
 2085 In th'emperour, and seide thus:
 'O thou unkinde Julius,
 Whan thou in thi bataille were
 Up in Aufrique, and I was there,
 Mi myht for thi rescousse I dede *rescue*
 2090 And putte no man in my stede;
 Thou wost what woundes ther I hadde. *place*
 Bot hier I finde thee so badde, *know*
 That thee ne liste speke o word
 Thin oghne mouth, nor of thin hord
 2095 To give a florin me to helpe.
 Hou scholde I thanne me beyelpo *myself be proud*
 Fro this dai forth of thi largesse,
 Whan such a gret unkindenesse
 Is founde in such a lord as thou?'
 2100 This Julius knew wel ynou *enough*
 That al was soth which he him tolde; *true*
 And for he wolde noght ben holde
 Unkinde, he tok his cause on honde,
 And as it were of Goddes sonde, *messenger*
 2105 He gaf him good ynouh to spende
 Forevere into his lives ende.
 And thus scholde every worthi king
 Take of his knihtes knowleching,
 Whan that he syh thei hadden nede,
 2110 For every service axeth mede. *requires reward*
 Bot othre, whiche have noght deserved
 Thurgh vertu, bot of japes served,
 A king schal noght deserve grace, *repay*
 Thogh he be large in such a place.

[TALE OF ANTIGONUS AND CINICHUS]

- 2115 It sit wel every king to have
 Discrecion, whan men him crave,
 So that he mai his gifte wite, *bestow*
 Wherof I finde a tale write,
 2120  Hou Cinichus a povere kniht *(see note)*
 A somme which was over myht *overly great*
 Preide of his king Antigonus.
 The king ansuerde to him thus,
 And seide hou such a gifte passeth
 His povere astat: and thanne he lasseth, *reduced his request*

- 2125 And axeth bot a litel peny,
 If that the king wol give him eny.
 The king ansuerde, it was to smal
 For him, which was a lord real;
 To give a man so litel thing
- 2130 It were unworschipe in a king. *dishonorable (undignified)*
 Be this ensample a king mai lere *learn*
 That for to give is in manere:
 For if a king his tresor lasseth *diminishes*
 Withoute honour and thonkles passeth,
- 2135 Whan he himself wol so beguile,
 I not who schal compleigne his while, *know not*
 Ne who be rihte him schal relieve.
 Bot natheles this I believe,
 To helpe with his oghne lond
- 2140 Behoveth every man his hond
 To sette upon necessité.
- ☞ And ek his kinges realté *(see note)*
 Mot every liege man conforte,
 With good and bodi to supporte,
- 2145 Whan thei se cause resonable.
 For who that is noght entendable
 To holde upright his kinges name,
 Him oghte for to be to blame.

[FLATTERY]

- ☞ Of policie and overmore *(see note)*
- 2150 To speke in this matiere more,
 So as the Philosophre tolde,
 A king after the reule is holde
 To modifie and to adresce *direct*
- 2154 Hise giftes upon such largesce
- ☞ That he mesure noght excede. *(see note)*
 For if a king falle into nede,
 It causeth ofte sondri thinges
 Whiche are ungoodly to the kinges.
 What man wol noght himself mesure,
- 2160 Men sen fulofte that mesure *moderate*
 Him hath forsake: and so doth he *moderation*
 That useth Prodegalité,
 Which is the moder of poverte,
 Wherof the londes ben deserte;
- 2165 And namely whan thilke vice
 Aboute a king stant in office
 And hath withholde of his partie

- The covoitouse flaterie,
 Which many a worthi king deceiveth,
 2170 Er he the fallas aperceiveth *false becomes aware of*
 Of hem that serven to the glose. *flattery*
 For thei that cunnen plese and glose, *flatter*
 Ben, as men tellen, the norrices *nurses*
 Unto the fostringe of the vices,
 2175 Wherof fulofte natheles
 A king is blamed gulteles.
- ☞ A Philosophre, as thou schalt hiere, *(see note)*
 Spak to a king of this matiere,
 And seide him wel hou that flatours
 2180 Coupable were of thre errours. *Culpable*
 ☞ On was toward the goddes hihe, *One (see note)*
 That weren wrothe of that thei sihe *angry; what they saw*
 The meschief which befaller scholde
 2184 Of that the false flatour tolde.
 ☞ Toward the king another was, *(see note)*
 Whan thei be sleihte and be fallas *deceit; falsehood*
 Of feigned wordes make him wene
 That blak is whyt and blew is grene
 Touchende of his condicion.
 2190 For whanne he doth extorcion
 With manye another vice mo,
 Men schal noght finden on of tho
 To groucche or speke theragein,
 Bot holden up his oil and sein *flattery and say*
 2195 That al is wel, whatever he doth.
 And thus of fals thei maken soth, *true*
 So that here kinges yhe is blent *eye is blinded*
 And wot not hou the world is went.
- ☞ The thridde error is harm comune, *(see note)*
 2200 With which the poeple mot commune
 Of wronges that thei bringen inne:
 And thus thei worchen treble sinne,
 That ben flatours aboute a king.
 Ther myhte be no worse thing
 2205 Aboute a kinges regalie, *royal court*
 Thanne is the vice of flaterie.
 And natheles it hath ben used, *customary*
 That it was nevere yit refused *[Such] that*
 As for to speke in court real; *royal*
 2210 For there it is most special,
 And mai noght longe be forbore.
 Bot whan this vice of hem is bore,
 That scholden the vertus forthbringe,

And trouthe is torned to lesinge,
 2215 It is, as who seith, agein kinde, *lies*
 Wherof an old ensample I finde. *against nature*

[TALE OF DIOGENES AND ARISTIPPUS]

Among these othre tales wise
 Of philosophres, in this wise
 I rede, how whilom tuo ther were, *(see note)*
 2220 And to the scole for to lere
 Unto Athenes fro Cartage
 Here frendes, whan thei were of age,
 Hem sende; and ther thei stoden longe,
 Til thei such lore have underfonge, *learning; achieved*
 2225 That in here time thei surmonte
 Alle othre men, that to acompte *recount*
 Of hem was tho the grete fame.
 The ferste of hem his rihte name
 Was Diogenes thanne hote, *called*
 2230 In whom was founde no riote. *unruly behavior*
 His felaw Arisippus hyhte, *was called*
 Which mochel couthe and mochel myhte. *knew and had the power to do much*
 Bot ate laste, soth to sein,
 Thei bothe tornen hom agein
 2235 Unto Cartage and scole lete. *left*
 This Diogenes no beyete *possession*
 Of worldes good or lasse or more
 Ne soghte for his longe lore,
 Bot tok him only for to duelle
 2240 At hom; and as the bokes telle,
 His hous was nyh to the rivere
 Besyde a bregge, as thou schalt hiere. *bridge; hear*
 Ther duelleth he to take his reste,
 So as it thoghte him for the beste,
 2245 To studie in his philosophie,
 As he which wolde so defie
 The worldes pompe on every syde.
 Bot Arisippe his bok aside
 Hath leid, and to the court he wente,
 2250 Wher many a wyle and many a wente *wile; devious path*
 With flaterie and wordes softe
 He caste, and hath compassed ofte *devised often*
 Hou he his prince myhte plese;
 And in this wise he gat him ese
 2255 Of vein honour and worldes good.
 The londes reule upon him stod,
 The king of him was wonder glad,

- And all was do, what thing he bad, *done; commanded*
 Bothe in the court and ek withoute.
 2260 With flaterie he broghte aboute
 His pourpos of the worldes werk,
 Which was agein the stat of clerk, *against the proper role of a learned man*
 So that philosophie he lefte
 And to richesse himself uplefte. *opulent splendor; elevated*
 2265 Lo, thus hadde Arisippe his wille.
 Bot Diogenes duelte stille
 At home and loked on his bok.
 He soghte nocht the worldes crok, *seduction*
 For vein honour ne for richesse,
 2270 Bot all his hertes besinesse *occupation*
 He sette to be vertuous;
 And thus withinne his oghne hous
 He liveth to the sufficance
 Of his havinge. And fell per chance, *possessions*
 2275 This Diogene upon a day,
 And that was in the monthe of May,
 Whan that these herbes ben holsome,
 He walketh for to gadre some
 In his gardin, of whiche his joutes *vegetable soup*
 2280 He thoghte have, and thus aboutes *in all directions*
 Whanne he hath gadred what him liketh,
 He satte him thanne down and pyketh *cleans*
 And wyssh his herbes in the flod *washes; stream*
 Upon the which his gardin stod,
 2285 Nyh to the bregge, as I tolde er.
 And hapneth, whil he sitteth ther,
 Cam Arisippes be the strete *road*
 With manye hors and routes grete,
 And straght unto the bregge he rod,
 2290 Wher that he hoved and abod; *stopped*
 For as he caste his yhe nyh, *eye nearby*
 His felaw Diogene he syh,
 And what he dede he syh also,
 Wherof he seide to him so:
 2295 ‘O Diogene, God thee spede
 It were certes litel nede
 To sitte there and wortes pyke, *herbs (plants)*
 If thou thi prince couthest lyke, *knew how to please*
 So as I can in my degré.’
 2300 ‘O Arisippe,’ agein quod he,
 ‘If that thou couthist, so as I,
 Thi wortes pyke, trewely
 It were als litel nede or lasse,
 That thou so worldly wolt compasse

- 2305 With flaterie for to serve,
 Wherof thou thenkest to deserve
 Thi princes thonk, and to pourchace
 Hou thou myht stonden in his grace,
 For getinge of a litel good.
- 2310 If thou wolt take into thi mod *mind*
 Reson, thou myht be reson deeme *by reason judge*
 That so thi prince for to queeme *please*
 Is noght to reson acordant,
 Bot it is gretly discordant
- 2315 Unto the scoles of Athene.’
 Lo, thus ansuerde Diogene
 Agein the clerkes flaterie. *Against*
 Bot yit men sen th’essamplerie *example*
 Of Arisippe is wel received,
- 2320 And thilke of Diogene is weyved. *avoided*
 Office in court and gold in cofre
 Is nou, men sein, the philosophre
 Which hath the worschipe in the halle. *honor*
 Bot flaterie passeth alle *surpasses*
- 2325 In chambre, whom the court avanceth;
 For upon thilke lot it chanceth
 To be beloved nou aday.
 I not if it be ye or nay, *know not*
 Bot as the comun vois it telleth; *Except*
- 2330 Bot wher that flaterie duelleth
 In eny lond under the sonne,
 Ther is ful many a thing begonne
 Which were betre to be left —
 That hath be schewed nou and eft. *time and again*
- 2335 Bot if a prince wolde him reule *himself*
 Of the Romeins after the reule,
 In thilke time as it was used,
 This vice scholde be refused,
 Wherof the princes ben assoted. *befuddled (deceived)*
- 2340 Bot wher the pleine trouthe is noted,
 Ther may a prince wel conceive,
 That he schal noght himself deceive,
 Of that he hiereth wordes pleine;
 For him thar noght be reson pleigne,
- 2345 That warned is er him be wo.
 And that was fully proeved tho,
 Whan Rome was the worldes chief,
 The sothseiere tho was lief, *truth-teller; beloved*
 Which wolde noght the trouthe spare,
- 2350 Bot with hise wordes pleine and bare
 To th’emperour hise sothes tolde,

As in cronique is yit withholde,
 Hierafterward as thou schalt hiere
 2354 Acordende unto this matiere.


[TRIUMPH, HUMILITY, AND THE ROMAN EMPERORS]

<p>☞ To se this olde ensamplerie, That whilom was no flaterie Toward the princes wel I finde; Wherof so as it comth to mynde, Mi sone, a tale unto thin ere, 2360 Whil that the worthi princes were At Rome, I thenke for to tellen. For whan the chances so befellen That eny Emperour as tho Victoire hadde upon his fo, 2365 And so forth cam to Rome agein, Of treble honour he was certain, Wherof that he was magnified. The ferste, as it is specefied, Was, whan he cam at thilke tyde, 2370 The charr in which he scholde ryde Foure whyte stiedes scholden drawe; Of Jupiter be thilke lawe The cote he scholde were also; Hise prisoners ek scholden go 2375 Endlong the charr on eyther hond, And alle the nobles of the lond Tofore and after with him come Ridende and broghten him to Rome, In thonk of his chivalerie 2380 And for non other flaterie. And that was schewed forth withal; Wher he sat in his charr real, Beside him was a ribald set, Which hadde hise wordes so beset, 2385 To th'emperour in al his gloire He seide, 'Tak into memoire, For al this pompe and al this pride Let no justice gon aside, Bot know thiself, what so befall. 2390 For men sen ofte time falle Thing which men wende siker stonde. Thogh thou victoire have nou on honde, Fortune mai noght stonde alway; The whiel per chance another day</p>	<p><i>model; (see note)</i></p> <p><i>ear</i></p> <p><i>unforseen circumstances</i></p> <p><i>chariot</i></p> <p><i>triumphal cloak; wear</i></p> <p><i>royal chariot</i> <i>fool</i></p> <p><i>go astray (deviate)</i></p> <p><i>think secure</i></p>
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- 2395 Mai torne, and thou myht overthrowe;
 Ther lasteth nothing bot a throwe.' *moment*
 With these wordes and with mo
 This ribald, which sat with him tho, *fool*
 To th'emperour his tale tolde.
- 2400 And overmor whatever he wolde,
 Or were it evel or were it good, *Whether; or*
 So plainly as the trouthe stod,
 He spareth noght, bot spekth it oute;
 And so myhte every man aboute
- 2405 The day of that solempneté
 His tale telle als wel as he
 To th'emperour al openly.
 And al was this the cause why;
 That whil he stod in that noblesse,
- 2410 He scholde his vanité represse
 With suche wordes as he herde.

[THE EMPEROR AND THE MASONS]

- Lo nou, hou thilke time it ferde *(see note)*
 Toward so hih a worthi lord:
 For this I finde ek of record,
- 2415 Which the cronique hath auctorized. *confirmed*
 What Emperour was entronized,
 The ferste day of his corone,
 Wher he was in his real throne *royal*
 And hield his feste in the paleis
- 2420 Sittende upon his hihe deis *high dais*
 With al the lust that mai be gete,
 Whan he was gladdest at his mete, *food*
 And every menstral hadde pleid,
 And every disour hadde seid *storyteller*
- 2425 What most was plesant to his ere,
 Than ate laste comen there
 Hise macons, for thei scholden crave *masons; desire to know*
 Wher that he wolde be begrave, *buried*
 And of what ston his sepulture
- 2430 Thei scholden make, and what sculpture
 He wolde ordeine therupon.
 Tho was ther flaterie non *Then*
 The worthi princes to bejape; *delude*
 The thing was otherwise schape *contrived*
- 2435 With good conseil; and otherwise
 Thei were hemselven thanne wise,
 And understoden wel and knewen.
 Whan suche softe wyndes blewen

- Of flaterie into here ere, *their ear*
 2440 Thei setten noght here hertes there;
 Bot whan thei herden wordes feigned,
 The pleine trouthe it hath desdeigned
 Of hem that weren so discrete.
 So tok the flatour no beyete *possession*
 2445 Of him that was his prince tho.
 And for to proven it is so,
 A tale which befell in dede
 In a cronique of Rome I rede.
-  Cesar upon his real throne *royal (see note)*
 2450 Wher that he sat in his persone
 And was hiest in al his pris, *excellence*
 A man, which wolde make him wys,
 Fell down knelende in his presence,
 And dede him such a reverence,
 2455 As thogh the hihe God it were.
 Men hadden gret mervaille there
 Of the worschipe which he dede.
 This man aros fro thilke stede,
 And forth with al the same tyde
 2460 He goth him up and be his side
 He set him down as pier and pier,
 And seide, 'If thou that sittest hier *equal*
 Art God, which alle thinges myht,
 Thanne have I do worschipe ariht
 2465 As to the God; and otherwise,
 If thou be noght of thilke assisse, *condition*
 Bot art a man such as am I,
 Than mai I sitte faste by,
 For we be bothen of o kinde.'
- 2470 Cesar ansuerde and seide, 'O blinde, *blind man*
 Thou art a fol, it is wel sene *fool*
 Upon thiself, for if thou wene *think*
 I be a God, thou dost amys
 To sitte wher thou sest God is;
 2475 And if I be a man, also
 Thou hast a gret folie do,
 Whan thou to such on as schal deie
 The worschipe of thi God aweie
 Hast goven so unworthely.
 2480 Thus mai I prove redely,
 Thou art noght wys.' And thei that herde
 Hou wysly that the king ansuerde,
 It was to hem a newe lore;
 Wherof thei dradden him the more,
 2485 And broghten nothing to his ere,

- Bot if it trouthe and reson were.
 So be ther manye, in such a wise
 That feignen wordes to be wise,
 And al is verray flaterie
 2490 To him which can it wel aspie.
 ¶ The kinde flatour can noght love *(see note)*
 Bot for to bringe himself above;
 For hou that evere his maister fare,
 So that himself stonde out of care,
 2495 Him reccheth noght: and thus fulofte
 Deceived ben with wordes softe
 The kinges that ben innocent.
 Wherof as for chastiment
 The wise Philosophre seide,
 2500 What king that so his tresor leide
 Upon such folk, he hath the lesse,
 And yit ne doth he no largesse,
 Bot harmeth with his oghne hond *own hand*
 Himself and ek his oghne lond,
 2505 And that be many a sondri weie.
 Wherof if that a man schal seie,
 As for to speke in general,
 Wher such thing falleth overal
 That eny king himself misreule,
 2510 The Philosophre upon his reule
 In special a cause sette,
 Which is and evere hath be the lette *impediment*
 In governance aboute a king
 Upon the meschief of the thing,
 2515 And that, he seith, is Flaterie.
 Wherof tofore as in partie
 What vice it is I have declared;
 For who that hath his wit bewared *applied*
 Upon a flatour to believe,
 2520 Whan that he weneth best achieve
 His goode world, it is most fro.
 And for to proeven it is so
 Ensamples ther ben manyon, *many a one*
 Of whiche if thou wolt knowen on,
 2525 It is behovely for to hie
 What whilom fell in this matiere. *useful
once happened*

[TALE OF AHAB AND MICAIAH]

- Among the kinges in the Bible
 I finde a tale, and is credible,
 2529 Of him that whilom Achab hihte, *was called Ahab*

- Which hadde al Irahel to rihte;
 Bot who that couthe glose softe
 And flatre, suche he sette alofte
 In gret astat and made hem riche;
 Bot thei that spieken wordes liche
 To trouthe and wolde it noght forbere,
 For hem was non astat to bere,
 The court of suche tok non hiede.
 Til ate laste upon a nede,
 That Benedab king of Surie
 Of Irahel a gret partie,
 Which Ramoth Galaath was hote,
 Hath sesed; and of that riote
 He tok conseil in sondri wise,
 Bot noght of hem that weren wise.
 And natheles upon this cas
 To strengthen him, for Josaphas,
 Which thanne was king of Judee,
 He sende for to come, as he
 Which thurgh frendschipe and alliance
 Was next to him of aqueintance;
 For Joram sone of Josaphath
 Achabbes dowhter wedded hath,
 Which hihte faire Godelie.
 And thus cam into Samarie
 King Josaphat, and he fond there
 The king Achab: and whan thei were
 Togedre spekende of this thing,
 This Josaphat seith to the king,
 Hou that he wolde gladly hiere
 Som trew prophete in this matiere,
 That he his conseil myhte give
 To what point that it schal be drive.
 And in that time so befell,
 Ther was such on in Irahel,
 Which sette him al to flaterie,
 And he was cleped Sedechie.
 And after him Achab hath sent,
 And he at his comandement
 Tofore him cam, and be a sleyhte
 He hath upon his heved on heyhte
 Tuo large hornes set of bras,
 As he which al a flatour was,
 And goth rampende as a leoun
 And caste hise hornes up and down,
 And bad men ben of good espeir,
 For as the hornes percen th'eir,
- Israel; govern (see note)*
knew how to use fair words courteously
them wealthy (powerful)
Israel
called
gang
in fellowship
hear
head
Two
leaping about (rampant)
hope
air

- He seith, withoute resistence,
 So wiste he wel of his science
 That Benedab is desconfit. *defeated*
 2580 Whan Sedechie upon this plit
 Hath told this tale to his lord,
 Anon ther were of his acord
 Prophetes false manye mo
 To bere up oil, and alle tho *To speak flatteringly; those*
 2585 Affermen that which he hath told, *Corroborate*
 Wherof the king Achab was bold
 And gaf hem giftes al aboute.
 Bot Josaphat was in gret doute,
 And hield fantosme al that he herde,
 2590 Preiende Achab, hou so it ferde,
 If ther were eny other man,
 The which of prophecie can,
 To hie him speke er that thei gon.
 Quod Achab thanne, 'Ther is on,
 2595 A brothell, which Micheas hihte;
 Bot he ne comth noght in my sihte,
 For he hath longe in prison lein. *lain*
 Him liketh nevere yit to sein
 A goodly word to mi plesance;
 2600 And natheles at thin instance
 He schal come oute, and thanne he may
 Seie as he seide many day;
 For yit he seide nevere wel.'
 Tho Josaphat began somdel
 2605 To gladen him in hope of trouthe,
 And bad withouten eny slouthe *sloth*
 That men him scholden fette anon. *fetch immediately*
 And thei that weren for him gon,
 Whan that thei comen wher he was,
 2610 Thei tolden unto Micheas
 The manere hou that Sedechie
 Declared hath his prophecie;
 And therupon thei preie him faire
 That he wol seie no contraire,
 2615 Wherof the king mai be desplesed,
 For so schal every man ben esed,
 And he mai helpe himselve also.
 Micheas upon trouthe tho
 His herte sette, and to hem seith,
 2620 Al that belongeth to his feith
 And of non other feigned thing,
 That wol he telle unto his king,
 Als fer as God hath gove him grace. *given*

- Thus cam this prophete into place
 2625 Wher he the kinges wille herde;
 And he therto anon ansuerde,
 And seide unto him in this wise:
 ‘Mi liege lord, for mi servise,
 Which trewe hath stonden evere yit,
 2630 Thou hast me with prisone aquit; *repaid*
 Bot for al that I schal nought glose *obscure*
 Of trouthe als fer as I suppose;
 And as touchende of this bataille,
 Thou schalt nought of the sothe faile.
 2635 For if it like thee to hieere,
 As I am tauht in that matiere,
 Thou mihte it understonde sone;
 Bot what is afterward to done
 Advise thee, for this I sih. *saw*
 2640 I was tofor the throne on hih, *before*
 Wher al the world me thoghte stod, *lay [before me]*
 And there I herde and understod
 The vois of God with wordes cliere
 Axende, and seide in this manere: *Asking*
 2645 “In what thing mai I best beguile
 The king Achab?” And for a while
 Upon this point thei spieken faste.
 Tho seide a spirit ate laste,
 “I undertake this emprise.”
 2650 And God him axeth, “In what wise?”
 “I schal,” quod he, “deceive and lye
 With flaterende prophecie
 In suche mouthes as he lieveth.” *believes*
 And He which alle thing achieveth
 2655 Bad him go forth and don riht so.
 And over this I sih also
 The noble peple of Irahel
 Dispers as schep upon an hell, *sheep; hill*
 Withoute a kepere unarraied; *in disarray*
 2660 And as thei wente aboute astraied, *aimlessly*
 I herde a vois unto hem sein,
 “Goth hom into your hous agein,
 Til I for you have betre ordeigned.”
 Quod Sedechie, “Thou hast feigned *invented*
 2665 This tale in angringe of the king.’ *provocation*
 And in a wraththe upon this thing
 He smot Michee upon the cheke;
 The king him hath rebuked eke, *also*
 And every man upon him cride.
 2670 Thus was he schent on every side, *scorned*

- Agein and into prison lad, *led*
 For so the king himselve bad.
 The trouthe myhte noght ben herd;
 Bot afterward as it hath ferd,
 2675 The dede proveth his entente. *facts*
 Achab to the bataille wente,
 Wher Benedab for al his scheld *despite all his [Ahab's] protective soldiers*
 Him slouh, so that upon the feld
 His poeple goth aboute astray. *out of formation*
 2680 Bot God, which alle thinges may,
 So doth that thei no meschief have;
 Here king was ded and thei ben save,
 And hom agein in Goddes pes
 Thei wente, and al was founde les *found to be lies*
 2685 That Sedechie hath seid tofore.
 So sit it wel a king therfore
 To loven hem that trouthe mene;
 For ate laste it wol be sene
 That flaterie is nothing worth.
 2690 Bot nou to mi matiere forth,
 As for to speken overmore
 After the Philosophres lore,
 The thridde point of policie
 I thenke for to specifie.”

[JUSTICE, THE THIRD PART OF POLICY]

- ix. *Propter transgressos leges statuuntur in orbe,
 Vt vivant iusti Regis honore viri.
 Lex sine iusticia populum sub principis umbra
 Deviat, ut rectum nemo videbit iter.*¹

[Confessor] “What is a lond wher men ben none?


- 2696 What ben the men whiche are alone
 Withoute a kinges governance?
 What is a king in his ligance,
 ¶ Wher that ther is no lawe in londe? *(see note)*
 2700 What is to take lawe on honde,
 Bot if the jugges weren trewe?
 These olde worldes with the newe
 Who that wol take in evidence,
 Ther mai he se th’experience,

¹ *Laws are established on earth on account of transgressors, so that righteous men might live by the King’s honor. Law without justice makes the people deviant [see note] under the shadow of the ruler, so that no one will see the straight path.*


- 2705 What thing it is to kepe lawe,
 Thurgh which the wronges ben withdrawe
 And rihtwisnesse stant commended,
 Wherof the regnes ben amended. *kingdoms; restored (reformed)*
 For wher the lawe mai comune *unite*
- 2710 The lordes forth with the commune, *commonwealth*
 Ech hath his propre dueté;
 And ek the kinges realté
 Of bothe his worschipe underfongeth, *honor receives*
 To his astat as it belongeth,
- 2715 Which of his hihe worthinesse
 Hath to governe rihtwisnesse, *Has the inherent right to govern*
 As he which schal the lawe guide.
 And natheles upon som side
 His pouer stant above the lawe,
- 2720 To give bothe and to withdrawe
 The forfet of a mannes lif;
 Bot thinges whiche are excessif
 Agein the lawe, he schal noght do
 For love ne for hate also.
- 2725 The myhtes of a king ben grete,
 Bot yit a worthi king schal lete *keep*
- ¶ Of wrong to don al that he myhte;
 For he which schal the poeple ryhte, *From doing wrong; (see note)*
 It sit wel to his regalie
- 2730 That he himself ferst justefie
 Towardes God in his degré:
 For his astat is elles fre
 Toward alle othre in his persone,
 Save only to the God alone,
- 2735 Which wol himself a king chastise,
 Wher that non other mai suffise.
 So were it good to taken hiede
 That ferst a king his oghne dede
 Betwen the vertu and the vice
- 2740 Redresce, and thanne of his justice
 So sette in evene the balance *judged impartially*
 Towardes othre in governance,
 That to the povere and to the riche
 Hise lawes myhten stonde liche, *the same*
- 2745 He schal excepte no persone. *show favoritism to no one*
 Bot for he mai noght al him one
 In sondri places do justice,
 He schal of his real office *royal*
 With wys consideracion
- 2750 Ordeigne his deputation
 Of suche jugges as ben lerned,

- So that his poeple be governed
 Be hem that trewe ben and wise.
 For if the lawe of covoitise
 2755 Be set upon a jugges hond,
 Wo is the poeple of thilke lond,
 For wrong mai noght himselven hyde.
 Bot elles on that other side,
 If lawe stonde with the riht,
 2760 The poeple is glad and stant upriht.
 Wher as the lawe is resonable,
 The comun poeple stant menable, *compliant (in agreement)*
 And if the lawe torne amis,
 2764 The poeple also mistorned is. *are skewed*

[EMPEROR MAXIMIN]


-  And in ensample of this matiere *(see note)*
 Of Maximin a man mai hiere,
 Of Rome which was emperour,
 That whanne he made a governour
 Be weie of substitucion *appointment*
 2770 Of province or of region,
 He wolde ferst enquire his name,
 And let it openly proclame
 What man he were, or evel or good. *either; or*
 And upon that his name stod
 2775 Enclin to vertu or to vice,
 So wolde he sette him in office,
 Or elles putte him al aweie.
 Thus hield the lawe his rihte weie,
 Which fond no let of covoitise: *found no impediment from*
 2780 The world stod thanne upon the wise,
 As be ensample thou myht rede;
 And hold it in thi mynde, I rede. *memory*

[GAIUS FABRICIUS]

- In a cronique I finde thus,
 Hou that Gayus Fabricius,
 2785 Which whilom was Consul of Rome,
 Be whom the lawes yede and come, *come and go*
 Whan the Sampnites to him broghte
 A somme of gold, and him besoghte *(see note)*
 To don hem favour in the lawe,
 2790 Toward the gold he gan him drawe,
 Wherof in alle mennes lok
 A part up in his hond he tok,

- Which to his mouth in alle haste
 He putte it for to smelle and taste,
 2795 And to his yhe and to his ere, *eye; ear*
 Bot he ne fond no confort there.
 And thanne he gan it to despise,
 And tolde unto hem in this wise:
 'I not what is with gold to thryve, *know not*
 2800 Whan non of all my wittes fyve
 Fynt savour ne delit therinne.
 So is it bot a nyce sinne *foolish sin*
 Of gold to ben to covoitous; *too*
 Bot he is riche and glorious,
 2805 Which hath in his subjeccion
 Tho men which in possession
 Ben riche of gold, and be this skile: *according to this reason*
 For he mai aldai whan he wile,
 Or be hem lieve or be hem lothe, *Whether [it] be pleasing or displeasing to them*
 2810 Justice don upon hem bothe.'
 Lo, thus he seide, and with that word
 He threw tofore hem on the bord
 The gold out of his hond anon,
 And seide hem that he wolde non: *said to them; wanted none*
 2815 So that he kepte his liberté
 To do justice and equité, *what is fair*
 Withoute lucre of such richesse.
 Ther be nou fewe of suche, I gesse,
 For it was thilke times used,
 2820 That every jugge was refused
 Which was noght frend to comun riht.
 Bot thei that wolden stonde upriht
 For trouthe only to do justice
 Preferred were in thilke office
 2825 To deme and jugge commun lawe,
 Which nou, men sein, is al withdrawe.
 To sette a lawe and kepe it noght
 Ther is no comun profit soght;
 Bot above alle natheles
 2830 The lawe, which is mad for pes,
 Is good to kepe for the best,
 For that set alle men in reste.

[EMPEROR CONRAD]

-  The rihtful Emperour Conrade *(see note)*
 To kepe pes such lawe made
 2835 That non withinne the cité
 In destorbance of unité

Dorste ones moeven a matiere. *stir up trouble*
 For in his time, as thou myht hiere,
 What point that was for lawe set
 2840 It scholde for no gold be let, *obstructed*
 To what persone that it were. *whatever*
 And this broghte in the comun fere *fear*
 Why every man the lawe dradde,
 For ther was non which favour hadde.

[CARMIDOTIRUS]

2845 So as these olde bokes sein,
 I finde write hou a Romein,
 Which Consul was of the Pretoire, *commander of the Praetorian Guard*
 Whos name was Carmidotoire,
 ¶ He sette a lawe for the pes *(see note)*
 2850 That non, bot he be wepneles, *unless; weaponless*
 Schal come into the conseil hous,
 And elles as malicious *on the grounds of intending malice*
 He schal ben of the lawe ded. *put to death by law*
 To that statut and to that red *counsel*
 2855 Acorden alle it schal be so,
 For certein cause which was tho.
 Nou lest what fell therafter sone. *listen to*
 This consul hadde for to done,
 And was into the feldes ride;
 2860 And thei him hadden longe abide, *waited for him to arrive*
 That lordes of the conseil were,
 And for him sende, and he cam there
 With swerd begert, and hath forgete, *girded*
 Til he was in the conseil sete.
 2865 Was non of hem that made speche,
 Til he himself it wolde seche, *investigate*
 And fond out the defalte himselve;
 And thanne he seide unto the tuelle,
 Whiche of the senat weren wise,
 2870 'I have deserved the juise, *judgment*
 In haste that it were do.'
 And thei him seiden alle no;
 For wel thei wiste it was no vice,
 Whan he ne thoghte no malice,
 2875 Bot onliche of a litel slouthe. *sloth*
 And thus thei leften as for routhe *spared*
 To do justice upon his gilt,
 For that he scholde noght be spilt. *slain*
 And whanne he sih the maner hou
 2880 Thei wolde him save, he made avou

With manfull herte, and thus he seide,
 That Rome scholde nevere abreide
 His heires, whan he were of dawē,
 That here ancestre brak the lawe.
 2885 Forthi, er that thei weren war,
 Forth with the same swerd he bar
 The statut of his lawe he kepte,
 So that al Rome his deth bewepete.

upbraid (censure)
dead (lit., at the end of his days)

aware

mourned

[CAMBYSES]

☞ In other place also I rede,
 2890 Wher that a jugge his oghne dede
 Ne wol noght venge of lawe broke,
 The king it hath himselven wroke.
 The grete king which Cambises
 Was hote, a jugge laweles
 2895 He fond, and into remembrance
 He dede upon him such vengeance:
 Out of his skyn he was beflain
 Al quyk, and in that wise slain,
 So that his skyn was schape al meete,
 2900 And nayled on the same seete
 Wher that his sone scholde sitte.
 Advise him, if he wolde flitte
 The lawe for the coveitise,
 Ther sih he redi his juise.
 2905 Thus is defalte of other jugge
 The king mot otherwhile jugge,
 To holden up the rihte lawe.
 And for to speke of th'olde dawē,
 To take ensample of that was tho,
 2910 I finde a tale write also,
 Hou that a worthi prince is holde
 The lawes of his lond to holde,
 Ferst for the hihe Goddes sake,
 And ek for that him is betake
 2915 The poeple for to guide and lede,
 Which is the charge of his kinghede.

(see note)

Will not take vengeance for a broken law
avenged

wrecked
entirely skinned
Alive

circumvent

judgment [that would befall him]

olden days
then

bound
uphold

obliged

[TALE OF LYCURGUS]

In a cronique I rede thus
 Of the rihtful Ligurgius,
 Which of Athenis prince was,
 2920 Hou he the lawe in every cas,
 ☞ Wherof he scholde his poeple reule,

(see note)

- Hath set upon so good a reule,
 In al this world that cité non
 Of lawe was so wel begon
 2925 Forth with the trouthe of governance.
 Ther was among hem no distance,
 Bot every man hath his encress;
 Ther was withoute werre pes,
 Withoute envie love stod;
 2930 Richesse upon the comun good
 And noght upon the singuler *for personal gain*
 Ordeigned was, and the pouer
 Of hem that weren in astat
 Was sauf: wherof upon debat *uncertainty (instability)*
 2935 Ther stod nothing, so that in reste
 Mihte every man his herte reste.
 And whan this noble rihtful king
 Sih hou it ferde of al this thing, *Saw*
 Wherof the poeple stod in ese,
 2940 He, which forevere wolde plese
 The hihe God, whos thonk he soghte,
 A wonder thing thanne him bethoghte,
 And schop if that it myhte be, *instituted*
 Hou that his lawe in the cité
 2945 Mihte afterward forevere laste.
 And therupon his wit he caste
 What thing him were best to feigne,
 That he his pourpos myhte atteigne.
 A parlement and thus he sette,
 2950 His wisdom wher that he besette
 In audience of grete and smale,
 And in this wise he tolde his tale.
 ‘God wot, and so ye witen alle, *knows; know*
 Hierafterward hou so it falle,
 2955 Yit into now my will hath be
 To do justice and equité
 In forthringe of comun profit;
 Such hath ben evere my delit.
 Bot of o thing I am beknowe,
 2960 The which mi will is that ye knowe: *I acknowledge*
 The lawe which I tok on honde,
 Was altogedre of Goddes sonde *entirely; sent by God*
 And nothing of myn oghne wit;
 So mot it nede endure yit,
 2965 And schal do lengere, if ye wile.
 For I wol telle you the skile; *reason*
 The god Mercurius and no man
 He hath me tawht al that I can *know*

- Of suche lawes as I made,
 2970 Wherof that ye ben alle glade;
 It was the god and nothing I,
 Which dede al this, and nou forthi
 He hath comanded of his grace
 That I schal come into a place
 2975 Which is forein out in an yle, *far removed*
 Wher I mot tarie for a while,
 With him to speke, as he hath bede. *commanded*
 For as he seith, in thilke stede *place*
 He schal me suche thinges telle,
 2980 That evere, whyl the world schal duelle,
 Athenis schal the betre fare.
 Bot ferst, er that I thider fare,
 For that I wolde that mi lawe
 Amonges you ne be withdrawe
 2985 Ther whyles that I schal ben oute, *All the while*
 Forthi to setten out of doute
 Bothe you and me, this wol I preie,
 That ye me wolde assure and seie
 With such an oth as I wol take,
 2990 That ech of you schal undertake
 Mi lawes for to kepe and holde.
 Thei seiden alle that thei wolde,
 And therupon thei swore here oth,
 That fro the time that he goth,
 2995 Til he to hem be come agein,
 Thei scholde hise lawes wel and plein
 In every point kepe and fulfille.
 Thus hath Ligurgius his wille,
 And tok his leve and forth he wente.
 3000 Bot lest nou wel to what entente
 Of rihtwisnesse he dede so:
 For after that he was ago,
 He schop him nevere to be founde; *contrived*
 So that Athenis, which was bounde,
 3005 Nevere after scholde be releessed,
 Ne thilke goode lawe cessed,
 Which was for comun profit set.
 And in this wise he hath it knet; *established*
 He, which the comun profit soghte,
 3010 The king, his oghne astat ne roghte; *did not care about*
 To do profit to the comune,
 He tok of exil the fortune,
 And lefte of prince thilke office
 Only for love and for justice,
 3015 Thurgh which he thoghte, if that he myhte,

Forevere after his deth to rihte
 The cité which was him betake. *entrusted to him*
 Wherof men oghte ensample take
 The goode lawes to avance *improve (advance, encourage)*
 3020 With hem which under governance
 The lawes have for to kepe;
 For who that wolde take kepe
 Of hem that ferst the lawes founde, *established*
 Als fer as lasteth eny bounde *region*
 3025 Of lond, here names yit ben knowe.
 And if it like thee to knowe
 Some of here names hou thei stonde,
 Nou herkne and thou schalt understonde.

[FIRST LAWGIVERS]

Of every bienfet the merite *meritorious action*
 3030 The God himself it wol aquite; *reward*
 And ek fulofte it falleth so,
 The world it wole aquite also,
 3035 Bot that mai noght ben evene liche. *(see note)*
 The God he gifh the heveneriche, *kingdom of heaven*
 The world gifh only bot a name,
 Which stant upon the goode fame
 Of hem that don the goode dede.
 And in this wise double mede *reward*
 Resceiven thei that don wel hiere; *here*
 3040 Wherof if that thee list to hiere *hear*
 After the fame as it is blowe, *widely acclaimed*
 Ther myht thou wel the sothe knowe,
 Hou thilke honeste besinesse
 Of hem that ferst for rihtwisnesse
 3045 Among the men the lawes made,
 Mai nevere upon this erthe fade.
 Forevere, whil ther is a tunge,
 Here name schal be rad and sunge
 And holde in the cronique write;
 3050 So that the men it scholden wite,
 To speke good, as thei wel oghten,
 Of hem that ferst the lawes soghten *devised*
 In forthringe of the worldes pes.
 Unto th'Ebreus was Moises *Hebrews*
 3055 The ferste, and to th'Egipcians
 Mercurius, and to Troiens
 Ferst was Neuma Pompilius,
 To Athenes Ligurgius
 Gaf ferst the lawe, and to Gregois *Greeks*

- 3060 Foroneus hath thilke vois,
 And Romulus to the Romeins.
 For suche men that ben vileins
 The lawe in such a wise ordeigneth,
 That what man to the lawe pleigneth, *is plaintiff*
- 3065 Be so the jugge stonde upriht,
 He schal be served of his riht.
 And so ferforth it is befallē
 That lawe is come among ous alle.
 God lieve it mote wel ben holde,
- 3070 As every king therto is holde;
 For thing which is of kinges set,
 With kinges oghte it noght be let. *evaded (nullified)*
 What king of lawe takth no kepe, *pays no heed*
 Be lawe he mai no regne kepe. *By*
- 3075 Do lawe away, what is a king?
 Wher is the riht of eny thing,
 If that ther be no lawe in londe?
 This oghte a king wel understonde,
 As he which is to lawe swore,
- 3080 That if the lawe be forbore
 Withouten execucioun,
 It makth a lond torne up so down,
 Which is unto the king a sclandre. *disgrace*
 Forthi unto king Alisandre
- 3085 The wise Philosophre bad,
 That he himselve ferst be lad *led*
 Of lawe, and forth thanne overal
 So do justice in general,
 That al the wyde lond aboute
- 3090 The justice of his lawe doute,
 And thanne schal he stonde in reste.
 For therto lawe is on the beste
 Above alle other erthly thing,
 To make a liege drede his king.
- 3095 Bot hou a king schal gete him love
 Toward the hihe God above,
 And ek among the men in erthe,
 This nexte point, which is the ferthe *fourth*
 Of Aristotles lore, it techeth.
- 3100 Wherof who that the scole secheth,
 What policie that it is
 The bok reherceth after this.”

[PITY, THE FOURTH PART OF POLICY]

- x. *Nil rationis habens ubi velle tyrannica regna
Stringit, amor populi transiet exul ibi.
Set Pietas, regnum que conseruabit in eum,
Non tantum populo, set placet illa deo.*¹

- [Confessor]** “It nedeth nought that I delate
The pris which preised is algate, *describe at length
esteemed renown; continually*
3105 And hath ben euer and euer schal,
Wherof to speke in special,
It is the vertu of Pité,
Thurgh which the Hihe Magesté
☞ Was stered, whan His Sone alyhte, *moved; descended to earth (see note)*
3110 And in Pité the world to rihte *amend (atone for)*
Tok of the maide fleissch and blod. *maiden (i.e., the Virgin Mary)*
Pité was cause of thilke good,
Wherof that we ben alle save.
Wel oghte a man Pité to have
3115 And the vertu to sette in pris, *esteem*
Whan He Himself which is al wys
Hath schewed why it schal be preised.
Pité may nought be conterpeised *balanced*
Of tirannie with no peis; *By; weight*
3120 For Pité makth a king courteis
Bothe in his word and in his dede.
Nota It sit wel every liege drede *It is suitable for; [to] fear*
His king and to his heste obeie, *command*
And riht so be the same weie
3125 It sit a king to be pitous *It befits*
Toward his poeple and gracious
Upon the reule of governance,
So that he worche no vengeance,
Which mai be cleped cruauté.
3130 Justice which doth equité
Is dredfull, for he no man spareth.
Bot in the lond wher Pité fareth
The king mai nevere faile of love,
For Pité thurgh the grace above,
3135 So as the Philosophre affermeth,
His regne in good astat confermeth.
☞ Thus seide whilom Constantin: *(see note)*
‘What Emperour that is enclin

¹ *Lacking all reason, a tyrant's will strips bare the kingdom, and the people's love roams as an exile there. But Pity [see note], and the kingdom it will preserve for eternity, is pleasing both to the people and to God.*

- To Pité for to be servant,
 3140 Of al the worldes remenant
 He is worthi to ben a lord.'
- ☞ In olde bokes of record *(see note)*
 This finde I write of essamplaire:
 Troian the worthi debonaire, *Trajan*
 3145 Be whom that Rome stod governed,
 Upon a time as he was lerned
 Of that he was to familier,
 He seide unto that conseillier,
 That for to ben an emperour
 3150 His will was noght for vein honour,
 Ne yit for reddour of justice; *rigor*
 Bot if he myhte in his office
 Hise lordes and his poeple plese,
 Him thoghte it were a grettere ese
 3155 With love here hertes to him drawe,
 Than with the drede of eny lawe.
 For whan a thing is do for doute, *fear*
 Fulofte it comth the worse aboute;
 Bot wher a king is pietous,
 3160 He is the more gracious,
 That mochel thrift him schal betyde, *success to him; come about*
 Which elles scholde torne aside. *otherwise; (see note)*

[TALE OF CODRUS]

- ☞ Of Pité for to speke plein, *(see note)*
 Which is with mercy wel besein,
 3165 Fulofte he wole himselve peine
 To kepe another fro the peine,
 For Charité the moder is
 Of Pité, which nothing amis
 Can soffre, if he it mai amende.
 3170 It sit to every man livende *befits; living*
 To be pitous, bot non so wel
 As to a king, which on the whiel
 Fortune hath set aboven alle.
 For in a king, if so befalle
 3175 That his Pité be ferme and stable,
 To al the lond it is vailable *beneficial*
 Only thurgh grace of his persone.
 For the Pité of him alone
 Mai al the large realme save.
 3180 So sit it wel a king to have
 Pité; for this Valeire tolde,
 And seide hou that be daies olde *Valerius Maximus*

- Codrus, which was in his degré
 King of Athenis the cité,
 3185 A werre he hadde agein Dorrence: *the Dorians*
 And for to take his evidence
 What schal befall of the bataille,
 He thoghte he wolde him ferst consaille *seek advice*
 With Appollo, in whom he triste; *From; trusted*
 3190 Thurgh whos ansuere this he wiste, *knew*
 Of tuo pointz that he myhte chese,
 Or that he wolde his body lese *Either*
 And in bataille himselve deie,
 Or elles the seconde weie,
 3195 To sen his poeple desconfit. *defeated*
 Bot he, which Pité hath parfit
 Upon the point of his believe,
 The poeple thoghte to relieve,
 And ches himselve to be ded.
 3200 Wher is nou such another hed, *head*
 Which wolde for the lemes dye? *limbs*
 And natheles in som partie
 It oghte a kinges herte sterve,
 That he hise liege men forbere. *guide*
 3205 And ek toward hise enemis *show respect for*
 Fulofte he may deserve pris, *praise*
 To take of Pité remembrance,
 Wher that he myhte do vengeance.
 For whanne a king hath the victoire,
 3210 And thanne he drawe into memoire *vengeance*
 To do Pité in stede of wreche,
 He mai noght faile of thilke speche
 Wherof arist the worldes fame, *arose*
 To give a prince a worthi name.

[TALE OF POMPEIUS AND THE KING OF ARMENIA]

- 3215 I rede hou whilom that Pompeie,
 To whom that Rome moste obeie,
 A werre hadde in jeupartie *war; uncertainty*
 Agein the king of Ermenie,
 3220 Which of long time him hadde grieved. *(see note)*
 Bot ate laste it was achieved
 That he this king desconfit hadde, *defeated*
 And forth with him to Rome ladde
 As prisoner, wher many a day
 In sori plit and povere he lay, *poverty*
 3225 The corone of his heved deposed, *head*
 Withinne walles faste enclosed;

- And with ful gret humilité
 He soffreth his adversité.
 Pompeie sih his pacience
 3230 And tok pité with conscience, *tenderness*
 So that upon his hihe deis *dais*
 Tofore al Rome in his paleis, *Before*
 As he that wolde upon him rewe, *take pity*
 Let give him his corone newe
 3235 And his astat al full and plein
 Restoreth of his regne agein,
 And seide it was more goodly thing
 To make than undon a king, *undo*
 To him which pouer hadde of bothe.
 3240 Thus thei, that weren longe wrothe, *angry [at each other]*
 Acorden hem to final pes; *Came to terms; peace*
 And yit justice natheles
 Was kept and in nothing offended,
 Wherof Pompeie was comended.
 3245 Ther mai no king himself excuse,
 Bot if justice he kepe and use,
 Which for t'eschuie cruauté
 He mot attempre with Pité. *temper*
 Of cruauté the felonie *sin*
 3250 Engendred is of tirannie,
 Agein the whos condicion *which*
 God is himself the champion,
 Whos strengthe mai no man withstonde. *stand against*
 Forevere yit it hath so stonde,
 3255 That God a tirant overladde.
 Bot wher Pité the regne ladde,
 Ther mihte no fortune laste
 Which was grevous, bot ate laste
 The God himself it hath redresced.
 3260 Pité is thilke vertu blessed *pleasing to God*
 Which nevere let his maister falle; *(i.e., one who is piteous)*
 Bot cruauté, thogh it so falle *may happen*
 That it mai regne for a throwe, *for a little bit*
 God wole it schal ben overthrowe.
 3265 Wherof ensamples ben ynowhe
 Of hem that thilke merel drowhe. *those who move that game piece*
 ¶ Of cruauté I rede thus: *(see note)*
 Whan the tirant Leoncius
 Was to th'empire of Rome arrived, *descended upon*
 3270 Fro which he hath with strengthe prived *deprived [of power]*
 The pietous Justinian,
 As he which was a cruel man,
 His nase of and his lippes bothe *nose off*


- He kutte, for he wolde him lothe
 3275 Unto the poeple and make unable. *render him loathsome*
 Bot he which is al merciabe,
 The hihe God, ordeigneth so, *unsuitable*
 That he withinne a time also,
 Whan he was strengest in his ire,
 3280 Was schoven out of his empire. *driven out*
 Tiberius the pouer hadde,
 And Rome after his will he ladde,
 And for Leonce in such a wise
 Ordeigneth, that he tok juise *should receive judicial punishment*
 3285 Of nase and lippes bothe tuo,
 For that he dede another so,
 Which more worthi was than he.
 Lo, which a fall hath cruauté,
 And Pité was set up agein.
 3290 For after that the bokes sein,
 Therbellis king of Bulgarie
 With helpe of his chivalerie
 Justinian hath unprisoned
 And to th'empire agein coroned.

[CRUELTY OF SICULUS]


- 3295 In a cronique I finde also
 Of Siculus, which was ek so
 ☞ A cruel king lich the tempeste, *(see note)*
 The whom no Pité myhte areste,
 He was the ferste, as bokes seie,
 3300 Upon the see which fond galeie *sea; invented the galley*
 And let hem make for the werre, *had them made; war*
 As he which al was out of herre *out of killer (unhinged)*
 Fro Pité and misericorde; *compassion*
 For therto couthe he noght acorde,
 3305 Bot whom he myhte slen, he slouh, *kill; killed*
 And therof was he glad ynouh.
 He hadde of conseil manyon,
 Among the whiche ther was on
 Be name which Berillus hihte, *was called*
 3310 And he bethoghte him hou he myhte
 Unto the tirant do likinge, *ingratiate himself*
 And of his oghne ymaginyng
 Let forge and make a bole of bras, *bull*
 And on the side cast ther was
 3315 A dore, wher a man mai inne, *door; enter*
 Whan he his peine schal beginne *torture*
 Thurgh fyr, which that men putten under.

- And al this dede he for a wonder,
 That whanne a man for peine cride,
 3320 The bole of bras, which gapeth wyde,
 It scholde seme as thogh it were
 A belwinge in a mannes ere *bellowing; ear*
 And noght the criinge of a man.
 Bot he which alle sleihtes can, *deceptions knows*
 3325 The devel, that lith in helle faste, *who lies*
 Him that this caste hath overcast, *brought about; overthrown*
 That for a trespas which he dede
 He was putt in the same stede, *place*
 And was himself the ferste of alle
 3330 Which was into that peine falle
 That he for othre men ordeigneth: *designed*
 Ther was no man which him compleigneth. *lamented for him*
 Of tirannie and cruauté
 Be this ensample a king mai se,
 3335 Himself and ek his conseil bothe,
 Hou thei ben to mankinde lothe
 And to the God abhominable.
 Ensamples that ben concordable *appropriate*
 I finde of othre princes mo,
 3340 As thou schalt hiere, of time go. *from time past*

[DIONYSIUS AND HIS HORSE]

-  The grete tirant Dionys, *(see note)*
 Which mannes lif sette of no pris, *value*
 Unto his hors fulofte he gaf
 The men in stede of corn and chaf,
 3345 So that the hors of thilke stod *corral*
 Devoureden the mennes blod,
 Til fortune ate laste cam
 That Hercules him overcam, *So that*
 And he riht in the same wise
 3350 Of this tirant tok the juisse. *punished*
 As he til othre men hath do,
 The same deth he deide also,
 That no Pité him hath socoured,
 Til he was of hise hors devoured.

[LICHAON]

- 3355 Of Lichaon also I finde
 Hou he agein the lawe of kinde *against*
 Hise hostes slough, and into mete *(see note)*
 He made her bodies to ben ete

- With othre men withinne his hous.
 3360 Bot Jupiter the glorious,
 Which was commoeved of this thing, *Who; roused to anger by*
 Vengeance upon this cruel king
 So tok, that he fro mannes forme
 Into a wolf him let transforme:
 3365 And thus the cruauté was kidd, *known*
 Which of long time he hadde hidd;
 A wolf he was thanne openly,
 The whos nature prively
 He hadde in his condicion.
 3370 And unto this conclusioun,
 That tirannie is to despise,
 I finde ensample in sondri wise,
 And nameliche of hem fulofte,
 The whom Fortune hath set alofte
 3375 Upon the werres for to winne. *wars*
 Bot hou so that the wrong beginne
 Of tirannie, it mai noght laste,
 Bot such as thei don ate laste
 To othre men, such on hem falleth;
 3380 For agein suche Pité calleth
 Vengeance to the God above.
 For who that hath no tender love
 In savinge of a mannes lif,
 He schal be founde so gultif,
 3385 That whanne he wolde mercy crave
 In time of nede, he schal non have.

[NOBLENESS OF THE LION]

- ☞ Of the natures this I finde, *books on natural history; (see note)*
 The fierce leon in his kinde, *lion; nature*
 Which goth rampende after his preie,
 3390 If he a man finde in his weie,
 He wole him slen, if he withstonde. *resists*
 Bot if the man coude understonde
 To falle anon before his face
 In signe of mercy and of grace,
 3395 The leon schal of his nature
 Restreigne his ire in such mesure,
 As thogh it were a beste tamed,
 And torne away halfvinge aschamed, *somewhat (halfway)*
 That he the man schal nothing grieve. *So that; injure*
 3400 Hou scholde thanne a prince achieve
 The worldes grace, if that he wolde
 Destruie a man whanne he is yolde *has yielded*

And stant upon his mercy al? *depends on; entirely*
 Bot for to speke in special,
 3405 Ther have be suche and yit ther be
 Tirantz, whos hertes no pité
 Mai to no point of mercy plie,
 That thei upon her tirannie
 Ne gladen hem the men to sle;
 3410 And as the rages of the see *sea*
 Ben unpitous in the tempeste,
 Riht so mai no Pité areste
 Of cruauté the gret outrage,
 Which the tirant in his corage
 3415 Engendred hath: wherof I finde
 A tale, which comth nou to mynde.

[TALE OF SPERTACHUS AND THAMERIS]

I rede in olde bokes thus,
 Ther was a duk, which Spertachus *duke*
 Men clepe, and was a werreieur, *called (see note)*
 3420 A cruel man, a conquerour
 With strong pouer the which he ladde.
 For this condicion he hadde,
 That where him hapneth the victoire,
 His lust and al his moste gloire
 3425 Was for to sle and noght to save.
 Of rancoun wolde he no good have *ransom*
 For saviage of a mannes lif,
 Bot al goth to the swerd and knyf,
 So lief him was the mannes blod. *dear to him*
 3430 And natheles yit thus it stod,
 So as fortune aboute wente,
 He fell riht heir as be descente
 To Perse, and was coroned king.
 And whan the worschipe of this thing *honor*
 3435 Was falle, and he was king of Perse,
 If that thei weren ferst diverse, *they (tyrannical acts); hostile (vicious)*
 The tirannies whiche he wroghte,
 A thousandfold welmore he soghte
 Thanne afterward to do malice.
 3440 The God vengeance agein the vice
 Hath schape: for upon a tyde,
 Whan he was heihest in his pride,
 In his rancour and in his hete *wrath*
 Agein the queene of Marsagete,
 3445 Which Thameris that time hihte, *was called*
 He made werre al that he myhte.

