unpublished review of 1st book

Andalusian and Trobador Love Lyric:
From Source-Seeking to Comparative Analysis

> La recherche des sources,...indispensable, et en elle-même sans intérêt
> --Zumthor 310

> si la sagesse des Arabes était traduite... on ne trouverait dans les idées émises rien que les non-Arabes n'aient déjà dit... Toutes ces oeuvres étrangères ont été communiquées de nation à nation, se sont transmises de siècle en siècle, transposées d'une langue à l'autre
> --Al-Jahiz (ca.780-869) in Pellat 9

Literary historians have never succeeded in explaining cogently the appearance of a European vernacular love poetry tradition with the Count of Poitiers, William IX, in the South of France around 1100. Some today might maintain that no such explanation is required or possible, for absolute origins do not exist in matters traceable at least as much to the collective and individual psyche as to localizable and identifiable literary sources [cf. Bastide and Duby 101; Gorton 1974, 13]. Yet since the sixteenth century and still in our own times one theory in particular, that of Hispano-Arabic origins, has never ceased to be debated, with much rhetoric and brio, but without ever winning widespread conviction or being totally discarded [survey of modern scholarship to 1966 in Mansoor 3-103, 325-43].

Most recently, in a stimulating series of essays since 1981 and in a book published in 1987, María Rosa Menocal of Yale University has again raised the issue of Hispano-Arabic origins. Her own original approach is not so much to champion Arabic sources as to expose the ethnocentrism of Europeanists, Arabists and comparatists who have often rejected the possibility of medieval literary exchanges with the Arabic world. Following the model of Edward Said's Orientalism, Menocal criticizes "the methodological, attitudinal and ideological biases" of her predecessors while acknowledging that any scholarship will necessarily reflect its author's own ideology [Menocal 1981, 50 & 56n.].

Notwithstanding the enthusiasm of pro-Arabist scholars like Nykl and Menocal, supporters of Andalusian origins for trobador lyric have scant if any documentation which they can cite to bolster the thesis of interaction between the two literatures [Denomy on art and architecture; Menéndez Pidal 327-33; other items in Menocal 1987, 67]. "We have no evidence of contacts between Spanish Arabic poetry and Old Provençal," categorically affirms one succinct overview [Gorton 1974, 14; also Stern 225-26 and Davis]. For lack of demonstrable exchanges, many scholars have pointed to possible borrowings in either form or content. Those who focus on form have looked to metrical and linguistic parallels [e.g., Le Gentil], while those concentrating on content turn to shared images and concepts [e.g., Nykl 396-98]. Others, noting the inadequacy of Arabist theories, have been led still farther afield: "The troubadours may have read Persian books on poetics," affirms one [Draper 258]. Meanwhile, the debate over the language of the kharjas, once thought to furnish the missing link between the two literatures in the form of early Romance lyrics enmeshed within Arabic songs, is far from resolved [Hitchcock].

To many Europeanists, the sum of Arabist arguments is not entirely satisfying, and the pro-Arabists themselves are no longer as readily convinced as in the days of Nykl [one exception: the barrister Morère]. Indeed, it is periodically remembered that any influence may have moved in the opposite direction, from Romance to Arabic literature [Grünebaum 147]. Much recent scholarship on trobador lyric, including the latest origins book [Boase] and comparative dissertation [Nouryeh, but also Gorton 1973], has rightly shied away from unilateral source-hunting and extravagant conclusions, but with the result that comparative study of the two literatures has in the last decade diminished almost to the vanishing point. Even Menocal's avowed purpose in her dissertation is not to study Hispano-Arabic or Provençal or any other literary texts but "to explore the reasons why that theory has never achieved widespread acceptance and to repostulate it in different terms" [Menocal 1979]. Similarly, in her book she acknowledges that her approach deals with intercultural climates, not literary texts: "None of this, of course, proves anything about any particular literary text of the medieval period. It is not intended to" [Menocal 1987, 66].

Neglect of primary texts is unfortunate, for whether we opt for polygenetic origins, parthenogenesis, immaculate conception, or none of these models when treating the birth of trobador lyric, the two divergent poetic systems provide a rich field for comparative study. At a time when Menocal has cogently defended a return to the Arabic etymology of the key term trobador [Menocal 1982; also Lemay], it is tempting to revive the undying debate on literary sources through the analysis of some of the shared conceits in the two traditions. This paper examines four examples from the collective repertory to find universals where there were thought to be sources, but also to reveal divergences where one might expect only continuity and uniformity. A first example signals a few of the risks run by the parallelographic school in proposing any direct filiation of influence [cf. Oliphant].