- And sche, which wolde hir lond defende,
 Hir oghne sone agein him sende,
 Which the defence hath undertake.
- 3450 Bot he desconfit was and take; *defeated*
 And whan this king him hadde in honde,
 He wol no mercy understonde, *conceive of*
 Bot dede him slen in his presence.
 The tidinge of this violence
- 3455 Whan it cam to the moder ere, *mother's ear*
 Sche sende anon ay wydewhere *far and wide*
 To suche frendes as sche hadde,
 A gret pouer til that sche ladde.
 In sondri wise and tho sche caste
- 3460 Hou sche this king mai overcaste; *overthrow*
 And ate laste acorded was,
 That in the danger of a pass,
 Thurgh which this tirant scholde passe,
 Sche schop his pouer to compasse *devised a means; surround*
- 3465 With strengthe of men be such a weie
 That he schal noght eschape aweie.
 And whan sche hadde thus ordeigned,
 Sche hath hir oghne bodi feigned, *herself (in her own person) disguised*
 For feere as thogh sche wolde flee
- 3470 Out of hir lond: and whan that he
 Hath herd hou that this ladi fledde,
 So faste after the chace he spedde,
 That he was founde out of array. *out of ranks*
 For it betidde upon a day,
- 3475 Into the pas whanne he was falle,
 Th'embuisschementz tobricken alle *Those lying in ambush disperse*
 And him beclipte on every side, *surrounded*
 That fle ne myhte he noght aside,
 So that ther weren dede and take *dead; captured*
- 3480 Tuo hundred thousand for his sake,
 That weren with him of his host.
 And thus was leid the grete bost *cut down (laid to rest); pride (boast)*
 Of him and of his tirannie.
 It halp no mercy for to crie
- 3485 To him which whilom dede non; *who once gave no [mercy]*
 For he unto the queene anon
 Was broght, and whan that sche him sih, *saw*
 This word sche spak and seide on hih:
 'O man, which out of mannes kinde
- 3490 Reson of man hast left behinde
 And lived worse than a beste,
 Whom Pit   myhte noght areste,
 The mannes blod to schede and spille

- Thou haddest nevere yit thi fille.
 3495 Bot nou the laste time is come,
 That thi malice is overcome:
 As thou til othre men hast do,
 Nou schal be do to thee riht so.
 Tho bad this ladi that men scholde
 3500 A vessel bringe, in which sche wolde
 Se the vengeance of his juisse, *judicial penalty*
 Which sche began anon devise;
 And tok the princes whiche he ladde,
 Be whom his chief conseil he hadde,
 3505 And whil hem lasteth eny breth,
 Sche made hem blede to the deth
 Into the vessel wher it stod.
 And whan it was fulfilled of blod,
 Sche caste this tirant therinne,
 3510 And seide him, 'Lo, thus myht thou wynne
 The lustes of thin appetit.
 In blod was whilom thi delit,
 Nou schalt thou drinken al thi fille.'
 And thus onliche of Goddes wille,
 3515 He which that wolde himselve strange *estrangle*
 To Pité, fond mercy so strange, *From; distant*
 That he withoute grace is lore. *lost*
 So may it schewe wel therfore
 That cruauté hath no good ende;
 3520 Bot Pité, hou so that it wende,
 Makth that the God is merciable,
 If ther be cause resonable
 Why that a king schal be pitous.
 Bot elles, if he be doubtful, *fearful*
 3525 To slen in cause of rihtwisnesse,
 It mai be said no pitousnesse,
 Bot it is pusillamité, *cowardice*
 Which every prince scholde flee.
 For if Pité mesure excede,
 3530 Kinghode mai noght wel procede
 To do justice upon the riht,
 For it belongeth to a knyht
 Als gladly for to fihte as reste,
 To sette his liege poeple in reste,
 3535 Whan that the werre upon hem falleth. *war*
 For thanne he mote, as it befalleth,
 Of his knyghthode as a leon
 Be to the poeple a champioun
 Withouten eny Pité feigned.
 3540 For if manhode be restreigned,



	Or be it pes or be it werre, Justice goth al out of herre, So that knyghthode is set behinde. Of Aristotles lore I finde,	<i>in disorder</i>
3545	A king schal make good visage, That no man knowe of his corage Bot al honour and worthinesse. For if a king schal upon gesse Withoute verrai cause drede,	<i>put a good face on things So that Except without due consideration true cause</i>
3550	He mai be lich to that I rede; And thogh that it be lich a fable, Th'ensample is good and resonable.	

[TALE OF THE MOUNTAIN AND THE MOUSE]

	As it be olde daies fell, I rede whilom that an hell	<i>once; hill</i>
3555	Up in the londes of Archade A wonder dredful noise made;	<i>Arcadia</i>
☞	For so it fell that ilke day, This hell on his childinge lay, And whan the throwes on him come,	<i>(see note) in childbirth birth pains</i>
3560	His noise lich the day of dome Was ferfull in a mannes thoght Of thing which that thei sihe noght, Bot wel thei herden al aboute The noise, of which thei were in doute,	<i>judgment (doom)</i>
3565	As thei that wenden to be lore Of thing which thanne was unbore. The nerr this hell was upon chance To taken his diliverance, The more unbuxomliche he cride;	<i>fear thought; lost nearer; by chance be delivered defiantly</i>
3570	And every man was fledd aside, For drede and lefte his oghne hous. And ate laste it was a mous The which was bore and to norrice Betake; and tho thei hield hem nyce,	<i>mouse That was born deemed themselves stupid</i>
3575	For thei withoute cause dradde. Thus if a king his herte ladde With everything that he schal hiere, Fulofte he scholde change his chiere And upon fantasie drede,	<i>were afraid countenance</i>
3580	Whan that ther is no cause of drede.	
☞	Orace to his prince tolde, That him were levere that he wolde Upon knihthode Achillem suie In time of werre, thanne eschuie,	<i>Horace (see note) rather follow Achilles war; avoid (eschew)</i>

3585 So as Tersites dede at Troie. *did*
 Achilles al his hole joie
 Sette upon armes for to fihte;
 Tersites soghte al that he myhte
 Unarmed for to stonde in reste:
 3590 Bot of the tuo it was the beste
 That Achilles upon the nede
 Hath do, wherof his knyhtlihiede
 Is yit comended overal.

[A TIME FOR WAR]

 King Salomon in special *(see note)*
 3595 Seith, as ther is a time of pes,
 So is a time natheles
 Of werre, in which a prince algate *assuredly*
 Schal for the comun riht debate
 And for his oghne worschipe eke. *own honor also*
 3600 Bot it behoveth noght to seke.
 Only the werre for worschipe,
 Bot to the riht of his lordschipe,
 Which he is holde to defende, *obliged*
 3604 Mote every worthi prince entende.
 Betwen the simplesce of Pité *innocence; (see note)*
 And the folhaste of cruauté, *rashness*
 Wher stant the verray hardiesce, *true bravery*
 Ther mote a king his herte adresce, *must; direct (control)*
 Whanne it is time to forsake,
 3610 And whan time is also to take
 The dedly werres upon honde,
 That he schal for no drede wonde, *turn away*
 If rihtwisnesse be withal.
 For God is myhty overal
 3615 To forthren every mannes trowthe,
 Bot it be thurgh his oghne slowthe; *Unless; sloth*
 And namely the kinges nede
 It mai noght faile for to spede, *succeed*
 For he stant one for hem alle. *Since he [the king] represents them all*
 3620 So mote it wel the betre falle
 And wel the more God favoureth,
 Whan he the comun riht socoureth.
 And for to se the sothe in dede,
 Beholde the Bible and thou myht rede
 3625 Of grete ensamples manyon,
 Wherof that I wot tellen on.

[GIDEON]

- Upon a time, as it befell,
 Agein Judee and Irahel *Judah; Israel*
 3629 Whan sondri kinges come were
 In pourpos to destruie there
 The poeple which God kepte tho, *whom; looked after then*
 And stod in thilke daies so, *And [as] it happened in those days thus*
 That Gedeon, which scholde lede
 The Goddes folk, tok him to rede *betook himself to give advice*
 3635 And sende in al the lond aboute,
 Til he assembled hath a route *company*
 With thritti thousand of defence,
 To fihte and make resistence
 Agein the whiche hem wolde assaille. *attack (assault)*
 3640 And natheles that o bataille *battalion*
 Of thre that weren enemys
 Was double mor than was al his;
 Wherof that Gedeon him dradde, *twice as many*
 That he so litel poeple hadde. *so few*
 3645 Bot He which alle thing mai helpe,
 Wher that ther lacketh mannes helpe,
 To Gedeon His angel sente,
 And bad, er that he forther wente,
 Al openly that he do crie
 3650 That every man in his partie
 Which wolde after his oghne wille
 In his delice abide stille *pleasant life*
 At hom in eny maner wise,
 For purchas or for covoitise,
 3655 For lust of love or lacke of herte,
 He scholde noght aboute sterte, *set out*
 Bot holde him stille at hom in pes. *keep himself quietly; peace*
 Wherof upon the morwe he les *lost*
 Wel twenty thousand men and mo,
 3660 The whiche after the cri ben go. *proclamation had departed*
 Thus was with him bot only left
 The thridde part, and yit God eft *afterward*
 His angel sende and seide this
 To Gedeon: 'If it so is
 3665 That I thin help schal undertake,
 Thou schalt yit lasse poeple take, *fewer*
 Be whom mi will is that thou spede. *succeed*
 Forthi tomorwe tak good hiede,
 Unto the flod whan ye be come, *river*
 3670 What man that hath the water nome *taken*
 Up in his hond and lapeth so, *drinks*


	To thi part ches out alle tho;	
	And him which wery is to swinke,	<i>labor</i>
	Upon his wombe and lith to drinke,	<i>[And] falls onto his stomach to drink</i>
3675	Forsak and put hem alle aweie.	
	For I am myhti alle weie,	
	Wher as me list myn help to schewe	
	In goode men, thogh thei ben fewe.'	
	This Gedeon awaiteth wel,	<i>pays close attention</i>
3680	Upon the morwe and everydel,	
	As God him bad, riht so he dede.	<i>just so he did</i>
	And thus ther leften in that stede	<i>place</i>
	With him thre hundred and no mo,	<i>more</i>
	The remenant was al ago.	<i>gone</i>
3685	Wherof that Gedeon merveileth,	
	And therupon with God conseileth,	<i>takes counsel</i>
	Pleignende als ferforth as he dar.	<i>Complaining</i>
	And God, which wolde he were war	
	That he schal spede upon his riht,	
3690	Hath bede him go the same nyht	
	And take a man with him, to hiere	
	What schal be spoke in his matiere	
	Among the hethen enemis;	<i>heathen</i>
	So mai he be the more wys,	
3695	What afterward him schal befall.	
	This Gedeon amonges alle	
	Phara, to whom he triste most,	
	Be nyhte tok toward thilke host,	
	Which logged was in a valleie,	<i>lodged</i>
3700	To hiere what thei wolden seie;	
	Upon his fot and as he ferde,	
	Tuo Sarazins spekende he herde.	<i>speaking; heard</i>
	Quod on, 'Ared mi swevene ariht,	<i>Interpret; dream correctly</i>
	Which I mette in mi slep tonyht.	<i>dreamed</i>
3705	Me thoghte I sih a barli cake,	<i>saw a barley cake</i>
	Which fro the hull his weie hath take,	<i>hill</i>
	And cam rollende doun at ones;	
	And as it were for the nones,	
	Forth in his cours so as it ran,	
3710	The kinges tente of Madian,	
	Of Amalech, of Amoreie,	
	Of Amon and of Jebuseie,	
	And many another tente mo	
	With gret noise, as me thoghte tho,	
3715	It threw to grounde and overcaste,	
	And al this host so sore agaste	<i>terrified</i>
	That I awok for pure drede.'	

- 'This swevene can I wel arede,' *dream*
 Quod th'other Sarazin anon:
 3720 'The barli cake is Gedeon,
 Which fro the hell down sodeinly
 Schal come and sette such ascry *outcry*
 Upon the kinges and ous bothe,
 That it schal to ous alle lothe. *be hateful*
 3725 For in such drede he schal ous bringe,
 That if we hadden flyht of wynges,
 The weie on fote in desespere
 We scholden leve and fien in th'eir, *escape*
 For ther schal nothing him withstonde.'
 3730 Whan Gedeon hath understonde
 This tale, he thonketh God of al,
 And priveliche agein he stal, *stole away*
 So that no lif him hath perceived. *living person*
 And thanne he hath fulli conceived
 3735 That he schal spede, and therupon
 The nyht suiende he schop to gon *fare well*
 This multitude to assaile. *following; prepared*
attack
 Nou schalt thou hiere a gret mervaille,
 With what voisdie that he wroghte. *cunning; worked*
 3740 The litel poeple which he broghte, *small group*
 Was non of hem that he ne hath
 A pot of erthe, in which he tath
 A lyht brennende in a kressette, *An earthen pot; takes*
 And ech of hem ek a trompette *lamp (metal cup)*
 3745 Bar in his other hond beside;
 And thus upon the nyhtes tyde *time*
 Duk Gedeon, whan it was derk, *Duke*
 Ordeineth him unto his werk, *Set himself to*
 And parteth thanne his folk in thre,
 3750 And chargeth hem that thei ne fle,
 And tawhte hem hou thei scholde ascrie *raise the battle cry*
 Alle in o vois per compaignie, *one voice in unison*
 And what word ek thei scholden speke,
 And hou thei scholde here pottes breke *their pots break*
 3755 Ech on with other, whan thei herde
 That he himselve ferst so ferde;
 For whan thei come into the stede,
 He bad hem do riht as he dede.
 And thus stalkende forth a pas
 3760 This noble duk, whan time was, *duke*
 His pot tobrak and loude ascride, *smashed; cried out*
 And tho thei breke on every side.
 The trompe was nought for to seke;
 He blew, and so thei blewen eke *The trumpet [blast] was not far behind*
also


- 3765 With such a noise among hem alle,
 As thogh the hevene scholde falle.
 The hull unto here vois ansuerde, *hill; their*
 This host in the valleie it herde,
 And sih hou that the hell alyhte; *hill glowed with fire*
- 3770 So what of hieringe and of sihte,
 Thei cawhten such a sodein feere,
 That non of hem belefte there. *remained*
 The tentes hole thei forsoke, *utterly*
 That thei non other good ne toke,
- 3775 Bot only with here bodi bare *their bare bodies*
 Thei fledde, as doth the wylde hare.
 And evere upon the hull thei blewe, *hill*
 Til that thei sihe time, and knewe
 That thei be fled upon the rage;
- 3780 And whan thei wiste here avantage, *knew their position*
 Thei felle anon unto the chace.
 Thus myht thou sen hou Goddes grace
 Unto the goode men availeth;
 Bot elles ofte time it faileth
- 3785 To suche as be noght wel disposed.
 This tale nedeth noght be glosed,
 For it is openliche schewed
 That God to hem that ben wel thewed *virtuous (well-bred)*
 Hath gove and granted the victoire:
- 3790 So that th'ensample of this histoire
 Is good for every king to holde;
 Ferst in himself that he beholde
 If he be good of his livinge,
 And that the folk which he schal bringe
- 3795 Be good also, for thanne he may
 Be glad of many a merie day,
 In what as evere he hath to done.
 For he which sit above the mone *moon*
 And alle thing mai spille and spede, *destroy; cause to succeed*
- 3800 In every cause, in every nede
 His goode king so wel adresceth, *directs*
 That alle his fomen he represseth, *enemies*
 So that ther mai no man him dere; *injure*
 And als so wel he can forbere,
- 3805 And soffre a wickid king to falle
 In hondes of his fomen alle.

[SAUL AND AGAG]

Nou forthermore if I schal sein
 Of mi matiere, and torne agein

-  To speke of justice and pité *(see note)*
 3810 After the reule of realté,
 This mai a king wel understonde,
 Knihthode mot ben take on honde,
 Whan that it stant upon the nede:
 He schal no rihtful cause drede,
 3815 No more of werre thanne of pes,
 If he wol stonde blameles; *guiltless*
 For such a cause a king mai have
 That betre him is to sle than save,
 Wherof thou myhte ensample finde.
 3820 The hihe makere of mankinde
 Be Samuel to Saul bad,
 That he schal nothing ben adrad
 Agein king Agag for to fihte;
 For this the Godhede him behihte, *promised*
 3825 That Agag schal ben overcome;
 And whan it is so ferforth come,
 That Saul hath him desconfit, *defeated*
 The God bad make no respit,
 That he ne scholde him slen anon.
 3830 Bot Saul let it overgon *disregarded it*
 And dede noght the Goddes heste. *command*
 For Agag made gret behest
 Of rancoun which he wolde give, *Because; promise*
 King Saul soffreth him to live *ransom*
 3835 And feigneth pité forth withal.
 Bot He which seth and knoweth al,
 The hihe God, of that he feigneth
 To Samuel upon him pleigneth, *complained*
 And sende him word, for that he lefte
 3840 Of Agag that he ne berefte
 The lif, he schal noght only dye
 Himself, bot fro his regalie *apart from his royal office*
 He schal be put foreveremo,
 Noght he, bot ek his heir also,
 3845 That it schal nevere come agein.

[DAVID AND JOAB]

- Thus myht thou se the sothe plein,
 That of to moche and of to lyte *excess and insufficiency (see note)*
 Upon the princes stant the wyte. *blame*
 Bot evere it was a kinges riht
 3850 To do the dedes of a knyht;
 For in the handes of a king
 The deth and lif is al o thing

- After the lawes of justice.
 To slen it is a dedly vice,
 3855 Bot if a man the deth deserve;
 And if a king the lif preserve
 Of him which oghte for to dye,
 He suieth noght th'ensamplerie *follows*
 Which in the Bible is evident:
 3860 Hou David in his testament,
 Whan he no lengere myhte live,
 Unto his sone in charge hath give *an order has given*
 That he Joab schal slen algate; *at once*
 And whan David was gon his gate, *had passed on*
 3865 The yonge wise Salomon
 His fader heste dede anon, *command did immediately*
 And slouh Joab in such a wise,
 That thei that herden the juise *judicial punishment*
 Evere after dradden him the more,
 3870 And God was ek wel paid therfore, *well pleased*
 That he so wolde his herte plye *make submissive (mollify)*
 The lawes for to justefie. *administer*
 And yit he kepte forth withal
 Pit , so as a prince schal,
 3875 That he no tirannie wroghte;
 He fond the wisdom which he soghte,
 And was so rihtful natheles,
 That al his lif he stod in pes,
 That he no dedly werres hadde,
 3880 For every man his wisdom dradde.
 And as he was himselve wys,
 Riht so the worthi men of pris *esteem*
 He hath of his conseil withholde;
 For that is every prince holde *bound*
 3885 To make of suche his retenue
 Whiche wise ben, and to remue *remove*
 The foles: for ther is nothing *fools*
 Which mai be betre aboute a king
 Than conseil, which is the substance
 3890 Of all a kinges governance.

[SOLOMON'S WISDOM]

- In Salomon a man mai see *(see note)*
 What thing of most necessit 
 Unto a worthi king belongeth.
 Whan he his kingdom underfongeth, *inherits*
 3895 God bad him chese what he wolde, *choose*
 And seide him that he have scholde

- What he wolde axe, as of o thing.
 And he, which was a newe king,
 Forth therupon his bone preide
 3900 To God, and in this wise he seide:
 'O King, be whom that I schal regne,
petition prayed
 Gif me wisdom, that I my regne,
by; rule
 Forth with Thi poeple which I have,
kingdom
 To Thin honour mai kepe and save.'
 3905 Whan Salomon his bone hath taxed,
prayer; demanded
 The God of that which he hath axed
pleased
 Was riht wel paid, and granteth sone
 Noght al only that he his bone
 Schal have of that, bot of richesse,
 3910 Of hele, of pes, of hih noblesse,
health
 Forth with wisdom at his axinges,
 Which stant above alle othre thinges.
 Bot what king wole his regne save,
 ¶ Ferst him behoveth for to have
 3915 After the God and his believe
it is obligatory for him (see note)
 Such conseil which is to believe,
trustworthy
 Fulfild of trouthe and rihtwisnesse.
 Bot above alle in his noblesse
 Betwen the reddour and pité
 3920 A king schal do such equité
severity
 And sette the balance in evene,
 So that the hihe God in hevene
 And al the poeple of his nobleie
 Loange unto his name seie.
 3925 For most above all erthli good,
Praise
 Wher that a king himself is good
 It helpeth, for in other weie
 ¶ If so be that a king forsueie,
 3930 Fulofte er this it hath be sein,
goes astray (see note)
 The comun poeple is overlein
oppressed
 And hath the kinges senne aboght,
dearly paid for (suffered)
 Although the poeple agulte noght.
are not guilty
 Of that the king his God misserveth,
 The poeple takth that he descerveth
 3935 Hier in this world, bot elleswhere
suffer what; deserves
 I not hou it schal stonde there.
know not
 Forthi good is a king to triste
trust
 Ferst to himself, as he ne wiste
 Non other help bot God alone;
 3940 So schal the reule of his persone
 Withinne himself thurgh providence
 Ben of the betre conscience.

And for to finde ensample of this,
A tale I rede, and soth it is.

true

[COURTIERS AND THE FOOL]

3945 In a cronique it telleth thus:

The king of Rome Lucius
Withinne his chambre upon a nyht
The steward of his hous, a knyht,



Forth with his chamberlein also,

(see note)

3950 To conseil hadde bothe tuo,
And stoden be the chiminee
Togedre spekende alle thre.

And happeth that the kinges fol
Sat be the fyr upon a stol,

fool

3955 As he that with his babil pleide,
Bot yit he herde al that thei seide,
And therof token thei non hiede.
The king hem axeth what to rede
Of such matiere as cam to mouthe,

jester's scepter played

3960 And thei him tolden as thei couthe.
Whan al was spoke of that thei mente,
The king with al his hole entente
Thanne ate laste hem axeth this,
What king men tellen that he is.

whole

What sort of

3965 Among the folk touchende his name,
Or be it pris, or be it blame,
Riht after that thei herden sein,
He bad hem for to telle it plein,
That thei no point of soth forbere,

Whether; praise

3970 Be thilke feith that thei him bere.
The steward ferst upon this thing
Gaf his ansuere unto the king

By

And thoghte glose in this matiere,
And seide, als fer as he can hiere,

thought to flatter

hear

3975 His name is good and honourable.
Thus was the stieward favorable,
That he the trouthe plein ne tolde.
The king thanne axeth, as he scholde,
The chamberlein of his avis.

thoughts [on the matter]

3980 And he, that was soubtil and wys,
And somdiel thoghte upon his feith,
Him tolde hou al the poeple seith
That if his conseil were trewe,
Thei wiste thanne wel and knewe



understood

3985 That of himself he scholde be
A worthi king in his degré.

- And thus the conseil he accuseth
 In partie, and the king excuseth.
 The fol, which herde of al the cas
 3990 That time, as Goddes wille was,
 Sih that thei seiden noght ynowh, *said*
 And hem to skorne bothe lowh, *laughed*
 And to the king he seide tho:
 'Sire king, if that it were so,
 3995 Of wisdom in thin oghne mod
 That thou thiselven were good,
 Thi conseil scholde noght be badde.'
 The king therof merueille hadde,
 Whan that a fol so wisly spak,
 4000 And of himself fond out the lack
 Withinne his oghne conscience.
 And thus the foles evidence,
 Which was of Goddes grace enspired,
 Makth that good conseil was desired.
 4005 He putte away the vicious
 And tok to him the vertuous;
 The wrongful lawes ben amended,
 The londes good is wel despended,
 The poeple was no more oppressed,
 4010 And thus stod everything redressed.
 For where a king is propre wys,
 And hath suche as himselven is
 Of his conseil, it mai noght faile
 That everything ne schal availe.
 4015 The vices thanne gon aweie,
 And every vertu holt his weie; *holds its*
 Wherof the hihe God is plesed,
 And al the londes folk is esed.
 For if the comun poeple crie,
 4020 And thanne a king list noght to plie *chooses not to relent*
 To hie what the clamour wolde, *hear*
 And otherwise thanne he scholde
 Desdeigneth for to don hem grace,
 It hath be sen in many place, *seen repeatedly*
 4025 Ther hath befaller gret contraire; *misfortune*
 And that I finde of ensamplaire.

[FOLLY OF REHOBOAM]


- After the deth of Salomon,
 Whan thilke wise king was gon,
 And Roboas in his persone
 4030 Receive scholde the corone,

-  The poeple upon a parlement *(see note)*
 Avised were of on assent, *Resolved*
 And alle unto the king thei preiden,
 With comun vois and thus thei seiden:
 4035 'Oure liege lord, we thee beseche
 That thou receive oure humble speche
 And grante ous that which reson wile,
 Or of thi grace or of thi skile. *Either; or*
 Thi fader, whil he was alyve
 4040 And myhte bothe grante and pryve, *take away*
 Upon the werkes whiche he hadde
 The comun poeple streite ladde. *oppressively caused hardship*
 Whan he the temple made newe,
 Thing which men nevere afore knewe
 4045 He broghte up thanne of his tailage, *arbitrary taxation*
 And al was under the visage *guise*
 Of werkes whiche he made tho. *then*
 Bot nou it is befall so,
 That al is mad, riht as he seide,
 4050 And he was riche whan he deide;
 So that it is no maner nede,
 If thou therof wolt taken hiede,
 To pilen of the poeple more, *pillage*
 Which long time hath be grieved sore.
 4055 And in this wise as we thee seie,
 With tendre herte we thee preie
 That thou relesse thilke dette,
 Which upon ous thi fader sette.
 And if thee like to don so,
 4060 We ben thi men foreveremo,
 To gon and comen at thin heste.'
 The king, which herde this requeste,
 Seith that he wole ben avisid, *seek advise*
 And hath therof a time assised;
 4065 And in the while as he him thoghte
 Upon this thing, conseil he soghte.
 And ferst the wise knyhtes olde,
 To whom that he his tale tolde,
 Conseilen him in this manere; *(see note)*
 4070 That he with love and with glad chiere
 Forgive and grante al that is axed
 Of that his fader hadde taxed; *demandd*
 For so he mai his regne achieve
 With thing which schal him litel grieve.
 4075 The king hem herde and overpasseth, *disregards*
 And with these othre his wit compasseth, *made up his mind*
 That yonge were and nothing wise.

- And thei these olde men despise,
 And seiden: 'Sire, it schal be schame *(see note)*
 4080 Forevere unto thi worthi name,
 If thou ne kepe noght the riht,
 Whil thou art in thi yonge myht,
 Which that thin olde fader gat.
 Bot seie unto the poeple plat *plainly*
 4085 That whil thou livest in thi lond,
 The leste finger of thin hond
 It schal be strengere overal
 Than was thi fadres bodi al.
 And this also schal be thi tale,
 4090 If he hem smot with roddes smale,
 With scorpions thou schalt hem smyte;
 And wher thi fader tok a lyte,
 Thou thenkst to take mochel more.
 Thus schalt thou make hem drede sore
 4095 The grete herte of thi corage,
 So for to holde hem in servage.' *keep them*
 This yonge king him hath conformed
 To don as he was last enformed,
 Which was to him his undoinge.
 4100 For whan it cam to the spekinge,
 He hath the yonge conseil holde,
 That he the same wordes tolde
 Of al the poeple in audience;
 And whan thei herden the sentence
 4105 Of his malice and the manace,
 Anon tofore his oghne face
 Thei have him outtreli refused *utterly*
 And with ful gret reproef accused.
 So thei begunne for to rave,
 4110 That he was fain himself to save;
 For as the wilde wode rage *violence*
 Of wyndes makth the see salvage, *sea wild*
 And that was calm bringth into wawe, *turn into a rough sea*
 So for defalte of grace and lawe
 4115 This poeple stered al at ones *stirred themselves all simultaneously*
 And forth thei gon out of hise wones; *territory (place of dwelling)*
 So that of the lignages twelve *twelve tribes*
 Tuo tribes only be hemselfe *by themselves*
 With him abiden and no mo.
 4120 So were thei foreveremo
 Of no retorn withoute espeir *hope*
 Departed fro the rihtfull heir.
 Al Irahel with comun vois *Israel*
 A king upon here oghne chois

- 4125 Among hemself anon thei make,
 And have here yonge lord forsake;
 A povere knyht Jeroboas
 Thei toke, and lefte Roboas,
 Which rihtfull heir was be descente. *their*
Jereboam
Reheboam
- 4130 Lo, thus the yonge cause wente:
 For that the conseil was noght good,
 The regne fro the rihtfull blod
 Evere afterward divided was.
 So mai it proven be this cas
- 4135 That yong conseil, which is to warm,
 Er men be war doth ofte harm. *too zealous*
Before; become prudent
 Old age for the conseil serveth,
 And lusti youthe his thonk deserveth
 Upon the travail which he doth;
- 4140 And bothe, for to seie a soth,
 Be sondri cause for to have,
 If that he wole his regne save
 A king behoveth every day.
- 4145 Be so the king hem bothe reule,
 For elles al goth out of reule. *one possesses knowledge, another power*
Provided that

[WISDOM AND THE KING]

- And upon this matiere also
 A question between the tuo
-  Thus writen in a bok I fond; *(see note)*
 4150 Wher it be betre for the lond *Whether*
 A king himselve to be wys,
 And so to bere his oghne pris,
 And that his consail be noght good,
 Or otherwise if it so stod,
- 4155 A king if he be vicious
 And his conseil be vertuous.
 It is ansuerd in such a wise,
 That betre it is that thei be wise
 Be whom that the conseil schal gon,
- 4160 For thei be manye, and he is on; *one*
 And rathere schal an one man *individual*
 With fals conseil, for oght he can,
 From his wisdom be mad to falle,
 Thanne he alone scholde hem alle
- 4165 Fro vices into vertu change,
 For that is wel the more strange.
 Forthi the lond mai wel be glad,
 Whos king with good conseil is lad, *led*

- Which set him unto rihtwisnesse,
 4170 So that his hihe worthinesse
 Betwen the reddour and Pit  
 Doth mercy forth with equit  .
 A king is holden overal
 To Pit  , bot in special *especially so*
 4175 To hem wher he is most beholde;
indebted
 Thei scholde his Pit   most beholde
 That ben the lieges of his lond,
 For thei ben evere under his hond
 After the Goddes ordinaunce
 4180 To stonde upon his governance.
 ¶ Of th'emperour Anthonius *(see note)*
 I finde hou that he seide thus,
 That levere him were for to save
 Oon of his lieges than to have
 4185 Of enemis a thousand dede.
 And this he lernede, as I rede,
 Of Cipio, which hadde be *Scipio; been*
 Consul of Rome. And thus to se
 Diverse ensamples hou thei stonde,
 4190 A king which hath the charge on honde
 The comun poeple to governe,
 If that he wole, he mai wel lerne.
 Is non so good to the plesance
 Of God as is good governance.
 4195 And every governance is due *bound by duty*
 To Pit  : thus I mai argue *assert*
 That Pit   is the foundement *basis (foundation)*
 Of every kinges regiment,
 If it be medled with justice. *blended*
 4200 Thei tuo remuen alle vice, *Those two get rid of*
 And ben of vertu most vailable *efficacious*
 To make a kinges regne stable.
 Lo, thus the foure pointz tofore,
 In governance as thei ben bore,
 4205 Of Trouthe ferst and of Largesse,
 Of Pit   forth with Rihtwisnesse,
 I have hem told; and over this
 The fife point, so as it is
 Set of the reule of Policie,
 4210 Wherof a king schal modiefie
 The fleisschly lustes of nature, *sexual urge*
 Nou thenk I telle of such mesure,
 That bothe kinde schal be served
 And ek the lawe of God observed."

[CHASTITY, THE FIFTH PART OF POLICY]

- xi. *Corporis et mentis regem decet omnis honestas,
Nominis vt famam nulla libido ruat.
Omne quod est hominis effeminat illa voluptas,
Sit nisi magnanimi cordis, vt obstat ei.*¹

[Confessor] “The madle is mad for the femele,

male; made; female

- 4216 Bot where as on desireth fele,
That nedeth noght be weie of kinde:
For whan a man mai redy finde
His oghne wif, what scholde he seche

one; many

nature

- 4220 In strange places to beseche

seek (entreat)

☞ To borwe another mannes plow,

plow (see note)

Whan he hath geere good ynough

implements; enough

Affaited at his oghne heste,

Fashioned; command

And is to him wel more honeste

noble (appropriate)

- 4225 Than other thing which is unknowe?

Forthi scholde every good man knowe

And thenke, hou that in mariage

think

His trouthe plight lith in morgage,

stands as a pledge

Which if he breke, it is falshode,

- 4230 And that descordeth to manhode,

And namely toward the grete,

Wherof the bokes alle trete.

So as the Philosophre techeth

(Aristotle)

To Alisandre, and him betecheth

teaches

- 4235 The lore hou that he schal mesure

His bodi, so that no mesure

Of fleisshly lust he scholde excede.

And thus forth if I schal procede,

The fite point, as I seide er,

- 4240 Is Chasteté, which sielde wher

seldom

Comth nou adaies into place;

And natheles, bot it be grace

Above alle othre in special,

Is non that chaste mai ben all.

- 4245 Bot yit a kinges hihe astat,

Which of his ordre as a prelat

Schal ben enoight and seintefied

sanctified

He mot be more magnified

For digneté of his corone,

crown

¹ Every sort of honorableness of body and mind is proper for a king, so that no lust destroys his name's repute. Sensuous indulgence effeminizes everything there is in a man, unless he be a great-hearted [see note] man who can oppose it.

- 4250 Than scholde another low persone,
Which is noght of so hih emprise.
Therefore a prince him scholde advise,
Er that he felle in such riote,
And namely that he n'assote
4255 To change for the wommanhede
The worthinesse of his manhede.
- ☞ Of Aristotle I have wel rad (see note)
Hou he to Alisandre bad
That for to gladen his corage
4260 He schal beholde the visage
Of wommen, whan that thei ben faire.
Bot yit he set an essamplaire,
His bodi so to guide and reule,
That he ne passe noght the reule,
4265 Wherof that he himself beguile.
For in the womman is no guile
Of that a man himself bewhapeth;
Whan he his oghne wit bejapeth,
I can the wommen wel excuse.
4270 Bot what man wole upon hem muse
After the fool impression
Of his ymaginacioun,
Withinne himself the fyr he bloweth,
Wherof the womman nothing knoweth,
4275 So mai sche nothing be to wyte.
For if a man himself excite
To drenche, and wol it noght forbere,
The water schal no blame bere.
What mai the gold, thogh men coveite?
4280 If that a man wol love streite,
The womman hath him nothing bounde;
If he his oghne herte wounde,
Sche mai noght lette the folie;
And thogh so felle of compainie
4285 That he myht eny thing pourchace,
Yit makth a man the ferste chace,
The womman fleth and and he poursuieth:
So that be weie of skile it suieth,
The man is cause, hou so befallē,
4290 That he fulofte sithe is falle
Wher that he mai noght wel aryse.
And natheles ful manye wise
Befoled have himself er this,
As nou adaies yit it is
4295 Among the men and evere was,
The stronge is fieblest in this cas.
- achievement (glory)*
take into consideration (advise himself)
dissipation (debauchery)
behave not foolishly
- the limit*
befuddles
tricks
whoever; muse upon them
blame
cause
drown
devotedly
hinder
cruel
reason; follows
times
Deluded; themselves before
weakest

Which was undon foreveremo.
 And yit men speken of him so,
 That it is schame for to hie.

[DAVID]

- ☞ Forthi to love is in manere. *love is [i.e., should be] in moderation (see note)*
 4345 King David hadde many a love,
 Bot natheles alwey above
 Knythode he kepte in such a wise,
 That for no fleissli covoitise
 Of lust to ligge in ladi armes
 4350 He lefte noght the lust of armes. *warfare*
 For where a prince hise lustes suieth, *desire follows*
 That he the werre noght poursuieth *war*
 Whan it is time to ben armed,
 His contré stant fulofte harmed,
 4355 Whan th'enemis ben woxe bolde, *are grown overconfident (rash)*
 That thei defence non beholde.
 Ful manye a lond hath so be lore, *lost*
 As men mai rede of time afore *before*
 Of hem that so here eses soghten,
 4360 Which after thei full diere aboghten.

[CYRUS AND THE LYDIANS]

- ☞ To mochel ese is nothing worth, *(see note)*
 For that set every vice forth
 And every vertu put abak, *sets aside (impede)*
 Wherof priss torneth into lak, *excellence; deficiency*
 4365 As in cronique I mai reherse
 Which telleth hou the king of Perse,
 That Cirus hihte, a werre hadde *was called*
 Agein a poeple which he dradde,
 Of a contré which Liddos hihte;
 4370 Bot yit for oght that he do mihte
 As in bataille upon the werre,
 He hadde of hem alwey the werre. *worse*
 And whan he sih and wiste it wel, *knew*
 That he be strengthe wan no del,
 4375 Thanne ate laste he caste a wyle
 This worthi poeple to beguile,
 And tok with hem a feigned pes, *peace*
 Which scholde lasten endeles,
 So as he seide in wordes wise,
 4380 Bot he thoghte al in other wise.
 For it betidd upon the cas, *happened*

- Whan that this poeple in reste was,
 Thei token eses manyfold;
 And worldes ese, as it is told,
 4385 Be weie of kinde is the norrice *nurse*
 Of every lust which toucheth vice.
 Thus whan thei were in lustes falle, *pleasures*
 The werres ben forgeten alle;
 Was non which wolde the worschipe *honor*
 4390 Of armes, bot in idelschipe
 Thei putten besinesse aweie
 And token hem to daunce and pleie.
 Bot most above alle othre thinges
 4395 Of fleysshly lust, that chasteté
 Received was in no degré,
 Bot every man doth what him liste. *pleases him*
 And whan the king of Perse it wiste, *knew*
 That thei unto folie entenden,
 4400 With his pouer, whan thei lest wenden, *least expected*
 Mor sodeinly than doth the thunder
 He cam, forevere and put hem under.
 And thus hath lecherie lore *lost*
 The lond, which hadde be tofore
 4405 The beste of hem that were tho. *then*

[COUNSEL OF BALAAM]

- ☞ And in the Bible I finde also *(see note)*
 A tale lich unto this thing, *like*
 Hou Amalech the païen king, *pagan*
 Whan that he myhte be no weie
 4410 Defende his lond and putte aweie
 The worthi poeple of Irael,
 This Sarazin, as it befell,
 Thurgh the conseil of Balaam
 A route of faire wommen nam, *group; took*
 4415 That lusti were and yonge of age,
 And bad hem gon to the lignage
 Of these Hebreus: and forth thei wente
 With yhen greye and browes bente *arched*
 And wel arraied everych on;
 4420 And whan thei come were anon
 Among th'Ebreus, was non insihte,
 Bot cacche who that cacche myhte,
 And ech of hem hise lustes soghte,
 Whiche after thei full diere boghte.
 4425 For grace anon began to faile,

- That whan thei comen to bataille
 Thanne afterward, in sori plit
 Thei were take and disconfit,
 So that withinne a litel throwe *while*
 4430 The myht of hem was overthrowe,
 That whilom were wont to stonde.
 Til Phinees the cause on honde
 Hath take, this vengeance laste,
 Bot thanne it cessed ate laste,
 4435 For God was paid of that he dede: *pleased*
 For wher he fond upon a stede *place*
 A couple which misferde so, *were misbehaving thus*
 Thurghout he smot hem bothe tuo,
 And let hem ligge in mennes yhe; *them lie; sight*
 4440 Wherof alle othre whiche hem sihe
 Ensamplede hem upon the dede,
 And preiden unto the Godhiede
 Here olde sennes to amende: *Their; absolve*
 And He, which wolde His mercy sende,
 4445 Restorede hem to newe grace.
 Thus mai it schewe in sondri place,
 Of chasteté hou the clenness
 Acordeth to the worthinesse *purity*
 Of men of armes overal;
 4450 Bot most of alle in special
 This vertu to a king belongeth,
 For upon his fortune it hongeth
 Of that his lond schal spede or spille. *succeed; fail*
 Forthi bot if a king his wille
 4455 Fro lustes of his fleissh restreigne,
 Agein himself he makth a treigne, *snare*
 Into the which if that he slyde,
 Him were betre go besyde. *It were better for him to escape*
 For every man mai understonde,
 4460 Hou for a time that it stonde,
 It is a sori lust to lyke,
 Whos ende makth a man to syke *sigh*
 And torneth joies into sorwe.
 The brihte sonne be the morwe
 4465 Beschyneth nought the derke nyht, *Shines*
 The lusti youthe of mannes myht,
 In age bot it stonde wel,
 Mistorneth al the laste whiel. *Changes for the worse*

[LECHEROUS SOLOMON AND THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM]

- That every worthi prince is holde
 4470 Withinne himself himself beholde,
 To se the stat of his persone,
 And thenke hou ther be joies none
 ¶ Upon this erthe mad to laste, *made (see note)*
 And hou the fleissh schal ate laste
 4475 The lustes of this lif forsake,
 Him oghte a gret ensample take
 Of Salomon, whos appetit
 Was holy set upon delit, *wholly*
 To take of wommen the plesance.
 4480 So that upon his ignorance
 The wyde world merveileth yit,
 That he, which alle mennes wit
 In thilke time hath overpassed,
 With fleisshly lustes was so tassed, *burdened*
 4485 That he which ladde under the lawe
 The poeple of God, himself withdrawe *withdrawn*
 He hath fro God in such a wise,
 That he worschipe and sacrificise
 For sondri love in sondri stede *places*
 4490 Unto the false goddes dede. *dead*
 This was the wise ecclesiaste,
 The fame of whom schal evere laste,
 That he the myhti God forsok,
 Agein the lawe whanne he tok
 4495 Hise wyves and hise concubines
 Of hem that weren Sarazines,
 For whiche he dede ydolatrie.
 For this I rede of his sotie: *folly*
 ¶ Sche of Sidoyne so him ladde, *(see note)*
 4500 That he knelende hise armes spradde
 To Astrathen with gret humblesse,
 Which of hire lond was the goddesse. *Astarte*
 ¶ And sche that was a Moabite *(see note)*
 So ferforth made him to delite
 4505 Thurgh lust, which al his wit devoureth,
 That he Chamos hire god honoureth.
 ¶ Another Amonyte also *(see note)*
 With love him hath assoted so, *infatuated*
 Hire god Moloch that with encense
 4510 He sacreth, and doth reverence *sacrificed to*
 In such a wise as sche him bad.
 Thus was the wiseste overlad *overcome*

- With blinde lustes whiche he soghte;
 4514 Bot he it afterward aboghte. *paid for*
 ☞ For Achias Selonites, *(see note)*
 Which was prophete, er his decess, *before; demise*
 Whil he was in hise lustes alle,
 Betokneth what schal after falle. *Foretells*
 For on a day, whan that he mette *met*
 4520 Jeroboam the knyht, he grette *greeted*
 And bad him that he scholde abyde,
 To hiere what him schal betyde.
 And forth withal Achias caste
 His mantell of, and also faste *off*
 4525 He kut it into pieces twelve,
 Wherof tuo partz toward himselve
 He kepte, and al the remenant,
 As God hath set His covenant,
 He tok unto Jeroboas,
 4530 Of Nabal which the sone was
 And of the kinges court a knyht,
 And seide him, 'Such is Goddes myht,
 As thou hast sen departed hiere *divided*
 Mi mantell, riht in such manere
 4535 After the deth of Salomon
 God hath ordeigned therupon,
 This regne thanne he schal divide:
 Which time thou schalt ek abide,
 And upon that division
 4540 The regne as in proporcion
 As thou hast of mi mantell take, *garment*
 Thou schalt receive, I undertake. *swear*
 And thus the sone schal abie *pay for*
 The lustes and the lecherie
 4545 Of him which nou his fader is.'
 So for to taken hiede of this,
 It sit a king wel to be chaste, *befits*
 For elles he mai lihtly waste
 Himself and ek his regne bothe,
 4550 And that oghte every king to lothe.
 O, which a senne violent,
 Wherof so wys a king was schent, *destroyed*
 That the vengeance in his persone
 Was noght ynouh to take alone,
 4555 Bot afterward, whan he was passed,
 It hath his heritage lassed, *diminished (lessened)*
 As I more openli tofore
 The tale tolde. And thus therfore
 ☞ The Philosophre upon this thing *(see note)*

- 4560 Writ and conseileth to a king,
 That he the surfet of luxure *excess of luxury*
 Schal tempre and reule of such mesure,
 Which be to kinde sufficant
 And ek to reson acordant,
- 4565 So that the lustes ignorance
 Because of no misgovernance,
 Thurgh which that he be overthrowe,
 As he that wol no reson knowe.
 For bot a mannes wit be swerved, *turned aside*
- 4570 Whan kinde is dueliche served,
 It oghte of reson to suffise;
 For if it falle him otherwise,
 He mai tho lustes sore drede.
- ☞ For of Anthonie thus I rede, *(see note)*
- 4575 Which of Severus was the sone,
 That he his lif of comun wone *practice (habit)*
 Gaf holy unto thilke vice, *wholly*
 And ofte time he was so nyce, *foolish*
 Wherof nature hire hath compleigned
- 4580 Unto the God, which hath desdeigned *who was offended by*
 The werkes whiche Antonie wroghte
 Of lust, whiche he ful sore aboghte.
 For God his forfet hath so wroke *avenged*
 That in cronique it is yit spoke.
- 4585 Bot for to take remembrance
 Of special misgovernance
 Thurgh covoitise and injustice
 Forth with the remenant of vice,
 And nameliche of lecherie,
- 4590 I finde write a gret partie
 Withinne a tale, as thou schalt hiere,
 Which is th'ensample of this matiere.

[TALE OF TARQUIN AND ARUNS]

- So as these olde gestes sein, *tales*
 The proude tirannyssh Romein
- 4595 Tarquinius, which was thanne king
 And wroghte many a wrongful thing,
 Of sones hadde manyon, *many a one*
 Among the whiche Arrons was on,
- ☞ Lich to his fader of maneres; *(see note)*
- 4600 So that withinne a fewe yeres
 With tresoun and with tirannie
 Thei wonne of lond a gret partie,
 And token hiede of no justice,

- Which due was to here office *duty*
 4605 Upon the reule of governance.
 Bot al that evere was plesance
 Unto the fleissches lust thei toke.
 And fell so, that thei undertoke *it so happened*
 A werre, which was noght achieved, *war; won*
 4610 Bot ofte time it hadde hem grieved,
 Agein a folk which thanne hihte
 The Gabiens: and al be nyhte
 This Arrons, whan he was at home
 In Rome, a privé place he nom *secret; took*
 4615 Withinne a chambre, and bet himselve *beat*
 And made him woundes ten or twelve
 Upon the bak, as it was sene.
 And so forth with hise hurtes grene *fresh wounds*
 In al the haste that he may
 4620 He rod, and cam that other day
 Unto Gabie the cité,
 And in he wente. And whan that he
 Was knowe, anon the gates schette, *were shut*
 The lordes alle upon him sette *attached*
 4625 With drawe swerdes upon honde.
 This Arrons wolde hem noght withstonde,
 Bot seide, 'I am hier at your wille,
 Als lief it is that ye me spille, *pleasant it would be if; kill*
 As if myn oghne fader dede.'
- 4630 And forthwith in the same stede *place*
 He preide hem that thei wolde se,
 And schewede hem in what degré
 His fader and hise brethren bothe,
 Whiche, as he seide, weren wrothe,
 4635 Him hadde beten and reviled,
 Forevere and out of Rome exiled.
 And thus he made hem to believe,
 And seide, if that he myhte achieve
 His pourpos, it schal wel be yolde, *rewarded*
 4640 Be so that thei him helpe wolde.
 Whan that the lordes hadde sein
 Hou wofully he was besein, *agitated*
 Thei token pité of his grief;
 Bot yit it was hem wonder lief *wondrously pleasant to them*
 4645 That Rome him hadde exiled so.
 These Gabiens be conseil tho
 Upon the goddes made him swere,
 That he to hem schal trouthe bere
 And strengthen hem with al his myht;
 4650 And thei also him have behiht *promised*

- To helpen him in his querele.
 Thei schopen thanne for his hele
 That he was bathed and enoight,
 Til that he was in lusti point;
 4655 And what he wolde thanne he hadde,
 That he al hol the cité ladde
 Riht as he wolde himself divide.
 And thanne he thoghte him in what wise
 He myhte his tirannie schewe;
 4660 And to his conseil tok a schrewe,
 Whom to his fader forth he sente
 In his message, and he tho wente,
 And preide his fader for to seie
 Be his avis, and finde a weie,
 4665 Hou thei the cité myhten winne,
 Whil that he stod so wel therinne.
 And whan the messenger was come
 To Rome, and hath in conseil nome
 The king, it fell per chance so
 4670 That thei were in a gardin tho,
 This messenger forth with the king.
 And whanne he hadde told the thing
 In what manere that it stod,
 And that Tarquinius understod
 4675 Be the message hou that it ferde,
 Anon he tok in honde a yerde,
 And in the gardin as thei gon,
 The lile croppes on and on,
 Wher that thei weren sprongen oute,
 4680 He smot of, as thei stode aboute,
 And seide unto the messenger:
 'Lo, this thing, which I do nou hier,
 Schal ben in stede of thin ansuere;
 And in this wise as I me bere,
 4685 Thou schalt unto mi sone telle.'
 And he no lengere wolde duelle,
 Bot tok his leve and goth withal
 Unto his lord, and told him al,
 Hou that his fader hadde do.
 4690 Whan Arrons herde him telle so,
 Anon he wiste what it mente,
 And therto sette al his entente,
 Til he thurgh fraude and tricherie
 The princes hefdes of Gabie
 4695 Hath smiten of, and al was wonne:
 His fader cam tofore the sonne
 Into the toun with the Romeins,
- prepared then; health
annointed
vigorous condition
desired
completely*
villainous rascal
taken
staff
lily blossoms one by one
off
Immediately he knew
*heads
cut off*

- And tok and slowh the citezeins
 Withoute reson or pité,
 4700 That he ne spareth no degré.
 And for the sped of this conqueste
 He let do make a riche feste
 With a sollempne sacrificise
 In Phebus temple; and in this wise
 4705 Whan the Romeins assembled were,
 In presence of hem alle there,
 Upon th'alter whan al was diht *prepared*
 And that the fyres were alyht, *fires; kindled*
 From under th'alter sodeinly
 4710 An hidous serpent openly
 Cam out and hath devoured al
 The sacrifice, and ek withal
 The fyres queynt, and forth anon, *quenched*
 So as he cam, so is he gon
 4715 Into the depe ground agein.
 And every man began to sein,
 'Ha lord, what mai this signefie?'
 And therupon thei preie and crie
 To Phebus, that thei mihten knowe
 4720 The cause: and he the same throwe
 With gastly vois, that alle it herde,
 The Romeins in this wise ansuerde,
 And seide hou for the wikkidnesse
 Of pride and of unrihtwisnesse, *injustice*
 4725 That Tarquin and his sone hath do,
 The sacrifice is wasted so,
 Which myhte noght ben acceptable
 Upon such senne abhominable.
 And over that yit he hem wisseth, *made known to them*
 4730 And seith that which of hem ferst kisseth
 His moder, he schal take wrieche *vengeance*
 Upon the wrong. And of that speche
 Thei ben withinne here hertes glade,
 Thogh thei outward no semblant made.
 4735 Ther was a knyht which Brutus hihte, *was called*
 And he with al the haste he myhte
 To grounde fell and th'erthe kiste,
 Bot non of hem the cause wiste, *knew*
 Bot wenden that he hadde sporned *thought; tripped*
 4740 Per chance, and so was overtorned.
 Bot Brutus al another mente;
 For he knew wel in his entente
 Hou th'erthe of every mannes kinde *a different thing meant*
 Is moder. Bot thei weren blinde, *nature*

- 4745 And sihen noght so fer as he.
 Bot whan thei leften the cité
 And comen hom to Rome agein,
 Thanne every man which was Romein
 And moder hath, to hire he bende *hastened*
- 4750 And keste, and ech of hem thus wende
 To be the ferste upon the chance,
 Of Tarquin for to do vengeance,
 So as thei herden Phebus sein.

[TALE OF THE RAPE OF LUCRECE]

- Bot every time hath his certein, *its duration*
- 4755 So moste it nedes thanne abide, *happen*
 Til afterward upon a tyde *time*
- ☞ Tarquinus made unskilfully *without discretion (see note)*
 A werre, which was fasteby *war; nearby*
 Agein a toun with walles stronge
- 4760 Which Ardea was cleped longe, *for a long time*
 And caste a siege therabout, e,
 That ther mai no man passen oute.
 So it befell upon a nyht,
- Arrons, which hadde his souper diht, *prepared*
- 4765 A part of the chivalerie *knighthood*
 With him to soupe in compaignie
 Hath bede: and whan thei comen were *invited*
 And seten at the souper there,
 Among here othre wordes glade
- 4770 Arrons a gret spekinge made,
 Who hadde tho the beste wif
 Of Rome. And ther began a strif, *dispute*
 For Arrons seith he hath the beste.
 So jangle thei withoute reste,
- 4775 Til ate laste on Collatin, *one*
 A worthi knyht, and was cousin *who was*
 To Arrons, seide him in this wise:
 ‘It is,’ quod he, ‘of non emprise *useless*
 To speke a word, bot of the dede,
- 4780 Therof it is to taken hiede.
 Anon forthi this same tyde *time*
 Lep on thin hors and let ous ryde:
 So mai we knowe bothe tuo
 Unwarli what oure wyves do,
- 4785 And that schal be a trewe assay.’ *assessment*
 This Arrons seith noght ones nay.
 On horse bak anon thei lepte
 In such manere, and nothing slepte,

- Ridende forth til that thei come
 4790 Al prively withinne Rome;
 In strange place and doun thei lihte, *hidden*
 And take a chambre, and out of sihte
 Thei be disguised for a throwe, *time*
 So that no lif hem scholde knowe. *no living person might know them*
- 4795 And to the paleis ferst thei soghte,
 To se what thing this ladi wroghte
 Of which Arrons made his avant. *boast*
 And thei hire sihe of glad semblant,
 Al full of merthes and of bordes; *jokes*
- 4800 Bot among alle hire othre wordes
 Sche spak noght of hire housebonde.
 And whan thei hadde al understonde
 Of thilke place what hem liste, *they desired*
 Thei gon hem forth, that non it wiste, *in such a way that no one knew*
- 4805 Beside thilke gate of bras,
 Collacea which cleped was,
 Wher Collatin hath his duellinge.
 Ther founden thei at hom sittinge
 Lucrece his wif, al environed *surrounded*
- 4810 With wommen, whiche are abandoned *utterly devoted*
 To werche, and sche wroghte ek withal, *To [their] work; worked*
 And bad hem haste, and seith, 'It schal
 Be for mi housebondes were, *wearing apparel*
 Which with his swerd and with his spere *Who*
- 4815 Lith at the siege in gret desese. *Lies; discomfort*
 And if it scholde him noght displese,
 Nou wolde God I hadde him hiere;
 For certes til that I mai hiere *If only God wanted that*
 Som good tidinge of his astat, *hear*
- 4820 Min herte is evere upon debat. *welfare*
 For so as alle men witenesse, *in turmoil*
 He is of such an hardiesse,
 That he can noght himselve spare, *restrain*
 And that is al my moste care,
- 4825 Whan thei the walles schulle assaile.
 Bot if mi wisshes myhte availe,
 I wolde it were a groundles pet, *it (Ardea); bottomless pit*
 Be so the siege were unknet, *dispersed*
 And I myn housebonde sihe.'
- 4830 With that the water in hire yhe
 Aros, that sche ne myhte it stoppe,
 And as men sen the dew bedroppe
 The leves and the floures eke, *as [when]; besprinkle*
 Riht so upon hire whyte cheke *also*
- 4835 The wofull salte teres felle.

- Whan Collatin hath herd hire telle
 The menyng of hire trewe herte,
 Anon with that to hire he sterte,
 And seide, 'Lo, mi goode diere,
 4840 Nou is he come to you hiere,
 That ye most loven, as ye sein.'
 And sche with goodly chiere agein
 Beclypte him in hire armes smale,
 And the colour, which erst was pale,
 4845 To beauté thanne was restored,
 So that it myhte noght be mored.
- leapt*
- Embraced*
- greater (made more)*
- The kinges sone, which was nyh,
 And of this lady herde and syh
 The thinges as thei ben befallē,
 4850 The resoun of hise wittes alle
 Hath lost; for love upon his part
 Cam thanne, and of his fyrī dart
 With such a wounde him hath thurghsmite,
 That he mot nedes fiele and wite
- feel; know*
- 4855 Of thilke blinde maladie,
 To which no cure of surgerie
 Can helpe. Bot yit natheles
 At thilke time he hield his pes
 That he no contenance made,
 4860 Bot openly with wordes glade,
 So as he couthe in his manere,
 He spak and made frendly chiere,
 Til it was time for to go.
 And Collatin with him also
 4865 His leve tok, so that be nyhte
 With al the haste that thei myhte
 Thei riden to the siege agein.
 Bot Arrons was so wo besein
- woefully afflicted*
- 4870 With thoghtes whiche upon him runne,
 That he al be the brode sunne
 To bedde goth, noght for to reste,
 Bot for to thenke upon the beste
 And the faireste forth withal
 That evere he syh or evere schal,
 4875 So as him thoghte in his corage,
 Where he pourtreieth hire ymage:
 Ferst the fetures of hir face,
 In which nature hadde alle grace
 Of wommanly beauté beset,
 4880 So that it myhte noght be bet;
 And hou hir yelwe her was tresced
 And hire atir so wel adresced,
- broad daylight*
- best [woman]*
- heart*
- yellow hair; arranged (braided)*
- arrayed*

- And hou sche spak, and hou sche wroghte, *worked*
 And hou sche wepte, al this he thoghte,
 4885 That he forgeten hath no del, *no detail*
 Bot al it liketh him so wel,
 That in the word nor in the dede
 Hire lacketh noght of wommanhiede.
 And thus this tyrannysse knyht
 4890 Was soupled, bot noght half ariht, *moved (made supple)*
 For he non other hiede tok,
 Bot that he myhte be som crok, *by some stratagem*
 Although it were agein hire wille,
 The lustes of his fleissh fulfille;
 4895 Which love was noght resonable,
 For where honour is remuable, *fickle*
 It oghte wel to ben avised. *watched*
 Bot he, which hath his lust assised *satisfied*
 With melled love and tirannie, *mingled*
 4900 Hath founde upon his tricherie
 A weie which he thenkth to holde,
 ¶ And seith, 'Fortune unto the bolde *(see note)*
 Is favorable for to helpe.'
 And thus withinne himself to yelpe, *boast*
 4905 As he which was a wylde man,
 Upon his treson he began:
 And up he sterte, and forth he wente
 On horsebak, bot his entente
 Ther knew no wiht, and thus he nam *person; took*
 4910 The nexte weie, til he cam *fastest (closest)*
 Unto Collacea the gate
 Of Rome, and it was somdiel late,
 Riht evene upon the sonne set, *Just as*
 As he which hadde schape his net *devised*
 4915 Hire innocence to betrappe. *ensnare*
 And as it scholde tho mishappe, *then*
 Als priveliche as evere he myhte *secretly*
 He rod, and of his hors alyhte
 Tofore Collatines in, *Before; residence (inn)*
 4920 And al frendliche he goth him in, *quite friendly*
 As he that was cousin of house. *[a] relative*
 And sche, which is the goode spouse,
 Lucrece, whan that sche him sih,
 With goodli chiere drowh him nyh,
 4925 As sche which al honour supposeth,
 And him, so as sche dar, opposeth *asks*
 Hou it stod of hire housebonde.
 And he tho dede hire understonde
 With tales feigned in his wise, *caused her to understand*

- 4930 Riht as he wolde himself devise,
 Wherof he myhte hire herte glade,
 That sche the betre chiere made,
 Whan sche the glade wordes herde,
 Hou that hire housebonde ferde. *fared*
- 4935 And thus the trouthe was deceived
 With slih tresoun, which was received
 To hire which mente alle goode.
 For as the festes thanne stode,
 His souper was ryht wel arraied. *prepared (cooked)*
- 4940 Bot yit he hath no word assaied *attempted*
 To speke of love in no degré;
 Bot with covert soubtilité
 His frendly speches he affaiteth, *embellishes*
 And as the tigre his time awaiteth
- 4945 In hope for to cacche his preie. *tables*
 Whan that the bordes were aweie
 And thei have souped in the halle,
 He seith that slep is on him falle,
 And preith he moste go to bedde.
- 4950 And sche with alle haste spedde,
 So as hire thoghte it was to done, *as she thought proper*
 That everything was redi sone.
 Sche broghte him to his chambre tho
 And tok hire leve, and forth is go
- 4955 Into hire oghne chambre by, *near at hand*
 As sche that wende certainly *who thought*
 Have had a frend, and hadde a fo, *but [she] had an enemy*
 Wherof fell after mochel wo.
- This tirant, thogh he lyhe softe,
 4960 Out of his bed aros fulofte,
 And goth aboute, and leide his ere *ear*
 To herkne, til that alle were *listen*
 To bedde gon and slepten faste.
 And thanne upon himself he caste
- 4965 A mantell, and his swerd al naked
 He tok in honde; and sche unwaked *remained asleep*
 Abedde lay, bot what sche mette, *dreamed*
 God wot; for he the dore unschette *knows; unlatched*
 So prively that non it herde, *secretly*
- 4970 The softe pas and forth he ferde
 Unto the bed wher that sche slepte,
 Al sodeinliche and in he crepte, *And all suddenly in*
 And hire in bothe his armes tok.
 With that this worthi wif awok,
- 4975 Which thurgh tendresce of wommanhiede *delicacy*
 Hire vois hath lost for pure drede,

- That o word speke sche ne dar,
 And ek he bad hir to be war, *careful*
 For if sche made noise or cry,
 4980 He seide, his swerd lay faste by
 To slen hire and hire folk aboute.
 And thus he broghte hire herte in doute, *intimidated her*
 That lich a lomb whanne it is sesed *seized*
 In wolves mouth, so was desesed *terrified*
 4985 Lucrece, which he naked fond,
 Wherof sche swounede in his hond,
 And, as who seith, lay ded oppressed. *completely overwhelmed*
 And he, which al him hadde adressed *had prepared himself*
 To lust, tok thanne what him liste, *pleased him*
 4990 And goth his wey, that non it wiste, *knew*
 Into his oghne chambre agein,
 And clepede up his chamberlein,
 And made him redi for to ryde.
 And thus this lecherouse pride *arrogant lecher*
 4995 To horse lepte and forth he rod.
 And sche, which in hire bed abod, *remained*
 Whan that sche wiste he was agon, *knew*
 Sche clepede after liht anon
 And up aros long er the day, *before*
 5000 And caste away hire freissh aray,
 As sche which hath the world forsake,
 And tok upon the clothes blake. *black*
 And evere upon continuinge, *incessantly*
 Riht as men sen a welle springe,
 5005 With yhen fulle of wofull teres, *eyes*
 Hire her hangende aboute hire eres, *hair; ears*
 Sche wepte, and no man wiste why.
 Bot yit among full pitously
 Sche preide that thei nolden drecche *would not delay*
 5010 Hire housebonde for to fecche
 Forth with hire fader ek also.
 Thus be thei comen bothe tuo,
 And Brutus cam with Collatin,
 Which to Lucrece was cousin,
 5015 And in thei wenten alle thre
 To chambre, wher thei myhten se
 The wofulleste upon this molde, *most woeful; earth*
 Which wepte as sche to water scholde. *as if she would [turn] into water*
 The chambre dore anon was stoke, *closed*
 5020 Er thei have oght unto hire spoke;
 Thei sihe hire clothes al disguised, *all in disarray*
 And hou sche hath herself despised, *hated*
 Hire her hangende unkemd aboute, *hair; uncombed*

- Bot natheles sche gan to loute *bow*
 5025 And knele unto hire housebonde;
 And he, which fain wolde understonde *who was eager to know*
 The cause why sche ferde so, *behaved*
 With softe wordes axeth tho, *then*
 'What mai you be, mi goode swete?' *What is wrong*
 5030 And sche, which thoghte himself unmete *unfit (horrible to look upon)*
 And the lest worth of wommen alle, *most worthless*
 Hire wofull chiere let down falle *countenance*
 For schame and couthe unnethes loke. *scarcely make eye contact*
 And thei therof good hiede toke,
 5035 And preiden hire in alle weie
 That sche ne spare for to seie
 Unto hir frendes what hire eileth, *troubles*
 Why sche so sore himself beweileth, *laments*
 And what the sothe wolde mene.
 5040 And sche, which hath hire sorwes grene, *fresh*
 Hire wo to telle thanne assaieth,
 Bot tendre schame hire word delaieth,
 That sondri times as sche minte *intended*
 To speke, upon the point sche stinte. *stopped*
 5045 And thei hire bidden evere in on
 To telle forth, and therupon,
 Whan that sche sih sche moste nede, *saw; needs must do it*
 Hire tale between schame and drede
 Sche tolde, noght withoute peine. *mortification*
 5050 And he, which wolde hire wo restreigne,
 Hire housebonde, a sory man,
 Conforteth hire al that he can,
 And swor, and ek hire fader bothe,
 That thei with hire be noght wrothe *angry*
 5055 Of that is don agein hire wille;
 And preiden hire to be stille,
 For thei to hire have al forgive.
 Bot sche, which thoghte noght to live,
 Of hem wol no forgivenessse,
 5060 And seide, of thilke wickednesse
 Which was unto hire bodi wroght,
 Al were it so sche myhte it noght,
 Nevere afterward the world ne schal
 Reproeven hire; and forth withal, *Rebuke*
 5065 Er eny man therof be war,
 A naked swerd, the which sche bar
 Withinne hire mantel priveli,
 Betwen hire hondes sodeinly
 Sche tok, and thurgh hire herte it throng, *pierced*
 5070 And fell to grounde, and evere among,

- Whan that sche fell, so as sche myhte,
 Hire clothes with hire hand sche rihte, *adjusted*
 That no man downward fro the kne *So that*
 Scholde eny thing of hire se:
 5075 Thus lay this wif honestly, *honorably*
 Although she deide wofully.
 Tho was no sorwe for to seke.
 Hire housebonde, hire fader eke *also*
 Aswoune upon the bodi felle; *Fainting*
 5080 Ther mai no mannes tunge telle
 In which anguisshe that thei were.
 Bot Brutus, which was with hem there,
 Toward himself his herte kepte,
 And to Lucrece anon he lepte,
 5085 The blodi swerd and pulleth oute,
 And swor the goddes al aboute
 That he therof schal do vengeance.
 And sche tho made a contenance, *expression*
 Hire dedlich yhe and ate laste
 5090 In thonkinge as it were up caste,
 And so behield him in the wise,
 Whil sche to loke mai suffise.
 And Brutus with a manlich herte
 Hire housebonde hath mad up sterte
 5095 Forth with hire fader ek also
 In alle haste, and seide hem tho
 That thei anon withoute lette *delay*
 A beere for the body fette; *bier (coffin); obtain*
 Lucrece and therupon bledende *bleeding*
 5100 He leide, and so forth out criende
 He goth into the marketplace
 Of Rome: and in litel space
 Thurgh cry the cité was assembled, *gathered*
 And every mannes herte is trembled, *shaken*
 5105 Whan thei the sothe herde of the cas.
 And therupon the conseil was
 Take of the grete and of the smale,
 And Brutus tolde hem al the tale.
 And thus cam into remembrance
 5110 Of senne the continuance, *persistence*
 Which Arrons hadde do tofore, *done before*
 And ek, long time er he was bore,
 Of that his fadre hadde do *done*
 The wrong cam into place tho;
 5115 So that the comun clamour tolde
 The newe schame of sennes olde.
 And al the toun began to crie,

- And stod upon acord til eft.
 The king, which herde telle of this,
 Hou that this maide ordeigned is
 5165 To mariage, thoghte another.
 And hadde thilke time a brother,
 Which Marchus Claudius was hote,
 And was a man of such riote
 Riht as the king himselve was.
 5170 Thei tuo togedre upon this cas
 In conseil founden out this weie,
 That Marchus Claudius schal seie
 Hou sche be weie of covenant
 To his service appourtenant
 5175 Was hol, and to non other man;
 And therupon he seith he can
 In every point wnesse take,
 So that sche schal it noght forsake.
 Whan that thei hadden schape so,
 5180 After the lawe which was tho,
 Whil that hir fader was absent,
 Sche was somouned and assent
 To come in presence of the king
 And stonde in ansuere of this thing.
 5185 Hire frendes wisten alle wel
 That it was falshed everydel,
 And comen to the king and seiden,
 Upon the comun lawe and preiden,
 So as this noble worthi knyht
 5190 Hir fader for the comun riht
 In thilke time, as was befalle,
 Lai for the profit of hem alle
 Upon the wylde feldes armed,
 That he ne scholde noght ben harmed
 5195 Ne schamed, whil that he were oute;
 And thus thei preiden al aboute.
 For al the clamour that he herde,
 The king upon his lust ansuerde,
 And gaf hem only daies tuo
 5200 Of respit; for he wende tho,
 That in so schorte a time appiere
 Hire fader mihte in no manere.
 Bot as therof he was deceived,
 For Livius hadde al conceived
 5205 The pourpos of the king tofore,
 So that to Rome agein therfore
 In alle haste he cam ridende,
 And lefte upon the field liggende

*by agreement [to be pursued] later**pledged
intended**was called
lecherous disposition**wholly**devised**sent for**knew
utterly false**figured then**riding*

- His host, til that he come agein. *army till he should come*
 5210 And thus this worthi capitein
 Appiereth redi at his day,
 Wher al that evere reson may
 Be lawe in audience he doth,
 So that his dowhter upon soth
 5215 Of that Marchus hire hadde accused
 He hath tofore the court excused.
 The king, which sih his pourpos faile,
 And that no sleihte mihte availe,
 Encombred of his lustes blinde
 5220 The lawe torneth out of kinde,
 And half in wraththe as thogh it were,
 In presence of hem alle there
 Deceived of concupiscence *Misled by*
 Gaf for his brother the sentence,
 5225 And bad him that he scholde sese *seize*
 This maide and make him wel at ese;
 Bot al withinne his oghne entente
 He wiste hou that the cause wente, *knew*
 Of that his brother hath the wyte *censure*
 5230 He was himselven for to wyte. *to be blamed*
 Bot thus this maiden hadde wrong,
 Which was upon the king along, *was wronged*
 Bot agein him was non appel, *caused by the king*
 And that the fader wiste wel. *against; recourse (appeal)*
 5235 Wherof upon the tirannie, *knew*
 That for the lust of Lecherie
 His douhter scholde be deceived,
 And that Ilicius was weyved *obstructed*
 Untrewly fro the mariage, *Maliciously*
 5240 Riht as a leon in his rage, *lion*
 Which of no drede set acompte
 And not what pité scholde amounte, *knows not; lead to*
 A naked swerd he pulleth oute,
 The which amonges al the route
 5245 He threste thurgh his dowhter side, *thrust*
 And al alowd this word he cride:
 ‘Lo, take hire ther, thou wrongfull king,
 For me is levere upon this thing
 To be the fader of a maide,
 5250 Thogh sche be ded, than if men saide
 That in hir lif sche were schamed
 And I therof were evele named.’
 Tho bad the king men scholde areste *capture (seize)*
 His bodi, bot of thilke heste, *command*
 5255 Lich to the chaced wylde bor, *hunted wild boar*

- The houndes whan he fieleth sor,
 Tothroweth and goth forth his weie,
 In such a wise for to seie
 This worthi kniht with swerd on honde
 5260 His weie made, and thei him wonde, *avoid*
 That non of hem his strokes kepte; *parried*
 And thus upon his hors he lepte,
 And with his swerd droppende of blod,
 The which withinne his douhter stod,
 5265 He cam ther as the pouer was
 Of Rome, and tolde hem al the cas,
 And seid hem that thei myhten liere
 Upon the wrong of his matiere,
 That betre it were to redresce
 5270 At hom the grete unrihtwisnesse, *injustice*
 Than for to werre in strange place *make war; foreign*
 And lese at hom here oghne grace. *lose; their own*
 For thus stant every mannes lif
 In jeupartie for his wif *In danger*
 5275 Or for his dowhter, if thei be
 Passende another of beauté.
 Of this merveile which thei sihe *saw*
 So apparant tofore here yhe, *clearly before their eyes*
 Of that the king him hath misbore,
 5280 Here othes thei have alle swore
 That thei wol stonde be the riht.
 And thus of on acord upriht
 To Rome at ones hom agein
 Thei torne, and schortly for to sein,
 5285 This tirannye cam to mouth, *was spoken of (came to mouth)*
 And every man seith what he couthe, *knew*
 So that the privé tricherie,
 Which set was upon lecherie,
 Cam openly to mannes ere; *ear*
 5290 And that broghte in the comun feere,
 That every man the peril dradde
 Of him that so hem overladde.
 Forthi, er that it worse falle,
 Thurgh comun conseil of hem alle
 5295 Thei have here wrongfull king deposed,
 And hem in whom it was supposed
 The conseil stod of his ledinge
 Be lawe unto the dom thei bringe,
 Wher thei receiven the penance
 5300 That longeth to such governance.
 And thus th'unchaste was chastised,
 Wherof thei myhte ben avised

That scholden afterward governe,
 And be this evidence lerne,
 5305 Hou it is good a king eschuie *avoid*
 The lust of vice and vertu suie. *follow*

[TALE OF TOBIAS AND SARA]

To make an ende in this partie,
 Which toucheth to the Policie
 Of Chastité in special,
 5310 As for conclusion final
 ☞ That every lust is to eschue *(see note)*
 Be gret ensample I mai argue:
 Hou in Rages a toun of Mede
 Ther was a mayde, and as I rede,
 5315 Sarra sche hihite, and Raguel *was called*
 Hir fader was; and so befell,
 Of bodi bothe and of visage
 Was non so fair of the lignage,
 To seche among hem alle, as sche;
 5320 Wherof the riche of the cité,
 Of lusti folk that couden love,
 Assoted were upon hire love, *Crazy*
 And asken hire for to wedde.
 On was which ate laste spedde,
 5325 Bot that was more for likinge,
 To have his lust, than for weddinge,
 As he withinne his herte caste,
 Which him repenteth ate laste.
 For so it fell the ferste nyht,
 5330 That whanne he was to bedde dyht, *prepared*
 As he which nothing God besecheth
 Bot al only hise lustes secheth,
 Abedde er he was fully warm
 And wolde have take hire in his arm,
 5335 Asmod, which was a fend of helle,
 And serveth, as the bokes telle,
 To tempte a man of such a wise,
 Was redy there, and thilke emprise,
 Which he hath set upon delit,
 5340 He vengeth thanne in such a plit,
 That he his necke hath writhe atuo.
 This yonge wif was sory tho,
 Which wiste nothing what it mente;
 And natheles yit thus it wente
 5345 Noght only of this ferste man,
 Bot after, riht as he began,

Who knew

- Sexe othre of hire housebondes
 Asmod hath take into hise bondes,
 So that thei alle abedde deiden *died in bed*
 5350 Whan thei her hand toward hir leiden, *their; laid*
 Noght for the lawe of mariage,
 Bot for that ilke fyri rage
 In which that thei the lawe excede.
 For who that wolde taken hiede
 5355 What after fell in this matiere,
 Ther mihte he wel the sothe hie.
 Whan sche was wedded to Thobie,
 And Raphael in compainie
 Hath tawht him hou to ben honeste, *honorable*
 5360 Asmod wan noght at thilke feste,
 And yit Thobie his wille hadde;
 For he his lust so goodly ladde, *desire so seemly governed*
 That bothe lawe and kinde is served,
 Wherof he hath himself preserved,
 5365 That he fell noght in the sentence.
 O which an open evidence
 Of this ensample a man mai se,
 That whan likinge in the degré
 Of mariage mai forsueie, *go wrong*
 5370 Wel oghte him thanne in other weie
 Of lust to be the betre avised.
 For God the lawes hath assised *submitted*
 Als wel to reson as to kinde,
 Bot he the bestes wolde binde
 5375 Only to lawes of nature,
 Bot to the mannes creature
 God gaf him reson forth withal,
 Wherof that he nature schal
 5379 Upon the causes modefie,
Nota That he schal do no lecherie, *(see note)*
 And yit he schal hise lustes have. *satisfaction*
 So ben the lawes bothe save
 And everything put out of sclandre;
 As whilom to king Alisandre
 5385 The wise Philosophre tawhte,
 Whan he his ferste lore cawhte, *teaching received*
 Noght only upon chasteté,
 Bot upon alle honesteté; *honorableness*
 Wherof a king himself mai taste,
 5390 Hou trewe, hou large, hou joust, hou chaste
 Him oghte of reson for to be,
 Forth with the vertu of Pité,
 Thurgh which he mai gret thonk deserve

- Toward his Godd, that he preserve
 5395 Him and his poeple in alle welthe
 Of pes, richesse, honour and helthe
 Hier in this world and elles eke.
- Confessor** Mi sone, as we tofore spieke
 In schrifte, so as thou me seidest,
 5400 And for thin ese, as thou me preidest,
 Thi love throghes for to lisse, *throes; relieve*
 That I thee wolde telle and wisse *guide*
 The forme of Aristotles lore,
 I have it seid, and somdiel more
- 5405 Of othre ensamples, to assaie *try*
 If I thi peines myhte allaie *alleviate*
 Thurgh eny thing that I can seie.”
- Amans** “Do wey, mi fader, I you preie!
 Of that ye have unto me told *Enough of this*
- 5410 I thonke you a thousandfold.
 The tales sounen in myn ere, *resound; ear*
 Bot yit myn herte is elleswhere,
 I mai miselve noght restreigne,
 That I nam evere in loves peine. *am not*
- 5415 Such lore couthe I nevere gete,
 Which myhte make me forgete *unless*
 O point, bot if so were I slepte,
 That I my tydes ay ne kepte
- 5420 To thenke of love and of his lawe;
 That herte can I noght withdrawe. *feeling*
 Forthi, my goode fader diere,
 Lef al and speke of my matiere *Leave*
 Touchende of love, as we begonne:
 If that ther be oght overronne *skipped over*
- 5425 Or oght forgete or left behinde
 Which falleth unto loves kinde,
 Wherof it nedeth to be schrive,
 Nou axeth, so that whil I live
- 5429 I myhte amende that is mys.”
- Confessor** “Mi goode diere sone, yis. *yes*
 Thi schrifte for to make plein,
 Ther is yit more for to sein
 Of love which is unavised. *ill-considered*
 Bot for thou schalt be wel avised
- 5435 Unto thi schrifte as it belongeth,
 A point which upon love hongeth
 And is the laste of alle tho,
 I wol thee telle, and thanne ‘Ho.’” *[say] “stop”*



EXPLANATORY NOTES

ABBREVIATIONS: **Bart. Ang.:** Trevisa's translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *On the Properties of Things*; **BD:** Chaucer, *Book of the Duchess*; **CA:** Gower, *Confessio Amantis*; **De nuptiis:** Martianus Capella, *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*; **CT:** Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*; **De formis:** Petrus Berchorius, *De formis figurisque deorum*; **De Is:** Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*; **Did.:** Hugh of St. Victor, *Didascalion*; **Diod.:** Diodorus Siculus, *Historia Librii*; **Etym.:** Isidore, *Etymologiae* (PL 82); **Ful.:** Fulgentius, *Mythographies*; **Gen. deorum:** Boccaccio, *Genealogie deorum gentilium libri*; **HF:** Chaucer, *House of Fame*; **Hyg.:** Hyginus, *The Myths of Hyginus (Fabulae)*; **LGW:** Chaucer, *Legend of Good Women*; **Mac:** G. C. Macaulay (4 vol. *Complete Works*); **MED:** *Middle English Dictionary*; **Met.:** Ovid, *Metamorphoses*; **MO:** Gower, *Mirour de l'Omme*; **OCCL:** *Oxford Companion to Classical Literature*; **OED:** *Oxford English Dictionary*; **PL:** *Patrologia Latina*; **Poet. astr.:** Hyginus, *Poetica astronomica*; **RR:** Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *Le Roman de la Rose*; **TC:** Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde*; **Trésor:** Brunetto Latini, *The Book of the Treasure*; **Val. Max.:** Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Doings and Sayings*; **Vat. Myth.:** Vatican Mythographer I, II, or III; **VC:** Gower, *Vox Clamantis*; **Vit. Barl.:** *Vitae Sanctorum Barlaam Ermitae et Josaphat Indiae Regis*. For manuscript abbreviations, see p. 34.

EXPLANATORY NOTES TO BOOK 5

- 8 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic in quinto libro intendit Confessor tractare de Auaricia, que omnium malorum radix dicitur, necnon et de eiusdem viciū speciebus: set primo ipsius Auaricie naturam describens Amanti quatenus amorem concernit super hoc specialius opponit.* [Here in the fifth book the Confessor intends to discourse about Avarice, which is called the root of all evils, and also about the species of this vice. But first, describing the nature of Avarice to the Lover in so far as it concerns love, on this he particularly questions him.]
- 17–18 *on honde . . . to londe.* A poetic tag “with little semantic content” (*OED* *lond* n. 1[g]), which, with *comen to*, means “to occur,” “happen.” Compare 1.3288–89 and 5.4899–4900. See also 5.341–42 and 5.975–76.
- 49–57 Compare *MO* 7645 ff. on the idea that the money owns the avaricious person rather than the other way around.
- 79–90 Here Gower uses as many as six *rimes riches* in succession, a technique he had perfected in *MO*. Itô (*John Gower*, pp. 224–25) notes that Gower uses this kind of wordplay more in dialogue between the Confessor and Amans than in the tales themselves. For further discussion of Gower's use of *rime équivoque* in these lines, see Olsen, “*Betwene Ernest and Game*”, pp. 55–56, and Zarins, “Poetic Justice,” on *rime riche*.

- 123 ff. *Unto the gold schal serve and bowe*. Macaulay (2.514n127–36) notes how Gower emphasizes gold's mastery over its servants by placing *gold* as the first stressed word in lines 127, 134, and 136, as if the iteration exemplifies gold's control of its avaricious thralls.
- 141 ff. Gower's story of Midas is based on *Met.* 11.85–145. Midas' debate over the three choices is Gower's addition to the traditional story. See also Hyg. 191, and Ful. 2.10. For discussion of Gower's manipulation of Ovid's tale, see Moran, "Tale of Midas."
- 143 *Cillen*us. Silenus was a wise but truculent satyr, who was raised by Dionysus. Midas captured him and forced him to reveal his wisdom, namely, that it is best never to have been born, second best to die as soon as possible (Herodotus 8.138, Pseudo-Plutarch, *Consolatio ad Apollonium* 27, and Virgil, Eclogue 6). Godley draws a parallel between the capture of Silenus and Menelaus' capture of Proteus in *The Odyssey* (Herodotus, p.145n2). Silenus was notorious for his drunkenness.
- 146 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur contra istos Auaros. Et narrat qualiter Mida Rex Frigie Cillen*um Bachi sacerdotem, quem rustici vinculis ferreis alligarunt, dissoluit, et in hospicium suum benignissime recollegit; pro quo Bachus quodcumque manus Rex exigere vellet donari concessit. Vnde Rex Auaricia ductus, ut quicquid tangeret in aurum conuerteretur, indiscrete peciit. Quo facto postea contigit quod cibos cum ipse sumere vellet, in aurum conuersos manducare non potuit. Et sic percipiens aurum pro tunc non posse sibi valere, illud auferri, et tunc ea que victui sufficerent necessaria iteratis precibus a deo mitissime postulauit. [Here he speaks against the avaricious, and he tells how Midas of Frigia released Silenus the priest of Bacchus, whom peasants had bound in iron chains, and how Midas most benignly nurtured him in his own residence. For this, Bacchus granted that the king be given as much as his hand might reach to. Wherefore the king, led by avarice, foolishly requested that whatever he touched be turned to gold. With this made so, it happened that the food he wanted to take turned to gold, and he could not eat; and thus perceiving that the gold now could not help him, he most humbly begged the god with repeated prayers to take it away, and then supply those necessities which might suffice for victuals.]
- 236 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Salomon. Pecunie obediunt omnia*. [Solomon: "All things obey money" (Ecclesiastes 10:19).]
- 249 ff. Compare *MO* 7063–7108 on the likening of the avaricious man to one afflicted with dropsy, that dries up a man with unnatural thirst, regardless of how much he drinks.
- 334 *To for the time*. On Gower's *ubi sunt* nostalgic response within the rhetoric of complaint satire to the former age as a golden time before gold was smitten, see Peter, *Complaint and Satire*, p. 70.
- 363 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de pena Tantal*i, cuius amara sitis dampnatos torquet auaros. [Note concerning the punishment of Tantalus, whose bitter thirst torments the avaricious in hell.]

The story of Tantalus was well known: for example, Hyg. 82; Ful. 2.18; Vat. Myth. II 102; *Gen. deorum* 12.1. Ovid alludes to the story several times, though he never tells it fully.

388 *whiche a wreche*. The sense might be “what a miserable person.” But I have followed Macaulay’s gloss (2.515) “what a punishment” as being especially apt to the context.

389 *couth*. *MED* gives “known; well-known, familiar,” *couth*, adj. (1a), citing this line. But I have preferred 1b, “evident.” “Near” would be satisfactory, too, though “evident,” meaning “in front of your face” is better.

461 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de Ialousia, cuius fantastica suspicio amorem quamuis fidelissimum multociens sine causa corruptum ymaginatur*. [Note concerning Jealousy, whose phantasmic suspicion very often baselessly imagines that love, even if most faithful, is corrupt.] Compare the fantastic rage of Jean de Meun’s jealous husband in *RR*, lines 8455–9492. Both writers associate jealousy with Avarice. Chaucer likewise draws upon the tradition in creating jealous husbands like old Januarie in *The Merchant’s Tale*, who would keep May locked in his garden; or John the carpenter and his sweet Alison in *The Miller’s Tale*: “Jalous he was, and heeld hire narwe in cage” (*CT* I[A]3224). For women, jealousy is seen to be a self-protective virtue, though still the source of often baseless fantasies (though sometimes not so baseless) as it would help the women to protect what is rightfully hers. See *RR*, lines 3526–754, where li Jalous stirs Daungier (Resistance) into action against Amans.

464 *fiereve . . . cotidian*. Although jealousy is commonly seen to be a kind of rage, jealous love is often compared to a debilitating daily fever. See *RR* lines 1831 ff., where the god of love instructs the lover on the pains of love, along with the pains of the jealous lover described by Friend in lines 8455 ff.; or the feverish self-protective behavior of Troilus in *TC* 1.491, 1.916, 2.1520, or 3.1213. See also Chaucer’s *Romaunt*, lines 2391–2452, a passage close to Gower’s portrayal of the indolent, love-sick, jealous Amans in *CA* 4.1648–1770, 4.2746–2916, and 5.467 ff.

468 *of comun wone*. “of common practice, custom, or habit.” See 5.851 and 3.149 for similar use of the idiom.

513 *aliche grene*. Jealousy is the green sickness; see *OED* adj. (3a) on the green eye of jealousy and the green, bilious, pale, sickly complexion associated with jealousy. See also *OED* “green-eyed.”


558–59 *gold unpursed . . . leid upon the bok*. See Macaulay (2.515n558–59): “The gold in question is that which is laid upon the service-book in payment of the marriage fees: ‘and the Man shall give unto the Woman a Ring, laying the same upon the book with the accustomed duty to the Priest and Clerk.’ *Marriage Service*.”

564 The gloss is from Macaulay (2.515), who compares the usage to *Prol.* 154.

591–94 See Simpson, *Sciences and the Self*, p. 172, on the possibilities of “deceptive psychological ‘information’” capable of transforming man from his ideal state.

Much of Amans' reception of Genius' examples in Books 2–6, but especially in Book 3, illustrates the problems of *feigned enformacion* (line 593), as one chooses to give it and the other to receive it, a key, perhaps, to the main thrust of Genius and Amans' unstable debate in the middle books of the poem.

639–700 The author of *Chaucer's Ghost* (1672) steals and adapts these lines as if they were his own in his Arg. 7, the story of Venus, Mars, and Vulcan. He presents the passage as if he were affecting Chaucer's style in presenting Ovidian tales, "penn'd after the ancient manner of writing in England." The plagiarism is proof that Gower is at least being read during the Restoration period, albeit considered obscure enough to pass as another's work. See also 5.6225–81 and 5.6715–80.

642 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic ponit exemplum contra istos maritos quos Ialousia maculauit. Et narrat qualiter Vulcanus, cuius vxor Venus extitit, suspicionem inter ipsam et Martem concipiens, eorum gestus diligentius explorabat: vnde contigit quod ipse quadam vice ambos inter se pariter amplexantes in lecto nudos inuenit, et exclamans omnem ceterum deorum et dearum ad tantum spectaculum conuocauit: super quo tamen derisum potius quam remedium a tota cohorte consecutus est.* [Here he presents an instructive example against those husbands whom jealousy has tainted. And he narrates how Vulcan, whose wife was Venus, conceiving a suspicion about something between her and Mars, scrutinized very diligently their activities. Whence it happened that he by a certain chance discovered both of them naked, entwined with one another in bed, and, crying out, he convened all the rest of the gods and goddesses to such a spectacle. Nonetheless, laughter from all the court, rather than a remedy, followed thereupon.] Vulcan's capturing of Mars in bed with Venus is one of the favorites of all ancient stories. See Hyg. 148; Vat. Myth. II 121; *Gen. deorum* 9.3; and *Met.* 4.170; *Ars amatoria* 2.589; and *Vit. Barl.* (PL 78.551), to name a few.

729 ff. Macaulay's indignation at "the very ill-advised digression" (2.515) on pagan religions is sufficiently unsedate to be quoted in full:

There is no more reason why this should come in here than anywhere else, indeed if the question of false gods was to be raised at all, it ought to have come in as an explanation of the appearance of Venus and Cupid in the first book. Many stories have been told, for example those of Acteon, of the Gorgons, of Tiresias, of Phoebus and Daphne, of Phaeton, of Ceix, of Argus, and of Midas, which required the explanation quite as much as this one, and the awkwardness of putting it all into the mouth of the priest of Venus is inexcusable.

732–1302 Gower's principal authority in his discussion of the Chaldean, Egyptian, and Greek religions is *Vit. Barl.* 1.27 (PL 73.548–55), the *cronique* that he mentions in lines 816 and 837 (N.b. the ME translation *Barlam and Iosaphat*). Although that work includes lore on the Greek gods, Gower's generalizations about them range far beyond the information supplied by *Vit. Barl.* But Gower also draws on *Etym.*, Book 8 (PL 82.293–326), which begins by discussing matters of religion, faith, heresy, and schism and deals with Christianity, Judaism, and the pagan gods, especially those of Greece and Egypt. For a succinct discussion of the history behind such catalogues of classical deities

as Gower's, see Sez nec, *Survival of the Pagan Gods*, especially ch. 1. The observations by Dindimus to Alexander at the end of the discussion could be drawn from any number of versions (Latin, Old French, Middle English) of the ever-popular history of Alexander, or of chronicles that include that history. *Orus* (line 798) apparently refers to Horus the Elder, while *Orayn* (line 806) would be Horus the Child.

Isirus (line 798) is, of course, Osiris, and *Typhon* (line 798) is Seth. In my glosses I have used modern spelling for the Greek deities except in those instances when I have not been able to identify the character. For example, when Genius calls the father of Ilia *Mynitor* (line 897), the reference is clearly to Numitor; so too his *Ypolitus* (line 967) is Hippotas, and his *Sibeles* (line 1135) is Cybele, and *Philerem* (line 1163) is Philyra. Of the two pits of Hell that Pluto swears by, *Stige* (line 1113) must be Styx, while, Andrew Galloway suggests, *Segne* is perhaps the river Seine (an anti-French joke of the Hundred Years War, as if the Parisian river were one of the pits of Hell).

- 748 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Quia secundum Poetarum fabulas in huius libelli locis quampluribus nomina et gestus deorum falsorum intitulantur, quorum infidelitas vt Christianis clarius innotescat, intendit de ipsorum origine secundum varias Paganorum Sectas scribere consequenter. Et primo de Secta Chaldeorum tractare proponit.* [Since, following the fables of the poets, the names and deeds of the false gods are inscribed in many places in this book, in order to describe their unsuitability for faith (*infidelitas*) he intends to write subsequently about their origin according to various pagan sects. And first he proposes to treat the sect of the Chaldeans.]
- 765 *ben corrupt be sondri weie.* The scornful tone with which Genius depicts the foolishness of a Chaldean theogony based on mutable elements comes from *Vit. Barl.* 1.27 (*PL* 73.548).
- 772 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Et nota quod Nembroth quartus a Noe ignem tanquam deum in Chaldea primus adorari decreuit.* [And note that Nimrod, fourth after Noah, first ordered fire to be worshiped as a god.] See Genesis 10:8–9, where Nimrod is identified as a mighty hunter. In *Cursor Mundi* he is son of Chus, son of Cham, who becomes king of Babylon and builds the Tower of Babel, using bricks prepared by fire (lines 2195–2304).
- 774 *hevenly figures.* See *Vit. Barl.* 1.27 (*PL* 73.548) on the worshiping of features of the zodiac as gods. Martianus credits “the sanctums of Egyptian priests” with keeping of the secrets of such study “for almost forty thousand years” (8.812).
- 787 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *De Secta Egipciorum.* [Concerning the sect of the Egyptians.]
- 789 *worst of alle.* The Egyptian gods are worst because of the bestial (5.791), incestuous (5.801–03), fratricidal (5.805), and murderous ways (5.809) of Osiris, Isis, Horus, and the monstrous Typhon. N.b., the tone of *Vit. Barl.* 1.27 (*PL* 73.552: *Egyptii autem eos stultitia et stoliditate superantes, gravius quam ullæ aliæ*

nationes aberrarunt [But the Egyptians were more grossly aberrant than any other peoples, surpassing them all in stupidity and vulgarity]).

798 *Orus, Typhon, and Isirus*. On the Egyptian gods (also Isis, 5.801), see *Vit. Barl.* (PL 73.552), *Vat. Myth.* II 90–91 and *Vat. Myth.* III 6.3; and *Gen. deorum* 2.4. That they could turn themselves into animals, see Hyg. 196.

805 *Typhon*. Typhon, originating in Greek mythology, is only later identified with the Egyptian god Set. According to Hesiod, Ge lay with Tartarus to conceive her youngest child Typhon, a huge monster with a hundred dragon heads instead of hands. Typhon attacked Zeus, temporarily defeating him, until Zeus, using his thunderbolts, confined him beneath Etna, from which his rage still spews forth. According to the *Homeric Hymns*, Hera gave birth to him without benefit of a father, but that is a story Gower would not likely have known. Hyginus reports the details from Hesiod in Hyg. 152. Typhon appears again in Hyg. 196 and in *Poet. astr.* 2.28, where the gods change themselves into beasts to avoid Typhon's assault.

816–17 *Ysis . . . Fro Grece into Egipte cam*. Leonhard notes that Isis was traditionally associated with Io, whom Jupiter hid away from Juno and made a goddess in Egypt ("Classical Mythology," p. 52n4).

819 *teche hem for to sowe and eere*. Leonhard notes that Isis, "as wife of Osiris, began the cultivation of grain, when he, god of the Nile, taught the use of the plow. She was also the earth goddess (*Vat. Myth.* II 90). She was identified with Ceres, and, as goddess of the moon, with Io (*Diod.* 1.24.9–10; *Vat. Myth.* II 89). She was mother of Horus (*De Is* 19, 52, 65, 68)" ("Classical Mythology," p. 55n.). None of these sources suggest that she is goddess of childbirth (see *CA* 5.827–31).

835 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *De Secta Grecorum*. [Concerning the sect of the Greeks.]

839–41 *here goddes and goddesses . . . weren full of vice*. Itô ("Gower's Use of *Vita Barlaam*," pp. 11–12) notes that these lines are likely taken from *Vit. Barl.* (PL 73.550): *Græci igitur sapientiæ laudem sibi arrogantes, stultiores etiam Chaldæis se præbuerunt, complures videlicet deos inducentes, partim masculos, partim feminas, vitiosarum omnis generis affectionum, ac scelerum architectos* [The Greeks, while arrogating to themselves great fame for wisdom, revealed themselves to be stupider even than the Chaldeans, exhibiting a great many gods, some masculine and some feminine, as connivers of all types of vicious passions and wicked deeds].

845–63 *Saturnus*. Gower could have constructed his Saturn from various sources — Hyg. 139; *Ful.* 1.2; *Vat. Myth.* I (102, 104, 105); *Vat. Myth.* III 1; *Gen. deorum* 9.1; or, especially, *Bart. Ang.* 8.12, pp. 473–80. His castration is a central point in *RR*, lines 5505–18. Usually he is presented as cold, cruel, and malicious, an enemy of love. But Gower does give him some good traits as well, as the donor of agriculture in Italy (5.1221–44) and the discoverer of geomancy (6.1292–94), if that gift can be viewed as a favor. Gower cites three wives: Rhea, whose children he ate (5.849), Cybele (who in some instances

may be the same as Rhea), by whom he sired Jupiter, Neptune, Juno, and Pluto (5.1133), and Ceres, who induced him to give the gift of agriculture to Italy (5.1221 ff.).

845 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota qualiter Saturnus deorum summus appellatur.* [Note how Saturn is called the highest of the gods.]

864 *Lo, which a god thei maden chief!* The Greek gods get off to a bad start in Genius' review, as he presents the daddy of them all as a cannibal, emasculated by his own lecherous son, who casts him into exile.

870 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Iupiter deus deliciarum.* [Jupiter the god of pleasure.]

870–72 *Jupiter . . . the secounde . . . a lechour.* Genius regards Saturn as the first. Jupiter in his pleasance and delicacy is often portrayed as a lecher (see Vat. Myth. III 15 on Jove's lecherous behavior in all signs of the zodiac). In Gower his lovers include: Juturna (3.821), Io (4.3318), Semele (5.1044), Latona (5.1245), Venus (5.1404), and Callisto (5.6249). He is the one who gives his son Cupid the two tuns of sweet and bitter love potions (6.330–36 and 8.2252–58). Elsewhere, Gower does give him other roles besides lechery. He is a benevolent, all-seeing god, almost like the Christian deity, in 2.291, the Tale of the Angel and the Travelers; so too when he answers Philomela's prayer (5.5741 ff.) or performs miracles in response to Bacchus' prayer in the desert (6.398–439). Also he often performs judiciously in matters of law. Bart. Ang. 8.12 offers a good summary of his traits. See also Vat. Myth. III 3.1–9.

883 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Mars deus belli.* [Mars the god of war.]

885 *Vegecius.* Flavius Vegetius Renatus, author of *Epitoma rei militaris* (c. 383), a treatise of some influence on military thinking into the Renaissance. See Robert's edition of Jean de Meun's translation. No mention is made there of Mars' fathering of Romulus and Remus, however.

894 *Dame Ylia.* Rhea Silvia, the mother of Romulus and Remus. She was loved by Mars, who fathered the twins (see 5.899–900). Amulus, younger brother of Numitor, king of Alba, condemned her to be a Vestal Virgin (i.e., the "prioress" of 5.891). For early Latin versions of the story, see Livy, *Ab urbe condita* (On the Founding of the City) 1.3.10 ff.; Dionysus Halicarnassensis, *Antiquitates Romanae* 1.76.1 ff.; and Plutarch, *Vitae Parallelae, Romulus*. 3 ff.

897 *Mynitor.* Numitor, elder son of Proca, king of Alba, and father of Rhea Silvia. His younger brother overthrew him for a time. He gave his grandsons the land on which to found Rome. See Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 1.3–6.



915 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Appollo deus Sapiencie.* [Apollo the god of wisdom.]

917–18 *brother to Venus, / Appollo.* I have not been able to identify a source that links Apollo's genealogy with Venus. Perhaps Genius is thinking of Venus Dione, "O Joves doughter deere," as Chaucer puts it (*TC* 3.3), in which case Apollo and Venus are kin, by consequence of father Jupiter's lechery. This would explain Genius' numerous accounts of Apollo's seduction of nymphs and women (the "lewed folk" that he deceives — 5.931) such as Cornide (3.783

ff.), Daphne (3.1688 ff.), and Leucothoe (5.6719 ff.). He also fathered Aescylapius (5.1072) and Phaeton (4.979). Mythographers regularly praise Apollo's skills at harping and hunting, which Genius begrudgingly here acknowledges by granting him the phrase "god of wit" (5.935), though he turns his harping skills into minstrelsy by which means he gets "[h]is sustenance" (5.925–26). Lewis (*Allegory of Love*, p. 211) sees Genius' grumbling expostulation as "mere abuse," though he finds the passage to be "irresistibly funny." But I suspect that the "irresistible" humor throughout this section is quite intentional. Gower is having an amusing time distorting the hijinks of the gods that he has worked hard with for so many years by means of just such cultural incongruities. In the neoplatonic tradition Apollo is viewed as an allegorical figure of Christ, a god of light and benefactor of nature. (See *Assembly of Gods*, ed. Chance, p. 95). Gower is having fun making Venus' priest so hostile and impatient with pagan lore, which well he might be, given the fact that he is an aspect of libido, even as Amans is, though for a different effect.

- 937 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Mercurius deus Mercatorum et furtorum*. [Mercury the god of merchants and thieves.] See Ful. 1.18 on Mercury as the complete trader — *mercium-curum*.
- 938 *Mercurie hihite*. For a neat summary of Mercury's qualities — his name, his involvement with merchants, his thievery, his shape-shifting, his dress, his capricious activities, see Ful. 1.18. See also Vat. Myth. III 9 and Bart. Ang. 8.15.
- 940–43 On Mercury's *sorcerie* and his ability to be male or female, see *Etym.* 8.11.49 (PL 82.321), which links Mercury to sorcery and Hermes Trismegistus; Bart. Ang. 8.15, which comments on his being *quasi medius currens* (Mercury), "as rennyng in þe middil," a "nyȝt planete, now male, now female"; and *De formis*, pp. 25–26: *Quando enim volebat, de viro in feminam & de femina in masculum se mutabat, de albis vero nigra & de nigris candida faciebat*. [For whenever he wanted, he changed himself from man to woman and from woman to man; and he could make black from white and brilliance from darkness.]
- 955 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Vulcanus deus Ignis*. [Vulcan the god of fire.]
- 959 *He was a schrewe in al his youthe*. Perhaps Genius is alluding to Vulcan's being cast out of heaven (Vat. Myth. I 128 and II 40); or perhaps the shrew allusion is to his spying on his wife Venus to trap her in bed with her lover Mars (Hyg. 148; Vat. Myth. II 121; or *Vit. Barl.* [PL 78.551]), thereby offending the court of love.
- 967 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Eolus deus ventorum*. [Eolus the god of the winds.]
- 981 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Neptunus deus maris*. [Neptune the god of the sea.]
- 981 *king of Crete Jupiter*. Jupiter became king of Crete when he overthrew Saturn. See *Gen. deorum* 4.1; Vat. Myth. I 2.105; and *Vit. Barl.* (PL 73.550), though I do not find the specific phrase in these "sources." The phrase does appear in Giovanni Villani's c. 1300 *Nuova Cronica* ("Iove re di Creti"), Book 1, ch. 8.

- 983 *Neptune*. Glossators commonly equate Neptune with water (Vat. Myth. I 107 and Ful. 1–4). Vat. Myth. III 5 offers a useful summary compilation of his traits. See Chance on the natural allegorization of Neptune in Bernard Silvestris, Martianus Capella, William of Conches, and others (*Medieval Mythography*, pp. 711–12). Gower sometimes uses him as a metaphor for the power of the sea (8.623 ff.), but that is not the point here. In his comic vilification of the pagan gods, Genius presents Neptune (Jupiter’s brother — the lot of them are bad) as a sailor/pirate whose behavior is so outrageous that the “comun vois” (5.995) rises against him to force him into exile and give him a bad name (5.996–1000). The implication is that in ancient times (and perhaps later, too) if someone is bad enough he may be made into a god. In Gower his founding of Troy does, however, bring him some honor (5.1002–04; compare 1.1152), a tradition found in Dictys 5.11; Benoît 25921 ff.; and Guido 30, p. 234.
- 1005 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Pan deus nature*. [Pan the god of nature.]
- 1007 *Pan*. Gower gives Pan a more detailed and favorable review than the other pagan gods, partly because he helps people through “naturel experience” (5.1037). (See the discussion of Gower’s ambiguous use of nature as part of the poem’s setting in my introduction to volume 2, pp. 14 ff.) Gower includes no stories about Pan. Rather, he is a pastoral force, a god of shepherds, living in Arcadia and its environs (i.e., “Nonarcigne” [Nonacris], 5.1009), near the river Ladon on the “Mount of Parasie” (Parnassus). Most of the place names are found in Ovid’s description of Pan in *Met.* 1.689 ff., 600 ff. Leonhard, “Classical Mythology,” p. 76, suggests that *Pigne* may be the river Peneus, which Gower elsewhere calls “Pencie” (5.4006). The references to animal husbandry (the shepherd keeping his sheep, the breeder of oxen and tamer of horses, etc.) match up well with *Fasti* 2.271. His invention of double reed pipes (5.1029–34) is mentioned in *Met.* 1.705 ff. But to call him “god of nature” (5.1041) foolishly puts the foot above the head (5.1040).
- 1009 *Nonarcigne*. Nonacris, a mountain in Arcadia on whose slopes Pan saw the wood nymph Syrinx whom he pursued with passion only to end up embracing the marsh reeds into which she had been transformed. Pan’s lament was so pathetic that pipes with reeds fitted together were devised to keep the name of the maiden. Music from the reeds is so sweet that it charms Argus to sleep, for all his eyes, whereby he is slain. See *Met.* 1.682–721. (N.b., *CA* 5.1029–34.)
- 1015 *Ladon*. The river in Arcadia where Pan attempted to rape Syrinx. See *Met.* 1.702.
- 1019 *cité Stinfalides*. See *Fasti* 2.271 ff., where the Stymphalian waters bore witness to Pan’s pastoral activities. The city of Stymphalus is near the Stymphalian lake from which Hercules, in his sixth labor, killed the detestable Stymphalian birds. See *Met.* 11.187 ff. Elsewhere in Gower it is the place where Pan teaches animal husbandry, including that of “foules” (5.1025). See Leonhard, “Classical Mythology,” p. 92.
- 1043 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Bachus deus vini*. [Bacchus the god of wine.]

- 1044 *Jupiter upon Semele*. Gower is following the tradition of Dionysus being conceived upon Semele found in *Met.* 3.259 ff., *Vat. Myth.* I 120, *Ful.* 2.12, and *Gen. deorum* 5.25.
- 1044–58 See *Met.* 3.256–315 on Semele’s birthing of *Dyon (Bachus)*; *Met.* 4.20, 605 and 15.413 on his conquest of India; and 13.650 ff. on his wine-making talents. *Vat. Myth.* III 12 summarizes the events and sources of his story. So too *Gen. deorum* 5.25. See Pliny, *Naturalis historiae* 4.39, 12.85, and 16.9 on his role as god of fields and vines.
- 1049 *in Ynde*. Dionysus’ sojourn in India, which he conquered and where he then established the art of viniculture, is recorded in Euripides, *Bacchae*; Plutarch, *On Rivers*; Pausanias 10.29.2; Diod. 2.38; Strabo 9.5.5; Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius* 2.8.9. See *De formis* 15.1, p. 42, which cites *Ful.* 2.12, to the effect that Dionysus took his name from a mountain in India.
- 1059 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Esculapius deus medicine*. [Esculapius the god of medicine.]
Esculapius. Gower’s source here seems to be *Vit. Barl.* (PL 73.551), though, as Hamilton points out (“Studies in the Sources,” p. 501), Genius converts Tyn-dareus’ son into *Daires dowhter* (5.1063), perhaps to add lechery to the doctor’s character traits. *Vit. Barl.* does not include details about Esculapius’ travels to Rome or “Delphos” (line 1071) to do his father Apollo’s bidding. But those travels are hinted at in *Livy* 10.47ff. In addition, Ovid’s versions of the story in *Met.* 15.622–744 and *Fasti* 6.733–62 have some bearing on Genius’ account. See also *De nuptiis* 9.926 (where Esculapius is called “Asclepiades”).
- 1071 *Delphos*. Perhaps a slip for *Delos* (n.b., 5.1256, where Genius gets it right), though Mainzer (“John Gower’s Use of the ‘Mediaeval Ovid,’” p. 219) finds a similar reference to Delphi as an island in a gloss to an early fifteenth-century manuscript of *Ovidius Moralizatus*.
- 1083 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hercules deus fortitudinis*. [Hercules the god of strength.]
See *Vat. Myth.* III 13.
- 1088 *Merveiles tuelve*. See *Hyg.* 30.
- 1096 *The god of strengthe*. Compare the marginal gloss at 1083. Hamilton (“Studies in the Sources,” pp. 503–04) suggests Albericus’ *Poetarius* as the source of the epithet, where *fortitudo* translates as *strengthe*, not moral courage.
- 1100 *in a rage himself he brende*. See the Tale of Deianira, Hercules, and Nessus, 2.2295–2302.
- 1103 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Pluto deus Inferni*. [Pluto the god of the Underworld.]
- 1109–10 On the four rivers of Hades called Lethe, Flegeton, Acheron, and Cocytus, see *De formis* 15.1, pp. 43–45, *Vat. Myth.* III 6.2–4, or *Gen. deorum* 3.14–17. Berchorius’ *De formis* glosses the names of the rivers to mean “forgetfulness,” “ardor” (as in the burning ardor of avarice), “without salvation,” and “mourning” (pp. 44–45).

- 1119 *for Jupiteres sake*. Compare 1.2474, “for Gourmoundes sake.” The sense is “for the destruction of” or “out of disdain for” plus a genitive noun. See *MED sake* n. 4a(e).
- 1133 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota, qualiter Sibeles Dearum Mater et origo nuncupatur*. [Note how Cybele is called the mother and source of the goddesses.]
- 1135–36 *Sibeles of goddesses / The moder*. Cybele, the mother of the gods. Also called Rhea and Berecynthia (Gower’s “Bethincia,” line 1141). See Vat. Myth. I 230, Vat. Myth III.2, *Fasti* 4.181–96, 359–64, and *De formis* 15.1, pp. 35–36. See also *CA* 5.1160. For a convenient summary of the activities of Rhea (Cybele), the great Mother, see Rose, *Handbook of Greek Mythology*, pp. 45–47.
- 1146 *Juno, Neptunus, and Pluto*. On the three children of Cybele, see Vat. Myth. I 2.102. Juno is sometimes called “moder” because she is Jupiter’s wife, thus queen mother over the Olympian gods.
- 1157 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Iuno Dea Regnorum et diuiciarum*. [Juno the goddess of kingdoms and riches.]
- 1163 *Philerem*. Itô, “Gower’s Use of *Vita Barlaam*,” p. 15, points out that the source of Gower’s attribution of the mothering of Jupiter to Philyra appears to be *De formis*, Book 15, which reads: *Cognovitque Philerem in qua Iovem genuit, que fingit se lapidem peperisse, ipsum Saturno devorandum dedit, Iovem vero in Archadia nutriti caute fecit, qui tamen ipsum postea de regno expulit & eiecit* [And he knew Philyra, the one with whom he made Jove. She pretended to have given birth to a stone, gave that to Saturn to be devoured, and secretly had Jove brought up in Arcady, who nonetheless afterwards expelled Saturn from his kingdom] (p. 6). Both Vat. Myth. I 103 and *Gen. deorum* 7.62 identify Philyra, daughter of Ocean, as one of Saturn’s wives, but her child by Saturn is Chiron, the centaur, who first invented medicine.
- 1176–88 Genius’ presentation of Juno bears some likeness to *De formis* (especially pp. 32–33), which identifies her as a figure of air and the sky, served by Iris as the rainbow and nymphs as clouds (compare 5.1184–88). She is sister and wife of Jove, yet always a virgin, with great wealth both in kingdoms and riches (5.1177–80), and is said to be nourished by Neptune and sea nymphs (5.1182).
- 1189 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Minerva Dea sapienciarum*. [Minerva the goddess of wise women.]
- 1189–1200 Gower’s account of Minerva being found as an abandoned child by Lake Triton in Africa, whence she is borne to Thrace where she acquires a new name, Pallas, comes primarily from *Etym.* 8.9.71–75 (*PL* 82.322): *Hæc Minerva, et Tritonia dicitur. Triton enim Africæ palus est, circa quam fertur virginali apparuisse ætate, propter quod Tritonia nuncupata est. Unde et tanto proclivius dea credita, quanto minus origo ejus innotuit. Pallas autem dicta, vel ab insula Pallene in Thracia, in qua nutrita est*. [She is called Minerva and Tritonia. For Triton is a swamp of Africa, around which she is said to have appeared at a maidenly age, on account of which she is called Tritonia. Whence the more her origin has become less known, the more she is believed to be a goddess. She is also

called Pallas from the island Palle in Thrace, where she was raised.] See also Vat. Myth. III 10.

1202–03 *she fond ferst . . . cloth makinge of wolle and lyn.* On Minerva as inventor of cloth making, see note to 4.2435, which cites Methodius' *Apocalypse*, *Etym.* 19.20.1–2, *Did.* 3.2, and Higden 2.11 (Trevisa's translation) for similar statements on Minerva's inventions.