1). The dangers of Quellenforschungen are made clear in the attributing to the trouvere Conon de Béthune the invention of what is likely the most successful cliché of medieval crusade song. In 1188 on departing for the Holy Land, Conon sang in one of two such songs:

If my body goes to serve Our Lord
My heart remains completely in her [his Lady's] power

Se li cors va servir Nostre Signor,
Mes cuers remaint del tot en sa baillie. [Wallensköld 1968, 6].

Citing the widespread echoes of Conon's lyric in European crusade song, one distinguished scholar writes how Conon here "launched the idea which would be so successful" ("lança l'idée qui fera fortune dans les rangs des croisés galants" [Frank 144]). The same formula is indeed repeated in subsequent French and German crusade songs, some probably traceable (through metrical, thematic or verbal borrowings) to Conon's popular lyric. This idea did become the key formula of the French and German crusade song. Was it borrowed along with metrics, themes or words? It seemed obvious enough for István Frank to be so categorical about Conon's originality and influence. Today Conon is still regularly cited as source for subsequent, non-French lyrics, most recently for Raimbaut de Vaqueiras's quinquelingual "Eras quan vey verdeyar" [Brugnolo].

But the crusader's leaving his heart behind in his Lady's custody can also be found in an influential Hispano-Arabic crusader-poet predecessor, Ibn Al-Haddad, who died ca. 1087, almost exactly one hundred years before Conon's song. Ibn Al-Haddad wrote of his lady:

I leave her whom I love and so I depart, but by God, as I leave I don't take my heart with me. [Pérès 409]

The cause of separation is not stated. Was Ibn Al-Haddad also heading into battle when he left his heart behind with his lady? We do know that in 1087, the probable year of his death, Southern French barons again traveled to Spain on crusade. According to the historian Ibn Khaldun, Poitevin heroes, including the father of the first trobador, had returned from the successful expedition to Barbastro in 1064 with Moorish female singers among their booty [Menocal 1987, 27; Bond lxi; Menéndez Pidal 329, 331-32; Briffault 53, 64, 247n.78, 250n.95]. What better opportunities to import Hispano-Arabic songs like those of Ibn Al-Haddad and his fellows? His verses include many of the traditional formulae codified in a treatise like Ibn Hazm's classic Dove's Neck Ring.

The leaving of the poet's heart behind in the Lady's custody was a commonplace of Hispano-Arabic poetry long before it became one also in European lyric. To cite just one more example of the identical topic in Hispano-Arabic poetry: Ibn Guzman himself, born ca. 1087 [Nykl 268], the year Ibn Al-Haddad died, also sings:

How could I not be sad, I who, upon leaving,
leave my heart by my lady, Al-Hakam? [Briffault 234]

Ibn Al-Haddad is no more unique in attesting this idea in the Hispano-Arabic tradition than is Conon in the French tradition (cf. the stolen heart motif, as in the crusader Gace Brulé's most famous song [Rosenberg 6-7, 281], or the heart as hostage in the lyrics of another crusader, the Chastelain de Coucy [Lerond 69]).

That is, chronologically and geographically it may seem just as tempting to try to establish an Arabic-Romance connection as a Romance-Germanic link. In either case, however, we would do well to skirt the risks of post hoc, ergo propter hoc. While Nykl might insist that Arabic conceits found their way to the rest of Europe, the poet's separation from his heart is more likely a universal conceit, not a textbook case in influence. Scholars are right to compare the two traditions, as when the Arabist Henri Pérès affirmed that "with [Ibn Al-Haddad] we feel ourselves in the presence of the sincerest, purest love, such as that which some troubadours would sing a little later," but he would be wrong to affirm a genetic relationship -- and he wisely does not do so [Pérès 279 cited by Nykl 194].

2). In a second example, I propose to leave behind the generic topos of the crusader's heart to consider some proverbial words of encouragement in the face of any difficult but stubborn cause. Like the unrequited lover's sense that he is separated from his heart, an exemplary image of perseverance can also be shown to be a universal model for hopeful lover-poets.

The trobador Bernart de Ventadorn takes hope that he can soften the hard heart of his lady, saying that

for in my readings I have found
that a falling drop of water
strikes in a place so often
until it cuts through the hard stone

qu'ieu ai ben trobat legen
que gota d'aiga que chai
fer en un loc soven,
tro chava la peira dura [Lazar 118]

Since Carl Appel's magisterial edition [Appel 96-97] it has been standard to trace Bernart's simile to an Ovidian source, presumably accessible in florilegia where short passages from Ovid were well represented [Ullmann 11-13]. Ovid

does cite the case of the determined waterdrop, both in the Art of Love 1:475 and in the Ex Ponto 4.10.5 9 (cf. also Tristia 4.6.1-18). Can Bernart's "readings" be so readily localized, "certainement dans Ovide," as Lazar also affirms [Lazar 1966, 253]? What is more, after Bernart, the same image may be found in the Chastelain de Coucy [Lerond 115], whose debt to Bernart is well attested [Lazar 1964, 260]. May we then assume some direct filiation from Latin poet to Provençal trobador to French trouvere? Has the Chastelain read his Bernart with the same attention that Bernart read his Ovid? Perhaps not, pace Appel and Lazar.