1205 *goddesse of sapience.* See, for example, Bernardus Silvestris' *Commentary*, pp. 46–47, where Pallas [Minerva] represents the life of contemplation: "Minerva, as is *media vel intima cogitatio*, 'central or innermost thought,' is wisdom which resides in the brain" (p. 47). See also Vat. Myth. II 39 and *De nuptiis* 6.567 ff.

1207 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Pallas Dea bellorum.* [Pallas the goddess of wars.]

That Genius presents Pallas and Minerva as separate deities is understandable if we think of the ancient gods as allegorical packages: Minerva as wisdom and Pallas as war, though of one character, are separate aspects. Gower seems well aware that differing traditions underlie all the gods, e.g., 5.1214: "Some ek seide . . ."

1207–20 *Pallas.* See note to lines 1189–1200 on Minerva's several names. Gower suggests that according to one tradition (*sondri speche* — 5.1208) this name derives from the giant Pallant, who was *hire fader . . . a cruel man, a bataillous* (5.1209–11); another that she was *in his hous* and *was the cause why he deide* (5.1212–13). Gower's source here might be Vat. Myth. III 10.1, which indicates that she got the name after she killed the giant Pallant near Lake Tritonia (*Gigantem Pallentem juxta fluvium Tritonem interfecerit* [p. 221]).

1214–15 *some ek seide / That sche was Martes wif.* Who the *some* might be is a puzzler. Ful. 2.11 and Vat. Myth. III 10.3–6 tell how Jupiter, for his amusement, gave Pallas to Vulcan in marriage, and the scene that follows is indeed amusing as the warrior woman defends her chastity so fiercely that Vulcan drops his seed on the floor, whereupon the serpentine Erichthonius is born, whom Pallas raises until he can invent chariots, become lord of Athens, and win blessings for the city when he accepts Pallas' gift of the olive branch. Perhaps the idea of pitting the divine female warrior [Pallas] against the divine male warrior [Mars] appealed to some commentator; or perhaps the idea that Pallas, as Vulcan's wife whom Mars beds, means that Mars made an attempt with Pallas rather than Venus. But whatever the idea, one component is certain: Pallas remains virgin and potent, regardless of whether Jupiter is amused. The *Vit. Barl.* makes no mention of either Minerva or Pallas.

1221 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Ceres dea frugum.* [Ceres the goddess of grains.]

1223–24 *Into the londes of Ytaile, / And ther he dede gret mervaille.* On Saturn's great agricultural gifts to human kind, see Ful. 1.2, with its etymology of his name from *saturando* (glutting), along with his wife, the opulent Ops; and Bart. Ang. 8.12.

1227–44 On Ceres as goddess of grain and produce, see Ful. 1.11 and Bernardus Silvestris' *Commentary* (pp. 12, 48, 91, 96), where the plenty of Ceres and the

wine of Bacchus are recurrently identified as that which keeps Venus from freezing.

1245 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Diana Dea Moncium et Siluarum*. [Diana the goddess of mountains and woods.]

1250 *Diane his dowhter he begat*. Gower moves far beyond *Vit. Barl.* in his account of Diana, her conception, her birthing, and her life. All Barlam (the “cronique” of line 1270) reports is: “Also þei sayn þat Diana was his [Apollo’s] suster and a goddesse, and she was a grete huntere, and bare bowe and arrowes, and sometyme an harpe. And she wolde walke alone with here doggis in hylles and wodis to hunte both herte and hynde. This is inconvenyent to a goddesse to be of þis condicion” (lines 4579–84). On her birthing, see *Vat. Myth.* III 8.3. Numerous sources celebrate her chastity.

1277 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Proserpina Dea Infernorum*. [Proserpina the goddess of the underworlds.]

See *Vat. Myth.* I 7, 112, and 186; *Vat. Myth.* II 94–95 and 100–101; *Vat. Myth.* III 7; *Ful.* 1.10; and *Hyg.* 146.

1277–1302 *Proserpina*. Gower’s conversion of the story of Ceres’ daughter into a romance format is based mainly on *Fasti* 4.393 ff., with some hints at *Met.* 5.291 ff. and *Hyg.* 146 for the place names of Sicily and Etna. *Fasti* refers to the “Trinacrian land” (4.420), another name for Sicily. See also *Gen. deorum* 8.4. Proserpina’s story is not mentioned in *Barlam and Iosaphat*.

1323 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota, quod dii Montium Satiri vocantur*. [Note that the gods of the mountains are called satyrs.]

1328 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Oreades Nimphe Montium*. [Oreades the nymphs of the mountains.]

1328–35 *Nimphes . . . Oreades . . . Driades . . . Naiades . . . of the see*. The wood and sea nymphs are often cited together. E.g., *Etym.* 8.11.96–97 (*PL* 82.324–25). Itô suggests that “the four kinds of fairies attending Diana” derive from *De formis* (“Gower’s Use of *Vita Barlaam*,” p. 15).

1332 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Driades Siluarum*. [Dryads of the woods.]

1334 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Naiades fontium*. [Naiads of the streams.]

1336 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nereides Marium*. [Nereids of the seas.]


1337–45 *Dorus whilom king of Grece . . . Nereides*. Traditionally, as in *Met.* 2.268–69, Nereus is the father of the Nereids. Their mother is Doris, daughter of Oceanus and Tethys, Nereus’ wife. But see *Vat. Myth.* III 5.1, where Dorus, king of Greece, was lost at sea, but his children survive to become the Nereids. (*Dorus enim rex exilit Graeciae, qui in mari dicitur cum exercitu suo perisse. Quare a poetis, adulationi et figmento ubique deservientibus, ipse dea marina et exercitus ejus filiae ipsius, id est Nymphae marinae dicti sunt*. [“For Dorus was the king of Greece, who is said to have perished with his army in the ocean. Wherefore poets, always slaves to flattery and fiction, call him the goddess of the sea and

his army his daughters, that is the Nymphs of the ocean.”]) See also Servius, *Servii Grammatici qui feruntur in Vergilii Carmina Commentarii*, which identifies Dorus as the son of Poseidon and father of the sea nymphs. On the nymphs themselves, see *Etym.* 8.11.96–97. On the meaning of the name *Dorus* (bitterness, “since bitterness is dominant in sea water”), see Bernardus Silvestris, *Commentary* 3, p. 20. The etymology is especially apt when the sea takes your wife and all your daughters, as in 5.1339–42.



- 1358 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Manes dii mortuorum*. [Manes the gods of the dead.]
- 1363 *Manes*. The name given by the Romans to the souls of the dead. Leonhard cites Vat. Myth. III 6.18 and 6.29 as well as *Gen. deorum* 1.34 to indicate “that there was some interest in the significance of the Manes” (“Classical Mythology,” pp. 64–65). The soul of the departed were “sometimes regarded as gods and worshiped with divine honors” (p. 65n1), as Genius points out on 5.1361–62. Thus his conclusion that “Grekes law” accorded the deceased “ful gret honour” (5.1364–65). See also *Etym.* 8.100 (*PL* 82.325–26). The term also is used topographically to indicate the realm of the dead (e.g., *Fasti* 2.609 and *Aeneid* 3.565 and 11.181), or the underworld gods (*Aeneid* 10.39), or as an indicator of family ancestors (*Met.* 9.406 ff.). See the entry in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, p. 916.
- 1374–81 Amans’ question to Genius about how he came to be in the service of Venus puts Genius on the spot. As Lewis observes, Gower has not “blundered into [the tension] by an oversight.” Rather, Genius “is forced against his will to pass sentence on the very powers that he serves” (*Allegory of Love*, p. 219). Genius acknowledges that stories of Venus and Cupid often epitomize the absurdities he asks Amans to condemn. See also Bennett, “Gower’s ‘Honeste Love,’” pp. 109–10.
- 1382–1443 See Nicholson (*Annotated Index*, pp. 332–34) on numerous discussions of Genius’ denunciation of Venus and the incongruities of his dual role.
- 1383 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Qualiter Cupido et Venus deus et dea amoris nuncupantur*. [How Cupid and Venus are called the god and goddess of love.]
- 1420 *For he his moder dorste love*. On sexual chaos in Gower and Gower’s sympathy for the mother as the son’s desire is projected upon her, see Watt (*Amoral Gower*, pp. 83–90). Gower “stops short of making Venus solely responsible for sexual sin; instead Cupid is made to share the blame” (p. 90).
- 1427–29 *take / What man hire liste, and noght forsake / To ben als comun as sche wolde*. Olsson cites this passage as an example of Venus’ self-interested *gentillesse* that “blurs the very distinction of being gentle” (“Aspects of *Gentillesse*,” p. 228). In Book 4, on Sloth, Genius had suggested the possibility of some ennobling effects of *gentillesse*, but here the goddess’ form of *gentillesse* is “consistent with her own excessive regard for fleshly comfort and her desire to live [what Alanus de Insulis calls] ‘the soft life of barren ease’” (p. 228).
- 1453 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de Epistola Dindimi Regis Bragmannorum Alexandro magno directa, ubi dicit quod Greci tunc ad corporis conseruacionem pro singulis*

membris singulos deos specialiter appropriari credunt. [Note concerning the letter of Dindimus, king of the Brahmen, directed to Alexander the Great, where it states that the Greeks believe that, to protect the body, particular gods are assigned to particular members of the body.] Macaulay's note (2.517) is especially useful:

As for the letters said to have been exchanged between Alexander and the king of the Bragmans (or Brahmins), we find them at length in the *Historia Alexandri Magni de Preliis*, which was the source of most of the current stories about Alexander. The passage referred to is as follows: *Tot deos colis quot in tuo corpore membra portas. Nam hominem dicis paruum mundum, et sicut corpus hominis habet multa membra, ita et in celo dicis multos deos existere. Iunonem credis esse deum cordis, eo quod iracundia nimia mouebatur. Martem vero deum pectoris esse dicis, eo quod preceps extitit preliorum. Mercurium deum lingue vocas, ex eo quod plurimum loquebatur. Herculem deum credis brachiorum, eo quod duodecim virtutes exercuit preliando. Bachum deum gutteris esse putas, eo quod ebrietatem primus inuenit. Cupidinem esse deam dicis, eo quod fornicatrix extitit; tenere dicis facem ardentem, cum qua libidinem excitat et accendit, et ipsam deam iecoris etiam existimas. Cere rem deam ventris esse dicis, et Venerem, eo quod fuit mater luxurie, deam genitalium membrorum esse profers* (e 2. ed. Argent, 1489 [You worship as many gods as you possess members of your body. For you say that man is a little world, and just as the body of man has many members, so too in the heaven, you say, many gods exist. You believe Juno to be the god of the heart, since she was moved by excessive wrath; Mars you say is the god of the breast, since he was the leader of wars. Mercury you call the god of the tongue, since he spoke a very great deal; Hercules you believe the god of the arms, since he had the strength of twelve in his warring. You think Bacchus was the god of the throat, since he first discovered drunkenness. You say that Cupid is a goddess, since she was a fornicator; you say she held a burning torch, with which she excited and kindled lust, and you judge her indeed to be a goddess of the liver. You say that Ceres was the goddess of the stomach, and you present Venus, since she was the mother of lust, as the goddess of the members of generation]). Cp. the English alliterative *Wars of Alexander*, E.E.T.S., 1886, ll. 4494 ff. There is no mention of Minerva in either of these.

- 1460–96 This practice of linking the dominion of gods to parts of the anatomy is ancient (see note to 7.1453 ff.). For a superb painting of the idea, see “The Anatomical/Zodiacal Man” in Cazelles and Rathofer, p. 63 (fol. 14v). Such conventions go hand in hand with the rhetoric of anatomical personification; see the note on “stomach,” below, 7.479–80.
- 1498 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de prima ydolorum cultura, que ex tribus precipue Statuis exorta est; quarum prima fuit illa, quam in filii sui memoriam quidam princeps nomine Cirophanes a sculptore Promotheo fabricari constituit.* [Note concerning the worship of the first idols, which arose particularly from three statues, the first of which was one that a certain king by the name of Syrophanes ordered to be fashioned, in memory of his son by the sculptor Prometheus.] See Ful. 1.1.
- 1513 *That such a stock mai helpe or grieve.* Gower seems to be punning on the stock of a “ragged tre” (line 1509) in contrast to the stock of true religion, a stock that goes back to the Creator Himself to define the barrenness of idolatry, as

in Chaucer's "Gentilesse," beginning "The firste stok, fader of gentilesse," that "was ful of rightwisnesse," etc. (line 8).

- 1541 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Secunda Statua fuit illa, quam ad sui patris Beli culturam Rex Ninus fieri et adorari decreuit. Et sic de nomine Beli postea Bel et Belzebub ydolum accreuit.* [The second statue was one that King Ninus ordered to be made and adored for the worship of his father Belus. And thus from Belus' name, Bel and Belzebub later grew as idols.] Macaulay notes that Gower's account agrees "very nearly" with Godfrey of Viterbo, *Pantheon* 4, where Godfrey cites the image as the first example of an idol, titled, "Quare primum idolum in mundo et quo tempore fuit" ["Why and at what time was the first idol on earth"] (2.517).
- 1560 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Tercia Statua fuit illa, que ad honorem Apis Regis Grecorum sculpta fuit, cui postea nomen Serapis imponentes, ipsum quasi deum Pagani coluerunt.* [The third statue was one that was sculpted in honor of Apis, king of the Greeks, whom pagans later gave the name Serapis, and worshipped him as if he were a god.] Macaulay cites *Pantheon* 4: "His temporibus apud Egyptios constructum est idolum magnum in honorem Apis, Regis Argivorum; quidam tamen dicunt in honorem Ioseph, qui liberavit eos a fame; quod idolum Serapis vocabatur, quasi idolum Apis" ["In those days, a great idol in honor of Apis, King of the Argives, was fashioned among the Egyptians; certain ones say it was in honor of Joseph, who liberated them from hunger, since the idol was called Serapis, as if to say 'the idol of Apis.'"] (2.517).
- 1571 Macaulay (2.517–18) cites *Historia Alexandri magni de Preliis*, fol. 1v, ed. Argent, 1489: "Exiens inde Alexander cum Candeolo profecti sunt iter diei vnus, et venerunt ad quandam speluncam magnam et hospitati sunt ibi. Dixitque Candeolus, 'Omnes dii concilium in ista spelunca concelebrant.' Cum hoc audisset Alexander, statim fecit victimas diis suis, et ingressus in speluncam solus vidit ibi caligines maximasque nubes stellasque lucentes, et inter ipsas stellas quendam deum maximum," etc. [Alexander, departing from there with Candeolus, made his way for a day until he came to a certain vast cavern, where they took their dwelling. And Candeolus said, "all the gods hold their council in this cavern." When Alexander heard that, he at once made sacrifices to his gods, and entering into the cave alone, he saw there mists and huge clouds and bright stars, and among the stars a certain highest god, etc.].
- 1598–1736 Ames suggests that Gower's attitude toward the Jews in this section of his history of religions defines well his position on the subject of Judaism. Although Genius ridicules the idolatries and immoralities of the pagans, he praises the beliefs of the Jews: "God Himself chose the Jews. While all the world worshiped foul idols, Abraham alone found out the right way, how men should obey only the high God." He forbid idolatry and offered sacrifice to God from his heart. God laid the foundation of faith on Abraham; to Moses He gave the Law and sent prophets to guide the people, then and now ("Source and Significance," p. 47).

- 1609 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *De Hebreorum seu Iudeorum Secta, quorum Sinagoga, ecclesia Christi superueniente, defecit.* [Concerning the sect of the Hebrews or the Jews, whose synagogue fell when the church of Christ supervened.]
- 1741 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *De fide Cristiana, in qua perfecte legis complementum, summi misterii sacramentum, nostreque saluacionis fundamentum infallibiliter consistere credimus.* [Concerning the Christian faith, in which we believe to consist infallibly the completion of the perfect law, the sacrament of the highest mystery, and the foundation of our salvation.]
- 1756 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Gregorius. O necessarium Ade peccatum! O felix culpa, que talem ac tantum meruit habere redemptorem!* [Gregory: O necessary sin of Adam! O fortunate guilt, which merited to have such and so great a redeemer!] See Gregory, *In I Reg.* 8.7 (PL 79.222).
- 1765 ff. Macaulay (2.518) cites Gregory, *In I Reg.* 8.7 ff. (PL 79.222): “Et quidem, nisi Adam peccaret, Redemptorem nostrum carnem suscipere nostram non oporteret. . . . Si ergo pro peccatoribus venit, si peccata deessent, eum venire non oporteret. . . . Magna quippe sunt mala quae per primae culpae meritum patimur, sed quis electus nollet peiora perpeti, quam tantum Redemptorem non habere?” [And indeed, if Adam had not sinned, there would have been no need for a Redeemer of us to take on our bodily form. . . . If therefore he came on behalf of sinners, if sin had been absent, it would not have been necessary for him to come. . . . Great, indeed, are the evils that we suffer through the just merit of the first sin; but who would not want to suffer worse, than not to have such a Redeemer?]
- 1800 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Iacobus. Fides sine operibus mortua est.* [James: Faith without works is dead.] See James 2:26.
- 1807 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic contra istos qui iam lollardi dicuntur.* [Note here against those who are now called Lollards.]
- 1825 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Incepit Jhesus facere et docere.* [Jesus began to do and to teach.] See Acts 1:1.
- 1831–47 Gower’s source for Thoaz and Antenor’s desecration of the Temple of Minerva is Benoît’s *Roman de Troie*, lines 25615–72.
- 1832 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Nota quod, cum Anthenor Palladium Troie a templo Minerue abstulit, Thoas ibidem summus sacerdos auro corruptus oculos auertit, et sic malum quasi non videns scienter fieri permisit.* [Note that when Anthenor took away the Palladium from the temple of Minerva, Thoas the highest priest in that place, having been corrupted by gold, averted his eyes, and thus knowingly allowed the evil to take place as if not seeing it.]
- 1859–99 Stockton (p. 402n1) compares Gower’s critique of false clergy with *MO* 20209–20832 and *VC* 3.16–29. Compare also *CA* 3.2490–2515.
- 1881 *cokkel with the corn.* The idea originates in Matthew 13:25, where the noxious weeds of heresy are said to mingle with the good seed. Gower also alludes to the idea in *Carmen super multiplici viciorum pestilencia*, line 20: *Lollia messis ha-*

- bens granum perturbat et ipsum* [The harvest with tares confuses the grain itself]. Compare Chaucer's Epilogue to *The Man of Law's Tale* (CT II[B¹]1182–83) where the Shipman, in response to the Host's accusation that the Parson talks like a Lollard, warns, "He wolde sowen som difficolte / Or springen cokkel in our clene corn"; and *Mum and the Sothsegger*, line 1165a. See *Richard the Redeless and Mum and the Sothsegger*, ed. Dean, especially his note to line 1165a.
- 1900 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Gregorius. Quando Petrus cum Judea, Andreas cum Achaia, Thomas cum Yndea, et Paulus cum gente venient, quid dicemus nos moderni, quorum fossum talentum pro nichilo computabitur?* [Gregory: When Peter will come with Judea, Andrew with the Greeks, Thomas with India, and Paul with the people, what will we moderns say, whose buried talent will be counted as nothing?]
- 1930 *his lordes besant hedde*. See Matthew 25:14–30. The one who hides the talent rather than invest it (25:18) is cast out as an unprofitable servant and left to weep and gnash his teeth (25:30).
- 1960–61 *this matiere is bete / So fer*. Gower seems to be making fun of himself and his long digression on religion by having Amans observe that the matter is *bete so fer*, i.e., explained so thoroughly that it has been beaten to death.
- 1975 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat confessor super illa specie Auaricie, que Cupiditas dicitur, quam in amoris causa pertractans Amanti super hoc opponit.* [Here the Confessor treats that species of Avarice called Cupidity, and, pursuing this in the cause of love, he questions the Lover about this.]
- 2031 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic ponit exemplum contra magnates cupidos. Et narrat de Crasso Romanorum Imperatore, qui turrim, in qua speculum Virgilii Rome fixum extiterat, dolosa circumuentus cupiditate euertit; unde non solum sui ipsius perditionem, set totius Ciuitatis intollerabile dampnum contingere causauit.* [Here he poses an instructive example against cupidinous (covetous) magnates. And he tells about Crassus the Roman emperor, who, tricked by treacherous cupidity, destroyed a tower in which the mirror of Virgil in Rome had been set up; whence he caused not only his own perdition, but also an intolerable loss to the whole city.]
- 2031–2224 Gower's version of the Tale of Virgil's Mirror is most similar to the version of *Roman des Sept Sages* identified as A by Gaston Paris (Hamilton, "Some Sources," p. 336n2), though it was popular and occurs in various forms in the Latin moralized tales (e.g., the Latin *Gesta Romanorum*, cap. clxxxvi). Macaulay notes that "Gower seems to be responsible for the introduction of Carthage and Hannibal" (3.495).
- 2034 *the tounes þe*. "The tower, with its mirror and distinguished architect, functions as an emblem of wisdom, recalling Genius' admonition to Amans in Book 1: 'thin yhe for to kepe and warde, / So that it passe noght his warde'" (1.331–32; Peck, *Kingship and Common Profit*, p. 106). Crassus (5.2069), the dull-witted emperor whose name Gower derives from *L. crassus*, meaning "dense or stupid" (in *Roman des Sept Sages* he is simply referred to as "Le Roy de Romme") guards his ear no better than his eye, so when Hannibal sends his three "philosophers," who whisper *riht in his ere* (5.2145) the news of the

buried treasure, he undermines his tower digging for it and is destroyed. “By failing to keep proper vigil, Crassus, like Thoas, threw away the key to his own Palladion” (Peck, *Kingship and Common Profit*, p. 107). Other Middle English versions refer to the villain as “sire Cressus” and “Cresus the riche man,” thereby conflating the avaricious king of Rome with the myth of Croesus, king of Lydia (p. 196n5.4).

- 2222–23 *Into his mouth thei poure thanne; / And thus the thirst of gold was queynt.* Wetherbee (*Chaucer and the Poets*, p. 198) notes that Gower explicitly has Crassus drink the molten gold (he does so implicitly in Dante and Chaucer), where in other sources he has already been killed in battle.
- 2273–2390 The Tale of the Two Coffers is similar to that told by Boccaccio in *Decameron* 10.1. Variations of the story are found in such collections of moral tales as *Vit. Barl.* 6 (PL 74.462, following the Trump of Death story); Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum Historiale* 15.10; *Legenda Aurea*; and the English *Gesta Romanorum* (EETS e.s. 33, cap. lxvi). See also Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*.
- 2278 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic ponit Confessor exemplum contra illos, qui in domibus Regum seruiantes, pro eo quod ipsi secundum eorum cupiditatem promoti non existunt, de regio seruiicio quamuis in eorum defectu indiscrete murmurant.* [Here the Confessor presents an instructive example against those who, serving in kings’ houses, because they were not promoted as seemed appropriate to their own cupidity, indiscretely grumble about royal service, however much it injures themselves.]
- 2296–98 *Of o semblance and of o make / So lich that no lif . . . mai fro that other knowe.* Unlike the coffers in *The Merchant of Venice* and its analogues, these two are indistinguishable. As Macaulay points out, “the choice is a purely fortuitous one” (3.496).
- 2391–2441 A similar story to that of the two pastries occurs in the Latin *Gesta Romanorum*, cap. cix.
- 2395 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic de diuiciarum Accidencia: ubi narrat qualiter Fredericus Romanorum Imperator duos pauperes audiuit litigantes, quorum vnus dixit, “Bene potest ditari, quem Rex vult ditare.” Et alius dixit, “Quem deus vult ditare, diues erit.” Que res cum ad experimentum postea probata fuisset, ille qui deum inuocabat pastellum auro plenum sortitus est, alius vero caponis pastellum sorte preelegit.* [Note here concerning the superficial features of riches: where it is narrated and how Frederick the Roman emperor heard two paupers arguing, one of whom said, “He will be enriched whom the king wants to enrich,” while the other said, “He will be wealthy whom God wants to enrich.” When this matter had later been tested by experience, the one who had invoked God selected, by lot, a pasty full of gold, but the other chose, by lot, a pasty of capon.]
- 2400–01 Proverbial. See Whiting G246. Compare *VC* 2, Prol. 68. Ultimately derived from Proverbs 10:22.
- 2489 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Cecus non iudicat de coloribus.* [A blind man makes no judgments about colors.] Proverbial. Compare Chaucer’s *TC*, “A blind man cannot juggen wel in hewes” (2.21).

- 2497 *commun as the strete*. Proverbial. See Whiting, S831 and C64. Compare “As commune as þe Cartwey to knave and to all” in *Piers Plowman* B.3.132.
- 2648 *affeccioun*. I.e., the faculty of the soul concerned with emotion and volition.
- 2650 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic ponit exemplum contra istos qui non propter amorem sed propter diuicias sponsalia sumunt. Et narrat de quodam Regis Apulie Seneschallo, qui non solum propter pecuniam uxorem duxit, set etiam pecunie commercio uxorem sibi desponsatam vendidit.* [Here he presents an instructive example against those who take marriage vows not on account of love but of wealth. And he narrates about a certain seneschal of the king of Apulia, who not only took his wife because of money, but also sold her, divorced from himself, in a commercial exchange.] The Tale of the King and the False Steward is based on *Roman des Sept Sages*.
- 2844 *richesse*. *Richesse* is a member of the Court of Idleness in Guillaume de Lorris’ *RR*, lines 1017 ff. The world is in the power of *Richesse*, who is said to have great gifts at winning her way with her beauty that is defined by costly ornaments. She is accompanied by a youth accustomed to fine mansions, lavish spending, and rich clothing. She supports him as if coins grew out of granaries, a phenomenon Gower’s Amans says he has not known.
- 2863 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat super illis Auaricie speciebus, que falsum Testimonium et Periurium nuncupantur; quorum fraudulenta circumuencio tam in cupiditatis quam in amoris causa sui desiderii propositum quamsepe fallaciter attingit.* [Here he treats those species of avarice that are called False Testimony and Perjury, whose fraudulent betrayal, both in the cause of cupidity and the cause of love, frequently and fallaciously achieves the goal of its desire.]
- 2872 *hepe*. From Middle Low German, Middle Dutch. A kind of pruning hook. *MED* and *OED* cite no other instance of the term in English. Perhaps Gower knows it from a Dutch proverb.
- 2961 ff. The Tale of Achilles and Deidamia is told fully in Statius, *Achilleid* 1.198–960. Condensed versions occur in collections of moralized tales (for example, the Latin *Gesta Romanorum*, cap. clvi). On the ethical implications of cross-dressing in Gower, see Watt, *Amoral Gower*, pp. 69–76.
- 2965 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic ponit exemplum de illis, qui falsum testificantes amoris innocentiam circumveniunt. Et narrat qualiter Thetis Achillem filium suum adolescentem, muliebri vestitum apparatu, asserens esse puellam inter Regis Lichomedis filias ad educandum produxit. Et sic Achilles decepto Rege filie sue Deidamie socia et cubicularia effectus super ipsam Pirrum genuit; qui postea mire probitatis miliciam assecutus mortem patris sui apud Troiam in Polixenen tyrannice vindicauit.* [Here he presents an instructive example about those who, bearing false witness, betray a woman innocent in love. And he narrates how Thetis placed Achilles, her youthful son, to be raised among the daughters of King Lichomede, dressed in woman’s garb, asserting that he was a girl. And thus Achilles, with the king deceived, having been made the companion and roommate of the king’s daughter, Deidamia, engendered on her Pirrus, who later, pursuing

military endeavors of miraculous probity, tyrannically took revenge against Polyxenes for the death of his father at Troy.] See note to line 7591, below.

3062–69 In Statius, Achilles rapes Deidamia in a grove at a Bacchic festival, an act presented with graphic detail as Achilles grips her in his powerful arms and accomplishes his desire as she fills the grove and mountain with her cries, which the other women think to be the signal to dance (1.640–48). Genius converts the deed into an act of mutual arousal as nature first lets them kiss and then leads them down the *hihe weie of loves lore* (line 3066).

3063 *Nature*. Kelly observes that *Nature*, in this instance, implies the “mating instinct,” noting that Gower characteristically avoids placing moral blame on the instincts of natural love (*Love and Marriage*, pp. 137–38).

3247 ff. Gower’s story of Medea draws both from Benoît’s *Roman de Troie*, lines 715–2078, and Ovid’s *Met.* 7.1–424. Macaulay discusses Gower’s use of Benoît (3.497). Compare Chaucer’s version of the Medea story in *LGW*, lines 1500–1697. Lydgate offers a version, based mainly on Guido, that is more sprawling and somewhat less sympathetic to Medea (*Troy Book* 1.1513–3715). See Harbert, “Lessons from the Great Clerk,” pp. 93–97; Morse, *Medieval Medea*; Grinnell, “Medea’s Humanity”; and especially Bakalian (*Aspects of Love*, pp. 85–100). The tale of Medea in *Traitié* 8.1–3 is also highly sympathetic toward Medea. There the recurrent moral of the refrain is *Freinte espousaile dieus le vengua*, “God will avenge a broken marriage” (*Traitié* 8.3, lines 7, 14, and 21).


3249 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic in amoris causa ponit exemplum contra periuros. Et narrat qualiter Iason, priusquam ad insulam Colchos pro aureo vellere ibidem conquestando transmearet, in amorem et coniugium Medee Regis Othonis filie iuramento firmiter se astrinxit; set suo postea completo negocio, cum ipsam secum navigio in Greciam perduxisset, ubi illa senectam patris sui Esonis in floridam iuuentutem mirabili sciencia reformauit, ipse Iason fidei sue ligamento aliisque beneficiis postpositis, dictam Medeam pro quadam Creusa Regis Creontis filia periurus dereliquit.* [Here he presents an instructive example against perjurers in the cause of love. And he narrates how Jason, before he travelled to the island of Colchos for conquering the golden fleece, very firmly bound himself by oath to love and marry Medea, daughter of King Otho. But with his business having been completed, when he led her with him by ship to Greece where she reformed the old age of his father Eso into flowering youth by a miraculous science, this Jason, setting aside the ties of his faith and other favors owed, abandoned, as a perjurer, the said Medea in favor of a certain Creusa, daughter of King Creon.]

3303–09 For a lively Middle English retelling of Lamedon’s offense to Jason and the subsequent destruction of the first Troy, see Lydgate’s *Troy Book* (1.925–1196; 3721–4436), based on Guido de Columnis’ *Historia destructionis Troiae*.

3416 *Seint John to borwe*. I.e., “committed himself to St. John’s care.” St. John was a visionary; the implication may be that Jason lends himself to (or puts himself in the hands of) what may come, which only St. John might foresee. Or, given Jason’s assertion that “he wolde ferst beginne / At love” (lines 3417–18),

it is remotely possible that Gower intends a parodic allusion to “God is love” (1 John 4:8) to define Jason’s hypocrisy.

- 3484–92 Medea’s piety here is notable. Their mutual consent and solemn vows at the altar of God would be taken, according to medieval custom, as the basis of a true and binding marriage, which is important to subsequent details in their relationship, as Jason proves unfaithful and destroys all. See Kelly (*Love and Marriage*, p. 131) on the gravity of Jason’s infidelity. For discussion of Gower’s manipulation of his sources to create a tale highly sympathetic to Medea, see Peck, *Kingship and Common Profit*, pp. 109–15.
- 3495 *Ther cam a maide*. No maid is mentioned in Benoît or Guido. Her loyal presence adds to Medea’s dignity.
- 3590 *Thre sithes toward orient*. Genius gives Medea a good Hebrew sense of prayerful validation. See Daniel 6:10: “Daniel opening the windows in his upper chamber towards Jerusalem . . . knelt down three times a day, and adored, and gave thanks before his God, as he had been accustomed to do before.” Compare 3 Kings (1 Kings) 8:22–53 (the prayer of Solomon to “pray thee towards the way of their land” — 8:48).
- 3594–3601 *To opne a buiste . . . of such oignement . . .* Heroic women often cure or protect men by means of an ointment in a box. See *Destruction of Troy*, line 782 (compare *Laud Troy Book*, line 919); the Lady of Norison in *Yvain* (compare *Yvain and Gawain*, line 1761–82); see also Psyche’s venture into Hell in Apuleius to get the box of beauty ointment, though that’s for women.
- 3669 *undren hih*. Benoît writes “halte tierce” (*Roman de Troie*, line 1760).
- 3850–52 Proverbial. See Whiting, L517.
- 3957 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota quibus medicamentis Esonem senectute decrepitum ad suuuentutis adolescenciam prudens Medea reduxit*. [Note by what medicines shrewd Medea led Eson, decrepit with age, back to the early part of his youth.]
- 3981–82 *Echates . . . goddesse of sorcerie*. Hecate, the goddess of night, is the deity to whom witches commonly pray. See *Macbeth* 3.5, where Hecate tells the three weird sisters of Macbeth’s approach, and 4.1, where she appears with prophecies for Macbeth. The *MED* (*ecate*) cites *Palladius* (DukeH d.2) 1.586 and 11.253, where “Echates,” here figured as the crescent moon, exerts her influence on things terrestrial.
- 4039 *fieldwode and verveyne*. Medicinal herbs. The *MED* identifies *verveyne* as a genus of verbena, especially *Verbena officinalis*. The plant is used in cookery recipes and medicinal remedies, veterinary remedies, magic, and rites. The juice was extracted by boiling the herb. Precisely what *fieldwode* is remains uncertain, though it too appears to have something to do with magic.
- 4136 *medicine it wile*. “medicinal formula dictates.” See *MED* *willen* v. 7c and *medicine* n. 1a.



- 4175–84 This recapitulation of the heroine’s virtues prior to disaster is unusual in medieval writing. It illustrates well Gower’s keen sense of dramatic structure within his story as well as his detailed attention to female worth, particularly her intelligence, dedication, and powerful independence. “In Medea Gower has achieved his finest portrait of a powerful woman who loves her husband” (Bakalian, *Aspects of Love*, p. 87).
- 4213 *moste untrewre creature*. N.b., *CA* 8.2563–66, where Gower’s sympathy for Medea, as the last among six forsaken women and four wives, is evidenced by the fact that she is the only one of the women who speaks: “Fy on alle untrewre” (8.2566). See Bakalian, *Aspects of Love*, p. 99.
- 4219 *Pallas*. The court of Pallas Athena is the suitable residence for Medea to retire in Gower’s poem. *Vat. Myth. I* presents Pallas as the goddess of wisdom, invention, and ingenuity, as well as prowess in warfare — all qualities characteristic of Medea (*Vat. Myth. I* 124–25).
- 4243 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Nota qualiter aureum vellus in partes insule Colchos primo deuenit. Athemas Rex Philen habuit coniugem, ex qua Frixum et Hellen genuit: mortua autem Philen [MS: Hellen] Athemas Ynonem Regis Cadmi filiam postea in uxorem duxit, que more Nouerce dictos infantes in tantum recollegit odium, quod ambos in mare proici penes Regem procurauit. Vnde Iuno compaciens quendam Arietem grandem aureo vestitum vellere ad litus natantem destinauit; super cuius dorsum pueros apponi iussit. Quo facto Aries super vndas regressus cum solo Frixo sibi adherente in Colchos applicuit, ubi Iuno dictum Arietem cum suo vellere, prout in aliis canetur cronicis, sub arta custodia collocauit.* [Note how the Golden Fleece first came to the regions of the island of Colchos. King Athemas had Philen as a wife, from whom he bore Prixus and Hellen; but when Philen died, Athemas married Ino the daughter of King Cadmus, who, in the manner of stepmothers, held the aforementioned infants in such hatred that she procured both to be thrown into the sea that belonged to the king. Whence Juno, struck by sympathy, directed a certain huge ram clothed with a golden fleece to swim to shore, on whose back she ordered the children to be placed. With this done, the ram, retreating on the waves with only Prixus clinging on him, headed to Colchos, where Juno established the said ram with its fleece under close watch, just as is presented in other chronicles.]
- 4243–4361 The story of Phrixus and Helle occurs without much variation of detail in Hyg. 2–3; *Vat. Myth. I* 23; II 134; *Gen. deorum* 13.67; and *Fasti* 3.851–76, though Gower’s adaptation is closer to the *Ovide Moralisé* in the spelling of “Frixus” (line 4254), “Yno” (line 4271), and in details such as the mention of “soda whete” (line 4281) and the priest’s instruction to the queen (lines 4292–4307) or Jupiter’s sending the rain (line 4332). See Mainzer, “John Gower’s Use of the ‘Mediaeval Ovid,’” pp. 220–22, and Yeager, “John Gower and the Uses of Allusion,” p. 210. In *The Folktale*, Thompson compares the couple’s fleeing from their cruel stepmother to such a folk motif as Aarne, Type 450 (pp. 279–80).

- 4383 Genius' casting his observations upon Usury in the rhetorical format of a dream vision is unusual in moral diatribe but is well suited to his tale-telling format.
- 4383–4430 On Usury, with fraudulent *brocours* at hand (line 4387), compare *VC* 5.12.703 ff. Schmitz (*Middel Weie*, p. 104) points out Gower's comparison of usurers to packs of hounds (*racches in a route*, line 4388), noting Gower's skill in using animals to define mankind's loss of humanity through vice. Compare *VC* 1, with its nightmare on the Uprising of 1381.
- 4390 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat de illa specie Auaricie, que Vsura dicitur, cuius creditor in pecunia tantum numerata plusquam sibi de iure debetur incrementum lucri adauget.* [Here he narrates about that species of avarice which is called Usury, by which a lender of a certain price amasses returns of wealth more than by law he ought to.]
- 4452 *I were a goddeshalf.* See Macaulay's note: "This seems to mean, 'I should be content,' that is, I should be ready to say 'In God's name let it be so'" (3.501). Compare 5.5016 and *BD* lines 370 and 757.
- 4485 *thoght is fre.* Proverbial. See Whiting, T238.
- 4551–60 On the lawless nature of the law of love outlined here and elsewhere in Gower, see Collins, "Love, Nature and Law," pp. 117–19. N.b., *CA* 1.42–51, 1049–52, 2.2361–67, 3.169–75, 6.1262–65, 1278–84, and 8.2111–15. For comparison with Chaucer, see *TC* 3.1744–45, 1748 and 4.618, as well as *The Knight's Tale* (*CT* I[A]1164–69). Collins also considers passages in Chaucer's *Monk's* and *Franklin's Tales*, *Scogan*, and *LGW* (F-text), as well as several texts from Aquinas' *Summa theologiae*.
- 4556 *love is lord in every place.* Proverbial. See Whiting, L518. Compare *CA* 1.34–35 and Whiting, L509: "Love has no law."
- 4572 Genius modifies Ovid's version of the story considerably to suit his purpose. Compare *Met.* 3.359 ff.
- 4579 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic ponit exemplum contra istos maritos qui ultra id quod proprias habent uxores ad noue voluptatis incrementum alias mulieres superflue lucrari non verentur. Et narrat qualiter Iuno vindictam suam in Eccho decreuit, pro eo quod ipsa Eccho in huiusmodi mulierum lucris acquirendis de consilio mariti sui Iouis mediatrix extiterat.* [Here he presents an instructive example against those husbands who are not ashamed to gain, in excess profit, other women beyond what they have as their own wives, for the purpose of the profit of novel pleasure.]
- 4583–4652 On Gower's expansion of Ovid's story of Echo by developing her character and punishment, see Zipf, "Tale of Echo."
- 4640 *clappe it out as doth a belle.* Proverbial. See Whiting, B236. Compare *CA* 1.2390–91.

- 4676 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat super illa specie Auaricie que Parcimonia dicitur, cuius natura tenax aliqualem sue substancie porcionem aut deo aut hominibus participare nullatenus consentit.* [Here he treats about that species of Avarice called Parsimony, whose stingy nature does not at all consent to share the least portion of its wealth with either God or men.]
- 4720 *He was wys that ferst made mede.* Proverbial. See Whiting, G78. Compare *CA* 5.7716–17. See also *Havelok the Dane*, ed. Smithers, p. 130, note to line 1636. The allusion is to that person who first established the institution of gift giving, which Genius takes as the best antidote to Skarsnesse. Generosity is an important social concept in Gower's system of social values.
- 4723–25 *he faileth of his game / That wol with ydel hand reclame / His hauk.* Genius' sententious remark borders on the proverbial. See Whiting, *Chaucer's Use of Proverbs*, p. 147. Compare Chaucer's Reeve: "With empty hand men may na haukes tulle" (*CTI[A]*4134) and the Wife of Bath's "With empty hand men may none haukes lure" (*CTIII[D]*415).
- 4730 *Cresus.* Cresus, the last king of Lydia, famed for his wealth (i.e., "rich as Croesus"). On his unhappy fate, see Chaucer's Monk's Tale (*CT VII[B²]*2727–66) and *HF*, lines 105–06.
- 4731 *Octovien.* The emperor Augustus Caesar (63 BC–AD 14), ruler of Rome during the "Golden Age" of Latin literature; thus Gower's pun on *al the gold*. For Christian commentators, the Golden Age and Octavian locate Christ's birth and the reign of peace.
- 4781–4869 The story of Babio and Croceus is derived from the *Comoedia Babionis*, a Latin poem in a quasi-dramatic form which was popular in the fourteenth century. See Wright, *Early Mysteries*, p. 65.
- 4785 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur contra istos, qui Auaricia stricti largitatis beneficium in amoris causa confundunt. Et ponit exemplum, qualiter Croceus largus et hillaris Babionem auarum et tenacem de amore Viole, que pulcherrima fuit, donis largissimis circumuenit.* [Here he speaks against those who, constrained by Avarice, in the cause of love thwart the goodness of generosity. And he presents an instructive example, how generous and cheerful Croceus by large gifts undid the avaricious and stingy Babio in his love for Viola, who was extremely beautiful.]
- 4785–86 *For sparinge of a litel cost / Fulofte time a man hath lost.* Proverbial. See Whiting, *Chaucer's Use of Proverbs*, p. 273.
- 4799 *mede kepeth love in house.* Proverbial. See *MO*, line 25490.
- 4854–55 *Bot for to prinche and for to spare, / Of worldes muk to gete encress.* Proverbial. Whiting, M798.
- 4866 *noght worthi for to duelle.* In the *RR*, *Richesse* is one of the principal attendants in the garden of Love, while *Poverté* grimaces on the outside of the wall as a warning to all who enter.

- 4888 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur super illa aborta specie Auaricie, que Ingratitudo dicta est, cuius condicionem non solum creator, set eciam cuncte creature abhominabilem detestantur.* [Here he speaks about that monstrous offspring of the species of Avarice, which is called Ingratitude, whose nature not only the Creator but also creatures detest as abominable.]
- 4937 ff. The Tale of Adrian and Bardus is Eastern in origin. It occurs near the end of the *Speculum Stultorum* and a variation of it is told by Richard I in Matthew Paris' *Chronica Majora* (entry for 1195). A variation is likewise present in the Middle English *Gesta Romanorum* (cap. lxx).
- 4941 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Hic dicit qualiter bestie in suis beneficiis hominem ingratum naturaliter precellunt. Et ponit exemplum de Adriano Rome Cenatore, qui in quadam Foresta venacionibus insistens, dum predam persequeretur, in Cisternam profundam nescia familia corruit: ubi superueniens quidam pauper nomine Bardus, immissa cordula, putans hominem extraxisse, primo Simeam extraxit, secundo Serpentem, tercio Adrianum, qui pauperem despiciens aliquid ei pro benefacto reddere recusabat. Set tam Serpens quam Simea gratuita benevolencia ipsum singulis donis sufficienter remunerarunt.* [Here he says how animals in their beneficence naturally surpass an ungrateful human being. And he presents an instructive example about Adrian, a senator of Rome, who, forging through a certain forest for hunting, fell into a deep cavern while he was pursuing his prey, with his family unaware of what had happened. A certain poor man arriving there, Bardus by name, having sent a rope down thinking to extract a man, pulled out first an ape, second a serpent, and third Adrian, who, despising the poor man, refused to reward him for his charitable action. But both the serpent and the ape in grateful benevolence remunerated him with separate gifts.]
- 5171 *wel behote and evele laste.* Proverbial. A variant on "great promise, small performance." See Whiting, P409 and P411.
- 5231 *the poete.* The story of Ariadne is told in *Met.* 8.169, and Hyg. 42–43; Gower does not follow either source closely, though *the poete* doubtless refers to Ovid. For a contemporary retelling of the story, compare Chaucer's *LGW*, lines 1886–2227. See Bakalian, *Aspects of Love*, pp. 113–20, on Ariadne as the last of Gower's forsaken women tales.
- 5234 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Hic ponit exemplum contra viros amori ingratos. Et narrat qualiter Theseus Cadmi filius, consilio suffultus Adriagne Regis Mynos filie, in domo que laborinthus dicitur Minotaurum vicit: vnde Theseus Adriagne sponsalia certissime promittens ipsam vna cum Fedra sorore sua a Creta secum navigio duxit. Set statim postea oblito gratitudinis beneficio Adriagnam ipsum saluantem in insula Chio spre-tam post tergum reliquit; et Fedram Athenis sibi sponsatam ingratus coronauit.* [Here he presents an instructive example against men ungrateful in love. And he narrates how Theseus, the son of Cadmus, supported by the counsel of Ariadne, daughter of King Mynos, conquered the Minotaur in the house called the Labyrinth. Wherefore Theseus, promising most emphatically marriage vows to Ariadne, led her along with her sister Phedra by ship with him from Crete. But immediately afterwards, forgetting the debt of gratitude, he left Ariadne

who had saved him behind on the island of Chios, spurned; and, ingrate, awarded to himself Phedra as a bride at Athens.]

- 5339 *al on*. “Of one accord,” with a hint of legality, in that they have come to an agreement. The sense might also be “alone,” though that means of sealing the agreement, testifying, you might say, mainly comes later (5.5381–82).
- 5413 *Chyo*. Presumably Naxos, but where Gower comes up with this designation is uncertain. Ovid provides *Dia* as a name for Naxos, which may lie behind a faulty transcription.
- 5505 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat super illa specie cupida que Rapina nuncupatur, cuius mater extorcio ipsam ad deseruiendum magnatum curiis specialius commendauit.* [Here he treats that cupidinous species which is called Rapacity, whose mother, Extortion, particularly commends her (Rapacity) to the service of magnates in courts.]
- 5551 ff. Gower’s story of Tereus, Procne, and Philomela comes loosely from *Met.* 6.424–674. The story was a favorite example of the cruelty of rape. See Chaucer’s *LGW*, lines 2228–2393, and *TC* 2.64–73. Pearsall notes that “Ovid is Gower’s major source of narrative material in the *Confessio*” and discusses in detail the stories of Procne and Philomela, Ceix and Alceone, and Medea (“Gower’s Narrative Art,” pp. 478–83). So too Lepley, “Tale of Tereus.” See also Watt (*Amoral Gower*, pp. 90–97) on Tereus’ tyrannous masculinity. Watt includes a reproduction of Pierpont Morgan Library MS M.126, fol. 122r, depicting the cutting out of Philomena’s tongue and the end of Tereus’ feast as Procne explains what he has done (p. 97). In tales such as these (Tereus, Medea, Rosamund and Albinus, Mundus and Paulina, and Nectanabus) the reader continually encounters “contradictions that are not and can never be fully resolved” (p. 103).
- 5557 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic ponit exemplum contra istos in amoris causa raptores. Et narrat qualiter Pandion Rex Athenarum duas filias, videlicet Progné et Philomenam, habuit. Progné autem Tereo Regi Tracie desponsata, contigit quod cum Tereus ad instanciam uxoris sue Philomenam de Athenis in Traciam sororie visitacionis causa secum quadam vice perduceret, in concupiscenciam Philomene tanta seueritate in itinere dilapsus est, quod ipse non solum sue violencia rapine virginitatem eius oppressit, set et ipsius linguam, ne factum detegeret, forpice mutulauit. Vnde in perpetue memorie Cronicam tanti raptoris austeritatem miro ordine dii postea vindicarunt.* [Here he presents an instructive example against those who are rapists in the cause of love. And he narrates how Pandion the king of the Athenians had two daughters, namely Procne and Philomena. Now after Procne was betrothed to Tereus the king of Thracia, it happened that, when Tereus at the prompting of his wife led Philomena with him from Athens to Thracia by chance for the sake of a sisterly visit, on the journey he fell into lust for Philomena of such intensity that he not only by violent rape violated her virginity, but also with a pair of shears mutilated her tongue, lest she reveal the deed. Wherefore the gods by a miraculous means later took vengeance on the severity of such a rape, as a record of perpetual memory.]

- 5605–11 Gower efficiently shifts the focus from Ovid's sly Tereus, with his seductive language, to parental concern in general as the parents (no mother is mentioned in Ovid) wonder whether Philomene should go *[b]ot if thei weren in presence* (line 5607). At last they agree because of their delight in their son-in-law's company and because they do not wish him to fail. They have been made to feel proud of him and his attentions. In Gower the betrayal is of the fundamental domestic structure — the family.
- 5634–61 See Mast's discussion of Gower's sympathetic treatment of rape victims, particularly his presentation here of the emotional damage to Philomena ("Rape," pp. 112–16). As preface to her discussion of rape in *C4*, Mast (p. 106) cites *MO* (lines 8725–36), a passage worth quoting here:
- As autres jofnes femelines
De Stupre et de ses disciplines
Sovent aici vient Grant damage:
Quant de lour corps ne sont virgines,
Et que l'en sciet de leur covines,
Par ce perdont leur mariage,
Dont met esclandre en lour lignage,
Sique pour honte en leur putage
Tout s'enfuient comme orphelines,
Dont croist sur honte plus hontage,
Quant au bordell pour l'avantage
De sustenance sont enclines.
- [Great harm often comes to young women from Rape and her followers: when they are no longer virgins in body and the secret is out, they lose their chances at marriage, bring scandal to their family, so that (like orphans) they run away for shame, and, forced into brothels to support themselves, their shame increases into more shame. Trans. Wilson, p. 120.]
- 5668 *felonie*. Philomena calls attention to the legal implications of Tereus' crime, as does Gower. Rape of virgins was a felony punished by castration and blinding. See Bracton, *De legibus* f147, *Appellum de raptu virginem* (vol. 2, pp. 414–15), and Mast, "Rape," pp. 114 and 126n6.
- 5904–06 Here Gower gives rape and murder almost equal status (Mast, "Rape," p. 115).
- 5988 *Schal no man se my chekes rede*. Pearsall emphasizes the charm and tenderness with which Gower distances reactions to the horror of events by focusing on meaningful human behavior such as the nightingale's blush that it would poignantly hide ("Gower's Narrative Art," p. 479).
- 5993–95 *love is a wofull blisse*. Proverbial. See Whiting L513 and Tilley L505a.
- 6006 *in wynter lith swounynge*. The idea here is that the swallow sleeps in the mud through the winter, then appears in the spring and builds its nest out of mud. White, in his *Book of Beasts*, p. 117n1, cites Dr. Johnson's observation that swallows "certainly sleep all the winter. A number of them conglobulate together, by flying round and round, and then all in a heap throw themselves underwater, and lie in the bed of a river."


- 6059 *every love hath drede*. Proverbial. See Whiting L517.
- 6079 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur super illa Cupiditatis specie quam furtum vocant, cuius Ministri alicuius legis offensam non metuentes, tam in amoris causa quam aliter, suam quamsepe conscienciam offendunt*. [Here he speaks about that species of Cupidity which is called Robbery, whose ministers, not fearing to offend any law, frequently offend conscience itself, both in the cause of love and elsewhere.]
- 6117 *unmete*. The sense is complex. As a shepherdess the woman might be “becoming,” “incomparable”; or she might be “ugly,” “hideous,” “unsightly,” “displeasing,” all glosses common enough for *unmete* and suitable in defining the rapaciousness of the assailant, who rapes mainly because she is there, possibly for reasons of arousal, though more likely not. But given the fact that the “robber” is called “lord” and, as a hunter with hounds, must be of some station in life, a political sense may apply, such as “unworthy,” or “of inferior station,” in which case the passage is another in which Gower criticizes the privileged for their presumptuous treatment of common people, who would take from the poor simply because they would have what others have — “For other menne’s good is swete” (line 6118).
- 6118 *other menne’s good is swete*. Mast suggests that in Gower’s time “a woman’s sexuality was largely thought of as a commodity” and rape “an assault on male property.” Thus rape equates with theft more than passionate desire, the will “to dominate rather than to fornicate lecherously” (“Rape,” p. 108). The assault of Tereus upon Philomena certainly seems passion driven, however (n.b., “in a rage on hire he ran” [line 5632]).
- 6145 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur contra istos in amoris causa predones, qui cum in suam furtive concupiscenciam aspirant, fortuna in contrarium operatur. Et narrat quod cum Neptunus quamdam virginem nomine Cornicem solam iuxta mare deambulantem oppremere suo furto voluisset, superueniens Pallas ipsam e manibus eius virginitate servata graciosius liberavit*. [Here he speaks against those bandits in the cause of love against whom fortune works contrariiously, when they make pursuits in their furtive love. And he narrates that when Neptune wanted to assault by his robbery a certain virgin, Cornix by name, when she was wandering along the seashore, Pallas Athena intervened and graciously freed her from his hands, with her virginity intact.]

For the story of Neptune and Cornix, see *Met.* 2.542–632. Gower’s adaptation of the story of Cornix is more detailed than Ovid’s and shifts the focus from competition among gods to a victim of male aggression as Neptune uses Cornix’s beauty as an excuse for his lechery to become a pillager, not of broaches and rings, but of her most personal treasure, her maidenhead. In Ovid the god simply pursues; in Gower he is a robber, a rapist who seizes her in his arms and thrusts his hand toward the coffer (5.6177), none of which detail is in Ovid. Cornix, in turn, is given a touching prayer as she defends the flower she has always kept under lock and key. Pallas comes to her aid, transforming her into a crow that slips through Neptune’s greedy hands:

- “The bridd is flowe and he was let” (5.6214). Thwarted and shamed, he becomes a fool forever, “scorned of that he hath lore” (5.6217).
- 6150 *wif to Marte*. Compare 5.1214 ff. where, as “goddess of batailles” (5.1218, *Pallas Dea bellorum*, as the marginal gloss points out), she is said to be “Martes wif” (5.1215). This does not, of course, inhibit Mars’ attraction to Venus, and adds additional voltage to the Judgment of Paris.
- 6204–11 In Ovid there is none of the *delit* (line 6207) that Cornix experiences, a feeling of freedom as she flees off in front of Neptune’s eyes. The sharp contrast between her white virginity and her black feathers is also Gower’s. Gower raises “our sympathy and compassion for the innocent girl by making the plea to the goddess as emotional as possible” as he focuses on the horror of rape for women (Mast, “Rape,” pp. 121–22).
- 6225 The source of the Tale of Calistona is most likely *Met.* 2.409–541, where she is not given a name but is only called *virgo Nonacrina* (he does name Arcas); and *Fasti* 2.153–92, where she is called Callisto. Another Latin source might be *Poet. astr.* 2.1, for the story of Calistona, and 2.4 for an account of her son Arcas; and Hyg. 176–77, which, though brief, discusses the stars in Callisto’s constellation. The Tale of Calistona pairs well with that of Cornix in that the fate of the two women, though similar in that they are both translated into animals, is, nonetheless, very different. Here the god succeeds in having his way with the woman, and she, a rape victim, is left trapped by pregnancy. Gower is sensitive to her shame and touching effort to remain a part of Diana’s sacred community. But Diana offers no sympathy. After the child is born Juno transforms Calistona into a bear and, almost cruelly, leaves her human sensibilities intact: “For though she hadde hire forme lore, / The love was noght lost therfore / Which kinde hath set under his lawe” (5.6321–23). When her son Archas grows up and, as a hunter, pursues her, Gower focuses on the mother’s love as she would embrace her son despite her vulnerability. The moment is so poignant that Jupiter, the culprit who raped her, intercedes to protect them both. In this instance, the forces of nature win out, moderating even Jupiter’s behavior.
- 6225–81 The author of *Chaucer’s Ghoast* (1672), Arg. 10, adapts these lines without acknowledgment in his Ovidian tale of Calisto and Jupiter. He cuts out the birthing of Archas, however.
- 6231 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic ponit exemplum contra istos in causa virginitatis lese predones. Et narrat quod cum Calistona Lichaontis mire pulcritudinis filia suam virginitatem Diane conseruandam castissima vouisset, et in Siluam que Tegea dicitur inter alias ibidem Nimphas moraturam se transtulisset, Iupiter virginis castitatem subtili furto surripiens, quendam filium, qui postea Archas nominatus est, ex ea genuit: vnde Ivno in Calistonam seuiens eius pulcritudinem in vrse turpissime deformitatem subito transfigurauit.* [Here he presents an instructive example against those robbers who assault women in the cause of love. And he narrates that when most chaste Calistona, the most wondrously beautiful daughter of Lichaon, vowed to Diana to preserve her virginity, and betook herself into the forest called

Tegea to dally there with other nymphs, Jupiter stole away the chastity of this virgin by a deceitful robbery, and bore from her a certain son, who later was named Archas. Wherefore Juno, raging against Calistona, instantly transfigured her beauty into the hideous deformity of a bear.]