I find "in my readings" that well before Ovid the same sentiment is already expressed by Lucretius, On the Nature of Things 1:313, who says that the drip of the eaves hollows a stone: Stilcidi casus lapidem cavat. Long after Ovid, the same or similar formula is found in the fourth-century poet Sulpicius Lupercus Servasius who says that water hollows the rough rock: decidens scabrum cavat unda tofum [Duff 576].

Finally, were these other Latin examples not enough to give us pause, let me add another quotation closer to the special concerns of this essay. In his Dove Neck's Ring, Ibn Hazm, probably the greatest figure in eleventh-century Hispano-Arabic prose literature, counsels also to be stubborn, for water hollows out a rock [García Gómez 194; Nykl 93]. Did Ibn Hazm also read his Ovid? Is this a new indication that Bernart and other trobadors knew their Arabic poets from Spain, and their Ovid through them? It seems far more likely that the implied equation of the patient lover and the persistent drop of water is a commonplace of wide diffusion among Latin, Hispano-Arabic, Provençal and French cultures. This recurrent adage was cited in an early study of trobador proverbs [Cnyrim 32]. It resurfaces in at least one other Old Provençal text, the "Book of Seneca" [Bartsch 211]. Perhaps we would find the same proverb in other traditions as well, particularly that of classical Greece, a likely ultimate source.

Even Bernart's statement that he found this conventional saying "in his readings" is itself a topos of authority and not necessarily the equivalent of a modern footnote. We find equally formulaic affirmations of a poet's literary

sources in the lyrics of another trobador, Gui d'Ussel, who says in almost identical words, "I found in my readings," "e trobatz ho legen" [Audiau 84]. Yet the knowledge Gui maintains he acquired "in his readings" is no more than common sense: one can heal an error but there is no remedy for death. Gui also echoes only proverbial wisdom here.

3). In looking at a generic commonplace supposedly invented by a trouvere and at an international proverb wrongly thought to be traceable from a trobador to a classical Latin poet, we have seen that both also have antecedents in Hispano-Arabic lyric. Yet both are likely to be examples of conventional formulae rather than literary borrowings. We might turn now to a conceit and its parody, which go hand in hand as part and parcel of the same lyric convention as far back as we can trace either aspect. Like the various topoi and proverbs, a literary device like self-parody is also a universal of love poetry.

In the figure of the emaciated lover, wasting away from unrequited love, we have a familiar so-called Petrarchan conceit. But it is obvious enough that the sword-like glances, the fire and the flood and such images long predate Petrarch's Canzoniere (where, incidentally, we also find our determined drop of water [Durling 435]). Petrarch elsewhere acknowledges the inspiration of trobador and trouvere lyric, some of whose poets are honored by his praise in the Trionfi.

One of the trouveres, Thibaut de Champagne, adds what might seem to be an original twist to the debate between pining lover and robust lady. In an exchange traditionally (since at least the fourteeenth century) said to be between this king of Navarre and his legendary love, Blanche of Castille, Thibaut begins in courtly fashion:

Have pity, lady! When you die and I---but that will happen first,
Since I won't survive you for a moment---

Quant vous morrez et je -- mès c'iert avant,
Car après vous ne vivroie je mie --

She answers:

I don't know if you're not pulling my leg,
Because you're hardly so thin at all!

Ne je ne sai se vous m'alez guilant,
Que trop megres n'estes oncore mie [Wallensköld 1925, 164-65, xv-xxi].

We gather from several suggestions in the song that the king of Navarre may have sported quite a royal paunch. This much anthologized exchange is sometimes praised as an uncourtly dismissal of the familiar tenets of courtly love. The spirited dialogue continues on the same theme: he insists that he feeds on hope ("il se nourrit d'espérance," as the French say), but she rebukes him: "Be quiet, Thibaut. Nobody should follow a line of reasoning which is sure to be torn apart. You're just saying that to soften me, whom you've already tricked so often, towards you."