- 6359 ff. See *MO*, lines 17119 ff., where the saying is attributed to Jerome. Valerius does speak of a man named Spurrinna (Val. Max. 4.5, ext. 1) who destroys the beauty of his face to protect his virginity. Compare *MO*, lines 18301 ff. The subsequent reference to the Apocalypse is 14:4. The account of Valentinian's virginity occurs in *Epistola Valerii ad Rufinum*, where the emperor is said to be *octogenarius*. See Macaulay, p. xix of the introduction to *CA*, who finds it odd that the priest of Venus praises virginity. On this point see White (*Division and Failure*, pp. 608–10. Compare *MO*, lines 18301 ff., where “Phirinus, who was so handsome that all the women of the neighborhood were forced to love him . . . , cut out parts of his body with his own hands, thus overcoming Wantonness” (trans. Wilson, p. 251). Mutilation of one's God-given nature was considered a sin by the Christian Church (n.b., the condemnation of Origen for his self-castration to avoid lechery), but Gower gets around the problem by noting that Phirinus is an unbeliever who, even so, values virginity so passionately that he might, nonetheless, serve as an exemplum “for our edification” (p. 251).
- 6365 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur de virginitatis commendacione, ubi dicit quod nuper Imperatores ob tanti status dignitatem virginibus cedebant in via.* [Here he speaks about the commendation of virginity, saying that, formerly, emperors would give way to virgins in the street on account of the dignity such status possessed.]
- 6372 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur, qualiter Phyrinus, iuuenem Rome pulcherrimus, ut illesam suam conseruaret virginitatem, ambos oculos eruens vultus sui decorem abhominabilem constituit.* [Here he says how Phyrinus, the most handsome of the young men of Rome, made his beauty horrible by plucking both eyes from his face, so that he might preserve his virginity undamaged.]
- 6395 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur qualiter Valentinianus Imperator, cum ipse octogenarius plures prouincias Romano Imperio belliger subiugasset, dixit se super omnia magis gaudere de eo, quod contra sue carnis concupiscenciam victoriam obtinisset; nam et ipse virgo omnibus diebus vite sue castissimus permansit.* [Here he speaks how the Emperor Valentinian, when as an attacker at eighty years old he had subjugated many provinces to the Roman empire, said that above all things he took pleasure in having won victory over the lusts of his flesh; for he remained a most chaste virgin for all the days of his life.]
- 6433 ff. Not Chaucer's Criseyde, but Briseis. See *Heroides* 3.
- 6498 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat super illa Cupiditatis specie, que secretum latrocinium dicitur, cuius natura custode rerum nesciente ea que cupit tam per diem quam per noctem absque strepitu clanculo furatur.* [Here he treats about that species of Cupidity which is called secret robbery, whose nature it is to rob clandestinely those things it desires, both by day and by night, without a cry, with the guardian of the goods unawares.]

- 6584 *The servant lede agein the lord.* Amans is meticulously correct here in the politics of love. His heart can imagine many things it would like to do, especially were he to touch her knee (line 6566), though he dares not; but even if he had the strength of ten, he, as servant, would still not commit treason by rebelling against his lord (i.e., the lady), whom he honors. The point here is not so much that he is cowardly (though he may be, in plenty of ways), but that he abides by the hierarchies of vassalage.
- 6620 *Danger.* In *RR* Danger is the primary component in the woman's defense mechanism. Thus he is particularly the enemy of Amans, the would-be lover. See *RR*, lines 2809–4028, as the base churl interrupts Amans just as he is becoming familiar with Bel Acueil (Fair Welcome) and imprisons the lover's hoped for success, as Gower puts it, "under lock and under keie" (5.6621).
- 6632 *stronge lokes maken trewe.* Proverbial. See Whiting, L419.
- 6659–69 Burrow compares the passage to a miniature painting of the lover's confession; the technique is akin to that found in Froissart's *Espinette Amoureuse* ("Portrayal of Amans," p. 6). "This lover, gazing across the rooftops to the window of the room where his lady is sleeping, is first cousin to Froissart's lover gazing up at the window of his lady's house. Both poets favour a kind of realistic detailing which, so far from disturbing the graceful courtly style, makes it more poignant and delectable" (p. 7).
- 6713 ff. Based on *Met.* 4.190–270. See Gaston's remarks on Gower's alterations of Ovid to create a more stealthy Phoebus in "Tale of Leucothoe."
- 6715–80 The author of *Chaucer's Ghoast* (1672), Arg. 9, includes these lines in his penning "in the ancient manner of writing in England" of Ovid's tale of Phoebus and Leucothoe.
- 6718 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic in amoris causa super isto Latrocinio quod de die contigit ponit exemplum. Et narrat quod, cum Leuchotoe Orchami filia in cameris sub arta matris custodia virgo preseruabatur, Phebus eius pulcritudinem concupiscens, in conclave domus clara luce subintrans, virginis pudiciam matre nescia defloravit: vnde ipsa inpregnata iratus pater filiam suam ad sepeliendum viuam effodit; ex cuius tumulo florem, quem Solsequium vocant, dicunt tunc consequenter primitus accreuisse.* [Here he presents an instructive example about that robbery in the cause of love which happens by day; and he narrates that, when Leuchotoe, the daughter of Orchamus, was kept a virgin in a chamber under the strict guard of her mother, Phebus, lusting after her beauty, slipped into the house's chamber in a beam of light and deflowered the virgin's modesty, with her mother unawares. Wherefore, with her pregnant, her enraged father buried his daughter alive in a tomb, out of which they say that a flower that is called "sunflower" first subsequently grew.]
- 6745 *The which were al his worldes welthe.* The sense seems to be that the only worldly treasure Apollo wants at the moment is Leucothoe's treasure, which he would steal at any price.

- 6807–6935 For the story of Hercules and Faunus, see *Fasti* 2.303–58. Ovid refers to the story as a merry tale handed down from days of old (*traditur antiqui fabula plena iocī*) to explain why celebrants of the feast of Bacchus wear no clothes. Ovid concludes: “Thus betrayed by vesture, the god loves not garments which deceive the eye, and bids his worshipers come naked to his rites” (*veste deus lusus fallentes lumina vestes / non amat et nudos ad sua sacra vocat* — *Fasti* 2.357–58). Genius shifts the focus of Ovid’s fabliau from the practices of a religious festival to a farce on stealth and pilfering (*micherie*).
- 6807 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic ponit exemplum super eodem quod de nocte contigit. Et narrat qualiter Hercules cum Eole in quadam spelunca nobili, Thophis dicta, sub monte Thymolo, ubi silua Bachi est, hospicio pernoctarunt. Et cum ipsi variis lectis seperatim iacentes dormierunt, contigit lectum Herculis vestimentis Eole lectumque Eole pelle leonis, qua Hercules induebatur, operiri. Super quo Faunus a silua descendens speluncam subintravit, temptans si forte cum Eole sue concupiscencie voluptatem nesciente Hercule furari posset. Et cum ad lectum Herculis muliebri palpata veste ex casu peruenisset, putans Eolen fuisse, cubiculum nudo corpore ingreditur; quem sciens Hercules manibus apprehensum ipsum ad terram ita fortiter allisit, ut impotens sui corporis effectus usque mane ibidem requieuit, ubi Saba cum Nimphis siluestribus superueniens ipsum sic illusum deridebat.* [Here he presents an instructive example concerning the same thing which occurred by night. And he narrates how Hercules took his lodging for the night with Eolen in a certain noble cave, called Thopis, under Mount Thymolus where the woods of Bacchus are. And while they were sleeping, lying separately in different beds, the bed of Hercules happened to be made up with the clothes of Eolen, and the bed of Eolen with the lionskin that Hercules wore. Whereupon Faunus, descending from the woods, went down into the cave, seeing if by chance he might sneak his fulfillment of lust with Eolen with Hercules unawares. And when by chance he arrived at Hercules’ bed, after having stroked the womanly clothing thinking it was Eolen, he entered the bed with his body naked; perceiving him, Hercules, seizing him with his hands, thus powerfully smashed him to the ground, so that, made entirely powerless in his body, he remained there until morning, where Saba arriving with the wood nymphs mocked him, having been thus deceived.]
- 6810 *pelegrinage*. In Ovid they are on pilgrimage to the festival of the god of wine in the grove of Bacchus and the vineyard of Tmolus, details which Gower does not mention, though he does call the place where they bed down for the night “Bachus wode” (5.6837).
- 6852 ff. *Nou take good hiede hou love afaiteth / Him which withal is overcome*. When a lover dresses in his lady’s clothing the implication is, for Gower, that his wit has been overwhelmed. See *VC* 5.1–6 (trans. Stockton, pp. 196–206) on the effeminization of the knight who would become a lover. In Ovid there seems to be no moral opprobrium connected with cross-dressing.
- 6892 *bothe abedde*. I.e., “in separate beds.” In Ovid they sleep in separate beds, since they are preparing to celebrate the festival in honor of Bacchus next morning and wish to be in all purity (*quae facerent pure* — *Fasti* 2.330). The separate-beds detail is necessary for Faunus’ plan to work (or not work, as the case may be).

- 6894 *drunke swyn*. Proverbial, not a political commentary on the servants, who here have a good start on the festival to be celebrated in the morning. To be drunk as a swine is a common saying that is more descriptive than pejorative. See Whiting, S955. In Ovid there is no swine metaphor: the attendants only fall into a drunken slumber after they finish their tasks.
- 6921–23 *wende wel it were sche . . . he profreth him to love*. Ovid does not mention any confusion on Hercules' part; rather Faunus, his penis "harder than horn" (*Fasti* 2.346), lifts the bottom edge of the garment only to encounter the rough hair that bristles from Hercules' legs, at which moment the Tiryinthian hero, apparently having just awakened, tosses him out of bed.
- 6961 ff. In some manuscripts of *C4* (but not the Stafford or Sidney Sussex College manuscripts), about two hundred additional lines on sacrilege follow line 6980 and include the Tale of Lucius and the Statue, a tale told also in *MO*, lines 7093–7128, and which is to be found in various fourteenth-century Latin and Middle English story books (e.g., see the Middle English *Gesta Romanorum*, cap. lxviii) as well as classical sources including Cicero's *De natura deorum* and Val. Max. 1.1, ext.3. The story may be summarized as follows: Before Rome was Christian, Caesar made a statue of Apollo, gorgeously adorned with a gold beard, a gold mantle, and a fine carbuncle ring. It happened that a famous clerk named Lucius, a courtier of wit and amusement, squandered all his goods and fell into poverty. To make up for his losses he robbed the statue of its ring, mantle, and beard. The king was informed of the desecration, and Lucius was discovered in possession of the loot. When questioned about the robbery Lucius replied: "When I beheld the god, his hand was outstretched, offering me the ring, which I took in appreciation of his largesse. Moreover, in gratitude I removed the cold heavy gold mantle which so encumbered his shoulders — a garment too cold for winter and too heavy for summer. Then, as I looked at him, I saw his large beard and remembered that his father, who stood there before him, was a beardless youth. So I removed the beard that he might be like his father. Therefore I ask to be excused of the charges against me." See how men lighten their consciences with sacrilege!
- 6966 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat super ultima Cupiditatis specie, que Sacrilegium dicta est, cuius furtum ea que altissimo sanctificantur bona depredans ecclesie tantum spoliis insidiatur*. [Here he treats the last species of Cupidity, which is called Sacrilege, whose robbery assaults those things which the Highest has sanctified, seizing the goods of the church as its spoils.]
- 7012 *proude king Antiochus*. Perhaps Antiochus II, III, or IV alluded to but not named in the latter part of Daniel, though it is doubtful that Gower would have known commentaries that spoke of him. The boastful Antiochus Epiphanes, known for his loud mouth in Daniel 7:8 and 7:25, and evoked as antichrist in Apocalypse 13:6, is a possibility too. But probably Gower is speaking of Antiochus, the namesake of Antioch, who appears as the evil, incestuous king at the beginning of Gower's Tale of Apollonius (8.274 ff.).

- 7013 *Nabuzardan*. According to 4 Kings (2 Kings) 25:8–21, Nebuzaradan, captain of Nebuchadnezzar’s guard, looted Jerusalem, burnt the house of the Lord, the king’s house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, then delivered the priests and keepers of the door to Nebuchadnezzar, who executed them. *MO*, lines 7177–88, links him with Belshazzar as one upon whom God took vengeance for his sacrilege.
- 7018 *Nabugodonosor*. “At the end of the book we find our old friend Nebuchadnezzar” (Fisher, *John Gower*, p. 196). Genius uses the Babylonian king for many purposes, mainly as an exemplum of Pride in Prol. 585–662 and 1.2785–3042, and then again here to exemplify sacrilege. The Book of Daniel is Gower’s source for the more extended exempla on pride (see Peck, “John Gower and the Book of Daniel”), though here the sacrilege allusions are more akin to 4 Kings (2 Kings) 25, where the king of Babylon is the destroyer of Jerusalem and its priesthood rather than the inquisitor of Daniel who is so often brought to see the light, despite his pride.
- 7022 ff. The accounts of Nebuchadnezzar and Balthazar and the writing on the wall appear in Daniel 3–5.
- 7022–23 *Baltazar* . . . *Mane, Techel, Phares*. See Belshazzar’s feast and the writing on the wall in Daniel 5.5. Daniel’s interpretation of the inscription “is built on a paronomastic reworking of the Aramaic” (*Dictionary of Biblical Tradition*, p. 329), where *Mene* indicates that “God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it”; *Tekel*, “Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting”; and *Peres*, “Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.”
- 7070–72 *he loketh on the fleish / Riht as an hawk*. Proverbial. See Whiting, H201.
- 7187 “There is a time and place for all things.” See Ecclesiastes 3:1–8.
- 7195 ff. Gower’s account of Paris’ abduction of Helen is found in Benoît, *Roman de Troie*, lines 3845–3928 and 4167–4936. See also Dares, Books 7–10, and Guido, Books 6–7. For a Middle English retelling of the story, based on Guido, see Lydgate’s *Troy Book*, Books 2–5.
- 7197 *of Troie*. On Gower’s disenchantment with chivalry and his pervasive use of Troy for social commentary on his own time, see Wetherbee, “John Gower,” pp. 595–96 (on *VC*) and 601–02 (on *CA*): “The world of chivalry is for Gower an uncentered world of ceaseless, random movement, its activities often directly at odds with social order. . . . The career of Paris (5.7195–7590) exposes a society unable to acknowledge the reckless desire to which it owes its origin, and committed by its blind pursuit of that desire to inevitable dissolution.” See also the explanatory note to 6.1391 ff.
- 7201 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic in amoris causa super istius vicii articulo ponit exemplum. Et narrat, pro eo quod Paris Priami Regis filius Helenam Menelai uxorem in quadam Grece insula a templo Veneris Sacrilegus abduxit, illa Troie famosissima obsidio per uniuersi orbis climata divulgata precipue causabatur. Ita quod huiusmodi Sacrilegium non solum ad ipsius regis Priami omniumque suorum interitum, set etiam ad perpetuam urbis desolacionem vindicte fomitem ministrabat.* [Here he presents an in-

structive example about that vice (Sacrilege) in the cause of love. And he narrates that, because Paris the son of King Priamus sacrilegiously abducted Helen the wife of Menelaus from a temple of Venus on a certain Greek island, that most famous siege of Troy, eminently described through all the regions of the world, was set in motion. So it was that this Sacrilege furnished the kindling of revenge, leading not only to the death of King Priamus himself and all his people, but also to the perpetual desolation of the city.]

- 7228–57 For another ME account of the rebuilding of Troy, so wondrous in its *entaille* (line 7247), see Lydgate’s *Troy Book* 2.481–768.
- 7341 *thridde parti*. The other two parts are Asia and Africa. Traditionally, each continent was settled by one of Noah’s sons: Europe by Japheth, Asia by Shem, and Africa by Ham. See *Cursor Mundi*, lines 2081 ff. Also Higden’s *Polychronicon*, trans. Trevisa, 1.6: “De orbis divisione,” with citations from Augustine, Isidore, and Pliny. For a splendid map showing the three sons and their parts of the orb, accompanied by drawings of strange creatures from the diverse continents, see Schedel, ed., *Chronicle of the World*, pl. 13.
- 7353 *Wicke is to stryve and have the worse*. Proverbial. See Whiting, S842, and compare *CA* 3.1651.
- 7441–62 Genius calls upon his books (line 7453) as authority for the three premonitory prophesies by Cassandra, Sybil, and Helenus. But given the predilection of the company their words are thought to be “bot a jape” (line 7463) and thus are ignored. The passage links such choices to their doom, at the heart of which is sacrilege.
- 7591 Lydgate gives an account of Achilles’ infatuation for Polixena in much greater detail in *Troy Book* 4.551–3267.
- 7642 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic de virtute Largitatis, que ad oppositum Auaricie inter duo extrema, videlicet Parcimoniam et Prodegalitatem, specialiter consistit*. [Note here concerning the virtue of Generosity, which in opposition to Avarice, particularly stands between two extremes, namely Parsimony and Prodigality.]
- 7719 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Lucas. Omni habenti dabitur*. [Luke: To whoever has, it will be given. (Luke 8:18.)]
What man hath hors men give him hors. Proverbial. See Whiting, H537.
- 7720–21 [*The one who has no horse*] . . . *he mai thanne on fote go*. Proverbial. See Whiting, H512.
- 7725 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Beacius est dare quam accipere*. [“Betre is to give than to take” — line 7725.] Proverbial. See Whiting, G93.
- 7726 *With gifte a man mai frendes make*. Proverbial. See Whiting, G87.
- 7735 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Seneca. Si res tue tibi non sufficient, fac vt rebus tuis sufficias*. [Seneca: If your goods are not sufficient for you, see that you suffice for your goods. (Attributed to Seneca, but actually from Caecilius Balbus, *De nugis philosophorum* 11.3.)]

- 7736–39 *Bot if thi good suffise . . . be to thi good sufficient.* Proverbial. See Whiting, G346. Compare Chaucer, “Truth,” line 2.
- 7743 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Apostolus. Ordinata caritas incipit a seipsa.* [The Apostle: “Ordered charity begins from itself.”] See Cantic of Canticles 2:4.
- 7774 *Despended al thi time in wast.* Right use of time is a central philosophical concept for Gower. See the Introduction to volume 1 of *CA*. Compare Harry Bailly’s criticism of the pilgrim Chaucer who with his rhyming in *The Tale of Sir Thopas* “doost noght elles but despended tyme” (*CT* VII[B²]931).

EXPLANATORY NOTES TO BOOK 6

- 8 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic in sexto libro tractare intendit de illo capitali vicio quod Gula dicitur, nec non et de eiusdem duabus solummodo speciebus, videlicet Ebrietate et Delicacia, ex quibus humane concupiscencie oblectamentum habundancius augmentatur.* [Here in the sixth book he intends to discourse about that capital sin which is called Gluttony, and also about its two species, namely Drunkenness and Sensuality, by which are augmented very abundantly the delights of human lust.]
- 12 *of hem alle I wol noght trete.* Mindful of his original plan to address the five children of each sin, Genius prepares his reader for his new scheme where, now, he will speak only “of tuo . . . and of no mo” (lines 13–14).
- 60 *baillez ça the cuppe.* Compare Gloton’s admonition in *Piers Plowman*, “Lat go þe cuppe!” (B.5.337), the idea being that the revelers drink from a single bowl which, when one imbibes it too long, the company demands that he let go so that the next can drink. The *ça* heightens the imperative. That the glutton bursts into a macaronic French cuts two ways, with a jab at the drunk’s pretension, but also at French inebriation. Most wine consumed in England was imported from France.
- 93–99 Tales of wise or powerful men besotted by love are virtually a genre of medieval entertainment unto itself. Tales of Samson’s infatuations derive from Judges 14–16, with its folktale qualities; the famous story of David and Bathsheba originates in 2 Kings (2 Samuel) 11. The love follies of Virgil, Socrates, and Aristotle are favorite inventions of the fabliaux traditions. E.g., Juan Ruiz’s *Libro de Buen Amor*, 261–64, where Virgil attempts to reach his love in a tower, but is tricked by her when she leaves him hanging midway up in a basket where, next day, he is dishonored with mockery by all who see him so compromised; he retaliates by enchanting every candle flame or fire in Rome so that all go out in an instant and none can be lit except by the private parts of the woman who tricked him. Or, see the variant in the Icelandic tale of Virgil and the basket, *Virgilesrímur*. For a visual depiction of Virgil’s dilemma, see Lucas van Leyden’s Netherlandish engraving of the scene. Aristotle is featured in various adaptations based mainly on Henri d’Andeli’s thirteenth-century *Le lai d’Aristote*. For discussion of such popular tropes, see Smith, *Power of Women*, especially chapters 3 (“Tales of the Mounted Aristotle,” pp.

66–102) and 5 (“The Power of Women Topos in Fourteenth Century Visual Art,” pp. 137–90). Smith includes forty-five remarkable illustrations.

- 107–11 *Of such phisique . . . schapen to that maladie / Of lovedrunke*. Wack (“Lovesickness in *Troilus*,” p. 56) summarizes Constantinus’ *Viatricum* and Gerald of Berry’s *Glosses* on such a malady:

The sight of a beautiful form may cause the soul to go mad with desire, as Constantinus says. In Gerard’s formulation, the mind ‘overestimates’ the value of the perceived object and desires it excessively. This overestimation, however, can only take place if the material composition of the brain is corrupt, that is, the imagination must be excessively cold and dry so that the overestimated image adheres abnormally and excites the concupiscible power. An excess of black bile or another humor (some later treatises list semen in this category) may also cause the disease. The etiology is thus both psychic and somatic, but the material composition of the body, particularly of the brain, is crucial in the development of the illness. No ethical valuation is attached to the causal mechanisms in any of the texts — the patient is not held ‘guilty’ or ‘responsible’ for his illness.

Compare *VC* 5.3.130–40 ff: “When a man sees her womanly beauty — so sweet, elegant and fine, but more like an angel’s — he thinks her a goddess, and puts his fate of life and death in her hands. . . . Outwardly, he does not show what the sight of her means to him; inwardly, the sting of love pierces his heart. . . . His mind’s eye grows dull, blind from the darkness of lust, and he sinks down to his own destruction. . . . So he goes blindly mad because of his blind love.” See also Bakalian, *Aspects of Love*, pp. 124–25 and 138–43, on lovesickness as a kind of drunkenness.

- 239 *blanche fievere*. “A stage of lovesickness analogous to chills” (*MED*, citing this passage). For an extensive discussion of ailments of love and their remedies, see Wack, *Lovesickness*, 1989.


- 248 *peines fele*. The primary sense is that the pains of love surpass all others. But *fele* can also mean “excellent,” *peines fele* thus mirroring the oxymoronic “hote chele” (line 247) and “biter swete” (line 250).


- 325 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic narrat secundum Poetam, qualiter in suo celario Iupiter duo dolea habet, quorum primum liquoris dulcissimi, secundum amarissimi plenum consistit, ita quod ille cui fatata est prosperitas de dulci potabit, alter vero, cui aduersabitur, poculum gustabit amarum*. [Here he narrates, according to the Poet (identified as “Homer” in *RR* 6813; see *Iliad* 24.527), how in his cellar Jupiter has two vats, the first of which is full of most sweet liquid, the second of most bitter liquid, such that he for whom prosperity is fated will drink from the sweet, but another, for whom there will be adversity, will drink the bitter cup.]

- 330 ff. The story of Jupiter’s two tuns may be found in *RR*, lines 6813 ff., and before that in Boethius’ *Consolation* 2.pr.2, though Boethius does not name Homer as his source. Chaucer’s Wife of Bath alludes to the story (*CT* III[D]170) as she delights in assuming Cupid’s role as butler of the tuns, to serve sweet or bitter as she pleases.

- 352 *hindreth many a mannes fode*. The sense might be “causes indigestion,” though more likely *fode* implies “emotional satisfaction” (n.b., *MED fode* n.1, 2a and 2b), hence the gloss “comfort.”
- 391 ff. The story of Bacchus’ return from war and the miraculous fountain in the desert occurs in *Poet. astr.* 2.20, under the heading “Aries,” and in Vat. Myth. I 121.
- 399 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic qualiter potus aliquando sicienti precibus acquiritur. Et narrat in exemplum quod, cum Bachus de quodam bello ad oriente repatrians in quibusdam Lubie partibus alicuius generis potum non inuenit, fuis ad Iouem precibus, apparuit ei Aries, qui terram pede percussit, statimque fons emanauit; et sic potum petenti peticio preualuit.* [Note here how a drink for a thirsty man is sometimes acquired by a prayer; and he tells in the illustrative story that, when Bacchus was returning home to the east from a certain war, in some regions of Libya he did not find a drink of any sort. Pouring forth prayers to Jupiter, a ram appeared before him, which stamped the earth with its hoof, and immediately a spring welled up. And thus a petition prevailed for a petitioner.]
- 467 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic de amoris ebrietate ponit exemplum, qualiter Tristrans ob potum, quem Brangweyne in navi ei porrexit, de amore Bele Isolde inebriatus extitit.* [Here he presents an illustrative story about the intoxication of love, how Tristran, on account of a drink that Brangwein offered to him aboard the ship, was intoxicated with love for Fair Isolde.]
- The Tristran story was very popular. For a full account of the drinking of the love potion, see Gottfried von Strassburg’s *Tristan*, lines 1367 ff. (ch. 15 in some editions).
- 485 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic de periculis ebrietatis causa in amore contingentibus narrat quod, cum Pirothous illam pulcherimam Ypotaciam in uxorem duceret, quosdam qui Centauri vocabantur inter alios vicinos ad nupcias invitauit; qui vino imbuti, noue nupte formositatem aspicientes, duplici ebrietate insanierunt, ita quod ipsi subito salientes a mensa Ipotaciam a Pirothoo marito suo in impetu rapuerunt.* [Here, concerning the dangers of inebriation occurring in the cause of love, he narrates that when Pirithous took the most beautiful Ipotacia as bride he invited to the wedding certain ones among his other neighbors who were called centaurs. These, soused in wine, gazing on the shapeliness of the newly wed bride, raved madly with a double inebriation, such that, suddenly leaping from the wedding feast table, they forcefully abducted Ipotacia from her husband Pirithous.]
- The story of Pirithous is found in *Met.* 12.210 ff.
- 537 ff. No clear source is known for this story of Galba and Vitellius, though Hamilton suggests that the plot comes from a misreading of Eutropius, by way of the French *Secretum Secretorum* (“Some Sources,” p. 340).
- 542 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur specialiter contra vicium illorum, qui nimia potatione quasi ex consuetudine ebriosi efficiuntur. Et narrat exemplum de Galba et Vitello, qui potentes in Hispania principes fuerunt, set ipsi cotidiane ebrietatis potibus assueti, tanta vicinis intulerunt enormia, quod tandem toto conclamante populo pena sentencie*

capitalis in eos iudicialiter diffinita est: qui priusquam morerentur, ut penam mortis alleuiarent, spontanea vini ebrietate sopiti, quasi porci semimortui gladio interierunt. [Here he speaks particularly against the vice of those who regularly keep themselves inebriated by means of too much drink. And he narrates an illustrative story about Galba and Vitellius, who then were powerful rulers in Spain, but were accustomed to drinking for daily inebriation. They inflicted so many horrors on their neighbors that finally, from the outcry of the entire people, a sentence of judicial death was imposed on them. But before they might die, in order to blunt the pain of death, they willingly stunned themselves with the inebriation of wine, and were slaughtered half-alive like pigs, by the sword.]


625 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat super illa specie Gule que Delicacia nuncupatur, cuius mollicies voluptuose carni in personis precipue potentibus queque complacencia corporaliter ministrat.* [Here he treats about that species of Gluttony which is called Sensuality, whose softness of voluptuous flesh, especially in the persons of the powerful, each bodily pleasure serves.]

664 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Philosophus. Consuetudo est altera natura.* [Philosopher: “Habit is a second nature.”]

737 *smale lustes whiche I pike.* Several meanings are compatible with *pike* in this context: “steal” (given the fact that Amans feeds with his eyes [6.753] by stealing glances; see *MED piken* v.1, 8), but also “choose” (with his *smale lustes* Amans is perpetually willful) and “tidy up” (see *MED piken* v.1, 6 and 5), with a strong hint as well of “peck at” (the way one might pick at one’s food), given the reference to his “hunger” in 6.736 (see *MED piken* v. 1, 2 and 4).

743 *reherce.* Amans’ “rehearsal” of female beauty uses the device of *effictio*, so common in romance literature, praising the woman’s parts beginning with the top of the head and moving downward. The device, which originates in Cantic of Canticles 4, is brought to life by Amans’ dramatization of what his eye sees, which he personifies as a lusty voyeur (lines 753–826).

745–50 Amans’ three degrees (line 745) of delicately feeding his fantasy define the primary avenues of intellection that Genius, as confessor, is attempting to exorcize: 1) the eye, 2) the ear (the eye and ear being two windows of the soul defined in Book 1 as the primary senses affecting the welfare of the psyche), and 3) *thought* (line 749), the agency that converts what is seen and heard into images of desire that please and sustain the lover’s fantasy. The trio is presented in *RR* (lines 2643–2764) as *Douz Regart* (Sweet Looking), *Douz Parler* (Sweet Hearing of the lady’s “voice”), and *Douz Penser* (Sweet Thinking), three gifts from Cupid that make the lover’s pains seem all the more desirable — all good cooks, in Gower, for the seasoning of delicate and tasty food. See the explanatory note to line 939.

753 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Nota qualiter visus in amore se continet delicatus.* [Note how sensual sight restrains itself in love.]

767–76 Although Macaulay (2.xv) and others see the lady as “a creature of flesh and blood,” Kinneavy emphasizes the conventional rhetoric (*effictio*) of Amans’

- lady, who need only be compared with Chaucer's Criseyde or Henryson's to see "how lacking she is in flesh and blood"; mainly she is a creature of "inference" ("Gower's *Confessio Amantis* and the Penitentials," p. 157).
- 786 *Hire bodi round, hire middel smal*. Commonplace *figura* of tantalizing female beauty in Middle English romance. *Round* equates with shapeliness (e.g., compare Chaucer's *TC* 3.1250) and *smal* with a lithesome, small-waisted womanly comeliness (e.g., compare Chaucer's *Miller's Tale*, *CT* II[A]3234; *Merchant's Tale*, *CT* IV[E]1602; *TC* 3.1247; and the *Romaunt*, line 1032); The Tale of Sir Thopas, *CT* VII(B²)2026, provides an amusing analogue.
- 793–94 *the port and the manere . . . of hire wommanys she chere*. [C]here can refer to her lovely countenance, but more, to her courtly behavior and breeding. The bearing of the beautiful woman (*port* and *manere*, line 793) is a potent feature of the eroticizing of the female by the male fantasy. Compare Chaucer's *TC* 1.281–87, where Troilus first admires Criseyde's stature, then is captivated by "hire mevyng and hire chere" (1.289); or *BD*, where the Black Knight, having seen the good fair White amidst a "route" of ladies, falls in love with her manner (line 827), but is captivated when "I sawgh hyr daunce so comlyly, / Carole and synge so swetely, / Laughe and pleye so womanly, / And loke so debonairly, / So goodly speke and so frendly, / That certes y trowe that everemore / Nas seyn so blyful a tresor" (lines 848–54; see also *CA* 6.868 ff.). As in Gower, sight, hearing, and thought all correspond to shape the impression in the male's fantasy.
- 795 *on honde*. I have glossed the phrase as "for the moment," though that may be too elaborate a gloss. The phrase often appears as a line filler (see the note to 5.17–18); perhaps something like "you can count on it" would be better.
- 817–19 The figure is of the courtly lady carrying a goshawk on hand as they set out on a hunt. Here the woman is eroticized as the object of the goshawk's piercing gaze.
- 830 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Qualiter auris in amore delectatur*. [How the ear is sensually pleased in love.]
- 838 *I hie on seith*. Amans revels in *douz parler* as he hears pleasing talk in praise of his lady. Chaucer offers a variant on the idea in *TC* as he has the lady laugh in her heart (2.1592) at kind words and praise of Troilus, who is sick (2.1576–96). She too is enjoying the aural delicacies.
- 857 *Lombard*. I.e., Lombardy, where Milan was the seat of Italian bankers who, since the time of Edward I, financed much of England's opulence and thus became synonymous in late fourteenth-century literary parlance with luxury and delicacy (Macaulay notes that Gower refers to a pastry called "pain [bread] lumbard" in *MO* [3.514]), and, especially, with "merchants," "trade," "merchandizing," and "money."
- 879 *Ydoine* and *Amadas*. The allusion is to an Old French romance that enjoyed some popularity in England but was never translated into Middle English. It is alluded to in *Emaré*, *Sir Degrevant*, and *Cursor Mundi*. Amadas (not to be

confused with Sir Amadace in the Middle English romance of that name) is utterly devoted to Ydoine, and though severely tried by unhappy circumstances, like Amans, remains utterly faithful to his lady and her provocative eyes. See Reinhard, *Amadas et Ydoine*, along with his *Old French Romance of 'Amadas et Ydoine'*. The Old French poem has been translated into English by Arthur, as *Amadas and Ydoine*. See also Meecham-Jones' discussion ("Questioning Romance," pp. 35–49).

891 *cherie feste*. Cherry season lasts about a fortnight, and thus a very short time.

913 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia**. *Qualiter cogitatus impressiones leticie ymaginatiuas cordibus inserit amantum*. [How mental impressions impose imaginations of happiness in lovers' hearts.]

939 *mi lustes thre*. See note to lines 745–50, above, comparing the three dainties of Amans to the three gifts of the God of Love in *RR* (lines 2643–2764). See also the Proem to Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato*, where the lover debates which of the three gives greater pleasure.

943 *plover*. Proverbial. The plover (a bird) allegedly feeds on air, and thus has a most delicate palette. See Whiting, P272.

969 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia**: *Delicie corporis militant aduersus animam*. [Sensualities of the body militate against the soul.]

975 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia**: *Hic ponit exemplum contra istos delicatos. Et narrat de diuile et Lazaro, quorum gestus in euangelio Lucas euidentius describit*. [Here he presents an illustrative story against those sensualists. And he narrates about the rich man (Dives) and the leper (Lazarus), whose story will be found more fully in the Gospel of Luke.]

The story of Dives and Lazarus (Luke 16:19–31) was a common theme for homiletic elaboration.

1151–1227 Whether the raconteur be Chaucer, Jean de Meun, Boethius, or a market-place storyteller, tales about Nero's atrocities and follies offered the medieval imagination endless moral pleasure. Hamilton notes that the general authority for Gower's rendition might be Eutropius, as in the account of Galba and Vitellius, but, like Macaulay, observes that the source for the experiment in digestion is unknown ("Some Sources," p. 340). Tiller notes that this particular episode is also told of Frederick II Hohenstaufen (p. 228).

1155 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia**: *Hic loquitur de delicacia Neronis, qui corporalibus deliciis magis adherens spiritalia gaudia minus obtinuit*. [Here he speaks about the sensuality of Nero, who, adhering more to physical delights, all the less obtained spiritual joys.]

1197 *Walkende a pass*. The *Secretum Secretorum* agrees with Nero on value of walking after eating to enhance digestion: "When þu art arise fro mete, walke a litil

vpon soft gress,” rather than take a long nap (*The Booke of Goode Governance*, 12th doctrine; *Secretum Secretorum*, p. 6).

Latin verses iii (before line 1261). **Line 8:** *Nudatam . . . auem* [the “bird plucked naked”] keeps in view the lover’s erotic goal, but simultaneously presents this in unappealing terms of preparing and eating game-fowl.

1261–66 Love dares anything. Proverbial. See Whiting, L503.

1267 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat qualiter Ebrietas et Delicacia omnis pudicicie contrarium instigantes inter alia ad carnalis concupiscencie promocionem Sacrelegio magicam requirunt.* [Here he treats of how Drunkenness and Sensuality, instigating against all modesty, among other things seek out magical advancement of carnal lust by sorcery.]

1280 *as Baiard the blinde stede*. Proverbial. See Whiting, B71; also B72 and B73. The proverb is common in fourteenth-century literature. Compare Chaucer, *CT* VIII(G)1413–16. Bayard as a figure of an unruly horse was also common. See *TC* 1.218–24.

1293 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de Auctorum necnon et de librorum tam naturalis quam execrabilis magice nominibus.* [Note the names both of authorities and books, of natural and of forbidden magic.]

1293–1334 Gower’s principal source for the list of authors and titles seems to be Albertus Magnus’ *Speculum astronomiae*: 11.85–87 cites Raziell (see line 1316); Balemuz appears twice, associated with Hermes (11.7, 47–51); *Ghenbal* (line 1320) appears in the first line of “Salomon’s” book of magic *De sigillis ad daemoniacos* (*On the sigils possessed by demons*): “*Capitulum sigilli gandal et tanchil etc.*” (11.81–83); and Thebit (see line 1322), son of Chora, is also cited (11.129–34). See Albertus 17.6–15 for connections between Saturn and kinds of divination (n.b. note to lines 1295–1302, below). See also note to lines 1317–18.

1295–1302 *Geomance . . . Ydromance . . . Piromance . . . Aeremance*. Divination according to the four elements. “Nigromance” (line 1308) is Black Magic, or the calling up of spirits from the dead. Gower seems to be classifying all such “sciences” under Delicacie in that they all attempt to make something out of nothing, like the plover feeding on air or the lover’s fantasy becoming his precious reality.

1308–10 *With Nigromance he wole assaile / To make his incantacioun / With hot subfumi-gacioun*. Galloway, in his review of *Conjuring Spirits*, observes: “Gower writes, describing an illicit means of getting a beloved [by] parroting language like that found in . . . ‘The Book of Angels’ . . . where a man will be loved by all the women who see him if he writes the figure of Venus on a silver plate and ‘suffumigates’ it with aloe wood and other materials” (p. 565). See Lidaka, “*Book of Angels*,” and Albertus on necromancy, that most abominable form of divination that requires “suffumigations and invocation” (11.4–5).

1311 *Spatula*. Not found in Albertus, this is “the art of divination from the shoulder blades of animals” (Fox, *Mediaeval Sciences*, pp. 146–47, who cites an Arabic treatise, *De spatula*, translated in the early twelfth century by Hugh of Santalla).

- 1314 ff. *Thosz the Grek*. Toz Graecus (Thoth, Thoz, and Hermes Trismegistus) is often cited by later writers such as Daniel of Morley, William of Auvergne, and Albertus 11.71–75, which includes a work on the stations for the cult of Venus, another on the four mirrors of Venus, and a third on the images of Venus, all of which are attributed to Toz Graecus. See Thorndike 2.225–28.
- 1317–18 *Ne Salomones Candarie, / His Ydeac, his Eutonye*. Gower seems to have misread Albertus, who states that “amongst the books of Salomon, there is the book, *De quatuor annulis* (On the four rings) . . . which begins like this: ‘*De arte eutonica et ydaica etc.*’ (‘On eutonic and ydaic art etc.’); and the book *De novem candariis* (On the nine candles)” (11.76–68, trans. Zambelli).
- 1323 *Gibihere*. Probably Geber, who was not a magician but rather a noted alchemist (Fox, *Mediaeval Sciences*, p. 147). See chapter 2 of Albertus.
- 1325 *Babilla with hire sones sevene*. Babilla is one of the names for Babylon. The allusion seems to be astronomical, where “hire sones sevene” alludes to the seven planets and their spheres. See Lidaka (“*Book of Angels*,” note to line 1327) for examples of charms and magic squares based on the seven planets, lore that may be, perhaps, traced back to Babylonian astrology.
- 1327 *cernes bothe square and rounde*. Cernes are “circles or other peripheral figures used in magic” (Fox, *Mediaeval Sciences*, p. 147). On circles and magic squares, see Lidaka, “*Book of Angels*,” pp. 34–44, and Karpenko, “Magic Squares.”
- 1331 *The scole of Honorius*. “Honorius was the supposed author of the *Liber sacratus* or *Liber juratus* as it was sometimes called because of the oath which had to be taken to gain possession of the volume” (Fox, *Mediaeval Sciences*, p. 147). See Mathiesen’s essay on the *Liber juratus*, that is, *The Sacred or Sworn Book*, which includes a history of the work from the thirteenth century into the seventeenth, along with numerous excerpts on magical operations (“A Thirteenth-Century Ritual”). Honorius is not mentioned in Albertus, though Belamuz’s book *De horarum opere* is, which may have suggested Honorius to someone.
- 1381 *And thus the guilour is beguiled*. Proverbial. See Whiting, G491. See also *Piers Plowman* B.15.340 ff.
- 1391 ff. The story of Ulysses and Telegonus is told by Dictys, 6.14, 15; by Benoît, lines 28701–28825, 29815–30300; and in the *Gest Hystoriale* 34.13208–53, 36.13802–13989. Wetherbee notes that the Tale of Telegonus is the last of Gower’s Troy narratives, the fatal encounter of father and son based on “the somber final episode of the *Roman de Troie*. Like Chaucer’s Knight’s Tale, it exposes the uncontrollable relation of intimacy and violence in the chivalric bond” (“John Gower,” p. 602). See also Hyg. 126–27.
- 1392 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota contra istos ob amoris causam sortilegos; ubi narrat in exemplum quod, cum Vluxe a subuersione Troie repatriare nauigio voluisset, ipsum in Insula Cilly, ubi illa expertissima maga nomine Circes regnavit, contigit applicuisse; quem ut in sui amoris concupiscenciam exardesceret, Circes omnibus suis incantacionibus vincere conabatur. Vluxe tamen magica potencior ipsam in amore subegit, ex qua filium nomine Thelogonum genuit, qui postea patrem suum interfecit: et sic contra fidei*

naturam genitus contra generacionis naturam patricidium operatus est. [Note against those who use sorcery in the cause of love. Here he narrates in an instructive example that, when Ulysses wanted to return by ship to his homeland after the sacking of Troy, he happened to arrive at the Island of Cilly, where the most expert magician, Circes by name, ruled. Since she burned for him in the lust of her desire, Circes tried to conquer all his men with incantations. Ulysses, however, more powerful than magic, subjected her in love, from which a son, Theologonus by name, was born, who later killed his father. And thus having been generated in violation of the nature of faith (Theologonus) carried out patricide in violation of the nature of generation.]

- 1395–96 *whyl ther is a mouth, / Forevere his name schal be couth.* This tribute to Ulysses is testimony to the power and function of the voice of the people within their culture, as well as a tribute to the king's popularity.
- 1398 *clerk knowende.* Ulysses is wise in most ways. But Olsson, *John Gower and the Structures of Conversion*, p. 186, notes a deficiency in his wisdom: "Ulysses's knowledge lacks an *ordinatio*, or a field of topics to organize remembrance, and that is because he is driven by *sensualitas*, by a desire for immediate gratification of his 'lustes.' He is a character who has lost his history."
- 1408 *al the strengthe of herbes.* "A poem *De Viribus Herbarum* passed in the Middle Ages under the name of *Macer*" (Mac 3.516).
- 1422 *nedle and ston.* A "rather daring anachronism" on Gower's part (Mac 3.517).
- 1472 *A betre wif.* Genius deliberately sets Penelope's virtue against Ulysses' sensuality. In her wisdom, she is not confused or fooled by strangers at her door.
- 1513 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Oracius. Omnia sunt hominum tenui pendencia filo.* [Horace: All human matters are dangling by a slender thread.] Stollreither notes that the passage is from Ovid, *Ponti* 4.3.35, not Horace (*Quellen-Nachweise*, p. 57).
- 1513–14 *happes over mannes hed / Ben honged with a tendre thred.* Proverbial. See Whiting, H99.
- 1523–63 *he mette a swevene.* "The dream of Ulysses is the only one described by Gower in which the will of a personal agent, god or magician, is not the initiating force. No cause is stated" (Fox, *Mediaeval Sciences*, p. 109).
- 1567 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Bernardus. Plures plura sciunt et seipsos nesciunt.* [Bernard: Many know many things and are ignorant of themselves.] The phrase is also used in *Piers Plowman*, B.11.3, at a key moment.
- 1575–81 Bakalian points out that in *Traitié* 6.3, "Ulysses dies as a direct result of his infidelity" (*Aspects of Love*, p. 42). But in *CA* he is slain by his unknown son in part "because he has lost his ability to reason and correctly interpret the dream of his own death" (p. 41). Fox notes that although Ulysses' dream needs explication Ulysses is "unable to interpret it" (*Mediaeval Sciences*, p. 109). In Benoît he seeks help from others, but Gower leaves him on his own: "For al his calculacion / He seth no demonstracion / Al plainly for to knowe an ende" (6.1579–81).

- 1660 *Nachaie*. Presumably Ithaca, though perhaps Achaeia. Benoît's *Roman de Troie* reads "Tant qu'il vint droit en Acaie," which Macaulay suggests refers to Ithaca, for which *Nachaie* could be a mistake (3.518).
- 1768–78 Perhaps Gower's most succinct moral. The anaphora provides both emphasis on sorcery as well as a plot review, leading up to an epigrammatic couplet (lines 1777–78), with multiple puns on *unkindeschipe* to imply not only witchcraft and sorcery but also an "unfilial act," "unnaturalness," "ingratitude," "improper rule," "disloyalty," "ungenerosity," "lack of natural affection," etc.
- 1789 ff. Because he was Alexander's teacher and a magician, Nectanabus was a favorite in popular medieval literature. Gower may be working from Thomas of Kent's Anglo-Norman *Roman de toute Chevalerie*, the Latin *Historia de Preliis Alexandri* (Macaulay [3.519] gives a comparison of these two texts with Gower), Valerius' *Res Gestae Alexandri*, or some version of the *Alexandreis* by Walter of Châtillon. See deAngeli, "Julius Valerius' Account of the Birth of Alexander"; and De Bellis, "Thomas of Kent's Account of the Birth of Alexander." For general discussion, see Hamilton, "Some Sources," pp. 504–16; and Beidler, "Diabolical Treachery in the Tale of Nectanabus." Simpson links this tale with the Tale of Ulysses and Telegonus as examples of "self-ignorance in the learned, and the political consequences of that ignorance" (*Sciences and the Self*, p. 211).
- 1793 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic narrat exemplum super eodem, qualiter Nectanabus ab Egipto in Macedoniam fugitiuus, Olimpiadem Philippi Regis ibidem tunc absentis uxorem arte magica decipiens, cum ipsa concubuit, magnumque ex ea Alexandrum sortilegus genuit: qui natus, postea cum ad erudiendum sub custodia Nectanabi comendatus fuisset, ipsum Nectanabum patrem suum ab altitudine cuiusdam turris in fossam profundam proiciens interfecit. Et sic sortilegus ex suo sortilegio infortunii sortem sortitus est.* [Here he narrates an instructive example on the same thing, how Nectanabus, a fugitive from Egypt into Macedonia, deceived by magic art Olimpias the wife of Phillip the king there, who was away at that time. The sorcerer slept with her and generated from her Alexander the Great, who, having been born, when he was later commended to an education under the tutelage of Nectanabus, murdered his father Nectanabus by throwing him from a certain high tower into a deep pit. And thus the sorcerer was fated to an ill fate by his own sorcery.] The last line insistently puns on *sor* (fate) and *sortilegus* (fate-teller or sorcerer). See also VC 2.4.203–08, where Gower expounds upon sorcery and fate. See Peck, "Phenomenology of Make Believe," pp. 258–66.
- 1799 *magique of his sorcerie*. On Nectanabus' lack of real power over his victims as he manipulates illusions to gull people, see Peck, "Phenomenology of Make Believe," pp. 264–66.
- 1844 *tymber*. A percussion instrument, such as a small drum, tambourine, or a stringed instrument, used to accompany carols and other dances.
- 1848 *hoved and abod*. "paused and waited." Compare 2.3006. See MED *hoven* v 2a.
- 1858 *He couthe noght withdrawe his lok*. See Genius' fundamental advice on the importance of guarding your eyes well, with which he begins his instruction of Amans

- (1.304 ff.), and the dangers of “mislok” (1.334) as evidenced by stories of Acteon and Medusa. Queen Olympia needs some of the same advice (6.1864).
- 1882–83 *The dai goth forth . . . man mot lete his werk.* Compare Chaucer’s *Parliament of Fowls*, where the nightfall trope is also used to set up a dream-troubled night.
- 1886–88 *queene / And passeth over thilke nyht / Til it was on the morwe liht.* It is possible that *thilke nyht* (line 1887) is the subject of *passeth over* rather than *queene*, but there are plenty of examples of people struggling with anxiety-provoking thoughts to get through the night in medieval poetry (e.g., the opening of Chaucer’s *BD*). *MED* offers “survive,” “escape,” “endure” as glosses for *passen over* n. (c), which provide a more vivid sense of what is going on for the queen than simply saying “the night passed and it was day.” I take *queene* (line 1886) to be the subject of *passeth over*, rather than *nyht* on grounds that her restless preoccupation with Nectanabus’ words occupies her all night. How one gets through restless nights is a favorite topic in dream visions. The narrator in *BD* relies on a book “To rede and drive the night away” (line 49). Olympia’s only relief is to rehearse the words.
- 1922 *Amos of Lubie.* Hammon of Lybia. See *De nuptiis*, Book 2 (“The Marriage,” especially 2.158–93). Hammon is one of the demigods who, like Dionysus, Osiris, Isis, and Triptolemus, have celestial souls but may appear in human form for the benefit of the whole world. Philology places him as “the exalted power of the Father Unknown” (p. 58), a light in darkness (see *CA* 6.1981–82) known by many names — Phoebus, Lyceus, Serapis, Osiris, Mithras, Dis, Horus, Typhon, Attis, Phoenician Adonis, and “Hammon from parched Lybia” (p. 59), as he works his wonders.
- 1935 *He schal a sone of you begete.* For difficult-to-come-by sources for Gower’s Tale of Nectanabus’ conception and birth, see De Bellis’ excerpts with translation (based on the Paris Manuscript) from “Thomas of Kent’s Account of the Birth of Alexander,” which includes the following subsections: The Prologue; Of Nectanabus, King of Lybia; How Nectanabus fled and came to Macedonia; Of the Queen of Macedonia; How Alexander was conceived; How a shortwing hawk is transmitted to Philip in a vision; How Nectanabus changed himself into a dragon; Of the pheasant which, in flight, lays an egg; How Alexander is born and of the miracles that occur at his birth; Of Bucephalus, Alexander’s horse, and how he ate people; and How Alexander killed his father, and how Nectanabus criticized Alexander. And, also, see deAngeli’s text and translation of “Julius Valerius’ Account of the Birth of Alexander.”
- 1962 *recepcons.* *MED* cites this line, with the astrological meaning: “the reciprocal effect of two planets when each is in a sign where the other has a dignity.”
- 1963 *ascendent.* The degree of the ecliptic or zodiac arising above the horizon at a given moment. See *MED accendent* n.
- 2274 *Calistre.* Callisthenes, Aristotle’s nephew, accompanied Alexander as biographer and historian of his military campaigns on his eastern expedition. The biography extolled him as son of Zeus. Callisthenes quarreled with Alex-

ander, however, and was accused of conspiracy; he was put to death in 327. The murder caused strong hostility against Alexander by the school of Aristotle. Although Callisthenes' biography of the king does not survive, his name became attached to early versions of the Romance of Alexander. See *OCCL*, pp. 111–12.

2338 *sorcerie*. See Peck, *Kingship and Common Profit*, pp. 87–88, on Nectanabus' sorcery and the fating of his life; and pp. 135–38, on the ultimate folly of his self-beguiling as he uses his sorcery to look out for himself.

2367 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota qualiter Rex Zorastes, statim cum ab utero matris sue nasceretur, gaudio magno risit; in quo prenosticum doloris subsequentis signum figurabatur: nam et ipse detestabilis magice primus fuit inventor, quem postea Rex Surrie dira morte trucidavit, et sic opus operarium consumpsit.* [Note how King Zoroaster laughed with great joy as soon as he was born from his mother's womb, in which was figured the prognostication of future sorrow; for he was also the first inventor of detestable magic, and later the king of Syria executed him in a terrible death, and thus the work consumed the workman.]

On Zoroaster see Pliny, *Naturalis historiae* 7.15, and Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, 21.14. Zoroaster is the Greek form of Iranian Zarathustra. He is treated as a historical figure of the sixth century or earlier.

2385 ff. See 1 Kings (1 Samuel) 27–31.

📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de Saule et Phitonissa.* [Note concerning Saul and Phitonissa.]

2387 *Phitonesse in Samarie*. The witch of Endor. See 1 Kings (1 Samuel) 28:3–25.

2392 *Bot of to mochel no man yelpeth*. Proverbial. See Whiting, M788.

2408–15 See Minnis, “Moral Gower,” pp. 74–75, on Gower's use of Amans' desire (*min herte sore longeth*, line 2414) to learn of Aristotle's instruction of Alexander as a means of providing a *raison d'être* for the encyclopedic doctrine of the *Secretum Secretorum* that constitutes much of Book 7.

2420–36 Genius announces the philosophical content and goals of Book 7. See Simpson on the “Platonic poetics” (*Sciences and the Self*, p. 70) grounded in Boethius and Alan of Lille that Gower works from in creating Genius and the rhetorical order that he shapes to present the idea of the philosopher king that becomes the center of Book 7 and, for that matter, the whole poem. See especially pp. 203–11, on self-knowledge; the encyclopedic matter of Book 7 “is produced out of the joint desire of Amans and Genius” and is first provoked by Amans (p. 207).


EXPLANATORY NOTES TO BOOK 7

Book 7 has provoked a wide critical response, from charges of artless digression, “absolutely irrelevant to the main subject” (Macaulay, “John Gower,” p. 149), to praise as structurally “the most important” in the whole poem (Peck, *Kingship and Common Profit*, p. 140). For a

summary of positions see Nicholson, *Annotated Index*, pp. 423–26. For seminal discussion on the book’s function as advice-to-kings literature, see Coffman, “John Gower in His Most Significant Role”; Pearsall, *Gower and Lydgate*, pp. 16–17; Coleman, *Medieval Readers and Writers*, pp. 126–56; Olsson, *John Gower and the Structures of Conversion*, pp. 191–214; and Ferster, *Fictions of Advice*, pp. 108–36. Simpson suggests that the book provides from its inside position the actual framework of *CA*: “The whole poem outside of Book VII is a discussion of ethics and economics . . . [that] leads inevitably to the explicit political discourse of Book VII” (*Sciences and the Self*, p. 220); “the real ‘frame’ of the *Confessio* . . . is not the confession of Amans, but rather the *divisio philosophiae* of Book VII” (p. 223). Macaulay points out that the most important source for the book is the *Trésor* of Brunetto Latini, a work based largely on Aristotle, “with whose works Latini was exceptionally well acquainted” (3.522). My citations of Brunetto are based on the translation by Barrette and Baldwin and are cited by book, chapter, and page number to this edition. Astell notes also derivations from Giles of Rome’s *De regimine principum* and the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secretum Secretorum* (*Chaucer and the Universe of Learning*, pp. 76–83). See Wetherbee on the “integrative function” of Book 7 (“John Gower,” p. 604), and Porter, “Gower’s Ethical Microcosm,” especially p. 154.

5 *Alisandre*. In Book 7 Alexander is given a more positive treatment than elsewhere in *CA*. In *MO*, lines 22849 ff., David is presented as the exemplary king; Alexander is the tyrant, fortune’s fool (*MO*, lines 22051–80). Similarly, in the Tale of Diogenes (*CA* 3.1201 ff.), Alexander and the Pirate (3.2363 ff.), the Wars of Alexander (3.2438 ff.), and Alexander as the student of Nectanabus (6.2271 ff.), he is presented as one who wields power without much intelligence. But in Book 7, where he is mainly the occasion for Aristotle’s instruction in the tools of self-governance and kingship, he fares better. On the popularity of the pedagogical trope of Aristotle teaching kingly virtues to young Alexander, see *Secretum Secretorum* along with various Latin texts, originally translated from a tenth-century pseudo-Aristotelian Arabic teaching text, the *Kitab sirr al-asrar* (*The Book of the Secret of Secrets*).

7 *For it is noght to the matiere*. Gower makes a rather subtle point here through the complex voicing of his poem. Genius is concerned about his contract with Venus. But in the reciprocity of that contract with his client he is obliged to digress. Yet what is digression for him may be central to the poet, since his confessor’s voice reaches into matter touched on prior to this, mainly in the Prologue and the Latin voicing of the poem. The paradox enables him to approach doctrine directly, yet still within his fictive framework. For Genius, it is the “gladness” of the digression that justifies it (see line 10).

9 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Quia omnis doctrina bona humano regimini salutem confert, in hoc septimo libro ad instanciam Amantis languidi intendit Genius illam ex qua Philosophi et Astrologi philosophie doctrinam Regem Alexandrum imbuerunt, secundum aliquid declarare. Diuidit enim philosophiam in tres partes, quarum prima Theorica, secunda Rethorica, tercia Practica nuncupata est, de quarum condicionibus subsequenter per singula tractabit.* [Since all good doctrine confers well-being on the human condition, in this seventh book, at the prompting of the languishing Lover, Genius intends to declare in some respects the doctrine of philosophy with which philosophers and astrologers imbued King Alexander.

Thus he divides philosophy into three parts, the first of which is called Theory, the second Rhetoric, and the third Practice, concerning whose natures one by one he will subsequently discourse.]

- 20 See the explanatory note to 6.2274. *Calistre*, a second-century Greek work purportedly written by Callisthenes (Pseudo-Callisthenes), became the base text for various medieval renditions of Alexander's travels, including *Historia de Preliis* and *Epistola Alexandri ad Aristotelem*. See *The Greek Alexander Romance*, trans. Stoneman.
- 28 *intelligences*. Macaulay relates the term *intelligencias* in the margin at 1.149, where the sense seems to be the same as "sciences," that is, divisions or provinces of knowledge (2.522n26ff.).
- 51–52 Gower probably did not know Aristotle's work firsthand. Genius' account of Aristotle's division of Philosophy into "Theorique," "Rethorique," and "Practique" (lines 30–46) is based mainly on the third book of Brunetto Latini's *Trésor*.
- 54–55 *conserve* / *And kepere*. See Simpson, *Sciences and the Self*, pp. 217–29, on the theoretical and practical sciences of philosophy as the *conserve* / *And kepere* of *the remenant*. Politics, even more than the theoretical sciences, focuses ethical and economic themes of the poem so "that we can understand how a mediation between body and soul might be possible" (p. 225). In his humanism Gower always seems aware of the demands of the body (p. 229).
- 61 On the divisions of Theorique, see *Trésor* 1.3.1–8. See also *Did.*, appendix A (trans. Taylor, p. 153), for additions Hugh made on the divisions of the theoretical into Theology, Physics, and Mathematics.
- 66 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat de prima parte Philosophie, que Theorica dicitur, cuius natura triplici dotata est sciencia, scilicet Theologia, Phisica, et Mathematica: set primo illam partem Theologie declarabit.* [Here he discourses concerning the first part of Philosophy, which is called Theory, whose learning is endowed by a triple nature, namely Theology, Natural Science ("Physics"), and Mathematics; and first he will declare Theology's part.]
- 70 *The science of Theologie*. "The first and highest" branch of theory, dealing with that which "goes beyond heaven and shows us the nature of those things which have no corporeal existence," and concerns such matters as God the All Powerful, the Holy Trinity, the Catholic faith, and the law of Holy Church, that is, "everything pertaining to divinity" (*Trésor* 1.3.2, p. 3). See *CA* 7.73–134.
- 71 *Phisque*. Discourse on the nature of things; the physical sciences. Brunetto (*Trésor* 1.3.3) argues that through physics "we know the nature of those things which have corporeal existence and are related to corporeal things, that is, of men and beasts and birds, of fish, of plants, of stones and of the other corporeal things which are around us" (p. 3). See also *Did.* 2.16: "Physics searches out . . . the causes of things as found in their effects . . . The word *physis* means nature, and therefore Boethius places natural physics in the

higher division of the theoretical knowledge,” as part of a triumvirate with ethics and logic (p. 71). See *CA* 7.135–44.

- 72 *Mathematique*, akin to *Practique*, should not be confused with modern implications of mathematics. For Aristotle it is used to identify what later came to be called the quadrivium, that is, the study of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. These sciences all deal with ratios, proportions, and kinds of enumerations. The separate treatises by Augustine and Boethius entitled *De musica*, for example, do not deal with music as we think of it, but are primarily concerned with meter, what we might call prosody, along with matters of proportion (what we might extend into harmony) and categories of metrics and ratio (modes). See also the note to lines 7.145–202.
- 73–134 See the explanatory note to 7.70.
- 82 *as olde bokes telle*. Gower reminds us on several occasions that, although the frame of Book 7 may be the *Secretum Secretorum*, he draws upon various *bokes* to give us his full account of Aristotle’s teaching. That teaching is, of course, as important for us and Amans as it was for Alexander, who may or may not have been a good student. (See note to 7.5.)
- 86 *ferste cause*. See Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 1.1–8, on *simpliciter*, the number base from which all follows, and 2.1–2 on causes. The idea becomes commonplace, though central to theology and logic. See Boethius, *De Consolatione* 2.m.8, 3.pr.10, and 4.m.6, especially on yearning for the simplicity of God. Compare Chaucer’s Knight’s Tale (*CT* I[A]2987–89) on “The Firste Moevere of the cause above” and the “faire cheyne of love” which is the “effect” of his “entente”; or, Chaucer’s balade “Gentilesse” and “The firste stok, fader of gentilesse,” from whose “trace” all who would be gentle must derive. See Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being*.
- 88 *Withoute whom nothing is good*. Christ, “the ferste cause,” is the orderer of all creation. Take Christ out of the creation and chaos ensues. N.b., Chaucer’s Parson’s Tale (*CT* X[I]217–18). Evil is absence of Christ, a nothingness without substance. See *Trésor* 1.11 (“How Evil Was Invented,” p. 9): “Evil was invented by the Devil; it was not created, and therefore it is nothing, for that which is without God is nothing, and God did not make Evil.”
- 89–90 *every creature . . . his beinge and his nature*. Olsson cites this passage as part of his demonstration that one’s “title to existence, moral or otherwise, is not a person’s own, and neither are his or her secrets. Existence and the ‘privetes of mannes herte’ (1.2806) belong to God” (“Love, Intimacy, and Gower,” p. 94).
- 91 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota quod triplex dicitur essencia: Prima temporanea, que incipit et desinit, Secunda perpetua, que incipit et non desinit, Tercia sempiterna, que nec incipit nec desinit.* [Note that being is called triple: First temporal, which begins and ceases; Second perpetual, which begins and does not cease, and Third eternal, which neither begins nor ends.]
- 92 ff. *thre formes of beinges*. The division of what is “born and dies,” what is “born but does not die,” and what is “not born and does not die” was a traditional aca-

demic (and thus theological) hierarchy of being, ultimately based on Aristotle's ideas of what is moved and moves others, what is moved and does not move others, and what is not moved but moves others (the Prime Mover). Thirteenth- and fourteenth-century scholasticism was much concerned with issues of causality which elaborated these issues of being. See Gilson's *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, pp. 250–545. A good reference for distinctions between forms and causes moving beyond Aristotle is the third chapter of Duns Scotus' *Treatise on God as First Principle*. See the selection in Baird and Kaufmann's *Philosophic Classics Volume II: Medieval Philosophy*, pp. 425–30.

- 98 *Here beinge is perpetuel*. The idea is that of God as *deus conservans*, who perpetually sustains creation through His presence.
- 121–30 Here Theology insists that things may be “credible,” even though they may not be “prieve by weie of argument sensible” (7.126–28). The proposition behind Genius' point regarding the preeminence of faith over sensible proof echoes Augustine's *Credo ut intelligam* (“I believe in order to understand”). Chaucer lends support to the idea at the beginning of *LGW* (F.1–16).
- 135 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de secunda parte Theorice, que Phisica dicitur*. [Note concerning the second part of Theory, which is called Natural Science (“Physics”).]
- 135–44 *Phisique*. See note to 7.71, above.
- 145 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de tercia parte Theorice, que Mathematica dicitur, cuius condicio quatuor in se continent intelligencias, scilicet Arsmeticam, Musicam, Geometriam et Astronomiam: set primo de Artismetice natura dicere intendit*. [Note concerning the third part of Theory, which is called Mathematics, whose nature contains in itself four branches of knowledge (*intelligenciae*; compare “intelligences,” lines 28 and 176), namely Arithmetic, Music, Geometry, and Astronomy; and first he intends to speak about the nature of Arithmetic.]
- 145–202 The four subdivisions of mathematics are usually referred to as the *Quadrivium* (see note to 7.72). That all four depend upon line, measure, time, and space explains their relationship with “mathematics.” On the divisions of mathematics, see *Trésor* 1.3.4–8 (pp. 3–4); *De nuptiis* 6–9; and *Did.*, Appendix A. The fourfold classification is ancient, though Boethius provides the designation *quadrivium* and prepared texts for each that became standard curricula in medieval universities. Gower's ordering of the four differs from that of Boethius in that he places *musica* second rather than third, thus reversing it with *geometria*.
- 153 *Arsmetique*. See *Trésor* 1.3.5 (p. 3) on arithmetic as the first subject of mathematics. See *De nuptiis* 7 (“Arithmetic”) for a more full account of the subject.
- 155 *Algorisme*. Macaulay (3.522) notes: “This stands properly for the decimal system of numeration, but the use of the word in the plural, l.158, shows that Gower did not use it in this sense only. The association of the word ‘Algorismes’ below with the letters *a, b, c* (‘Abece’) seems to suggest some kind of algebraical expression, but this is perhaps due to a misunderstanding by

- Gower of the word ‘abaque’ (or ‘abake’) in the *Trésor* . . . : ‘Et de ce sont li enseignement de l’abaque et de l’augorisme.’”
- 163 See the explanatory note to 7.72.
- 163 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de Musica, que secunda pars Artis Mathematice dicitur.* [Note concerning Music, which is called the second part of the Mathematic Art.]
- 163–64 *The seconde . . . is the science of Musique.* “The second is music, which teaches us to make musical sounds, by singing, playing stringed instruments, and on organs and other harmonizing instruments, combining the sounds for the pleasure of the people, or in Church the service of our Lord” (*Trésor* 1.3.6; compare *Did.* 2.12). See also *De nuptiis* 9 (“Harmony”). Augustine and Boethius both produced tractates on the science of music, which concerned primarily discussion of metrics. (Boethius’ text was still in use at Oxford in the eighteenth century.) Genius’ description focuses more on what we would think of as music, namely, harmony (line 165), melody (line 166), voice and instruments, and the relationship of notes. (Compare Chaucer’s account of the singing birds in *BD*, lines 294–315, with some notes high, some low, but all of one accord with harmonies and melodies sweet.) But Genius also comments on Boethian subjects of prolation (duration), pronunciation, rhythm, and tone (lines 170–74).
- 175 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de tercia specie Artis Mathematice, quam Geometriam vocant.* [Note concerning the third species of the Mathematic Art, which they call Geometry.]
- 176–90 *the thridde intelligence / Full of wisdom and of clergie / And cleped . . . Geometrie.* See *Trésor* 1.3.7: “The third [division of Mathematics] is geometry, through which we know the measurements and proportions of things: their length, width and height. It was through the subject of geometry that the ancient sages attempted to find the relative dimensions of heaven and earth, and the distance from the one to the other, and many other proportions which are truly marvellous.” See also *De nuptiis* 6 (“Geometry”).
- 191–202 *Astronomie.* See *Trésor* 1.3.8: “The fourth subject is astronomy, which teaches us the entire organization of heaven and the firmament and the stars, and the movement of the seven planets through the zodiac, that is, through the twelve signs, and how the weather changes from hot to cold to rain to drought to wind, by reason of what is established in the stars.” See also *De nuptiis* 8 (“Astronomy”).
- 209 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic interim tractat de creacione quatuor Elementorum, scilicet terre, aque, aeris et ignis, necnon et de eorum naturis, nam et singulis proprietates singule attribuuntur.* [Here meanwhile he discourses about the creation of the four Elements, namely earth, water, air, and fire, and also about their natures, for to each particular one are attributed particular properties.]
- 216 *ylem.* “Hyle” is the term used by the twelfth-century author Bernardus Silvestris for primordial matter; see his widely copied *Cosmographia*, ed. and trans. Wetherbee, pp. 67–75: “Hyle was Nature’s most ancient manifestation, the inexhaustible womb of generation, the primary basis of formal existence, the matter of all bodies, the foundation of substance” (p. 70).

- 223 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de Terra, quod est primum elementum.* [Note concerning the Earth, which is the first element.]
- 223 On the four elements, four complexions, four humors, and four seasons and nature's role in perpetually harmonizing and ordering discordant matters, see *Trésor* 1.99–107. Brunetto's categories derive ultimately from the first book of Aristotle's *Meteorologica*. On the creation of the elements, see Bernardus Sylvestris, *Cosmographia*, ch. 2, especially pp. 72–73, where first comes fire, then earth, then water, then air. Gower begins at the center, with earth, then water, air, and fire.
- 232 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Philosophus. Vnumquodque naturaliter appetit suum centrum.* [The Philosopher: Each thing naturally desires its center.]
- 234–35 *centre drawe . . . every worldes thing.* See *Trésor* 1.104.6–10, where Brunetto explains why heaviest things are closest to the center and lighter things more distant, but still are drawn toward the center according to their natures.
- 237 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de Aqua, quod est secundum elementum.* [Note concerning Water, which is the second element.]
- 238 *water.* See *Trésor* 1.105. Genius' comparison of the streams of earth with veins of blood in men (7.245–46) comes from the opening section of this chapter: "the earth . . . is all perforated and full of veins and caverns, which is why the waters which flow from the sea go out and come back through the earth . . . which is similar to what happens to the blood in man, which spreads into veins, so that the blood flows up and down through the whole body." On water springing from high hills (7.247–53), see *Trésor* 1.105.2.
- 254 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de Aere, quod est tercium elementum.* [Note concerning Air, which is the third element.]
- 255 *Air.* See *Trésor* 1.106, though Brunetto does not discuss air in terms of "periferies."
- 265 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota qualiter Aer in tribus Periferiis diuiditur.* [Note how Air is divided into three Atmospheric Layers (*Periferia*).] Macaulay (3.523) suggests that Gower's three "periferies" are perhaps a refinement of the two strata of air laid out in Aristotle's *Meteorologica* 1.3, but the parallels are thin. On knowledge of the *Meteorologica* in the fourteenth century and the commentaries of Averroes and Albertus Magnus on Aristotle picked up by others like Jacobus Angeli and John of Damascus, and Blasius in his lectures on *Meteorologica* at Pavia in 1385, see Thorndike, vol. 4, especially pp. 67, 83, 102, 158, 367, and especially 653–54.
- 280 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *De prima Aeris Periferia.* [Concerning the first Layer of Air.]
- 285 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *De secunda Aeris Periferia.* [Concerning the second Layer of Air.]
- 297 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *De tercia Aeris Periferia.* [Concerning the third Layer of Air.]

- 312–13 A further proof of the preeminence of sight over the other senses. See the discussion of lightning, 7.307–18. That the sight is nearer to the eye than the sound is to the ears is evident by the fact that we see the lightning before we hear the thunder. See 1.304 ff. on sight being “the most principal of alle” the senses (n.b., 1.304–08n); also *Trésor* 1.106.8 and Bart. Ang. 3.17 (*De sensu visus*).
- 319–67 On fiery exhalations, lightning, firedrakes, and other airy demonstrations, see *Trésor* 1.106, especially 7–9, although Gower’s remarks about *Assub* (line 334), *Capra saliens* (line 347), *Eges* (line 351), and *Daaly* (line 361) are not in Brunetto. Aristotle (i.e., the “philosophre” Genius cites in 7.228) speaks in *Meteorologica* 1.4.2–3 of “the appearance of burning flames in the sky, of shooting stars and of what some people call ‘torches’ and ‘goats’” (p. 559).
- 319 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic qualiter Ignes, quos noctanter in Aeris discurrere videmus, secundum varias apparencie formas varia gestant nomina; quorum primus Assub, secundus Capra saliens, tercius Eges et quartus Daali in libris Philosophorum nuncupatus est.* [Note here how Fires, which we see traveling at night through the Air, carry various names according to various apparitions of forms: the first is called in philosophers’ books Assub, the second Capra saliens (“skipping Goat”), third Eges, and the fourth Daali.]
- 334 *Assub*. Macaulay notes that “this word is used in Latin translations of Aristotle as an equivalent of ‘stella cadens,’” or falling star, as if Gower is repeating authorities “without understanding them” (Mac 3.523), though Genius is talking about the variant terms in slightly different contexts and may simply have preferred the more descriptive term for his goat analogy. He is talking about names of the “same kinde” (line 340) but of another “forme” (line 341), as if to say that comets do not always behave in the same way, some falling, some “skippende” (line 345), some reaching earth and some not, thus “semende” (line 346) to be different.
- 375 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de Igne, quod est quartum elementum.* [Note concerning Fire, which is the fourth element.] On fire as the fourth element, see *Trésor* 1.107.
- 393–489 God has given the four complexions as aspects of human nature, but, though Nature affects human behavior through these conditions, the soul is governed by God alone. See 7.490–520. Gower appears to be working from *Trésor* 1.101.1–6, though Brunetto is more brief; he remarks on the conditions of the humors but does not discuss body parts in conjunction with the humors as Genius does (7.449–75). Perhaps the more useful text for comparison and contextualization of Gower’s views in conjunction with Aristotle, Augustine, Avicenna, etc., is Bart. Ang. 4, which deals extensively with the conditions of the body and the humors (vol. 1, pp. 129–62). White points out that, in the debate between body and soul, the two are, in some instances, at loggerheads; but that does not mean that the influence of Nature cannot be benign. “In fact, it may be that the idea of Nature is for Gower the focus of a vision of the healing of the fundamental division between soul and body and hence a talismanic concept” (*Nature, Sex, and Goodness*, p. 187). Genius

- holds together the two poles between the sacred and erotic (p. 188; and Baker, “The Priesthood of Genius”).
- 396–400 See White on man as victim of his own “divided constitution” (“Division and Failure,” p. 602). Compare 7.490–510, 515–20; and also, of course, Prol. 575–78, 827–33, 851–53, and 967–1011.
- 397 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic qualiter secundum naturam quatuor elementorum quatuor in humano corpore complexiones, scilicet Malencolia, Fleuma, Sanguis et Colera, naturaliter constituuntur: unde primo de Malencolia dicendum est.* [Note here how according to the nature of the four elements are naturally constituted four humors (*complexiones*) in the human body, namely Melancholy, Phlegm, Blood, and Choler (Bile). Wherefore first there is a discussion about Melancholy.] See Bart. Ang. 4.11.
- 414 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *De complexionem Fleumatis.* [Concerning the humor of Phlegm.] See Bart. Ang. 4.9.
- 421 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *De complexionem Sanguinis.* [Concerning the humor of Blood.] See Bart. Ang. 4.7.
- 429 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *De complexionem Colere.* [Concerning the humor of Bile.] See Bart. Ang. 4.10.
- 441 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota qualiter quatuor complexiones quatuor in homine habitationes diuisim possident.* [Note how the four humors respectively possess four habitations in man.]
- 449 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Splen domus est Malencolie.* [The spleen is Melancholy’s home.]
- 451 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Pulmo domus Fleumatis.* [The lung is Phlegm’s home.]
- 455 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Epar domus Sanguinis.* [The liver is the home of Blood.]
- 459 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Fel domus Colere.* [The gall-bladder is the home of Bile.]
- 463 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de Stomacho, qui vna cum aliis cordi specialius deseruit.* [Note concerning the Stomach, which along with the others particularly serves the heart.] Gower looks on the parts of the body as a community, each member of which has specific obligations to keep the estate functioning in a healthy way. Bartholomaeus provides the most detailed Middle English analysis of the body parts, their nature, and how they function, starting at the head and its several parts and proceeding downward to the feet, in Book 5 of *Properties*. Each part of the anatomy is given a separate chapter, not just for head, but skull, hair, eyes, eyelids, etc. The approach is more Aristotelian than Platonic, with little attention given to the metaphysics and sociology of the body that so interests Gower. Bartholomaeus works primarily from a Latin version of Aristotle’s *Parts of Animals*.
- 473–75 This is “Gower’s most explicit statement about the nature and physical origin of laughter” (Burke, “Genial Gower,” p. 42), thereby asserting his belief in the legitimacy of laughter as a means of expression. “Explaining that each

bodily organ has a rightful purpose to fulfill on behalf of the heart, the poet echoes the medical traditions of his day in locating the source of laughter in the spleen.”

- 479–80 *stomach . . . the boc*. In Gower the stomach is a *comun coc* [cook] / *Ordeined, as seith the boc*. In Bartholomaeus it is “the dore of þe wombe, and fongip mete and drynke, and sendip to þe guttis” (Bart. Ang. 5.38, 1.29–30). What precisely *the boc* is that Gower speaks of I have been unable to determine, but such personification is not unusual, even in medical texts. E.g., Master Nicolaus of Salerno, a twelfth-century follower of Galen, presents the digestive system as a kitchen in which staples, ground at the mill, are prepared to sustain the rest of the community (i.e., the body). The mouth is the mill, the teeth the mill-stones, and the tongue is the miller, “for just as grain is received into a mill, so is food taken into the mouth; and in the same way that the grain is cast by the hand of the miller under the grindstones (*molares*) to be ground, so is food cast by the tongue beneath the molar teeth to be masticated.” The stomach is the receiving kettle: “It has the liver below it like a fire underneath a caldron; and thus the stomach is like a kettle of food, the gall-bladder is the cook, and the liver is the fire” (Corner, *Anatomical Texts of the Earlier Middle Ages*, pp. 78–79).
- 485–89 *For as a king in his empire / . . . So is the herte principal, / . . . for the governance*. Compare Chaucer, *BD*, lines 495–96: “[the hert] ys membre principal / Of the body.” The dreamer, observing the pallid color of the Black Knight, notes that in his grief his blood has all “fled for pure drede” (line 490) down to his heart. This passage is in its way key to the whole of Book 7 of the *Confessio*, where the sound education of the king is, for Gower, essentially the education of the heart of man, king of his empire attempting to define the proper governance of the soul. See 8.2109–20. Burnley, discussing Gower and a Stoic tradition that sees the heart as “principal” member of the body, remarks that although Gower may not be aware of the technical import of the word, he certainly adopts the same administrative metaphor that draws an analogy between individual man and the state. For Gower, “The heart governs the rest of the body by reason, just as a king rules a kingdom” (*Chaucer’s Language*, p. 66).
- 490–520 That Gower follows his Stoic paradigm of heart/king/rule with a discussion of the soul’s “hyh noblesse / Appropred to his oghne kinde” (7.498–99) where, unlike the soul of beasts, it “to reson . . . serveth” (7.517), adds specific support to Burnley’s observation in the explanatory note to 7.485–89, above. Gower’s awareness of the “technical import of the word” *principal* seems, in this instance, to be quite precise. See *VC* 2.217–348, where Gower discusses the relationship between men, animals, and morality. See also note to 7.396–400.
- 521–600 Gower seems to be following *Trésor* 1.121–24 (pp. 85–98) in his division of the map of the world into three parts (Asia, Europe, and Africa), surrounded by Ocean. See also Trevisa’s translation of Higden’s *Polychronicon* 1.6.
- 522 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur ulterius de diuisione Terre que post diluvium tribus filiis Noe in tres partes, scilicet Asiam, Affricam et Europam diuidebatur*. [Here he speaks further about the division of the Earth, which after the flood was

divided by the three sons of Noah into three parts, namely Asia, Africa, and Europe.]

523 *if it be spoke plein*. Schmitz, *Middel Weie*, p. 38n39, reads *plein* as “plainness, clarity, simplicity,” to suggest irony as Gower uses the term in introducing the most scholarly sections of the poem. But the sense is more likely that of the adverbial form of the adj. *plein(e)*, i.e., “completely, entirely; fully, clearly.” See *MED plein* adv.

554 ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *De Asia*. [Concerning Asia.]

558–74 Gower’s discussion of the *seisine* of Asia is based on *Trésor* 1.121.2, where we learn that “Asia contains half of the whole earth, from the place where the Nile empties into the sea in Alexandria and from the place where the Tanain River empties into the sea in the branch called Saint George, towards the Orient, extending as far as the Ocean and the earthly paradise” (p. 86).

566 *Canahim*. An error for *Tanain*. See note to 7.558–74.

575 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *De Aufrica et Europa*. [Concerning Africa and Europe.]


587 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de mari quod magnum Oceanum dicitur*. [Note concerning the sea which is called the Great Ocean.]

601 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic secundum philosophum de quinto Elemento, quod omnia sub celo creata infra suum ambitum continet, cui nomen Orbis specialiter appropriatum est*. [Note here according to the philosopher concerning the fifth Element, which contains everything created under heaven within its orbit, to whom the name Orbis is uniquely granted.]

613–20 *orbis*. See *Trésor* 1.103.2. The fifth element, ether: “it is a round heaven which surrounds and encloses within itself all other elements and the other things which do not partake of divinity; and it is to the world as the shell is to the egg, which encloses and contains what is inside, and because it is completely round, it is necessary inevitably that the earth and the shape of the world be round” (p. 64).

630–32 *as an egle . . . Fleth above . . . So doth this science*. One is reminded of Chaucer’s eagle in *HF*, who is well grounded in mathematics, especially those parts dealing with astronomy and geometry. On astronomy as the winged “maiden of the sky,” see *De nuptiis* 8.807. Martianus does not use the metaphor of an eagle, however.

639 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur de Artis Mathematicae quarta specie, que Astro-nomia nuncupata est, cui etiam Astrologia socia connumeratur: set primo de septem planetis, que inter astra potenciores existunt, incipiendo a luna seorsum tractare intendit*. [Here he speaks concerning the fourth species of the Art of Mathematics, which is called Astronomy, with whom Astrology is counted a companion. And first he intends to discourse concerning the seven planets, which are the more powerful ones among the stars, beginning specifically with the moon.]

- 651–54 *Bot the divin seith otherwise*. Theology is a component of *sapientia*, while astronomy falls under the classification of *scientia*, a lower kind of knowledge useful for understanding the body, but not capable of overriding theological insights. Thus men *scholden noght the sterres drede* (line 654). On the superiority of *sapientia*, see Augustine, *De Trinitate* 12. Macaulay notes that line 652 echoes “*Sapiens dominabitur astris*” (*VC* 2.217 ff.). See Jean Gerson, *Trilogium astrologie theologizate*, where all the sciences are handmaids of theology. Though astrology is a noble science, some people abuse it by superstitious observations and sacrilegious errors. Gerson’s authorities include Alkindi, Oresme, Augustine, and d’Ailly (Thorndike 4.116–17).
- 670 *Astronomie*. See *De nuptiis* 8 on astronomy as sixth of the liberal arts. Macaulay states that Gower’s “astronomy is for the most part independent of the *Trésor*” (3.522), but see the numerous parallels between 7.685–709, 721–27, 731–35, 774–75, 782, 865–70, 889–94, 909–12, 935–39, 973–78 and *Trésor* noted by Hamilton (“Some Sources,” p. 341n7).
- 694 *Bot*. Macaulay suggests that *bot* might mean *out*, though it would be unusual as a southern form. The *MED*, s. v. *orisont(e* (n.) 2, thinks the line should read *Be* [i.e., “by”] *th’orizonte*, the reading in several manuscripts and one which Macaulay suggests as a possibility, though he prefers “beyond.”
- 717–20 Gower often puns on *tauhte* and *betauhte* (e.g., 5.3575–76, 6.2411–12), but seldom does he create quadruple puns, as he does here, to celebrate Aristotle’s learned role as instructor.
- 721 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic de prima planeta, que aliis inferior Luna dicitur*. [Note here concerning the first planet, lower than the others, which is called the Moon.]
- Benethe alle othre stant the mone*. An excellent source for medieval planetary lore to set against Genius’ discussion of the seven planets is Bart. Ang., 8.12–18. Bartholomaeus works from Saturn to the moon (the seventh sphere to the first), rather than from the inside out (first to the seventh), as Gower does. Chapters 17–18 discuss *luna*. To explain water’s love of the moon (see *CA* 7.23–24) Bartholomaeus draws an analogy between iron and a magnet (8.17, lines 20–27 [p. 490]).
- 725–30 *every fissh which hath a schelle / Mot. . . / wexe and wane in his degré / As be the mone*. See *Trésor* 1.117.2: “for when it [the moon] waxes, marrow begins to increase in bones, and the marrow of crabs and crawfish and all animals and fish grows; even the sea swells and produces great waves. When the moon wanes, all things decrease and are smaller than before” (p. 79).
- 739–946 Gower is not actually following Ptolemy’s *Almagest*, although that work certainly underlay the sources he was working with, namely Alchandrus. Part of his material may have been gleaned from Brunetto Latini’s *Trésor*, part from Vincent of Beauvais’ *Speculum naturale* and from Fulgentius’ *Mythologicon*, part from redactions of *De nuptiis*, and part from astronomical lists and treatises

such as the *Speculum astronomiae* (variously ascribed to Roger Bacon and Albertus Magnus). See Fox, *Mediaeval Sciences*, pp. 65–83.

The association of planets with man's elemental character was maintained on the best authority, though usually the writers were careful to maintain free will, too. (For example, John of Salisbury, *Polycraticus*, 2.18–19; Herman of Dalmatia's translation of Albumazar's *Introductum in astronomiam*, which became the basis for Aquinas' views on astrology in *Summa theologiae*; and the *Speculum astronomiae*. Medieval theory of planetary influence may be ultimately traced back through Ptolemy to the *Timaeus*, where the planets are viewed as instruments of time.) Theories of planetary influence provided a convenient means for characterizing men and circumstances and are thus commonly alluded to in medieval literature. See, for example, Chaucer's use of Saturn as a malignant influence beyond which there is only Higher Love in *The Knight's Tale*; and Gower's *VC* 2.221 ff., where we are told that God will hold the heavens in check and make Saturn pleasing if men become willing to observe His precepts.

755 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *De secunda planeta, que Mercurius dicitur.* [Concerning the second planet, which is called Mercury.]

755–70 Because his course is the quickest of the other planets, apart from the moon, Mercury is often said to be the messenger of the gods and is praised for his eloquence. See *The Assembly of Gods*, lines 365–71; or Martianus Capella's elaborate allegory in *De nuptiis (The Marriage of Philology and Mercury)*. Gower goes a different path, however; those born under his influence are *studious* (line 759, i.e., “zealous”) in reading and writing, but *slouh and lustles to travaile / In thing which elles myhte availe* (lines 761–62). Andrew Galloway has suggested by correspondence that the implication here is perhaps akin to Nicholas' delight in lying around reading and enjoying music rather than doing work as John the carpenter does in Chaucer's *Miller's Tale*, being rather more particular about doing what might be considered strenuous. The source of Gower's idea affiliating Mercury with business perhaps comes from *De formis* (see p. 25, where Berchorius derives the name Mercury from *mercatorum currus*, asserting that he is thus said to be god of merchants and thieves [*Iste ergo dicebatur deus marcatorum, deus eciam furtorum*]). See also “The Wise Book of Philosophy and Astronomy” (Cambridge University Library MS Ll.4.14) in Krochalis and Peters, *World of Piers Plowman*, pp. 5–15, which notes that Mercury makes men “grette geters, and gladliche spending” (p. 15); such passages explain why Gower says Mercury's children have *besinesse* in pursuit of wealth, with their hearts *set upon richesse* (*CA* 7.765–66). I have not found a source for the national connections that Gower affiliates with each planet. Galloway wonders whether the linking of Mercury with Burgundy and France might not be an acknowledgment of the literary skills of Froissart and Machaut.

771 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *De tercia planeta, que Venus dicitur.* [Concerning the third planet, which is called Venus.]

- 773 The linking of Venus with *the nacion / Of lovers* (lines 774–75) is universal. Genius acknowledges variously that she provokes lechery, though Gower’s presentation of her in Books 1 and 8 suggests a concern that reaches beyond promiscuity, which she scorns when it is manifested in Amans. On the climate of her lechery being *most commun in Lombardie* (line 800) one might think of the boastful Syr Valentyne “yn Lumbardye” in Thomas Chestre’s *Sir Launfal* (lines 505 ff.), who jousts “for love of his lemman” (line 523).
- 801 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de Sole, qui medio planetarum residens Astrorum principatum obtinet.* [Note concerning the Sun, who residing in the middle of the planets possesses a princely authority over the Stars.]
- 815 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de curru Solis necnon et de vario eiusdem apparatu.* [Note concerning the chariot of the Sun and also its various features.]
- 815–47 On the fifteen stars and their relative stones and herbs, see Heather, pp. 224–27. The description of the sun’s crown draws upon *De nuptiis* 1.75, though other sources are used as well. See Hamilton (“Some Sources,” p. 345).
- 822–26 *Three stones . . . cleped Licuchis . . . Astrices and Ceramis.* Hamilton (“Some Sources,” p. 345) identifies the source as Martianus Capella’s *De nuptiis* 22.5–6 (ed. Eyssenhardt, 1886): *quippe tres fuerant a fronte gemmae Lychnis, Astriles, et Ceraunos* (see also Book 1.75, The Betrothal, in the Stahl, Johnson, Burge translation, vol. 2, p. 27). The three gems in Sol’s crown all possess powers of light and and the capacity to heal dark illnesses. The *MED* glosses *licuchis* as [? error for *lychnites*], which seems likely, given Martianus’ term *lychnis* in the Latin. *De dea Syria*, attributed to Lucian of Samosata, identifies the stone in the headpiece of the Syrian goddess at Hieropolis as *lychnis*, a stone with the brightness of fire. Pseudo-Callisthenes, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 2.24, tells of *lychnis*, a gleaming white stone that Alexander found in the belly of a monstrous lake fish who pursued Alexander and jumped right out of the water after him. Alexander speared the fish, cut it open, and found inside “a gleaming stone . . . as bright as a lantern. Alexander took the stone, set it in gold and used it at night instead of a lamp” (p. 124). According to the Peterborough Lapidary, *astriles* is a stone like a star in clearness that contains an enclosed light, “as it were a ster goinge withyne, & maketh the sonne bemes ly3t” (21, p. 71). According to the London Lapidary *Ceraunius* comes in many colors and protects anyone who carries it from lightning and fire; the North Midland Lapidary likewise tells how the stone protects one from lightning, lightens burdens, and “schynes as it wer byrnynge” (25, p. 54).
- 835 *ydriades*. I have been unable to identify this stone. It is not a term found in the lapidaries that Evans and Serjeantson consider in *English Mediaeval Lapidaries*. The stem of the word suggests a watery appearance (Greek *hydro*). The *MED* simply glosses the term as “a kind of precious stone.” *De nuptiis* also identifies the other two, besides Gower’s *ydriades* (which Martianus calls “hydatis,” and which is translated as “a water-colored stone” [1.75]), as adamant and crystal. This particular grouping could suggest that “water-colored” means clear rather than blue or green. See also Hamilton (“Some Sources,” p. 345).

- 842 *dendides and jacinthus*. Dendrides, from a Latin term pertaining to trees, are stones with sprig-like crystals and arborescent forms (e.g., oxides of iron and manganese). Jacinth in the lapidaries are called blue gems, probably sapphires, as distinct from the variety of zircon with a reddish orange tinge now called jacinth. See the grouping of a sapphire, dendritis, and striped jasper in *De nupliis* (1.75). The term is also used for varieties of topaz and garnet (*OED*).
- 853–64 Macaulay notes that the sun’s horses (Erythreus, Actaeon, Lampros, and Philogeus) are named by Fulgentius (1.12) in the same order that they are named in Gower and that they represent the four divisions of the day: Erythreus, taking his name from the red light of morning and Philogeus from the sun’s inclination at evening; “Ovid gives a different set of names” (3.524). Hyginus, *De Planetis* 4.108–10 (Basel, 1535), offers a handsome drawing of Sol with bright stones in his crown (compare *CA* 7.818); the chariot wheel bears the sign of Leo. His four horses are not named.
- 889 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de quinta planeta, que Mars dicitur*. [Note concerning the fifth planet, which is called Mars.]
- 907 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de sexta planeta, que Iupiter dicitur*. [Note concerning the sixth planet, which is called Jupiter.]
- 935 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *De septima planeta, que reliquis celsior Saturnus dictus est*. [Note concerning the seventh planet, which, higher than all others, is called Saturn.]
- 955 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Postquam dictum est de vii. Planetis, quibus singuli septimane dies singulariter attitulantur, dicendum est iam de xii. Signis, per que xii. Menses Anni variis temporibus effectus varios assequuntur*. [After there has been discussion about the seven Planets, by each of which the seven days are individually named, there must be discussion about the twelve Signs, through which the twelve Months of the Year follow their various outcomes at various times.]
- 955–78 *He which departeth dai fro nyht*. Gower is careful to present the shaping of the zodiac in a Christian context. Commentaries abound upon God’s creating the *planetes sevene upon the hevene* to accord (*acordant*) with the making of the earth in seven days (7.963–64). Compare *VC* 7.587–90. Stockton cites Psalm 8:4–10 as a supporting text. See also St. Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 11.31, on seven as a number and measure of completeness, or *De formis* 15.1, pp. 40–41, on complementary sevens in nature, as Berchorius contemplates the natural realm of Pan.
- 955–1280 See Fox, *Mediaeval Sciences*, pp. 65–80, on Gower’s use of Alchandrus, rather than Ptolemy, on the signs of the zodiac, even though he cites the *Almageste* (line 983). Where Macaulay thought Gower to be floundering and getting it mixed up (see Mac 3.525), he is “actually following his source very carefully” (Fox, *Mediaeval Sciences*, p. 68). See note to 7.739–946, above.
- 979 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic de primo Signo, quod Aries dicitur, cui Mensis Marcii specialiter appropriatus est. Quo deus in primo produxit ad esse creata*. [Note here concerning the first Sign, which is called Aries, to whom the Month of March specifically belongs. “Under him God first brought creation into being.”]






In this and the following eleven sets of Latin glosses, the second sentences describing each of the twelve zodiacal signs scan as regular poetic lines. In the translation, I use quotation marks to indicate those lines that are cast in poetic form. A Latin poem on the seasons is thus spread across these marginal notes, which probably should be added to the list of Gower's own Latin poetry. The meter varies between dactylic hexameter and dactylic pentameter (as two hemiepes?), which, taken two by two, present standard elegiac couplets, Gower's most common Latin meter. This regular elegiac pattern begins this "poem" but it is varied in the second half, by a doubled hexameter, closing with five successive hexameters. Thus, with hexameter lines marked as "h" and the pentameters necessary for an elegiac couplet marked as "p," the assembled poem on the seasons has the following overall pattern:

- 979ff. (h) Quo deus in primo produxit ad esse creata;
 1015ff. (p) Quo prius occultas invenit herba vias.
 1031ff. (h) Quo volucrum cantus gaudet de floribus ortis;
 1051ff. (p) Quo falcet pratis pabula tonsor equis.
 1067ff. (h) Quo magis ad terras expandit Lucifer ignes;
 1081ff. (h) Quo vacuata prius pubes replet horrea messis.
 1101ff. (p) Vineae quo Bacchus pressa liquore colit.
 1121ff. (h) Floribus exclusis yemis qui ianitor extat.
 1141ff. (h) Quo mustum bibulo linquit sua nomina vino.
 1169ff. (h) Ipse diem Nano noctemque Gigante figurat.
 1185ff. (h) Quo Ianus vultum duplum conuertit in annum.
 1215ff. (h) Quo pluuie torrens riparum concitat ampnes.
 (Andrew Galloway)

- 979–81 *The ferste . . . is cleped Aries . . . a wether of stature.* Aries, the *wether*, is first because, like the lead ram, he guides the flock of other signs through the heavens. See Allen, *Star Names*, p. 76. Gower makes certain that credit for this orderly fact is not simply a matter of astrology but rather a part of God's design. See note to lines 994–96. On the structure of Gower's presentation of the signs of the zodiac, see also the note to 1141–63, below.
- 989 *hot and drye.* Macaulay observes: "According to the astrologers, Aries, Leo, and Sagittarius preside over the element of fire, and are hot and dry by nature; Taurus, Virgo, Capricornus over that of earth, being dry and cold; Gemini, Libra, Aquarius preside over air, and are hot and moist; while Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces are moist and cold, having dominion over water (Albumasar, cited by Vincent of Beauvais, *Spec. nat.* xv. 36)" (3.525). See Bart. Ang. 8.9 (vol. 1, pp. 460–65), on the nature of the zodiac; and 8.10 (vol. 1, pp. 465–73), on the signs of the zodiac.
- 991 See Bart. Ang. 8.11–18 (vol. 1, pp. 473–95), on the planets, their refuge, and their relationships with earth and the zodiac; their marriages, conditions, humors, and, especially in ch. 11, their motions and effects on weather, health, nations, etc.
- 992 *Of myhty Mars the bataillous.* Aries and Mars (Ares) are linked in two ways besides the verbal punning in their names: Allen notes that "among astrol-

ogers Aries was a dreaded sign indicating passionate temper and bodily hurt” (*Star Names*, p. 79), whereby March, the first month, is often stormy and blustery, thus *bataillous*; but also, because of the story of Phrixus (Ovid refers to Aries as *Phrixea ovis* in *Fasti* 3.852), where Phrixus, son of Athamas, fled on the back of the ram (*aries* — *Fasti* 3.867) with his sister Helle toward Colchis, to escape the wrath of Ino. Helle fell off and was drowned (thus the Hellespont), and Phrixus sacrificed the ram and hung its fleece in the Grove of Ares, where it turned to gold (another of Aries’ titles is *Ovis aurea*), thereby further linking Aries and Mars. See Allen, *Star Names*, p. 76. The golden fleece became the object of Jason’s quest (n.b., Gower’s Tale of Jason and Medea). See also Gower’s Tale of Phrixus and Helle (5.4243–4361).

- 994–96 *The Creatour of alle kinde / Upon this signe fers began / The world.* Man was created in the sign of Aries, which signifies beginnings (see 7.1000), as part of God’s design, “Whan every bridd schall chese his make, / And every neddre and every snake / And every reptil which mai moeve, / His myht assaieth for to proeve, / To crepen out agein the sonne, / Whan ver his seson hath begonne” (7.1009–14). Allen notes biblical commentators who link Aries with Abraham’s ram, caught in the thicket as substitute sacrifice for Isaac (*Star Names*, p. 78), a sign of the greatest new beginning.
- 1015 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Secundum Signum dicitur Taurus, cuius Mensis est Aprilis. Quo prius occultas invenit herba vias.* [The second Sign is called Taurus, whose Month is April. “Under him the greenery first discovers the hidden pathways.”]
- 1020 *somdiel discordant.* Macaulay notes that the hot and moist Libra (7.1111) is more accordant to Venus than is the “dreie and cold” Taurus (7.1017) with which she is affiliated here (3.525).
- 1029–30 Though Taurus may be “dreie and cold” (7.1017), his month, April, is proverbially known for *his schoures* that *ministreth weie unto the floures*, not only in the modern “April showers bring May flowers” proverb, but in Lydgate’s “holsum as the Aprile shour / Fallyng on the erbes newe” (*Reson*, lines 6310–11); Hawes’ “More sweter fer than the Aprell shour” (Oxford 13); or Chaucer’s *Anelida and Arcite* (lines 309–10): “I myghte as wel holde Aperill fro reyn, / As holde yow, to make yow be stidfast.” See Whiting, A173 and A176.
- 1033 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Tercium Signum dicitur Gemini, cuius Mensis Maius est. Quo volucrum cantus gaudet de floribus ortis.* [The third Sign is called Gemini, whose Month is May. “Under him the song of birds rejoices at the emergence of flowers.”]
- 1036 ff. “This statement and the others like it below, 1073, 1089, 1127, 1147, 1198, 1222, may be taken to indicate that the division of the signs was very uncertain in our author’s mind. It may be observed that the usual representation of Taurus in star-maps is with his head, not his tail, towards Gemini” (Mac 3.525).
- 1043 *wise Tholomeus wrot.* I.e., the *Almagest*. See note to lines 1239–40, below.

- 1044–50 Gower’s celebration of youth, love, and May has reminded readers of the opening of Chaucer’s *CT*. See Fisher, *John Gower*, p. 253, who compares the passage to *MO*, lines 939–46. The “vivid verbal miniatures” in this section on the months (Manzalaoui, “Noght in the Registre of Venus,” p. 160) add a lyric quality to this otherwise technical section of Book 7. See also 7.1009–14 and 7.1159–68 for other lovely examples of Gower’s skills at vignette composition. Manzalaoui suggests that this use of poetic description is a pictorial practice Gower seems to have learned from the *Secretum* (p. 175).
- 1051 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Quartum Signum Cancer dicitur, cuius Mensis Iunius est. Quo falcat pratis pabula tonsor equis.* [The fourth Sign is called Cancer, whose Month is June. “Under him the shearer cuts the hay from the flat fields.”]
- 1069 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Quintum signum Leo dicitur, cuius Mensis Iulius est. Quo magis ad terras expandit Lucifer ignes.* [The fifth sign is called Leo, whose Month is July. “Under him the morning star spreads his fires more across the earth.”]
- 1081 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Sextum Signum Virgo dicitur, cuius Mensis Augustus est. Quo vacuata prius pubes replet horrea messis.* [The sixth Sign is called Virgo, whose Month is August. “Under him the youth refill the emptied granaries with the harvests.”] The scansion requires one false quantity (the second syllable of *replet* must be scanned short); but the line is clearly hexameter like the others in this “seasons poem.”
- 1103 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Septimum Signum Libra dicitur, cuius Mensis Septembris est. Vineam quo Bachum pressa liquore colit.* [The seventh Sign is called Libra, whose Month is September. “Under him the vineyard, squeezed, honors Bacchus with its fluid.”]
- 1106–09 “There is grave doubt in my mind whether Gower was aware that there are two zodiacs — the zodiac of the *signs* and the zodiac of the *constellations*. He calls his divisions ‘signs,’ although he clearly thinks of his ‘signs’ as constellations to be seen in the heavens,” as these lines on Virgo make evident (Fox, *Mediaeval Sciences*, pp. 79–80).
- 1121 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Octauum Signum Scorpio dicitur, cuius Mensis October est. Floribus exclusis yemis qui ianitor extat.* [The eighth Sign is called Scorpio, whose Month is October. “He stands as the gatekeeper of winter, keeping flowers out.”]
- 1132–34 *eighte . . . unbehovely*. Eight is usually regarded as a benevolent number, a sign of new beginning, baptism, and new life; but its being *unbehovely* (unfitting, improper, unsuitable) for the tail of Scorpio may be one further sign of the treacherous felonies of this deceitful mansion.
- 1141–43 ff. *The nynthe signe . . . cleped Sagittarius*. Fox, *Mediaeval Sciences*, pp. 66–68, analyzes Gower’s description of Sagittarius to demonstrate how Gower’s discussion of the zodiac signs works. The elements Gower considers include 1) the figure of the constellation (in this instance a centaur), 2) the number of stars in each of the three subdivisions of the sign (head, body, tail), 3) the

“quality” of the sign (hot and dry, in this instance), 4) the dignity or debility of certain planets when residing in the sign (here Sagittarius is the house of Jupiter), and 5) an account of the month over which the sign rules. This latter feature “may even permit one to notice that the descriptions of the months embedded in this unpromising matrix are among the loveliest and freshest that Gower ever wrote” (p. 66).

- 1141 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Nonum signum Sagittarius dicitur, cuius Mensis Nouember est. Quo mustum bibulo linquit sua nomina vino.* [The ninth Sign is called Sagittarius, whose Month is November. “Under him the wine-must changes its name to drinkable wine.”]
- 1165–68 *must into the wyn . . . larder of the swyn; / That is Novembre which I meene, / Whan that the lef hath lost his greene.* The duke of Berry’s *Très Riches Heures*, pl. 10, depicts September as the month for harvest of grapes; thus the fermentation period (*must into wyn*) imagined here would be two months. Pl. 12, November, when the trees have lost their green and the acorns fall, depicts hogs devouring the acorns as their final fattening for slaughter in late November and December. Compare Bart. Ang. 9.17, *De septembri*: “In þis monthe grapis beþ ripe and þerfore he is ipeint in a vinezerd as a gardeynere gadringe grapis in a basket”; and 9.19, *De nouembre*: “þat tyme beestis waxiþ fatte and nameliche swyne; and þerfore he is ipeynt as a cherle betynge okes and fedinge his swyne wiþ mast and ackornis.” In Trevisa and most books of hours, December is identified as the time of slaughter and the salting of the meat, a time in closer proximity to Christmas feasts.
- 1169 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Decimum Signum Capricorus dicitur, cuius Mensis December est. Ipse diem Nano noctemque Gigante figurat.* [The tenth Sign is called Capricorn, whose Month is December. “He fashions day as a dwarf, and night as a giant.”]
- 1174 *Satorne.* Saturn’s sour disposition is wintry, therefore suitable to Capricorn and Aquarius (see 7.1188).
- 1175 *Bot to the mone it liketh noght.* Macaulay notes that “Capricorn is the ‘fall’ of the Moon, being opposite to her house, Cancer, as the next sign Aquarius is that of the Sun, see line 1190” (3.525). Martianus observes that the winter tropic begins in the eighth degree of Capricorn, passes through the entire body of Capricorn “to the feet of Aquarius, thence to the end of the tail of Cetus, then to Lepus and the front paws of Canis; then through Argo and the back of Centaurus to the sting of Scorpio; next through the last part of Sagitta, and back again to the eighth degree of Capricornus” (*De nuptiis* 8.830).
- 1187 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Vndecimum Signum Aquarius dicitur, cuius Mensis Ianuarius est. Quo Ianus vultum duplum conuertit in annum.* [The eleventh Sign is called Aquarius, whose Month is January. “Under him Janus turns his double-face toward the year.”]
- 1207–14 *Janus with his double face.* Winter storms appear most fiercely in the latter days of Aquarius, and thus are Janus-like as they look back to the ferocity of winter but forward also to the *ferste primerole* (line 1214).

- 1217 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Duodecimum Signum Piscis dicitur, cuius Mensis Februarius est. Quo pluuie torrens riparum concitat ampnes.* [The twelfth Sign is called Pisces, whose Month is February. “Under him the torrent of rain showers incites the rivers from their banks.”]
- 1239–40 *Albumazar . . . Seith.* The allusion is to Abu’Ma’sar’s *Introductorium in astronomiam*. Hamilton (“Some Sources”) asserts that Gower’s whole “detailed account of the influence of the planets on the men and countries under their control, and a description of the signs of the zodiac, the planets in their mansions, and the months tributary to them” (7.685–1236) was suggested by a short section of the *Secretum*, based on Abu’Ma’sar (p. 342), the same passage from which Gower drew his references to “Tholemeus” (7.1043, 1201).
- 1271 ff. Gower’s discussion of the universe moves from earth, through the planets, to the fixed stars which occupy the eighth sphere and are immutable. That the fixed stars are fifteen in number perhaps suggests through number symbolism the conjoining of heaven (8) and earth (7)—eternity and temporality. (See Hugh of St. Victor’s discussion of the number fifteen in *De arca Noe morali* 3.16.) Because of the stars’ permanence (and thus potency), more magicians than Nectanabus based wonder-working calculations on them. (See Chaucer’s “tregetour” in *The Franklin’s Tale*, *CT F*[V]1280). Gower’s account of the fifteen stars with their respective herbs and stones is taken from *Liber hermetis de XV stellis et de XV lapidibus et de XV herbis, XV figuris, etc.*, which, Macaulay notes, is found in several fourteenth-century manuscripts. Ideler’s *Untersuchungen über den Ursprung und die Bedeutung der Sternnamen*, provides information on a number of the names (Mac 3.526). Vincent of Beauvais observes (*Speculum naturale* 16.53) that every herb on earth has a star in the sky which is concerned with it and causes it to grow.
- 1281–1438 These lines on the fifteen stars are included in Longleat House MS 174, a fifteenth-century collection of letters and Middle English medical treatises. See Harris, who remarks on minor changes in the Longleat text, concluding that “the purposes behind the inclusion of the extract . . . [in Longleat] must have been practical” (“The Longleat House Extracted Manuscript,” p. 88).
- 1285 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat super doctrina Nectanabi, dum ipse iuuenem Alexandrum instruxit, de illis precipue xv stellis vna cum earum lapidibus et herbis, que ad artis magice naturalis operacionem specialius conueniunt.* [Here he discourses on the doctrine of Nectanabus while he instructed the young Alexander, specifically concerning the fifteen stars along with their stones and herbs that are particularly conducive to the operation of the art of natural magic.]
- 1295–1308 See Hamilton (“Studies in the Sources,” pp. 511–12), on various versions of *Liber hermetis* that attribute authorship of the treatise to Nectanabus, as does Gower.
- 1296 *Nectanabus.* Alexander’s natural father. See *CA* 6.1789–2366. Minnis, commenting on Gower’s use of the Nectanabus story to set up Book 7 in a cohesive way, points out that “Calistre and Aristote taught the young king philosophy,” while it was Nectanabus who taught him astronomy and magic

(7.1295–1308), which may not have been the most wise move by Nectanabus, given the fact that it was on a fair and starry night while they were observing the heavens from a tower that, to prove the old astrologer wrong, Alexander pushed Nectanabus off the tower, thus proving him right (“Moral Gower,” pp. 74–75).

- 1309 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Prima stella vocatur Aldeboran, cuius lapis Carbunculus et herba Anabulla est.* [The first star is called Aldeboran, whose stone is Carbuncle and herb Anabulla.]
- 1319 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Secunda stella vocatur Clota seu Pliades, cuius lapis Crisallum et herba Feniculus est.* [The second star is called Clota or Pliades, whose stone is Crystal and herb Fennel.]
- 1320–23 *Clota . . . Mars.* Clota is a Celtic goddess of the river Clyde. It is a curious coincidence that one of the valleys on Mars has, in modern times, been given the name Clota, suggesting that not only has Clota taken Mars’ complexion, but Mars is now under the influence of Clota!
- 1328 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Tercia stella vocatur Algol, cuius lapis Dyamans et herba Eleborum nigrum est.* [The third star is called Algol, whose stone is Diamond and herb black Hellebore.] Macaulay 3.526 is helpful in identifying Arabic meanings to star names and in linking Gower’s phrasing to *Liber Hermetis*.
- 1337 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Quarta stella vocatur Alhaiot, cuius lapis Saphirus et herba Marrubium est.* [The fourth star is called Alhaiot, whose stone is Sapphire and herb Horehound.]
- 1345 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Quinta stella vocatur Canis maior, cuius lapis Berillus et herba Savina est.* [The fifth star is called the greater Dog Star, whose stone is Beryl and herb Savin.]
- 1355 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Sexta stella vocatur Canis minor, cuius lapis Achates et herba Primula est.* [The sixth star is called the lesser Dog Star, whose stone is Agate and herb Cowslip.]
- 1363 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Septima stella vocatur Arial, cuius lapis Gorgonza et herba Celidonia est.* [The seventh star is called Arial, whose stone is Gorgonza and herb Celandine.]
- 1364 *Arial.* Macaulay suggests “Cor Leonis” or Regulus (3.526); North links *cor leonis* with Calbelezed (*Chaucer’s Universe*, p. 271, caption to figure 33, which includes a drawing of a rampant lion).
- 1371 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Octava stella vocatur Ala Corui, cuius lapis Honochinus et herba Lapacia est.* [The eighth star is called Crow’s Wing, whose Stone is Honochinus and herb Sorrel.]
- 1379 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Nona stella vocatur Alaezel, cuius lapis Smaragdus et herba Salgea est.* [The ninth star is called Alaezel, whose stone is Emerald and herb Sage.]

- 1386 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Decima stella vocatur Almareth, cuius lapis Iaspis et herba Plantago est.* [The tenth star is called Almareth, whose stone is Jasper and herb Plantain.]
- 1393 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Vndecima stella vocatur Venenas, cuius lapis Adamans et herba Cicorea est.* [The eleventh star is called Venenas, whose stone is Adamant and herb Chicory.]
- 1397 *adamant.* “lodestone (magnet)” is the sense here, given the stone’s affiliation with Venus and the moon, with their powerful powers of attraction (tides, love, etc.). Gower also uses the term to mean “diamond,” as in 7.833, when speaking of the precious gem in a royal crown. See *MED* *adamant* n. 1 and 2.
- 1401 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Duodecima stella vocatur Alpheta, cuius lapis Topazion et herba Rosa marina est.* [The twelfth star is called Alpheta, whose stone is Topaz and herb Rosemary.]
- 1401 *Alpheta*, from Arabic for the beggar’s dish (Mac 3.526).
- 1409 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Terciadecima stella vocatur Cor Scorpionis, cuius lapis Sardis et herba Aristologia est.* [The thirteenth star is called the Scorpion’s Heart, whose stone is Sardis and herb Birthwort.]
- 1417 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Quartadecima stella vocatur Botercadent, cuius lapis Crisolitus et herba Satureia est.* [The fourteenth star is called Botercadent, whose stone is Chrysolite and herb Savory.]
- 1419 *Botercadent.* Macaulay notes that the Latin source (*Liber hermetis*) reads “‘Vultur cadens,’ that is perhaps Vega; but ‘Botercadent’ would probably be a different star, namely that called in Arabic ‘Batn-Kaitos’ or Whale’s belly” (Mac 3.526–27). The “Falling Vulture” (*vultur cadens*) could indeed be Vega (the brightest star in the constellation Lyra), derived from Arabic *al-Waqi* and so named for the story of the bird that swoops down to grab Orpheus’ lyre from the river at Jupiter’s request. *MED* glosses the term to mean “falling Bittern (name of a star or constellation); ? The Whale’s Belly (star in Cetus).” According to *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, “Animals in the Bible,” the bittern (Lat. *botháurus vulgaris*) is sometimes substituted for the pelican, which, “of his kinde,” is a swooping bird as it feeds. But perhaps Macaulay’s first option (Vega) is the better identification, since the next line comments on his being obedient “of his kinde” to Mercury and Venus.
- 1425 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Quintadecima stella vocatur Cauda Scorpionis, cuius lapis Calcedonia et herba Maiorana est.* [The fifteenth star is called the Scorpion’s Tail, whose stone is Chalcedony and herb Marjoram.]
- 1426 *tail of Scorpio.* In *Liber Hermetis*, the phrase is ‘Cauda Capricorni’ (Mac 3.527).
- 1439 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic de Auctoribus illis, qui ad Astronomie scienciam pre ceteris studiosius intendentes libros super hoc distinctis nominibus composuerunt.* [Note here concerning his Authorities, who, striving very zealously beyond all others towards the science of Astronomy, composed books about this under various names.]

- Here, in his naming of the astronomers, Gower seems to be following Albertus Magnus' *De libris licitis et illicitis*, the *Speculum astronomiae*, and, perhaps, Michael Scot's *Introductio astrologiae*. See Fox, *Mediaeval Sciences*, pp. 80–83.
- 1449 ff. Macaulay notes that the names of the chief authors of books on astronomy seem to be taken from Albertus Magnus' *Speculum astronomiae* or *De libris licitis et illicitis*, cap. ii (3.527).
- 1461 *Alfraganus*. Author of *Rudimenta astronomica*.
- 1507–87 Since Christ Himself is God's Word, the Second Person being the *expression* of the First Person, abuse of language is a sin against Truth. Gower follows the Platonic-Aristotelian tradition in which truth (not simply persuasion) is a fundamental requisite of Rhetoric. Words used for persuasion, regardless of truth, are false rhetoric.
- 1507–1640 Murphy identifies this passage as the first discussion of rhetoric in the English language. Gower's source is *Trésor* 3. On Gower's shift away from Brunetto's praise of ornateness in favor of a plain style, see Schmitz (*Middel Weie*, pp. 28–37). Gower links Rhetoric with Ethics rather than Politics, where it serves as a guide to all people, not just rulers (pp. 168–97). For Gower, language is the universal gift of the Creator, a primary means of discovering divine likeness in the ethics of self rule (pp. 32–33). See Nicholson's annotations of scholars on this passage (*Annotated Index*, pp. 440–41). Craun notes that Gower begins treating rhetoric "exactly where pastoral treatises on deviant speech begin: with the origin and function of speech" (*Lies, Slander, and Obscenity*, p. 118).
- 1511 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat de secunda parte Philosophie, cuius nomen Rethorica facundos efficit. Loquitur eciam de eiusdem duabus speciebus, scilicet Grammatica et Logica, quarum doctrina Rethor sua verba perornat.* [Here he discourses about the second part of Philosophy, Rhetoric by name, which produces eloquent speakers. He speaks especially about two of its species, namely Grammar and Logic, by whose doctrine the Orator adorns his words.]
- 1522–25 *touchende . . . Rethorique . . . that ben resonable*. See Watt (*Amoral Gower*, pp. 38–60) on Gower's linking of rhetoric and reason as concepts gendered masculine, drawing on *Trésor*, which he then subverts in various ways. Gower "is concerned with his own reputation and the notoriety or eminence of his patron, forefathers, and other authorities, and also with the questions of whether writing is a legitimate and moral activity, what is the proper way to do it, and what are the difficulties in achieving a virile rhetorical style" (p. 60).
- 1558–63 On Ulysses as rhetorician, see Gittes, "Ulysses," p. 13.
- 1588 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de Eloquencia Iulii in causa Cateline contra Cillenum et alios tunc vrbis Rome Conciues.* [Note concerning the Eloquence of Julius in the case of Cateline against Cillenus and others who were then Citizens of the city of Rome.]

- 1588–1640 Rather than *Tullius* (line 1589), Gower is following Brunetto Latini in the *Trésor*, 1.36.5, which also uses the Roman Senate’s discussion of the fate of Catiline as a model of right use of Rhetoric.
- 1607 *Cillenus*. “D. Junius Silanus, who as consul-designate gave his opinion first. It is tolerably evident in this passage, as it is obvious in 4.2647 ff., that Gower did not identify Tullius with Cicero” (Mac 3.527).
- 1641 ff. The three part division of *Practique* ultimately comes from Aristotle and is found in Giles of Rome’s *De regimine principium*, Bromyard’s “regimen” in his *Summa praedicatorum*, and Bonaventure’s *De reductione Artium ad Theologiam* and *Secretum Secretorum*, though in this instance his source is probably Brunetto Latini’s *Trésor* 1.3.4.
- 1647 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat de tercia parte Philosophie, que Practica vocatur, cuius species sunt tres, scilicet Etica, Ichonomia, et Policia, quarum doctrina regia magestas in suo regimine ad honoris magnificenciam per singula dirigitur.* [Here he discourses about the third part of Philosophy, which is called Practice, whose species are three, namely Ethics, Economics, and Policy, by whose doctrine the royal majesty is directed point by point in his governance toward his honor’s magnificence.]
- 1650 Gower’s main source for practices of *the governance of kinges* is Giles of Rome’s *De regimine principium*. See David Fowler’s edition of Trevisa’s translation.
- 1670–78 *Iconomique*. See Simpson on economies as a central idea in the *Confessio*, particularly with reference to *familia* (i.e., domestic economies), but also the inner life of “conseil,” “wit,” and “resoun,” the *familia* of the soul (*Sciences and the Self*, pp. 221–23).
- 1673 [*a king*] *His wif and child schal reule and guie*. Burke (“Women,” pp. 240, 253n6) notes that this is the only reference in the poem to female submission in marriage, a further demonstration of the poet’s kind disposition toward women.
- 1706 The five points of policy that Genius explores — Truth (lines 1723 ff.), Liberality (lines 1985 ff.), Justice (lines 2695 ff.), Pity (lines 3103 ff.), and Chastity (lines 4215 ff.) — follow vaguely the model of kingly instruction in the *Secretum Secretorum*. There the recommended virtues are liberality, wisdom, chastity, mercy, truth, and also justice. In the *Secretum*, Aristotle is less systematic than Genius is. This portion of the *Confessio* is pointedly directed towards the English throne. See Coffman, “John Gower, Mentor for Royalty,” pp. 953–64; and Hamilton, “Some Sources”.
- 1715 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic secundum Policiam tractare intendit precipue super quinque regularum Articulis, que ad Principis Regimen obseruande specialius existunt, quarum prima veritas nuncupatur. Per quam veridicus fit sermo Regis ad omnes.* [Here in respect to Policy he intends to discourse particularly about five Elements of rules, which must especially be observed for the Governance of a Ruler, the first of which is named truth. Through this a King’s speech is made faithfully true to all.]

- 1716 *And for it stant upon his wille.* The Will, the third of the human faculties, the others being Memory and Intellect, was especially emphasized in fourteenth-century philosophical discourse as the starting point of ethics. Thus the will (desire) of the king is especially important. Compare, for example, Chaucer's "Lak of Stedfastnesse," where the will is repeatedly singled out as the crux of the problem (n.b. lines 6, 9, 13, 22).
- 1733 *double speche.* The implicit point here is that God gave humankind language for communication. But in his predatory sins, humankind uses language to deceive, rather than clarify. Double speech is thus an aspect of fallen nature. See Chaucer's remarks on the Fall where "mannes word," which once was obligation, is now "nothing lyk" ("Lak of Stedfastnesse," lines 2–6) or his recurrent proverb on the importance of words being "cosyn to the dede" (CT I[A]742). For Gower the phrase is tied to the evils of division that characterize corrupt behavior in modern times. See Prol. 850–55 and 967–1052. At the same time, given the fallen condition of the world, equivocal language may be the best tool for understanding the confusion. See Peck, "Phenomenology of Make Believe"; Simpson, *Sciences and the Self*, pp. 198 ff.; and Olsson, "Rhetoric, Gower, and the Late Medieval Exemplum," pp. 187–94, especially p. 189.
- 1735–36 On failure of truth in a king as *an unsittende thing*, see Peck, "Politics and Psychology," p. 238.
- 1741–43 *Awise . . . tofore, / And be wel war . . . / For afterward it is to late.* Proverbial. See Whiting, *Chaucer's Use of Proverbs*, p. 151.
- 1750 *corone.* On the crown as a symbol of kingship, see Peck, "Politics and Psychology," p. 238.
- 1751 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota super hiis que in corona Regis designantur.* [Note concerning those things which are signified in a King's crown.]
- The various significances of the parts of a king's crown are also elaborated in the alliterative poem *Richard the Redeless*, passus 1, lines 35–48.
- 1782 *cronique.* The reference is to 1 Esdras 3–4:41. Utley notes that Gower's is the earliest full treatment of this theme in English (*Crooked Rib*, p. 313). See also Gower's use of the story in *MO*, lines 2276–800. The attitude toward women is less benevolent in *MO* where Gower uses the figure of woman overcoming the king as a jibe at Alice Perrers (*MO*, lines 22801–72). See Stillwell, "John Gower," pp. 457–58, on the more negative attitude toward women in *MO*. In *CA* the anti-feminist components of his sources have been removed. See Burke, "Sources and Significance," p. 11.
- 1786 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic narrat, qualiter Darius filius Ylaspis Soldanus Percie a tribus suis Cubiculariis, quorum nomina Arpaghes, Manachaz et Zorobabel dicta sunt, nomine questionis singillatim interrogavit, utrum Rex aut mulier aut vinum maioris fortitudinis vim obtineret: ipsis vero varia opinione respondentibus, Zorobabel ultimus asseruit quod mulier sui amoris complacencia tam Regis quam vini potenciam excellit. Addidit insuper pro finali conclusione dicens, quod veritas super omnia vincit. Cuius responsio ceteris laudabilior acceptabatur.* [Here he narrates how the Sultan of

Persia, Darius the son of Ytaspis, separately interrogated with a question three of his Chamberlains, whose names are said to be Arpaghes, Manachaz, and Zorobabel, about whether a king, a woman, or wine possessed the greatest strength. The others responded with various opinions, but Zorobabel, the last one, asserted that a woman by the delight of her love exceed the power both of a king and of wine. He added moreover as a final conclusion the statement that truth conquers all. His response was accepted by all as more praiseworthy.] The story of Darius and the three counselors is based on 1 Esdras 3–4:41. The story is popular among fourteenth-century and early fifteenth-century English writers. Compare Lydgate, *Siege of Thebes*, lines 1721–45. See also Chaucer's Dame Prudence, who gives an amusing variation on the story, where jasper is declared stronger than gold, wisdom stronger than jasper, and woman strongest of all (The Tale of Melibee, *CT* VII[B²] 1106–08). Gower has added Zorobabel's illustrative account of Alcestis (lines 1917 ff.). Compare Chaucer's use of Alcestis as the model of virtue in *LGW*. A further variation of the story of Darius' questions occurs in the Latin *Gesta Romanorum*, cap. cclviii. For critical discussion of the illustrative example, see Burke ("Sources and Significance"), who suggests Flavius Josephus, Peter Comestor, and Vincent of Beauvais as possible additional sources. Wetherbee considers the tale, followed by the extended analysis of the five points of policy, to be "a summarial statement of the problems of self-governance and social order posed by the earlier books" ("John Gower," p. 604).

- 1800–02 *Arpaghes . . . Manachaz . . . Zorobabel*. Zorobabel appears in 1 Esdras, but Gower's source for the other names is unknown. They do not appear in Esdras, Peter Comestor, or Flavius Josephus.
- 1884 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic de vigore amoris, qui inter Cirum Regem Persarum et Apemen Besazis filiam ipsius Regis Concubinam spectante tota Curia experiebatur*. [Note here concerning the power of love, which was experienced between Cyrus, the king of the Persians, and Apemen, daughter of Besazis, the concubine of this king, while the entire court watched.]
- 1884–99 Bakalian suggests that Apemen's dominance of the besotted Cyrus reflects Gower's lingering distaste of Edward III's later years under the influence of Alice Perrers. Yet, "however angry Gower may still be with the irresponsible behavior of the deceased Edward, in the *Confessio* he recognizes that women can be accomplished helpmeets to men" (*Aspects of Love*, p. 54). E.g., 7.1890–91, where Apemen subdues the tyrant's notorious anger.
- 1904–07 *Thurgh hem [women] men finden out the weie / To knighthode and to worldes fame . . .* Bakalian contrasts the voice of Genius that acknowledges women's usefulness in making knights fear shame and desire honor with the position against women as a detrimental influence on knighthood in *VC* 5.1.20 ff. and *MO*, lines 22801 ff. (*Aspects of Love*, pp. 52–57).
- 1912 *bote*. A term rich with connotations: salvation, reward, deliverance, amends; advantage, profit; but also penance, expiation, cure. There could be a pun on vessel (boat), as well.

- 1917 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de fidelitate Coniugis, qualiter Alcesta vxor Ameti, vt maritum suum viuificaret, seipsam morti spontanee subegit.* [Note the fidelity of married partners, how Alceste the wife of Ametus subjected herself by her own will to death in order that her husband might be revived.]
- 1917–49 Gallacher discusses Alcestis as a synecdoche for “trouthe” itself, “a culmination of Gower’s ‘legend of good women’” (*Love, the Word, and Mercury*, p. 105). Her generosity in giving her life for her husband’s recovery “clarifies Gower’s purpose in intermeshing the classical with the biblical story” (p. 104). See *CA* 7.1944–49.
- 1934–40 Burke (“Sources and Significances,” pp. 12–13) remarks on the wholeheartedness of Alcestis’ self-sacrifice; her tenderness toward her husband epitomizes Gower’s esteem for a good marriage. He omits the story of Hercules’ rescue of Alcestis, perhaps to emphasize the dedication and pathos of her commitment.
- 1957–60 *The trouthe . . . schal be knowe.* Proverbial. See Whiting, T509. Compare *CA* Prol. 369. See also Whiting, S490–491, and *CA* 3.205 and 5.4604.
- 1990 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat de regie maiestatis secunda Policia, quam Aristotiles largitatem vocat: cuius virtute non solum propulsata Auaricia Regis nomen magnificum extollitur, set et sui subditi omni diuiciarum habundancia iocundiores efficiuntur.* [Here he discourses about the second Policy of royal majesty, which Aristotle calls Liberality, by whose virtue is Avarice repelled, and not only is the King’s name extolled as magnificent, but also his subjects are made happier by every abundance of wealth.]
- 2003 ff. On the evolution of kingship and the current necessity of kings, see *RR*, lines 9603–36, 18545–18606; and *Piers Plowman* B.Pro.113, 132–38, 141–42, where kings are also looked on, not as part of the original order, but rather as an expedience, a necessary evil which resulted from the fall.
- 2031 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota super hoc quod Aristotiles Alexandrum exemplificauit de exactionibus Regis Chaldeorum* [Note, concerning this, that Aristotle instructed Alexander by an example about the exactions of the King of the Chaldeans.]
- 2061 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic secundum gesta Iulii exemplum ponit, qualiter Rex suorum militum, quos probos agnouerit, indigenciam largitatis sue beneficiis releuare tenetur.* [Here following the deeds of Julius he presents an instructive example, how the King was led to relieve his knight’s poverty, since he saw they (his deeds) were worthy, by the beneficence of his liberality.]

The account of the king of Chaldee’s prodigality may be found in the *Secretum Secretorum*. The story of Julius and the Poor Knight, which comes next, is based ultimately on Seneca, *De beneficiis* 5.24, though it is retold in the Latin *Gesta Romanorum*, cap. lxxxvii. The story of King Antigonus, which follows, may originate with Brunetto Latini’s *Trésor*, though there the story is an example of hypocritical excuses.

- 2110 *every service axeth mede*. Proverbial. See Whiting, S168. Compare *CA* 4.2023–24: “Bot every labour axeth why / Of som reward,” and 8.2012: “The mede arist of the service.” Perhaps the source is Matthew 10:10b: “for the workman is worthy of his meat.”
- 2115–30 Hamilton (“Some Sources,” p. 339) suggests the *Tractatus de diversis historiis Romanorum* as a source for this story and others in Book 7, namely, the tales of Codrus (7.3163–3214), Fabricius (7.2783–2832), the Roman Triumph (7.2355–2411), Julius Caesar and the Poor Knight (7.2061–2114), the Emperor and the Masons (7.2412–31), and the story of Alexander and the Pirate in 3.2363–2437. But see also the notes to 7.2061 ff., 7.2328–2490, 7.2765 ff., and 7.3163 ff.
- 2119 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic ponit exemplum de Rege Antigono, qualiter dona regia secundum maius et minus equa discrecione moderanda sunt*. [Here he presents an instructive example concerning King Antigonus, how royal gifts must be moderated in respect to more and less equal discretion.]
- 2142 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic quod Regius status a suis fidelibus omni favore supportandus est*. [Note here that the Royal estate must be supported with all goodwill by the king’s faithful.]
- 2149 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic secundum Aristotilem, qualiter Principum Prodegalitas paupertatem inducit communem*. [Note here following Aristotle, how the Prodigality of Rulers induces poverty for all.]
- 2155 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Seneca. Sic aliis benefacito, vt tibi non noceas*. [Seneca: Be thus beneficent to others, so you may not be harmful to yourself.]
- 2162–63 *Prodegalité . . . is the moder of poverté*. Proverbial. See Whiting, P405.
- 2177 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota qualiter in principum curiis adulatores triplici gravitate offendunt*. [Note how in the courts of rulers, flatterers offend by a triple gravity.]
- 2181 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Primo contra deum*. [First, against God.]
- 2185 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Secundo contra Principem*. [Second, against the Prince.]
- 2199 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Tercio contra populum*. [Third, against the people.]
- 2217 ff. Based on an anecdote in Val. Max. 4.3, ext. 4b.
- 2219 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic contra vanitates adulantum loquitur, et narrat quod cum Arisippus de Cartagine Philosophus scole studium relinquens sui Principis obsequio in magnis adulacionibus pre ceteris carior assistebat, accidit vt ipse quodam die Diogenem Philosophum nuper socium suum, virum tam moribus quam sciencia probatissimum, herbas ad olera sua collectas lauantes ex casu ad ripam inuenit: cui ait, “O Diogenes, vere si tu sicut et ego Principi tuo placere scires, huiusmodi herbas aut colligere aut lauare tibi minime indigeret.” Cui alter respondit, “O Arisippe, certe et si tu sicut et ego olera tua colligere et lauare scires, principem tuum ob inanis glorie cupiditatem blandiri nullatenus deberes.”* [Here he speaks against the vanities of flatterers, and he narrates how when Arisippus, the Philosopher from Carthage, left his studies at school, he very painstakingly contributed to the obsequiousness given to his

Ruler even beyond others among the important flatterers. It happened that one day he found by chance at a riverbank Diogenes the Philosopher, not long ago his companion, a man most worthy both in manners and learning, washing herbs he had collected as his cooking-vegetables. To him Arisippus said, “O Diogenes, truly if you knew as I do how to please your Ruler, there would hardly be need for you either to collect or wash such herbs.” To him the other answered, “O Arisippus, certainly also if you knew how to collect and wash cooking-vegetables, you would not at all need to blandish your ruler on account of empty lust for glory.”]

2328–2490 Of these accounts of the Roman triumphal processions Macaulay (3.530) notes: “The Roman Triumph as here related was a commonplace of preachers and moralists, cf. Bromyard, *Summa praedicatorum*, I.v.36.” See also the Latin *Gesta Romanorum*, cap. xxx. Precisely which “Chronicle” Genius speaks of is not known. Hoccleve’s *Regiment of Princes* mentions the custom of masons visiting the emperor to plan his sepulcher; a marginal note there refers the reader to *Vita Johannis Eleemosynarii*. That custom is also described in Jofroi’s *Secretum Secretorum*.

2355 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic narrat super eodem, qualiter nuper Romanorum Imperator, cum ipse triumphator in hostes a bello Rome rediret, tres sibi laudes in signum sui triumphi precipue debebantur: primo quatuor equi albissimi currum in quo sedebat veherent, secundo tunica Iovis pro tunc indueretur, tercio sui captivi prope currum as utrumque latus catenati deambularent. Set ne tanti honoris adulacio eius animum in superbiam extolleret, quidam scurra linguosus iuxta ipsum in curru sedebat, qui quasi continuatis vocibus improperando ei dixit, “Notheos,” hoc est nosce teipsum, “quia si hodie fortuna tibi prospera fuerit, cras forte versa rota mutabilis aduersabitur.”* [Here he narrates about the same thing, how not long ago the Roman Emperor, when as a triumpher against enemies returned home from war to Rome, three signs of his triumph were particularly due: first, that four pure-white horses should draw the chariot in which he was sitting; second, that the coat of Jupiter should be put on him for that time; and third, that his captives should walk in chains near the chariot on both sides. But lest the adulation of such honor should inflate his spirit with pride, a certain man with facility in scurrilities sat next to him in the chariot, and chastised him with a steady stream, saying, “Notheos,” that is, know yourself, “because if fortune will have been prosperous to you today, tomorrow perhaps its mutable wheel turned downwards will throw you below.”]

2359 *unto thin ere*. Since Flattery’s primary means of entering the mind of its victim is through the ear, the wise emperor has his “Ribald” beside him to occupy his ear with warnings against the folly of “his gloire,” causing him to “Tak into memoire” the vanity of victory, which Fortune can “overthrowe” in “nothing bot a throwe” (lines 2385–96).

2388–89 This concept of self-knowledge (n.b. the marginal gloss cites the Delphi Oracle’s *nosce teipsum*) is implicit in the structure of the whole poem (see Simpson, *Sciences and the Self*, p. 204), especially as it moves through the refocusing

of “self” in Book 8, leading to the naming of John Gower and his communal sense of self manifest in his prayer for England.

- 2412 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic eciam contra adulacionem scribit quod primo die quo nuper Imperator intronizatus extitit, latomi sui ab ipso constanter peterent, de quali lapide sue sepulture tumulum fabricarent; vt sic futuram mortem commemorans vanitates huius seculi transitorias facilius reprimeret.* [Here he also writes against adulation, that on the first day when a former Emperor was enthroned his masons continually sought to know from him from what stone they should construct the tomb of his sepulcher; so that thus commemorating his future death he might more easily resist the transitory vanities of this world.]
- 2449 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic inter alia gesta Caesaris narrat vnum exemplum precipue contra illos qui, cum in aspectu principis aliis sapienciores apparere vellent, quandoque tamen simulate sapiencie talia committunt, per que ceteris stulciores in fine comprobantur.* [Here among other deeds of Caesar he narrates an instructive example especially against those who wished to appear wiser than others in the ruler’s presence, but sometimes commit such things of pretended wisdom that through these they were finally proven stupider than others.]
- 2470 On the king’s wise use of discretion to answer the flatterer, see Peck (*Kingship and Common Profit*, pp. 146–47). Porter sees this exemplum as the third of three on self-knowledge, the surest defense against flattery, the first two being the Roman Triumph and the Emperor and the Masons (“Gower’s Ethical Microcosm,” pp. 156–57).
- 2491 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Nota, qualiter isti circa Principem adultores pocius a Curia expelli, quam ad regie maiestatis munera acceptari, Policia suadente deberent.* [Note how those flatterers around a Ruler ought, by the argument of Policy, to be expelled from the Court rather than accepted as adornments of a king’s majesty.]
- 2493 ff. See Burnley, who cites lines 2495–508 of Chaucer’s Monk’s Tale in connection with his assessment of Gower’s changing attitude toward Richard as a king become tyrant: “As a moral philosopher whose concern was with the ‘commune profit,’ Gower would begin to see himself no longer as the philosophic instructor of a young prince, as an Aristotle to Richard’s Alexander, but rather he would begin to share the rôle that he allots also to Arundel who, by his moral teaching, endeavoured ‘to deflect the king from his fury.’ No longer an Aristotle, he might well see himself instead as a Seneca restraining the madness of his own contemporary Nero” (*Chaucer’s Language*, p. 15).
- 2527 ff. See 3 Kings (1 Kings) 22.
- 2530 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur vltterius de consilio adulantum, quorum fabulis principis aures organizate veritatis auditum capere nequiunt. Et narrat exemplum de Rege Achab, qui pro eo quod ipse prophetias fidelis Michee recusauit blandiciisque adulantis Zedechie adhesit, Rex Sirie Benedab in campo bellator ipsum diuino iudicio deuictum interfecit.* [Here he speaks further about the counsel of flatterers, by means of whose fables a ruler’s ears are not able to receive the sound of harmonious truth. And he narrates an instructive example about King Ahab,

who because of the fact that he rejected the prophecies of faithful Micaiah and clung to the blandishments and flatteries of Zedekiah, King Benedab of Syria as a warrior in the field killed him, condemned by divine judgment.]

- 2541 *Ramoth Galaath*. Ramoth-Gilead was the site of King Ahab's last battle (4 Kings [2 Kings] 8:28 ff.; compare 3 Kings [1 Kings] 22:3 ff.). Ramah means "heights" and appears in several biblical place-names, e.g., the place where the cry of Rachel was heard as she wept for her lost children (Jeremias 31:15).

Latin verses ix (before line 2695). **Line 4:** *Deuiat*. A nearly verbatim translation here seems best, although it obscures the pun: *deuiat* (a post-Classical word) means both "stray from the path" (a metaphor that the rest of the verse repeats), and "be transgressive" in a moral or legal sense.

- 2695–2701 *What is . . . What ben . . . What is . . . What is . . . Bot if . . .* This magnificent use of anaphora marks a rhetorical triumph for Gower as he moves toward the culmination of his poem in its celebration of Law epitomized in the Tale of Lyncurgus, lines 2917 ff., a tale skillfully set up by a sequence of exempla on good and bad rulers — Maximin, Gaius Fabricius, Emperor Conrad, Consul Carmidotirus, and Cambyse — all of whom demonstrate "th'experience" of "What thing it is to kepe lawe" (7.2704–05).

- 2695–3102 Fisher sees Gower's discussion of justice as the "climax in Gower's treatment of the themes of law and order," noting close echoes with *MO*, lines 205 ff., and *VC* 6.469 ff. (pp. 200–01 ff.).

- 2699 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat de tercia Principum regis Policia, que Iusticia nominata est, cuius condicio legibus incorrupta unicuique quod suum est equo pondere distribuit*. [Here he discourses about the third Policy of the Governance of rulers, which is called Justice, whose nature, uncorrupted by laws, distributes to each human being with an equal weight what is properly his.]

- 2709–24 Gower is careful to differentiate the king's relationship with law from that of the commons, noting that in some instances the king has power that *stant above the lawe* (line 2719), but emphasizing with equal conviction that the king must *governe with rihtwisnesse / As he which schal the lawe guide* (lines 2716–17); see also lines 2732 ff., demonstrating that "if the lawe torne amis, / The poeple also mistorned is" (7.2763–64).

- 2727 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Imperatoriam maiestatem non solum armis, set eciam legibus oportet esse armatam*. [It is necessary for imperial majesty to be armed not only with weapons but also with laws.]

- 2730 *That he himself ferst justefie*. Compare 8.2109–20 on each man's kingdom of the self that he must "justefie" (8.2112) or else lose his estate.

- 2732–64 "Gower's most lucid and earnest comment on the interdependence of the king, the legal system, and a peaceful nation" (Fisher, *John Gower*, p. 201). Compare *VC* 6.487–94.

- 2762 *menable*. *MED* adj. 1b glosses: "pliant; controllable." But those terms have more negative connotations that apply less well than "compliant (in agree-

ment).” If, of course, the law is turned amiss, then the people will be “mis-torned” (7.2764) as well and will become “uncontrollable.”

- 2765 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic de iusticia Maximini Imperatoris, qui cum alicuius prouincie custodem sibi substituere volebat, primo de sui nominis fama proclamacione facta ipsius condicionem diligencius inuestigabat.* [Note here concerning the justice of Emperor Maximin, who when he wanted to substitute a governor of some province of his, first, making proclamation, would investigate very diligently his repute.]

Macaulay (3.530) notes that the account of Maximin is found in Godfrey of Viterbo, *Speculum Regum*. The accounts of Gaius Fabricius and Consul Carmidotirus are based on Val. Max. 4.3.5a and 6.5, ext. 4, respectively. Emperor Conrad is mentioned in Godfrey.

- 2788 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Hic ponit exemplum de iudicibus incorruptis. Et narrat qualiter Gayus Fabricus nuper Rome Consul aurum a Sampnitibus sibi oblatum renuit, dicens quod nobilius est aurum possidentes dominio subiugare, quam ex auri cupiditate dominii libertatem amittere.* [Here he presents an instructive example about uncorrupted judges. And he narrates how Gaius Fabricius, who not long ago was the Consul of Rome, rejected gold brought to him by the Sampnites, saying that it was more noble to subjugate those possessing gold to dominion, than to lose the freedom of dominion by the love of gold.]


- 2833 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Hic narrat de iusticia nuper Conradi Imperatoris, cuius tempore alicuius reuerencia persone, aliqua seu precum interuencione quacunque vel auri redemptione, legum Statuta commutari seu redimi nullatenus potuerunt.* [Here he narrates about the justice of the recent Emperor Conrad, in whose days the Statutes of law could not at all be revoked or commuted on the grounds of anyone’s social status, of any intervention of pleas, or any sort of payment of gold.]

- 2849 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Nota exemplum de constancia iudicis; ubi narrat de Carmidotiro Rome nuper Consule, qui cum sui statuti legem nescius offendisset, Romanique super hoc penam sibi remittere voluissent, ipse propria manu, ubi nullus alius in ipsum vindex fuit, sui criminis vindictam executus est.* [Note an instructive example about the constancy of a judge, where it tells about Carmidotirus the recent Consul of Rome, who, when he had unknowingly broken the law of his own statute, and when the Romans wanted to remit him from the penalty, carried out by his own hand the retribution of his crime, when no one else would be his executioner.]

- 2889 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Nota quod falsi iudices mortis pena puniendi sunt, narrat enim qualiter Cambises Rex Persarum quendam iudicem corruptum excoari viuum fecit, eiusque pelle cathedram iudicalem operiri constituit: ita quod filius suus super patris pellem postea pro tribunali cessurus iudicii equitatem euidentius memoraretur.* [Note that false judges must be punished with the penalty of death. For he narrates how Cambises, King of the Persians, caused a certain corrupt judge to be flayed alive, and caused his skin to be fashioned into a judicial chair, so that his son, who would later sit as a tribunal on his father’s skin, would be more sharply mindful of equity in judgment.]


The story of Cambyzes and his judge, first told by Herodotus (5.25), was popular with medieval audiences. Macaulay (3.531) notes its recurrence in Val. Max. 6.3, ext. 3; the Latin *Gesta Romanorum*, cap. xxix; and Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes*. See Chaucer's Summoner's Tale (CT III[D]2043–78) for another story of the legendary tyrant.

2918 *Ligurgius*. The tale is well known. See the Latin *Gesta Romanorum* 169. Val. Max. 2.6.1, 5.3.ext.2, and 7.2.ext.15 all contain references to his laws. Gower's version offers "the most eloquent statement in all Gower's writing of the legal foundation of society and the ideal relationship of the king to the law" (Fisher, *John Gower*, p. 202), an evaluation of the story supported by Gallacher (*Love, the Word, and Mercury*, pp. 118–20), who sees the pact with the Athenians as "an anagnorisis, a movement from ignorance to knowledge in regard to the divine authority of their ruler," and Peck (*Kingship and Common Profit*, pp. 148–49), who contrasts Ligurgius' sense of peace and the common good with that of Amans. See also Street ("John Gower," p. 232), who identifies Lygurgus as Gower's favorite hero, given his love of the people and the common good.

2921 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic ponit exemplum de Principibus illis, qui non solum legem statuentes illem conseruant, set vt commune bonum adaugeant, propriam facultatem diminuunt. Et narrat quod, cum Ligurgius Athenarum princeps subditos suos in omni prosperitatis habundancia diuites et vnanimes congruis legibus stare fecisset, volens ad utilitatem rei publice leges illas firmitus obseruari, peregre proficisci se finxit; set prius iuramentum solempne a legiis suis sub hac forma exegit, quod ipsi vsque in reditum suum leges suas nullatenus infringere: quibus iuratis peregrinationem suam in exilium absque reditu pro perpetuo delagauit.* [Here he presents an instructive example concerning those Rulers who not only having established a law preserve it, but also in order that they might augment the common good diminish their own power. And he tells that Ligurgius the ruler of the Athenians had established his subjects in every abundance of prosperity, wealth, and unanimity by means of appropriate laws, when, wishing those laws to be more firmly observed for the utility of the commonwealth, caused himself to depart to foreign lands. But first he extracted a solemn oath from his lieges in this manner: that they would not break his laws in any way until he returned. With these things sworn, he commuted his pilgrimage into exile to be permanent, without return.]

3019 *The goode lawes to auance*. To the question of which is higher, the law or the king, Sidrak replies: "Lawe is of more auctorite / Thenne Kyng or any prince may be" — *Sidrak and Bokkus* 2.448 (Laud B lines 6559–60).

3029 ff. The list of lawgivers is based on *Trésor* 1.17.

3033 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic ad eorum laudem, qui iusticie causa leges primo statuerunt, aliquorum nomina specialius commemorat.* [Here in praise of those who for the sake of justice first established laws, he specifically commemorates some of their names.]

3054 ff. Macaulay notes (3.531):

This list of legislators is from [Brunetto's] *Trésor* . . . but the text which our author used seems to have been corrupt. The passage runs thus in the printed edition: 'Moyses fu li premiers qui bailla la loi as Hebreus; et li rois Foroneus fu li premiers qui la bailla as Grezois; Mercurus as EGYPTIENS, et Solon à cels de Athenes; Ligurgus as Troyens; Numa Pompilius, qui regna après Romulus en Rome, et puis ses filz, bailla et fist lois as Romains premierement,' &c. If we suppose 'Solon' to have been omitted in the MS., the passage might read (with changes in punctuation) nearly as we have it in Gower. [Moses was the first man to whom God gave the law, and Moses gave it to the Hebrews; King Phoroneus was the first to give it to the Greeks, Mercury to the Egyptians, Solon to the Athenians, Lycurgus to the Trojans. Numa Pompilius, who reigned after Romulus in Rome, and afterward his son, first gave law to the Romans, etc. — trans. Paul Barrette and Spurgeon Baldwin]

Note that Brunetto links Lycurgus with the Trojans, rather than Athens.

3075–77 *Do larwe awey, what is a king.* . . . One of several passages that place law at the center of the state and human definitions. Compare 7.2695–2708, 7.2759–64, and 7.3092–94.

Latin verses x (before line 3103). **Line 3:** *Pietas*. Echard and Fanger (*Latin Verses*, p. 84) rightly note that *pietas* connotes mercy, self-restraint, and obedience to God; for discussion of these senses, see Galloway, "Literature of 1388."


3109 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat de quarta Principum regiminis Policia, que Pietas dicta est; per quam Principes erga populum misericordes effecti misericordiam altissimi graciosius consequuntur.* [Here he discourses about the fourth Policy of the governance of Rulers, which is called Pity, by which Rulers, having been made merciful to the people, with much grace follow the mercy of the almighty.]

3130–31 The contest between Justice and Pity echoes the debate between the four Daughters of God (Righteousness, Mercy, Truth, and Peace), where Mercy, in her pity, convinces Righteousness, akin to the law, to permit grace to assist humankind. See, for example, Robert Grosseteste's *Chateau d'Amour* (lines 275–566 in the Middle English translation), *Piers Plowman* B.18.110–24, where the daughters meet at a crossroad to debate the fate of humankind after the Crucifixion; or *The Castle of Perseverance*, lines 3129–3560.

3135–36 *the Philosophre*. Itô (*John Gower*, pp. 183–85) identifies the Philosopher as Cassiodorus on grounds of similar passages in *MO*, lines 23059–61 and 13918–20, where "Cassodre" is specified, and also in 7.*3161–*62 (found only in MSS B, T, A), which reads "Cassodre in his apprise telleth, / The regne is sauf, wher pite duelleth," with a Latin marginal gloss: *Cassiodorus. Vbi regnat pietas, consolidatur regnum* [Where pity (or piety) reigns, the reign is secure] (Mac 3.319), and is clearly akin to the idea that Pity [*h*]is regne in good astat confermeth (line 3136).

3137 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Constantinus Imperator ait: "Vere se dominum esse comprobabat, qui seruum pietatis se facit."* [Emperor Constantine said, "Truly he proves himself a lord who makes himself pity's servant."]

See the story of Constantine and Sylvester (*CA* 2.3187 ff.) for a further exemplum of Constantine's pity. An account of Troian may be found in Godfrey of Viterbo, *Spec. reg.* 2.14.

3142 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Troianus ait, quod ipse subditos suos solite pietatis fauore magis quam austeritatis rigore regere, eorumque beneuolenciam potius quam timorem penes se attractare proponebat.* [Trajan said that he proposed to rule his subjects more by the good wishes of pity than by the rigor of austerity, and to attract their benevolence toward him rather than their fear.]

3144 *Troian the worthi debonaire.* Roman emperor from A.D. 98–117. Trajan gained a reputation as a virtuous ruler and patron of the arts — learned, fair-minded, and orderly. Jacobus de Voragine, in the life of St. Ignatius, tells of Trajan's having repented the torment and execution of St. Ignatius, upon learning from Pliny the Younger that Ignatius was a virtuous man (*Golden Legend*, Feb. 1). John the Deacon (*Sancti Gregorii Magni vita* 2.44, eighth century) tells of Pope Gregory weeping and praying for Trajan's soul, a prayer answered by God, whereby Trajan was returned to life long enough to know Christ, believe, and, upon his second death, be received into heaven. (See Aquinas, *Summa theol.* III, Suppl., q. 71, a. 5, ad 5.) The story was picked up in *Fiore di filosofi*, an account used by Dante who mentions the virtuous Trajan in *Purgatorio* 10.76 ff. as an example of humility (Trajan helped a widow whose son had been slain, even while he was in the midst of battle). Fiore's account is reprinted in Singleton's translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, vol. 2, pt. 2, pp. 211–12. Following the lead of Fiore and Aquinas, Dante places Trajan in heaven, the first of the five virtuous rulers: "Of the five which make an arch for my brow, he who is nearest to my beak consoled the poor widow for her son. Now, he knows by experience of this sweet life and the opposite, how dear it costs not to follow Christ" (*Paradiso* 20.43–48, Singleton, vol. 3, pt. 1, p. 223). The fifth of the five is also a pagan, the Trojan Ripheus; Dante's point demonstrates the power of grace beyond institutions or human understanding. (See Aquinas, *Summa theol.* II.II, q. 2, a. 7, ad 3, on Christ's revelation to virtuous gentiles, including the Sibyl, who foretold things about Christ.) In *Piers Plowman* B.11.140 Trajan appears as one "broken out of helle," "a trewe knyghte" (B.11.141) whose salvation did not depend on clerks and their books, but rather only on "loue and leaute and my lawful domes" (B.11.145), a fact known by St. Gregory, who desired Trajan's salvation (B.11.146–47), whereby the emperor was saved by grace "withoute syngyng of masses" (B.11.151) and "by loue, and by leryng of my lyuyng in treuthe" (B.11.152).

3162 Six manuscripts of the second recension, including S, B, and T, follow line 3162 with the Tale of the Jew and the Pagan (based on the *Secretum Secretorum*), which Macaulay includes in 3.320 ff., and which may be summarized as follows: To exemplify Pity, Aristotle told King Alexander how two men met one hot summer in the wilderness between Cairo and Babylon. One asked the other about his faith. The other said he was a Pagan whose law bade him to be gracious and debonaire and to love all men alike, whether they be rich or poor.

The first man then said he was a Jew who by his law would be a true fellow to no man unless he be another Jew. For if the fellow were not a Jew, he might take both life and goods from him. The Pagan marveled at so strange a law. As they traveled on under the hot sun, the Jew, who was on foot, schemed how he might ride. So he said to the Pagan, who rode upon an ass to which he had tied all his goods: “If your law is as you say you are beholden to me in my weariness and distress to let me ride a mile or two that I might rest my body.” The Pagan, who would not displease his companion, saw his plight and in pity let him ride full soft. On they went, chatting away about this and that until at last the Pagan could go no further. When he asked the Jew to let him ride again, the Jew hastened on ahead, saying: “You upheld your law by giving me succor; now I will do my duty according to the law of Jewry: “Thin asse schal go forth with me / With al thi good, which I have sesed; / And that I wot thou art desesed, / I am riht glad and noght mispaid” (lines *3294–*97). The deserted Pagan knelt on the ground, raised his hands to heaven, and prayed: “O highest Trust, who loves righteousness, I beseech with humble heart that you see and judge this quarrel. Mercy or vengeance I leave to your judgment.” So he went on “with drery chiere,” (line *3312) hoping to catch sight of the Jew, but without success until nightfall. Then from the highway he at last beheld the Jew, lying all bloody in a valley, slain by a lion. Looking about he found his ass nearby, still in harness, safe and sound. See how the piteous man deserves pity, as Aristotle bears witness. Pity is the source of all virtue, and God will repress under foot its enemies. See Ames, “Source and Significance.”

3163 ff.


☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic de Principis pietate erga populum, ubi narrat quod, cum Codrus Rex Athenarum contra Dorences bellum gerere deberet, consulto prius Appolline responsum accepit, quod unum de duobus, videlicet aut seipsum in prelio interfici et populum suum saluari, aut populum interfici et se saluum fieri, eligere oporteret. Super quo Rex pietate motus plebisque sue magis quam proprii corporis salutem affectans, mortem sibi preelegit; et sic bellum aggrediens pro vita multorum solus interiiit.* [Note here concerning the pity of a Ruler toward his people, where he narrates that, when Codrus, King of the Athenians, had to wage war against the Dorians, he first consulted Apollo. He received the answer that it was necessary to choose one of two things: namely, either that he be killed in battle and his people saved, or his people be killed and he be kept safe. Whereupon the King, moved by pity and desiring the safety of his people more than his own body, chose death for himself. And thus going into battle he alone died for the lives of many.]

3181


Valeire. See Val. Max. 5.6.ext.1, where the tale of Codrus is told as an example of piety. See also *MO*, lines 19981–20004 where the story is also attributed to Valerius. The story of Codrus also occurs in the Latin *Gesta Romanorum*, cap. xli, and Jofroi’s *Secretum Secretorum*. On Codrus’ Christ-like willingness to sacrifice his life for his people see Peck, *Kingship and Common Profit*, pp. 149–50, and Porter, “Gower’s Ethical Microcosm,” p. 158.


3201

lemes. Compare the Reeve’s Prologue (*CT* I[A]3886): “Oure olde lemes mowe wel been unweelde.”

- 3215 A source for The Tale of Pompeius and the King of Armenia might be Val. Max. 5.1.9–10.
- 3219 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic ponit exemplum de victoriosi Principis pietate erga aduersarios suos. Et narrat quod, cum Pompeius Romanorum Imperator Regem Armenie aduersarium suum in bello victum cepisset, captumque vinculis alligatum Rome tenuisset, tyrannidis iracundie stimulos postponens, pietatis mansuetudinem operatus est. Dixit enim quod nobilius est Regem facere quam deponere: super quo dictum Regem absque ulla redempcione non solum a vinculis absoluit, set ad sui regni culmen gratuita voluntate coronatum restituit.* [Here he presents an instructive example concerning the pity of a victorious Ruler toward his adversaries. And he narrates that, when Pompey, the Emperor of the Romans, had taken captive in battle the King of Armenia, his adversary, and bound him captive in chains at Rome, he put aside the goads of tyrannical wrath and devoted himself to the clemency of pity. For he said that it was more noble to make a King than to depose one; whereupon he not only released the said King from his chains without any ransom, but he also by free will restored him, crowned, to fullest height of power in his own kingdom.]
- 3230 *conscience*. I have followed Lewis (*Studies in Words*, p. 183) in glossing *conscience* as “tenderness.”
- 3266 *merel*. MED notes that a *merel* is a counter used in the game of merels, and thus, with *drowhe* means “to make a move.”
- 3267 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur contra illos, qui tyrannica potestate principatum obtinenetes in iniquitatis sue malicia gloriantur. Et narrat exemplum, qualiter Leoncius tyrannus piū Iustinianum non solum a solio imperatorie maiestatis fraudulenter expulit, set ut ipse inhabilis ad regnum in aspectu plebis efficeretur, naso et labris absceis, ipsum tyrannice mutulauit. Deus tamen, qui super omnia pius est, Tiberio superueniente vna cum adiutorio Terbellis Bulgarie Regis, Iustinianum interfecto Leoncio ad imperium restitui misericorditer procurauit.* [Here he speaks against those who, obtaining a principality by tyrannical power, glory in the malice of their iniquity. And he narrates an instructive example, how Leontius the tyrant fraudulently not only expelled Justinian from the majesty of his imperial throne but also, that he might be made unsuitable for reign in the appearance of a commoner, tyrannically mutilated him, cutting off his nose and lips. Nonetheless God, who is pitying beyond all, with Tiberius intervening along with the help of Terbelis the King of Bulgaria, mercifully caused Justinian to be restored to his empire, after Leontius had been killed.]
- Macaulay (3.532) notes: “Justinian II is described by Gibbon as a cruel tyrant, whose deposition by Leontius was fully deserved, and who, when restored by the help of Terbelis, took a ferocious vengeance on his opponents: ‘during the six years of his new reign, he considered the axe, the cord, and the rack as the only instruments of royalty.’ Nothing apparently could be less appropriate than the epithet ‘pious,’ which Gower bestows upon him.”
- 3295 ff. Gower apparently read the story in Godfrey of Viterbo’s *Pantheon*, where Barillus is the name given to Perillus, as in the CA, though the story was a


favorite of late Roman authors. See the Latin *Gesta Romanorum*, cap. xlvi; Cicero often cited the story of Phalaris and his brass bull (e.g., *De Divinatione* 3.33, *Verrine Orations* 4.73); and Diod. 9.19.1.


3297 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur ulterius de crudelitate Siculi tyranni, necnon et de Berillo eiusdem Consiliario, qui ad tormentum populi quendam taurum eneam tyrannica coniectura fabricari constituit; in quo tamen ipse prior, proprio crimine illud exigente, usque ad sui interitus expirationem iudicialiter torquebatur.* [Here he speaks moreover about the cruelty of Siculus the tyrant, and also about Berillus his Counselor, who for the torment of the people tyrannically caused to be constructed a certain brass bull, in which nonetheless he first, by the means of his own criminal creation, was judicially tortured to the last gasp of his annihilation.]

3341 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic de Dionisio tyranno, qui mire crudelitatis seueritate eciam hospites suos ad deuorandum equis suis tribuit: cui Hercules tandem superueniens victum impium in impietate sua pari morte conclusit.* [Note here concerning Dionysius the tyrant, who by an extraordinary severity of cruelty gave even his guests to his horses to be devoured; finally, Hercules overcame him, and brought the impious captive by his own impiety to an equally impious death.]


The tyrant Dionysius has been confused with Diomedes, whom Hercules overthrew. Mainzer (“John Gower’s Use of the ‘Mediaeval Ovid,’” pp. 223–24) suggests Ovid’s *Ibis* as the source on the basis of a verbal parallel — the marginal gloss at lines 3345 ff. — as well as the substitution of Dionysus for Diomedes, though the story also occurs in *Met.* 1.221–43.

3346 *Devoureden the mennes blod.* Compare Alexander’s horse Bucephalus, who was also a man-eater, though the dramatic irony of Gower’s exemplum, where the one who feeds his guests to his horse is eaten by his horse himself (line 3354), is uniquely satisfying. See note 6.1935.

3357 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic de consimili Lichaontis tirannia, qui carnes hominum hominibus in suo hospicio ad vescendum dedit; cuius formam condicioni similem Iupiter coequans ipsum in lupum transformauit.* [Note here concerning the similar tyranny of Lichaon, who gave the flesh of men to the men in his household for eating; Jupiter, making his form similar to his nature, transformed him into a wolf.] See *Met.* 1.209–43. Hamilton (“Some Sources,” pp. 333–34) suggests *Trésor* 1.173.5 as source, with the piteous lion coming from the French *Secretum Secretorum*.

3387 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Nota qualiter Leo hominibus stratis parcat.* [Note how the Lion spares fallen men.]

3417–3517 The story of Spartacus occurs in Justin, *Epitome* 1.8, and Orosius, *Historiarum* 2.7. Macaulay (3.532) suggests that the names in Gower’s account apparently come from Peter Comestor (*PL* 198.1471).

3419 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur precipue contra tyrannos illos qui, cum in bello vincere possunt, humani sanguinis effusione saturari nequiunt. Et narrat in exemplum de quodam Persarum Rege, cuius nomen Spertachus erat, qui pre ceteris tunc*

in Oriente bellicosus et victoriosus, quoscumque gladio vincere poterat, absque pietate interfici constituit. Set tandem sub manu Thamaris Marsegetarum Regine in bello captus, quod a diu quesivit, seueritatem pro seueritate finaliter invenit. Nam et ipsa quosdam vas de sanguine Persarum plenum ante se afferri decreuit, in quo caput tyranni usque ad mortem mergens dixit: "O tyrannorum crudelissime, semper esuriens sanguinem sitisti: ecce iam ad saturitatem sanguinem bibe." [Here he speaks especially against those tyrants who, when they are able to conquer in battle, cannot be satiated by the effusion of human blood. And he narrates in an instructive example about a certain King of the Persians, whose name was Spertachus, who, more warlike and victorious than others in the East, killed without pity whomever he was able to conquer by the sword. Finally, however, he was captured in battle by the hand of Thamaris the Queen of the Marsegetes which she had long sought, he finally received severity for his severity. For she decreed that a certain container full of Persian blood be brought before him, in which, submerging the head of the tyrant until he died, she said, "O most cruel of tyrants, always thirstily you have drunk blood; behold now, drink blood to your fill."]

- 3444 *queene of Marsagele*. Macaulay (3.532–33) notes that most histories call Thamyris "queen of the Scythians." The name *Marsagele* apparently comes from Peter Comestor, who also gives "Spartachus" as the youthful name of the Persian King Cyrus. See note to 7.3417–3517. This story of Thamyris is also found in Christine de Pizan's *Book of the City of Ladies*, 1.17.2, where she is called the Amazon queen.
- 3520–31 *Pité . . . Makth that the God is merciable, / If ther be cause resonable*. Gower is "certainly arguing in scholastic terms the importance of a rationally defined mean as the arbiter of virtue. *Pitee* is an emotion which leads on in suitable circumstances to *mercy*. It seems to be considered a virtue, and is opposed to the vice of excess which is labelled *pusillamite*, and which inhibits the enforcement of true justice" (Burnley, *Chaucer's Language*, p. 129).
- 3557 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur secundum Philosophum, dicens quod sicut non decet Principes tyrannica impetuositate esse crudeles, ita nec decet timorosa pusillanimitate esse vecordes*. [Here he speaks according to the Philosopher, saying that just as it is not fitting for Rulers to be cruel with tyrannical impetuosity, so it is not fitting for them to be cowardly with timid faint-heartedness.]
- 3575 *For thei withoute cause dradde*. Part of the wit of this fearsome tale is its inversion of the proverb "as fearful as a mouse" (see Whiting, M732).
- 3581 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic secundum Oracium de magnanimo Yacide et pusillanimitate Thersite*. [Note here according to Horace concerning the great-heartedness of Aeacida and the faint-heartedness of Thersites.] The reference should be to Juvenal, *Satires* 8.269 ff., instead of Horace. Stollreither (*Quellen-Nachweise*, p. 57) notes a similar false attribution to Horace in *MO*, line 23370, and also in the marginal gloss to *CA* 6.1513–14.
- 3594 ff. ☞ **Latin marginalia:** *Salomon. Tempus belli, tempus pacis*. [Solomon: "A time of war, a time of peace."] (Ecclesiastes 3:8.)

- 3595 *ther is a time of pes* is the culmination verse for the “All things have their season” passage (Ecclesiastes 3.1–8). Barnie notes that Gower “was a man of peace, but not a pacifist,” pointing out that the poet, like many of his contemporaries, differentiated with thoughtful discretion between just and unjust war (*War in Medieval English Society*, p. 122). Not only is this the topic of 7.3594–3622 but also of 3.2230–40, and *MO*, lines 23608 ff.
- 3605 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota qualiter inter duo extrema consistit virtus.* [Note how virtue is what stands between two extremes.]
- 3627–942 For Gideon’s story, see Judges 7; the story of Saul and Agag occurs in 1 Kings (1 Samuel) 15. For David’s advice to Solomon and Solomon’s wisdom in following it, see 3 Kings (1 Kings) 2–12.
- 3630 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic dicit quod Princeps iusticie causa bellum nullo modo timere debet. Et narrat qualiter dux Gedeon cum solis tricentis viris quinque Reges, scilicet Madianitarum, Amalechitarum, Amonitarum, Amoreorum et Iebuseorum, cum eorum excercitu, qui ad lxxx^{ia} Milia numeratus est, gracia cooperante diuina, victoriose in fugam conuertit.* [Here he says that a Ruler for the sake of justice in the cause of war ought never to be timid. And he narrates how the leader of Gideon with three hundred men, and with the help of divine grace, victoriously drove in flight five Kings, namely of the Midianites, of the Amalachites, of the Ammonites, of the Amorites, and of the Jebusites along with their army, who numbered ninety thousand.]
- 3807–3912 Hamilton (“Some Sources,” pp. 337–38) notes that all three of the biblical exempla in this passage (Saul and Agag, David and Joab, and Solomon’s Wisdom) are, along with the detailed story of Diogenes and Aristippus, found in Jofroi’s French *Secretum Secretorum* as examples of Justice and Wisdom, suitable to royal Prudence.
- 3809 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic dicit quod ubi et quando causa et tempus requirunt, princeps illos sub potestate sua, quos iusticie aduersarios agnouerit, occidere de iure tenetur. Et narrat in exemplum qualiter, pro eo quod Saul Regem Agag in bello deuictum iuxta Samuelis consilium occidere noluit, ipse diuino iudicio non solum a regno Israel priuatus, set et heredes sui pro perpetuo exheredati sunt.* [Here he says that where and when cause and time require, a ruler is compelled by right to kill those under his power whom he recognizes to be adversaries of justice. And he narrates in an instructive example how, because Saul following Samuel’s counsel did not want to kill King Agag when he was conquered in war, not only was he deprived by divine right of the rule of Israel, but also his heirs were disinherited forever.]
- 3835–37 *feigneth . . . feigneth.* False pity is the worst since it corrupts truth and turns virtue into a mockery.
- 3847 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic narrat vltterius super eodem, qualiter Dauid in extremis iusticie causa vt Ioab occideretur absque vlla remissione filio suo Salomoni iniunxit.* [Here he narrates further on the same thing, how David, under duress because of justice, enjoined his son Solomon that Joab might be killed without any remission.]

- 3891 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic dicit quod populum sibi commissum bene regere super omnia Principi laudabilius est. Et narrat in exemplum qualiter, pro eo quod Salomon, ut populum bene regeret, ab altissimo sapienciam specialius postulauit, omnia bona pariter cum illa sibi habundancius aduenerunt.* [Here he says that it is very praiseworthy above all things for a Ruler to rule well the people entrusted to him. And he narrates in an instructive example how, because Solomon asked particularly for wisdom from the Almighty so that he might rule well the people, all good things along with that wisdom came in great abundance.]
- 3914 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic dicit secundum Salomonem, quod regie maiestatis imperium ante omnia sano consilio dirigendum est.* [Here he says according to Solomon that an empire of royal majesty must be guided before all other things by salutary counsel.]
- 3928 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Quicquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achiui.* [In respect to whatever thing kings rave about, the Achaeans are punished.] See Horace, *Odes* 3.3.26–28.
- 3945 Macaulay notes (3.533) that Gower’s “chronicle” is Godfrey of Viterbo’s *Pantheon*.
- 3949 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic de Lucio Imperatore exemplum ponit, qualiter Princeps sui nominis famam a secretis consiliariis sapienter inuestigare debet; et si quid in ea sinistrum inuenerit, prouisa discrecione ad dexteram conuertat.* [Here he presents an instructive example about Emperor Lucius, how a Ruler ought wisely to investigate his reputation by secret counselors; and if he should find anything sinister in his repute, he should transform it by discreet provision to something righteous.]
- 4027–4146 The account of Rehoboam occurs in 3 Kings (1 Kings) 12. Notice that throughout this portion of the poem, where his criticism of the king and his counsel becomes most pointed, Gower makes extensive use of biblical sources; his argument rests on the highest authority, of which there can be no dispute. See Ferster (*Fictions of Advice*, pp. 123–34) on Gower’s use of Rehoboam in his advice to kings as he addresses crises in Richard II’s reign.
- 4031 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic dicit quod Seniores magis experti ad Principis consilium admittendi potius existunt. Et narrat qualiter, pro eo quod Roboas Salomonis filius et heres senium sermonibus renuncians dicta inuenum preelegit, de xii. tribubus Israel a dominio suo x. penitus amisit, et sic cum duabus tantummodo illius postea regnauit.* [Here he says that Older Men more expert in advising the Ruler should be particularly embraced. And he narrates how, because Rehoboam, son of Solomon and heir, renounced the advice of older men and chose the sayings of younger men, he utterly lost from his dominion ten tribes of Israel from the twelve, and thus deceived, he later reigned with only two.]
- 4069 ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *De consilio Senium.* [Concerning the counsel of the Old.]
- 4077–78 *yonge were and nothing wise / . . . olde men despise.* On youth ignoring the wisdom of the elderly, see notes to 7.4134 ff. and 4137.

- 4079 ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *De consilio iuuenum*. [Concerning the counsel of the young.]
- 4134–43 Compare *VC* 6.755–60, which counsels youth to take advice for peace from wise men, rather than harming themselves by turning from peaceful good to wickedness. Compare the wise counsel of the elderly to those who are young and eager for war in Chaucer’s *Tale of Melibee* (VII[B²]1035–41).
- 4137 *Old age for the conseil serveth*. Proverbial. See Whiting, A70.
- 4147–4214 The king with his wise counselor is Antoninus Pius, whose story Macaulay believes Gower probably knew from Godfrey of Viterbo’s *Pantheon* (3.533).
- 4149 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota questionem cuiusdam Philosophi, utrum regno conueniencius foret principem cum malo consilio optare sapientem, quam cum sano consilio ipsum eligere insipientem*. [Note the question of a certain Philosopher, whether it would be better for a kingdom to prefer a wise ruler surrounded by bad counsel, or to choose a foolish ruler with astute counsel.]
- 4181 *Anthonius*. Macaulay (3.533) cites the biographer Capitolinus who presents Antoninus Pius as one who loved peace (*Historiae Augustae*, ed. 1620, p. 20).
- 4181 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota adhuc precipue de principis erga suos subditos debita pietate. Legitur enim qualiter Anthonius a Cipione exemplificatus dixit, quod mallet unum de populo sibi commisso virum saluare, quam centum ex hostibus alienigenis in bello perdere*. [Note up to this point especially concerning the necessary pious pity of rulers in respect to their subjects. For it is written how Antony, instructed by an example from Scipio, said that he would prefer to save one man from among the people entrusted to him, than to lose a hundred from foreign enemies in battle.]
- 4195 *due*. “Bound by duty,” as glossed by Macaulay (3.533).
- Latin verses xi** (before line 4215). **Line 4:** *magnanimi*. *Magnanimitas*, mention of which Gower reserves for his final Latin verses in this “mirror for princes,” was a fundamental virtue in later, Aristotelian Christian culture. It often denoted a species of strength (hence was sometimes classed under “fortitude”). It is keyed here to the king’s repute (*fama*), in a wholly positive sense of “fame.” Brunetto Latini’s *Trésor* states, “The person who is magnanimous is the greatest and most honorable man there is; he will never be troubled by a trivial thing, and his heart is not concerned with an ugly thing. Therefore magnanimity is the crown and beacon of all virtues” (Book 2, ch. 23). Its virtue is its balance between extremes, and theme that reverberates with Gower’s own poetic goal of “the middel weie” (Prol. 17).
- 4215–5438 See Nicholson’s summary review (*Annotated Index*, pp. 472–76) of scholarly discussions of Chastity as conclusion to Book 7, ranging from Dodd’s remarks on chastity in marriage, as an account that perhaps has bearing on the duties of the sovereign, especially young Richard (*Courtly Love*, pp. 74–75); Utley’s suggestion that “Gower and Chaucer helped make marriage respectable material for *belles lettres*” (Nicholson, *Annotated Index*, p. 472); to Murphy’s suggestion that Gower uses Chastity as a means of bridging his discussions on the

education of the king back to his survey of the seven deadly sins (“John Gower’s *Confessio Amantis*,” p. 403n).

- 4215–17 “[P]erhaps the implication [is] that nature is providing a moral lesson [in monogamy] for human beings, who should follow the example of the birds as the poet represents himself doing” (White, *Nature, Sex, and Goodness*, p. 190n50).

- 4221 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Hic tractat secundum Aristotelem de quinta principum regiminis Policia, que Castitatem concernit, cuius honestas impudicie motus obtemperans tam corporis quam anime mundiciam specialius perseruat.* [Here he discourses according to Aristotle about the fifth Policy of governance of rulers, which concerns Chastity, whose honorableness, impeding impudent activity, preserves both body and soul.]

- 4226–29 *Forthi . . . in mariage / His trouthe plight lith in morgage, / Which if he breke, it is falshode.* Bakalian relates this “truth-in-marriage” concept to *Trailié* 18.2. 8–14, which reads in her translation: “Of the three blessed estates it is the second which disposes itself to marriage in righteous love; and he who brings to ruin this order in wantonness has much to fear if he does not lead himself back. Therefore it is good that each one prepare himself to love with unblemished fidelity. He is not loving who misguides his love” (*Aspects of Love*, p. 34).

- 4233–37 Minnis (“‘Moral Gower,’” pp. 77–78) notes that despite Gower’s frequent citation of *Secretum Secretorum* in Book 7, in his discussion of Chastity he draws mainly on other sources like Giles of Rome. Compare *CA* 7.4257–61 and 5384–88. See also *VC* 6.12 on the control of desire, abstention from voluptuousness, and lawful companionship with one’s wife.

- 4239–40 *The fyfte point . . . Is Chasteté.* Here the term enjoys a broader definition than we normally give it. Chastity is the proper maintenance of just marriages. It is a virtue that depends on what one is married to and what the rationale behind that marriage is. The discussion begins with a general admonition against lechery, the seventh of the deadly sins (Peck, *Kingship and Common Profit*, p. 150). As in *MO*, Chastity in its five points (Bonnegarde, Virginite, Matrimonie, Contenance, and Aspre [hard life]), all of which are exemplified in Genius’ discussion at the end of Book 7, is the antidote for Lechery.


- 4257 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota de doctrina Aristotilis, qualiter Princeps, ut animi sui iocunditatem prouocet, mulieres formosas crebro aspicere debet. Caueat tamen, ne mens voluptuosa torpescens ex carnis fragilitate in vicium dilabatur.* [Note concerning the doctrine of Aristotle, how a Ruler, that he might provoke his spirit to joy, ought to look frequently at beautiful women. Let him take care, however, lest his voluptuous mind, becoming indolent, slide into vice because of the flesh’s weakness.]


- 4298–302 *it is noght kinde . . . that Decembre schal ben hot.* Pearsall emphasizes that “the moral message of the poem is clear: the unqualified endorsement of reason over passion, and of marriage as the proper and only sanction of love” (“The Gower Tradition,” p. 182). See Utley, *Crooked Rib*, pp. 101–02, 286, on


Gower's use of the May/December trope that anticipates Chaucer's elaborate development of the motif in *The Merchant's Tale*.

4313–4405 The story of Sardanapulus occurs in Godfrey of Viterbo's *Pantheon*, where the conqueror Arbaces is referred to as *Barbatus* (Mac 3.534). The account of Cyrus' conquest over the Lydians occurs in Herodotus 1.154–55 and in Justin, *Epistle* a.7, though in those versions Cyrus' corruption of the Lydians takes place after he has had to put down (successfully) a revolt.

4314 ff. *Sardana Pallus*. On gender transgressions and the price of effeminacy for King Sardanapalus (the *falle fro chivalerie* — 7.4337), see Watt (*Amoral Gower*, pp. 70–71). Collins presents him in his *fyri rage* (7.4318) as one subdued by Love, “a tyrannous monarch whose laws are based on unreason,” who, when he is “deprive[d] . . . of self-sovereignty,” becomes an extreme example of a ruler made womanish (p. 122). Compare *TC* 4.3515 ff. and 8.2111–20 on the loss of self and personal domain to self-misgovernance.

4317 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic ponit exemplum qualiter, pro eo quod Sardana Pallus Assiriorum Princeps muliebri oblectamento effeminatus sue concupiscencie torporem quasi ex consuetudine adhibebat, a Barbaro Rege Medorum super hoc insidiante in sui feruoris maiori voluptate subitis mutacionibus extinctus est.* [Here he presents an instructive example how, because Sardanapalus the Ruler of the Assyrians was effeminized by womanly delight and habitually lapsed into the slothfulness of his lust, by suddenly changed circumstances he was treacherously destroyed amidst his great voluptuousness of passion by Barbarus, King of the Medes.]

4344 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Nota qualiter David amans mulieres propter hoc probitatem Armorum non minus excercuit.* [Note how David, loving women, exerted no less excellence in arms because of this.]

4361 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur qualiter regnum lasciuie voluptatibus deditum de facili vincitur. Et ponit exemplum de Ciro Rege Persarum, qui cum Liddos mire probitatis strenuissimos sibi in bello aduersantes nullo modo vincere potuit, cum ipsis tandem pacis tractatum dissimilans concordiam finalem stabiliri finxit. Super quo Liddi postea per aliquod tempus armis insoliti sub pacis torpore voluptatibus intenebant: quod Cirus percipiens in eos armatus subito irruit, ipsosque indefenbiles vincens sub imperio tributarios subiugauit.* [Here he tells how a kingdom given to the voluptuousnesses of lust is easily conquered. And he presents an instructive example concerning Cyrus the King of the Persians, who when he was not at all able in battle to conquer his enemies — the most strenuous Lydians of extraordinary military excellence — deceived them, fashioning a treaty of peace with them. Whereupon the Lydians later for a certain time became unaccustomed to weapons, and under the sloth of peace turned themselves to voluptuousnesses. Cyrus, perceiving this, armed his army and suddenly rushed upon them. He thus conquered them while they were incapable of defending themselves and subjugated them as tributaries to the empire.]



4384–86 *worldes ese . . . is the norrice / Of every lust*. Proverbial. A variation of “idleness is nurse of vices.” See Whiting, I6. See also *CA* 4.1086–89 and *MO*, lines

5266–68, which cites Cato’s *Distichs*. Compare *CT* VII(B²)1589, and VIII (G)1–3.

- 4406 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic qualiter fata bellica luxus infortunat. Et narrat quod cum Rex Amalech Hebreis sibi insultantibus resistere nequii, consilio Balaam mulieres regni sui pulcherrimas in castra Hebreorum misit; qui ab ipsis contaminati gratiam statim amiserunt. Et sic ab Amalech deuicti in magna multitudine gladio ceciderunt.* [Note here how sensual indulgence makes for bad outcomes in battle. And he narrates that when King Amalech was not able to resist the Hebrews assailing him, by Balaam’s counsel he sent the most beautiful women of his kingdom into the camps of the Hebrews, who, contaminated by the women, immediately lost their divine grace. And thus conquered by Amalech, they died by the sword in a vast multitude.]
- 4406–4573 On the counsel of Balaam, see Numbers 22–25, where the pagan king is Balac, not Amalech, and Balaam refuses to curse or otherwise harm the Israelites. Gower’s version is a mixture of Balac’s desire to defend himself from Israel and the Israelites’ weakness as described in Numbers 25:1–2. Balac, in the Bible, never actually sends the women. For the account of Phinees, see Numbers 25.
- 4418 *With yhen greye and browes bente.* Amalech’s women set off their grey eyes with plucked eyebrows (a conventional sign of female beauty) as a weapon against the Hebrews, whose unchaste response they are counting on. They might have succeeded were it not for Phinees, who kills the first two who succumb to temptation as a warning to others. That sight is more potent than *yhen greye and browes bente*. One basis of Chastity is Bonnegarde (“Good Care” or “Right Watchmanship,” devoted to guarding of the five senses, those “special doors and windows through which the devil enters the soul,” so that they go not astray or admit the enemy — *MO*, lines 16585–16608; see note to 7.4239–40); n.b., Bonnegarde as a virtue well exemplified in the Tale of Tobias and Sara which follows shortly (7.5307 ff.), though it does not help Lucrece much, despite all her care. Here see also discussions of “mislok” and the failure to guard the eyes elsewhere in *CA* (especially 1.304 ff.). See note to 6.1858.
- 4469 ff. Based on 3 Kings (1 Kings) 11.
- 4469–77 Wickert (*Studies in John Gower*) notes that reflections on death are not common in royal instruction books though such material is found in *VC* and Waltham’s *Myroure of Synners* (p. 154).
- 4473 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur qualiter Principum irregulata voluptas eos a semita recta multociens deuiare compellit. Et narrat exemplum de Salomone, qui ex sue carnis concupiscencia victus mulierum blandiementis in sui scandalum deos alienos colerre presumebat.* [Here he speaks how the unregulated lusts of Rulers often compels them to deviate from the straight path. And he narrates an instructive example about Solomon, who was conquered by the blandishments of women because of the lust of his flesh and thereby was led to worship strange gods, to his scandal.]

- 4477 *whos appetit.* *MED* glosses “appetite” in this line as “sexual craving.” Medieval writers differentiate kinds of appetite, depending upon the impetus of the desire. Gower seems to have in mind here the desire of the “*soule vegetablis*” that “*hap a vertu of gendringe þat is nedeful to multiplie and bringe forþ pinges in kinde,*” the “*vertu of appetit*” being to take whatever “*foode*” is “*nedeful*” (Bart. Ang. 3, cap. 8). This craving to satisfy natural necessities or body functions is what Chaucer’s Parson refers to as “the appetites of the fyve wittes” (CT X[I]207), or what the Wife of Bath means when she says she “*evere folwede myn appetit*” (CT III[D]623). Compare Januarie, who “*folwed ay his bodily delyt / On wommen, ther as was his appetyt*” (CT IV[E]1249–50).
- 4499 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *De filia Regis Cidonie.* [Concerning the daughter of King Sidonia.]
- 4501 *Astrathen.* Ashtart, Ashtoreth, Astarte: a Semitic goddess worshiped by Canaanites, Hebrews, Phoenicians; a goddess of untrammelled sexual love; in some colonies honored by religious prostitution and temple harlots; linked to Ishtar, she is a goddess of maternity and fertility, who suckles the child Tammuz at her breast; a creatrix of men; a war-goddess among Phoenicians but also in early matriarchal communities. See *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* 2.115–18. Gower bases his names Astrathen, Chamos (line 4506), and Moloch (line 4509) on 3 Kings (1 Kings) 11:33. Sidon was a Phoenician seaport.
- 4503 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *De filia Regis Moab.* [Concerning the daughter of King Moab.]
- 4506 *Chamos.* Chemosh, the national god of Moab, mentioned in the Moabite Stone. The name was often compounded with other names, such as Ashtar-Chemosh or Chemosh-nadab or Chemosh-yahi. The term was used in the same way Hebrews used the term Yahweh. Numbers 21:29 warns: “Woe to thee Moab: thou art undone, O people of Chamos.” See *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* 8.759–61.
- 4507 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *De filia Regis Amon.* [Concerning the daughter of King Amon.]
- 4509 *Moloch.* “A Canaanite god to whom children were sacrificed by being burned alive” (see Sol Liptzin’s entry on Moloch in the *Dictionary of Biblical Tradition*, pp. 516–17). N.b., Leviticus 18:21, 20:2–5; Deuteronomy 12:31, 18:9–10; 4 Kings (2 Kings) 23:10.
- 4515 ff. 📖 **Latin marginalia:** *Nota hic qualiter Achias propheta, in signum quod regnum post mortem Salomonis ob eius peccatum a suo herede diminueretur, pallium suum in xii, partes scidit, unde x. partes Ieroboe filio Nabal, qui regnaturus postea successit, precepto dei tribuit.* [Note here how Achias the prophet, in sign that the kingdom would be diminished after Solomon’s death by his heir, tore his mantle into twelve pieces, from which he gave as tribute ten pieces by God’s command to Jeroboam the son of Nabal, who, about to reign, succeeded him later.] See 3 Kings (1 Kings) 11:29–32.

- 4559 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Aristotiles. O Alexander, super omnia consulo, conserua tibi calorem naturalem.* [Aristotle: “O Alexander, I counsel you above all, preserve your natural warmth for yourself.”] Macaulay (3.534) relates the Latin quotation to the *Secretum Secretorum*: “O summe rex, studeas modis omnibus custodire et retinere calorem naturalem” (ed. 1520, f. 25v) [O highest king, be zealous by every means to preserve and retain your natural warmth].
- 4569–71 “[H]ere one might say that natural sexual appetite provides moral guidance, its satisfaction, and no more, indicating what is legitimate” (White, *Nature, Sex, and Goodness*, p. 190).
- 4570–71 *dueliche served, / It oghte of reson to suffice.* See White (*Nature, Sex, and Goodness*, p. 201) on the possible accommodation of “the natural sexual urge” and the “necessity of restraint” in Gower’s view of Nature. Compare Chaucer’s Parson, *CT X(I)935–42*, on measure in sexual behavior and matters of paying the debt to the body within the privileges of chaste behavior. Toby, *CA* 7.5361–65, exemplifies precisely the proposition, where “bothe lawe and kinde is served” (7.5363).
- 4574 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *De voluptuoso Antonio.* [Concerning Antonius the voluptuary.]
- 4574 *Anthonie.* Macaulay (3.534) notes: “Caracalla, son of Severus, is here meant. His name was Aurelius Antonius, and he is called Aurelius Antonius in the *Pantheon* (*Mon. Germ. Hist.* xxii. p.166). Caracalla is called by Orosius ‘omnibus hominibus libidine intemperantior, qui etiam novercam suam Iuliam uxorem duxerit’ (*Hist.* vii.18 [more intemperate in lust than any other man, and who indeed took his stepmother Julia as his wife]), and this character of him is repeated in the *Pantheon*.”
- 4593 Gower’s story of Tarquin, Aruns, and Lucrece is much enlarged from Ovid, *Fasti* 2.687–852. See also Chaucer’s *LGW*, lines 1680–1885; Latin *Gesta Romanorum*, cap. cxxxv; and Shakespeare’s *Rape of Lucrece*. For the story in fourteenth-century chronicles and commentaries, see Galloway, “Chaucer’s *Legend of Lucrece*.” Livy 1.53–54 (Sextus) and 1.57–59 (Lucrece) might also be a source.
- 4599 ff. **☞ Latin marginalia:** *Hic loquitur de Tarquino nuper Rome Imperatore, necnon et de eiusdem filio nomine Arrons, qui omni viciorum varietate repleti tam in homines quam in mulieres innumera scelera perpetrarunt: set specialiter super hiis que contra Gabinos fraudulentoperati sunt tractare intendit.* [Here he speaks about Tarquin, not long ago Emperor of Rome, and also about his son Aruns by name, who replete with every variety of vice perpetrated innumerable sins both against men and women; but particularly he intends to discourse about those which they fraudulently carried out against the Gabines.]
- 4598 *Arrons.* Macaulay: “[n]either Aruns nor Sextus is named in Ovid, who speaks only of ‘Tarquinius iuuenis.’ Gower gives to Aruns the place of Sextus throughout this and the following story” (3.534). For various arguments regarding the confusion of Aruns and Sextus, see Nicholson, *Annotated Index*, p. 479.

- 4694–95 *hefdes of Gabie / Hath smiten of*. The decapitation of the Gabines is fit punishment in that they foolishly brought Aruns into their fold of their own volition. The slaughter is Gower's addition to the narrative, as if to demonstrate that when the king errs the people suffer. See Peck (*Kingship and Common Profit*, pp. 153–56).
- 4754 In Ovid (*Fasti* 2.721–852), the rape of Lucrece is not a separate story but simply a continuation of the account of Tarquin's sons that concludes with the banishment of the lot of them. Chaucer also presents Lucrece as a separate story in *LGW*, lines 1680–1885. Root, "Chaucer's Legend of Medea," pp. 146–48, suggests that Chaucer draws some details from Gower. Pearsall ("Gower's Narrative Art," p. 481) suggests that "[i]n his story of Lucrece, Gower achieves perhaps his most perfect realisation of womanliness." See also note 7.4888.
- 4757 ff.  **Latin marginalia:** *Hic narrat quod, cum Tarquinius in obsidione Ciuitatis Ardee, vt eam destrueret, intentus fuit, Arrons filius eius Romam secreto adiens in domo Collatini hospitatus est; vbi de nocte illam castissimam dominam Lucreciam ymaginata fraude vi oppressit: vnde illa pre dolore mortua, ipse cum Tarquino patre suo tota conclamante Roma in perpetuum exilium delegati sunt.* [Here he narrates that, when Tarquin was striving to besiege the City of Ardea so that he might destroy it, his son Aruns secretly journeyed to Rome and was put up in the house of Collatine, where by night (Aruns) forced himself upon the most chaste lady Lucretia, by calculated deception. Wherefore she, having died for sorrow, (Aruns) with Tarquin his father were sent into perpetual exile, by the clamoring of all of Rome.]
- 4778–85 Collatine is guilty of the same error as the Gabiens when he foolishly invites his enemy into his home. See note 7.4694–95.
- 4888 *Hire lacketh noght of wommanhiede*. On Lucrece as living embodiment of a praiseworthy woman, see Bakalian, *Aspects of Love*, pp. 57–73, who compares Lucrece to the epitome of a good woman described in *VC* 5.6.295 ff. (p. 58). See also Burke ("Women," p. 239) and Schmitz, who sees her "tenderness" as that which sets her apart in Gower from other medieval writers (*Fall of Women*, p. 80).
- 4902  **Latin marginalia.** *Audaces fortuna iuuat.* [Fortune helps the bold.]
- 4902–03 *Fortune unto the bolde / Is favorable*. Proverbial. See Whiting, F519. N.b., also, *MO*, lines 22927–28, and *VC* 6.969.
- 4922–58 Lucrece's "openness and hospitality to the unexpected visitor," detailed by her timid, polite questions about the war and her husband (Pearsall, "Gower's Narrative Art," p. 481), create a stunning, bitterly ironic effect that Lucrece resolutely comprehends, albeit silently, after the betrayal. Her swoon, not found in Ovid, is Gower's means of demarcating her innocence. The brutality of Aruns' destruction of her highly civil world evokes sympathy and draws the audience close to the political complexities of her tragedy, a point that is central to Gower's book on the delicate balances of good kingship which here have been so cruelly abrogated.

- 4981 *To slen hire and hire folk aboute.* Mast ("Rape," p. 117) points to the higher stakes for Lucrece in Gower's version, where her modesty is not the only concern. This is not to say that he underestimates the "value of a wife's good reputation" (see p. 131n82). But she is keenly aware of the political issues of Aruns' assault. See also Simpson (*Sciences and the Self*, p. 215): "Lucrece's rape . . . reveals the violent concupiscence of territorial invasion."
- 4986 *Wherof sche swounede in his hond.* Pearsall ("Gower's Narrative Art," p. 481) makes the cogent point that in Gower's story "every suggestion of acquiescence is eliminated." She is open and hospitable when Tarquin arrives. Tarquin is in bed upon her even as she awakens and, overwhelmed by fear, she loses her voice and swoons.
- 4994 *lecherouse pride.* *Pride* as well as *lecherouse* carry sexual connotations here. See *MED prid(e* n.(2) 5(a) and *OED pride* sb.¹ 11, for examples of *pride* implying sexual desire, especially in animals. Gower's phrase has implications of a sex maniac whose one thought is to have his triumph over Collatine through the destruction of his wife.
- 5001 *As sche which hath the world forsake.* Pearsall observes: "Her actions on the morrow have the momentous, pre-ordained quality of one who has, like Clarissa, already passed beyond suffering into a different world" ("Gower's Narrative Art," p. 481).
- 5030 *unmete.* *MED unmete* adj. 2 suggests "unfit" and "unworthy" as glosses for this line but also with possible meanings of "displeasing" and "horrible to look at," senses which seem particularly apt for this passage, given Lucrece's concern over how the people will look upon her husband as well as herself in this disgrace. Her fears of how the event must appear constitutes her shame and "wofull chiere" (line 5032), whereby she casts down her eyes "and couthe unnethes loke" (line 5033).
- 5069 *thurgh hire herte it throng.* Mast cites St. Augustine's assessment of Lucrece's suicide in *The City of God* — *si adulterata, cur laudata; si pudica, cur occisa* (if she is adulterous, why is she praised? If chaste, why was she put to death?) — to observe that "Gower rejects this misogynistic reading and lets his heroine die with dignity and without reproach" ("Rape," p. 119). That Augustine's commentary was known in Gower's literary circle, see Chaucer's satirical allusion to Augustine's "gret compassioun" for Lucrece in *LGW*, line 1690.
- 5091 *so behield him in this wise.* Mast ("Rape," p. 120) suggests that Lucrece, in her look at Brutus, is cognizant of the political ramifications of her act whereby "her shameful rape is the cause of the end of the rape of her country by Tarquin's family."
- 5116 *newe schame of sennes olde.* Proverbial. See Whiting, S338. Compare *CA* 3.2033: "Old senne newe schame." Also *VC* 4.874.
- 5131 Like the Rape of Lucrece, the Tale of Virginia was very popular. The original version occurs in Livy. Jean de Meun includes the tale in *RR*, Boccaccio includes it in *De mulieribus claris*, and Chaucer includes it in the *Canterbury*

Tales as *The Physician's Tale*. Boccaccio and Chaucer cite Livy as their sources, though in fact they follow Jean de Meun. Gower follows Livy 3.44–50 or perhaps Pierre Bersuire's Old French translation of Livy. The tale provides another example of a leader who loses his kingship through lechery. See Ferster's reading of the tale as a precaution to Richard II ("O Political Gower," p. 36).

5136 *Livius Virginius*. Gower's version of the Tale of Virginia gives more attention to the father than do other versions. He is a man of honor, a civic-minded knight fighting in defense of the city; he is a conscientious father who has looked after his daughter well, having arranged a distinguished marriage. When he learns of her peril and imminent disgrace he rides in from the front, slays his daughter to protect her from defilement, escapes, and musters a force to retaliate against the would-be tyrant/rapist. He is obliged to act swiftly and decisively, and he does.

5137 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic ponit exemplum super eodem, qualiter Liuius Virginius dux exercitus Romanorum vnicam filiam pulcherimam habens cum quodam nobili viro nomine Ilcio, vt ipsam in vxorem duceret, finaliter concordauit. Set interim Apius Claudius tunc Imperator virginis formositatem, vt eam violaret, concupiscens, occasiones quibus matrimonium impedire, ipsamque ad sui vsum apprehendere posset, subdola conspiracione fieri coniectauit. Et cum propositum sui desiderii productis falsis testibus in iudicio Imperator habere debuisset, pater tunc ibidem presens extracto gladio filie sue pectus mortali vulnere per medium transfodit, dicens: "Malo michi de filia mea virginem habere mortuam, quam in sui scandalum meretricem reseruare viuientem."* [Here he presents an instructive example on the same thing, how Livius Virginius, leader of the army of the Romans, having a most beautiful daughter, made a settlement with a nobleman, Ilcius by name, that he would take her as a bride. But meanwhile Apius Claudius, then Emperor, lusting after the virgin's beauty, plotted to violate her using a treacherous conspiracy: he caused circumstances that would impede the marriage, so that he might be able to seize her to his own use. And when the Emperor was owed the fulfillment of his desire, producing false witnesses in judgment, her father, present there, with a drawn sword transfixing his daughter's breast through the middle in a mortal wound, saying, "As for my daughter, I prefer to have a dead virgin than, to her own scandal, a live whore."]

5140–41 *This fame . . . cam in his ere*. Another instance in which Gower alters his source to fit the exemplum to the principal motifs of his poem; here, once again, we witness the infection of a mind through the senses (windows of the mind), especially the eyes or the ears, without the safekeeping of Bonnegarde. See also 1.289–574.

5307 The Tale of Tobias and Sara is found in the apocryphal book of Tobit, 6–8.

5311 ff. ¶ **Latin marginalia:** *Hic inter alia castitatis regimen concernencia loquitur quomodo Matrimonium, cuius status Sacramentum, quasi continenciam equiperans, eciam honeste delectacionis regimine moderari debet. Et narrat in exemplum, qualiter pro eo quod illi vii.^{tem} viri, qui Sarre Raguelis filie magis propter concupiscenciam quam propter matrimonium voluptuose nupserunt, vnus post alium omnes prima nocte a demone*

Asmodeo singillatim iugulati interierunt. [Here, among other things concerning the governance of chastity, he says how matrimony, whose sacramental status almost equals sexual abstinence, ought to be moderated by governance even in legitimate pleasure. And he narrates in an instructive example how, because the seven husbands who had married Sara daughter of Raguel had done so more on account of lust than voluptuousness of matrimony, all of them, one after another, had separately died, strangled at night by the demon Asmodeus.]

- 5361 *yit Thobie his wille hadde.* “Love does sometimes go right, but it is not human judgement that makes it do so. The story of Toby and Sara shows the erotic ordered by a supernatural intervention — and in so doing suggests the rarity of such ordering” (White, *Nature, Sex, and Goodness*, p. 203).
- 5363 *bothe lawe and kinde is served.* See note to 7.4570–71.
- 5372–81 In his appreciation of both God-given reason and the laws of nature “Genius himself undergoes a sea-change . . . from which he never retreats”; before Book 7 he is Amans’ inspiration, often a “fool ymagynation”; but in Book 7 and thereafter he represents a balance between reason and nature (Simpson, *Sciences and the Self*, pp. 215–16). “The person who will finally be won over . . . is not the lady, but Amans himself” (p. 217).
- 5411–12 *The tales sounen in myn ere, / Bot yit myn herte is elleswhere.* Dimmick wittily identifies Amans as “the first of Gower’s critics to respond to five thousand lines on the philosophy of Aristotle with distinctly muted enthusiasm” (“Redinge of Romance,” p. 127).
- 5372–81 The passage exemplifies the need to control sexuality (Benson, “Incest,” p. 103).



TEXTUAL NOTES

ABBREVIATIONS: **A:** Bodleian Library MS Bodley 902 (SC 27573), fols. 2r–183r; **B:** Bodleian Library MS Bodley 294 (SC 2449), fols. 1r–197r; **C:** Corpus Christi College, Oxford MS 67, fols. 1r–209r; **F:** Bodleian Library MS Fairfax 3 (SC 3883; copy text for this edition), fols. 2r–186r; **J:** St. John’s College, Cambridge MS B.12 (34), fols. 1r–214r; **Mac:** G. C. Macaulay; **S:** Stafford, now Ellesmere 26, fols. 1r–169v; **T:** Trinity College, Cambridge MS R.3.2 (581), fols. 1r–147v.

TEXTUAL NOTES TO BOOK 5

- 57–213 Omitted in J (missing leaf).
306 *wisshe*. So F, J. S: *wyssh*. B, Mac: *wissh*.
412 *take*. So F, J. S, B, Mac: *tak*.
448 *understode*. So F, S. B: *understood*. J, Mac: *understod*.
630 *Mi*. So F, S, J. B, Mac: *My*.
650 Omitted in J (eyeskip).
786 *Thei*. So F, S, J. B, Mac: *They*.
787 *Chaldeus*. So F, S, B, J. Mac: *Caldeus*.
811 *th’Egipcians*. So F, S, J. B, Mac: *thegipcienes*.
821 *th’Egipcians*. So F, S, J. B, Mac: *thegipcienes*.
890 *hire*. So S, B, Mac. F: *hirer*. J: *hir*.
901 *Which*. So F, B, J. S, Mac: *Whiche*.
955 *Bot*. So F, S. B, Mac: *But*. J: *Bote*.
1220 *thei*. So F, S, B, J. Mac: *they*.
1275 *Thei*. So F, S, B, J. Mac: *They*.
1316 *priestes*. So F, S. B, J, Mac: *Prestes*.
1322 The small capital, signified here by an indent, appears at line 1323 in F, S, B, J, Mac.
1452 The small capital, signified here by an indent, appears at line 1453 in F, S, B, J, Mac.
1535 *set*. So F, J. S, B, Mac: *sette*.
1540 *thei*. So F, S, B, J. Mac: *they*.
1615–1770 Omitted in J (missing leaf).
1685 *tok*. So F. S, Mac: *toke*. B: *tooke*.
1715 *stond*. So F. S, B, Mac: *stonde*.
1724–43 Altered in B:
 Which mannes soule haþ set in euene
 And haþ his grace reconsiled

Fro which þe man was ferst exiled
And in himself so sore falle

1781–92

Altered in B:

þurgh vertu of his hihe might
Which in marie was alight
To bigge mannes soule aȝein
And þis bilieue is so certein
So ful of grace and of vertu
That what men clepeþ to Ihesu
In cleene lyf forþ wiþ good dede
He may nought faile of heuene meede
So þat it stant vpon bilieue
þat euery man may wel achieue

- 1835 *Antenor*. So F (though see lines 1836 and 1841). S, B, J, Mac: *Anthenor*.
1950 *ben*. So B, Mac. F, S, J: *be*.
2057 *kniththod*. So Mac. F: *knithode*. S: *knyththod*. B: *knighththode*. J: *knyththode*.
2098 *eche*. So F, S, B, J, Mac: *ech*.
2167 *thei*. So F, S, B, J. Mac: *they*.
2179 *Thei*. So F, S, B, J. Mac: *They*.
2434 *infortune*. So S, B, J, Mac. F: *infortune*.
2551 *rescousse*. So S, B, J, Mac (and elsewhere in F). F: *recousse*.
2598 *comelihied*. So F, S, B: *comlihede*. J: *comelihed*. Mac: *comlihied*.
2735 *told*. So F, B, S, J, Mac: *tolde*.
2761 *faste by*. So S, B, J, Mac. F: *fastby*.
2904 *Ther*. So F, S, B, J. Mac: *There*.
such. So F, S, B, J, Mac: *suche*.
2906 *here*. So S, B, J, Mac. F: *hire*.
procurours. So S, J, Mac. F, B: *procurous*.
2932 *saluely*. So F, S, Mac. B, A, J: *sauely*.
3199 *seene*. So F, S, B, J. Mac: *sene*.
3218 *mi*. So F, S, B, J, Mac: *my*.
3242 *yit*. So F, S, B, J. Mac: *yet*.
3393 *mad*. So F, S, B, J, Mac: *made*.
3542 *wol*. So F, S, B, J. Mac: *woll*.
3823 *seid*. So F, S, J, B, Mac: *seide*.
3892 *That*. So F, S, J, B, Mac: *The*.
3990 *And*. So S, B, J, Mac. F: *An*.
4020 Altered in B: *To make wiþ þis medicine*.
4040 *be*. So F, S, J, B, Mac: *ben*.
tueyne. So F, B: *tweyne*. J: *tweine*. Mac: *tueine*.
4427 *wher it is noght*. So F, J, S, B, Mac: *wher is noght*.
4504 *miht*. So F, S, Mac: *mihle*. B: *might*. J: *myht*.
4663 *Mi*. So F, S, J, B, Mac: *My*.
4728 *thi*. So F, S, B, J. Mac: *thy*.
4854 *prinche*. See MED *pinch(e)*.
4990 *the*. Added above the line in F. Not noted in Mac. S, B, J omit.

- 5001 *Bot.* So F, S, J. B, Mac: *But.*
- 5039 *Bot.* So F, S, J. B, Mac: *But.*
- 5056 *trasse.* So F, S, B, J: *trusse.* Mac: *trosse.*
- 5131 *eke.* So F, S, T, C, A, J, Mac: *ek.* B: *eek.*
- 5236 *bare.* So F, S, B, T, C, A, J, Mac: *bar.*
- 5302 *manye.* So F, S: *manie.* B, C, A, Mac: *many.* J: *monie.*
- 5349 *toke.* So F, S, C, A, J, Mac: *tok.* B: *took.*
- 5364 *wondre.* So F, S, J. B, T, C, A, Mac: *wonder.*
- 5464 *tresces.* So T, C, A, Mac. F, S, J: *trescess.* B: *tresses.*
- 5552 *worldde.* So F, S, B, J, Mac: *worldes.*
- 5684 *thanne.* So F, S, B. J: *thenne.* Mac: *than.*
- 5721 *Sche.* So F, S, B. J: *Heo.* Mac: *She.*
- 5769 *tyt.* So S, Mac. F, J: *tyd.* B: *tit.*
- 5846 *myhti.* So F, S. B: *mighty.* J: *mihti.* Mac: *myghti.*
- 5918 *be.* So S, B, J. F, Mac: *ben.*
- 5925 *remembrance.* So S, B, J, Mac. F: *remenbrance.*
- 5962 *largesse.* So S, B, J, Mac. F: *larchesse.*
- 6020 *here.* So F, S. B: *hir.* J, Mac: *hire.*
- 6084 *water.* So B, C, A, Mac. F, S, J: *watre.*
- 6103 *Mi.* So F, S, J. B, Mac: *My.*
- 6110 *wylde.* So S, J, Mac. F: *wyldee.* B: *wilde.*
- 6130 *hire.* So F, S, B, J. Mac: *her.*
- 6190 *and.* So S, B, J, Mac. F: *ad.*
- 6395–6405 Altered in S, B, and other second recension manuscripts, with additional lines that cite Gregory's comparing the life of a virgin to that of an angel before proceeding to the story of Valentinian's chastity (see Mac 3.121–23 [S text]).
- 6407 *hise.* So F, S. B, J, Mac: *his.*
- 6585 *wolde.* So S, B, A, J, Mac. F: *wold.*
- 6694 *thoghte.* So F, A, J. S, Mac: *thought.* B: *thought.* J: *thouhte.*
- 6821–7000 Omitted in S (missing leaf).
- 6862 *leon.* So F. B: *lioun.* J, Mac: *leoun.*
- 6877 A later hand has placed a "Note" in the margin of F.
- 6883 *Ech.* So B, C, A, J, Mac. F: *Eche.*
- 6981–82 Additional lines in B (see Mac 3.139).
- 7032–33 Additional lines in S, B: The Tale of Lucius and the Statue (see Mac 3.141–45 [S text]).
- 7274 *Antenor.* So F, S, B, J, Mac: *Anthenor.* See also note to line 1835.
- 7303–04 Omitted in B (eyeskip).
- 7586 *Nou.* So F, J. S, B, Mac: *Now.*
- 7619 *Skarsnesse.* So J, Mac. F: *Skarnesse.* S, B: *scarsnesse.*
- 7701–46 Omitted in S, B.
- 7815–16 Omitted in J (eyeskip).
- 7819 *Tell.* So F, A, S, C, B, J, Mac: *Telle.*

TEXTUAL NOTES TO BOOK 6

- 69 *For.* So S, B, J, Mac. F: *ffro*.
- 162 *wyn.* So F, S, B, J, Mac: *win*.
- 285 Omitted in B (eyeskip).
- 408 *the.* So S, B, J, Mac. F: *thei*.
- 495 *fest.* So F, C, S, B, A, J, Mac: *feste*.
- 536 *thin.* So F, S, B, J, Mac: *thine*.
- 554 *never.* So F, S, C, B, T, A, J, Mac: *nevere*.
- 665–964 Inserted after line 1146 in S, B, preceded by six additional lines (see Mac 3.198).
- 785 *schapthe.* So F, S. Other manuscripts read *schappe* (B) or *schape* (J), thinking, perhaps, that the earlier scribe must have unintentionally doubled the *p* with *p*. But *MED shaft(e)* n. 1d, gives *schapthe* as a normal spelling for *shaft*, with the sense of “appearance, likeness; guise; a shape, form; an idol; also, an image in a mirror,” citing this passage in Gower.
- 1140 Omitted in J (eyeskip).
- 1147–48 Omitted in S, B.
- 1186 *lete.* So F, S, A, J, B, T, C, Mac: *let*.
- 1307 Omitted in J (eyeskip).
- 1391 *which.* So F, C, A, J, S, B, Mac: *whiche*.
- 1412 *his.* So B, J, Mac. F, S: *hise*.
- 1428 *thei.* So F, S, J, B, Mac: *they*.
- 1602 *He.* So S, B, J, Mac. F: *His*.
- 1735 *badde.* So F, S, Mac: *badd*. B: *bad*. J: *bed*.
- 1823 *Bot.* So F, S, J, B, Mac: *But*.
- 2062 *put.* So F, S, J, C, B, A, Mac: *putte*.
- 2071 *wold.* So F, S, B, J, Mac: *wolde*.
- 2233 *myhte.* So F, S, Mac: *mihte*. B: *mighte*. J: *miht*.
- 2247 *sihe.* So F, S, A, Mac: *sih*. B: *sigh*. J: *sy*.
- 2314 *of.* So S, B, Mac. F, A: *if*. J: *yif*.
- 2356 *Alisandre.* So F, S, J, B, Mac: *Alisaundre*.
- 2357–7.88 Omitted in S (missing leaf).
- 2433 *philosophie.* So B, J, Mac. F: *Philophie*.

TEXTUAL NOTES TO BOOK 7

- 55 *remanent.* So F, B, J, Mac: *remnant*.
- 190 *Thei.* So S, J, Mac. F: *The*. B: *They*.
- 219 *thei.* So F, S, J, B, Mac: *they*.
- 340 *same.* So F, S, B, J, Mac: *fame*.
- 483 *myhty.* So F, S: *myhti*. B: *mighty*. J: *mihti*. Mac: *myghty*.
- 602 *thei.* So F, S, B, J, Mac: *they*.
- 672 *knowlechinge.* So B, J, Mac. F: *knowechinge*. S: *knowleching*.
- 979–82 Omitted in B.
- 1073 *whiche.* So F, S, B, J, Mac: *which*.
- 1274 *Bot.* So F, S, J, B, Mac: *But*. See also lines 2588, 2722, and 3784.

- 1289 *hiere*. So F, S, J, Mac: *here*. B: *heere*.
- 1402 *tuelfthe*. So F, B, J, S, Mac: *twelfthe*.
- 1671 *honesté*. So S, F, B, J, Mac: *honestete*. Meter, rhyme, and other spellings of the term favor the emendation.
- 1690 *eke*. So F, S, B: *EEK*. J, Mac: *ek*.
- 1815 *ansuere*. So S, Mac. F: *anssuere*. B, J: *answere*.
- 1964 *at*. So F, S, B, J, Mac: *ate*.
- 2329–31 Altered in B and other second recension manuscripts: The Example of Dante's Rebuff of the Flatterer (see Mac 3.296).
- 2588 *bot*. So F, S, B, J, B, Mac: *but*.
- 2637 *mihte*. So F, S, B: *might*. J, Mac: *miht*.
- 2641–3004 Omitted in S (two missing leaves).
- 2722 *bot*. So F, B, J, Mac: *but*.
- 2780 *thanne*. So F, B, Mac: *than*.
- 2806 *which*. So F, B, J, Mac: *whiche*.
- 3003 *schop*. So C, A, J, Mac. F: *schope*. B: *schoop*.
- 3135 Altered in B: *So as þe holy book affermeþ*.
- 3136–37 Additional lines in B and other second recension manuscripts: The Examples of James, Cassiodorus, Cicero, and Alexander (see Mac 3.319). Additional lines in S: The Tale of the Jew and the Pagan (see Mac 3.320–25).
- 3148 *conseillier*. So J, F: *conseilleir*. S, Mac: *conseiller*. B: *counseiler*.
- 3162–63 Additional lines in B: The Tale of the Jew and the Pagan (see Mac 3.320–25 [S text]).
- 3400 *thanne*. So F, S, B, J: *thenne*. Mac: *than*.
- 3530 *mai*. So F, S, B, J, Mac: *may*.
- 3568 *diliverance*. So F, S, B, J, Mac: *deliverance*.
- 3575 *cause*. So S, B, J, Mac. F: *causa*.
- 3592 *knyhtlihiede*. So S, Mac. F: *knythlihiede*. B: *knightlihede*. J: *knihtlihede*.
- 3639 *hem*. So S, B, Mac. F, J: *he*. The reasons for the scribal error in F are easy to understand, since *wolde* could be singular. But the slightly more subtle phrasing “Against those who wished to assail them” is clearly correct in context. (Andrew Galloway.)
- 3687 *als*. So F, S, B, J, Mac: *as*.
- 3751 *thei*. So F, S, B, J, Mac: *they*.
- 3784 *Bot*. So F, S, J, B, Mac: *But*.
- 3808 *mi*. So F, S, B, J, Mac: *my*.
- 3819 *myhte*. So F, S, J: *mihte*. B: *might*. C, A, Mac: *myht*.
- 3861 *no*. So S, B, J, Mac. F: *non*.
- 4064 *assissed*. So F, S, B, J, Mac: *assised*.
- 4115 *stered*. So F, S, J, Mac: *is stered*. B: *is stired*.
- 4194 *good*. So S, B, J, Mac. F: *god*. Emendation to match previous line.
- 4357 *manye*. So F, A, S, B, Mac: *many*. J: *mony*.
- 4395 *fleysshly*. So Mac. F: *fleyssly*. S, J: *fleissshly*. B: *fleischly*.
- 4665 *thei*. So F, S, J, B, Mac: *they*.
- 4737 *grounde*. So S, B, J, Mac. F: *ground*.
- 4967 *bot*. So F, S, J, B, Mac: *but*.

- 5135 *as.* So S, B, J, Mac. F: *and*.
5267 *seid.* So F. S, B, A, J, Mac: *seide*.
5383 *put.* So S, B, J, Mac. F: *pit*.
5411 *sounen.* So S, B, J, Mac. F: *sounnen*.
5417–8.336 Omitted in S (two missing leaves).



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GLOSSARY

abide, abyde(n) *wait, remain, endure*

achieve *finish, succeed, settle*

acompten *include; tell; confess;
compute; evaluate*

acorde *agree*

adresce *arrange, prepare, array*

affeccioun *inclination*

afferme *fix, confirm, establish*

agein *against*

alther *gen. of all*

and *conj., occasionally placed
medially rather than at the head
of a coordinated clause*

appel *appeal to a higher authority;
accuse*

aquite *free; repay, give, make amends,
relieve; deprive*

asterte *escapte*

awaite(n) *watch; lie in ambush*

axe *ask, ask for; demand*

barme *bosom*

be *by*

be(n) *be, been; am, are*

beclippe, beclipt *embrace(d);
contain(ed)*

beheste *promise; assurance*

behote *promised, assured, pronounced,
dedicated*

benyme *take away*

beschrewe *curse*

beste *beast*

betake *give, deliver, command*

beyete(n) *gain, property, possession;
acquire, obtain, provide; beget*

bille *letter*

bot *except, unless, only*

bote *reward, remedy, help*

chiere *face, looks, countenance; welcome*

childinge *childbirth*

clepeth *calls*

coign *coin, money*

colour *color, manner, pretext, reason*

compasse *devise, contrive; undertake;
surround; consider, achieve*

comune *common people; commonwealth;
ordinary, familiar*

comune(n) *participate, conform; have
dealings with; communicate*

conne *know, know how; be able to*

couth *could; understood; knew how*

covine *company; agreement; devise,
conspiracy*

cunnyng *skilled*

cure *charge of a parish; care, help,
remedy; trouble, grief*

dai, daw *day*

dampne *condemn*

dar, dorste, durste *dare(d)*

debat *strive, dispute*

debate *contend*

decas *destruction*

defence, defense *prohibition, protection*

defend *protect, forbid*

del, diel *part, portion*

dele(n) *have to do, consult*

delivere *active; readily*

deme *judge, condemn; decide*

dere *harm, injure*

dere, diere *dear; precious*

descrive *describe*

despuile *rob, strip*

do *cause, make, put*

dom *judgment*

drye *endure, suffer; experience*

duc, duck, duk *duke, leader*

echon *each one*

eft *after*

eir *air*

ek(e) *also*

engin(e) *disposition, ingenuity; deceive, entrap*

entaile *form, fashion, sculpture*

entente *meaning; intention, purpose, thought*

er(e) *ear; before*

faitour *deceiver, imposter, cheat; one who is false or feigns*

feint *false, sluggish, deceitful; faint*

fele *many*

ferre, fiere *companion; in fiere together*

ferst *first*

fette(n) *fetch, get*

finde, fint, fond *find (found), invent(ed), provide(d)*

fol *fool; foolish*

fonde *try, attempt*

fordo *destroy; condemn; render useless; blot out*

forlore, forlorn *utterly lost*

fre *free person*

fro *from*

gate *gate, gateway; passage; road, path, street*

gaude(s) *ornamental beads in a rosary; bawble; finery, fripperies*

gere *fighting equipment, harness; clothes; behavior*

gesse *infer, conclude; discern; suppose*

gete(n) *get; beget*

glas *mirror*

good *good; wealth; kindness*

gove(n) *give; given*

grucche *complain*

ha *interjection*

haveles *destitute, without possessions*

hele *heal; conceal, cover*

hem *them; themselves*

here *their; here; hear*

heste *command*

heved *head*

hewe *hue*

hie *hasten*

hiere *hear*

hihte *was called*

hol, hool, hole *whole; wholly*

honeste *honorable, noble, appropriate, truthful*

honesté *honorableness, worthiness; splendor, elegance, comeliness; virtue, decency*

hote(n), hatte *be named; be called; command, order, bid; promise*

ilke *same*

irous *angry, wrathful*

iwiss *truly, certainly*

jape *joke, trick, deception; to behave foolishly; fondle; have sexual intercourse*

jolif *lusty, frolicsome, amorous*

juel *jewel*

juise *judgment, punishment*

kepe *care*

kesse, kiste *kiss(ed)*

kinde *nature, manner, race; natural, kind*

kiste *chest*

lacche *seize*

laghtere *laughter*

large *wide, liberal*

latoun *bronze*

laude *praise*

lawhe *laugh*

leche *physician, remedy*

leiance *allegiance*

leie, lein *lay, set, apply*

lemman *lover*

lere *loss*

lere, liere *learn, teach, guide*
les *lie, falsehood*
lese *lose*
lesinge *lie, lying, falsehood*
lief *dear, pleasant*
lieve *believe, trust*
likned *compared*
list *like, desire*
loenge *praise*
longe *belong*
lore *n. learning, teaching; v. lost*
loure *frown*
loute *bow, yield*
low, lowh *laugh*
lust *desire, charm, pleasure*

maister *scholar, tutor, official*
make *mate, match; fashion*
makinge *making, composing*
malgré *in spite of*
manyon *many a one*
marche *border*
mased *amazed, confused*
mede *reward, gift, bribe; worldly gain; meadow*
medle *mingle*
memoire *memory*
men *people*
mete *food*
mete(n) *meet; dream*
mochel *great*
molde *earth; fashion*
mone *moan, lament; moon; companion*
mote *must*
mowe *may, be able to, might*
muable *changing, easily moved*
myht *might; strength, prowess*

n- *sometimes attached to words to indicate the negative: e.g., **not** = ne + wot (knows not); **nyste** = ne + wyste (knew not)*
nacioun *country, people, group, race*
nam *am not*
nam, nom *took*
nest *nest; next*
newe *new; renew; newly*

niht, nyht(e) *night; become night*
non *noon*
nyce, nice *foolish, fastidious, delicate*
nyh *near*

of *of, from, by, by reason of*
of *off*
oghne *own*
on *on, in*
on *one; in on* *united, without ceasing*
or, er(e) *before*
or *or; or . . . or* *either . . . or, whether . . . or*

paie *pay, please, satisfy*
part(e) *part; divide, distribute, depart, share*
parti *variegated; colorful*
pas *step, pace, gait; road, passageway*
peine *pain, punishment, endeavor; suffer, take pains, be troubled*
peise *weigh*
per, par *by, for, through or by means of*
pes *peace*
plat *plainly, flatly, entirely, frankly*
plein *full; plain, smooth, simple; fully, plainly*
pourchace *procure, seek; endeavor, succeed*
pris *value, prize, fame, renown, praise*
privé *secret*
propre *proper, own, appropriate*
pure *unalloyed, excellent, honest, absolute; entirely*

queinte *clever, wise; curious, crafty, cunning, gentle*
querele *dispute, altercation, cause, claim, enterprise*
qweme *please, be pleasing*

rape *haste; hasten; rape*
rathere *sooner*
real *royal*
recche, rowhte, roghte *care for, heed*
rede(n) *read, take counsel, contemplate, advise*

rote *custom, condition*
rote *a medieval musical instrument, probably of the violin class*
roune *whisper*
routhe *pity, compassion*
rowe *row, company; dawn; be rowe in order*
ryht *right; justice*

sawe *saying, speech*
schape(n), schope(n) *shape, contrive, prepare, bring about; create*
sche, scheo *she*
schent *harmed, ruined*
schrifte *confession*
schrive(n) *confess, hear confession, absolve, receive absolution*
se, seth, sih(e); sawh; sen, sein *see, saw, seen*
seie, sein; seid, sayde *say; said; spoken*
sek, siek, sik *sick*
siete *sit*
sih *saw*
sike, syke *sigh*
siker *certain, sure, secure; surely*
sithe *time(s)*
siththe *since*
skile *reason*
sleihte *skill, deceit, trickery*
slyh *cunning, sly*
sodeinliche *suddenly*
solein *alone, lonely, strange*
sonde *message, sending, decree; messenger*
sothe *truth*
stevene *voice; promise*
suie *follow*
swevene, swefne *dream*

take(n) *take, give; betake*
teene, tene *sorrow, injury, hardship, vexation, anger*
th- *often affixed to words for the as in thapostel (the apostle), thair (the air), and thastat (the estate). In such words I have used an apostrophe to differentiate the article from*

the noun (i.e., th'apostel)
that *that, which, so that*
ther(e) *there, where, whereas, at that point, thereby, therefore*
tho *those; then*
thrinne *therein*
thurgh *through*
tobreke *break to pieces*
tofore *before, formerly*
totore *torn to bits*
tour *tower*

unavised *unwise, unwisely*
unbuxom *disobedient*
unethes *scarcely, hardly*
unkinde *unnatural, ungrateful*
unsely *unhappy*
upon *on, upon, into, with regard to, by reason of*

vois *voice, rumor, vote*

war *aware, careful*
wawe *wave*
wede *dress, cover*
wene *think, expect, believe*
werne *refuse, prevent*
wif *woman, wife*
wight *person; creature*
will(e) *will, pleasure, willfulness*
wise *manner*
wiste *knew*
wit *mind, reason, senses*
wite(n), wot *know*
wod *mad, wild*
worthe(n) *become*
wreche *wretch; vengeance; avenge; satisfy*
wyle *cunning*
wyte *blame, censure*

yare *ready*
ye, yhe *eye*
ynowh *enough*
ywiss *certainly, truly; indeed*