Whether we believe that this is a genuine dialogue between two historical figures or, with more modern scholars, we assume that this was a mise en scène imagined by Thibaut alone, the piece is usually appreciated for its lady's down-to-earth language and matter-of-fact dismissal of courtly norms. Parallel exchanges are found also among the trobadors, where, for example, a Genoese woman (no one would call her a lady) responds in vulgar dialect and no less uncouth images to the polished Provençal of her would-be suitor, Raimbaut de Vaqueiras [Linskill 99, 104; mentioned in Menocal 1987, 106].

Do Thibaut's and Raimbaut's songs attest an impatience with courtly modes in language and wooing? Critics have long recognized that as early as the first trobador, Count William of Poitiers, there are already two distinct strains to the love lyric: one courtly, one earthy (the so-called idealist and realist schools). Was it then the clever innovation of later poets like Raimbaut and Thibaut to entertain audiences by putting the two contradictory voices on stage simultaneously in riotous conflict?

On the contrary, we already find the two stances regularly juxtaposed as early

as Hispano-Arabic lyric. To return to the emaciated lover, in the Iberian poets he is reduced to a shadow, wasting away in silence, or alternately he is audible but invisible [Monroe 222, 274; Pérès 407]. To be sure, this weak figure -- both the poet and his self-image -- is a universal of love lyric. But, and this is more significant for us, not only do we find the emaciated lover across these several literatures, but in Hispano-Arabic lyric too, his lady bluntly reproaches him for his exaggerated language and unconvincing reasoning. Following the customary complaints by the lover, one lady responds curtly in the kharja on which a muwashshaha concludes:

I see that you're pining;
What's with you, man?
You know that time will pass
And you will forget me!
[Monroe 252-5]

That is, long before Petrarch the Petrarchan lover wasted away for love. Nor need we wait for the epigones of this tradition to see him taken to task by the lady for his inflated claims. As far back as we trace the conceit, not only is the emaciated lover a constant, but so too is the deflating incredulity of his lady. In these several lyric systems, the stylistic contrast between courtly register and popular derision is a staple, likely even a basic component, among Arab and Romance poets alike. From the first of these texts, self-conscious courtliness incorporates self-mocking uncourtliness; long before any external reaction against courtly love, its excesses are already ridiculed internally. It is unnecessary to hypothesize a parodic response of one tradition to another, as María Rosa Menocal and earlier scholars might seem to do in questioning how the first trobador can write "a parody of something that is still in the very process of coming into existence" [Menocal 1987, 105]. From the earliest texts, in either tradition, there is self-parody at the heart of courtly lyric.

4). In these examples, we have a reminder and a warning that generic topoi, popular proverbs and lyric code-switching are the givens of all love poetry: basic building blocks, but not necessarily literary borrowings or parodic responses or even individual choices. Does this mean, as Dronke has teasingly

suggested, that courtly love dates not from the twelfth century (for so Seignobos and C.S. Lewis long ago proposed) but is a universal continuum dating back at least as far as Egyptian love lyrics? Clearly, many of the familiar topoi, the unchanging proverbs, and the contrasting registers have just such a long and international history [cf. Elicegui].

But the differences between these far-flung traditions, poets and texts still make them individually distinctive. We must not follow earlier generations of scholars, including Curtius, who might reduce to uniformity the recurrent motifs [collected by Ecker]. Nor need we consign all Stoffgeschichte, thematic and typological criticism or nineteenth-century dissertations to the dustbin. Comparatists look beyond these lists of superficial similarities, obvious parallels and possible borrowings to the more profound and more revealing differences. Cataloging shared components is only a stepping stone, a springboard to recognizing crucial if more subtle divergences. One balanced treatment of the issue of Arab origins makes a plea precisely for an end to polemics through "comparative textual study of Hispano-Arabic and Provençal poetry" [Gorton 1974, 16].

In a fourth, final and most elaborate example, I will try to show how slight variations in an almost elemental, seemingly innocuous image can rewrite its meaning. In so doing I hope to suggest, in unavoidably telegraphic form, something of the cultural and poetic stances characteristic of several traditions from the courtly to the contemporary. Though it is possible to conclude that "thematic and formulaic correspondences... can only have resulted from a common source" [Monroe 1975, 349], I prefer to look at variations underlying the correspondences. While universal topoi can resurface independently and unchangingly, in a case of genuine influence a source may provoke a response. There are indeed fundamental differences among the Romance literatures which certainly chronologically and perhaps thematically follow Arabic models.

The image of an embracing loop made by a lover's arms, whether in the form of a belt or a necklace, is continuous from Ovid [Amores 2.18.19] to Wallace Stevens ["The World as Meditation," Stevens 381]. Not at all restricted to the medieval courtly mode, and therefore more nearly universal than the long

courtly tradition, this simple figure can teach us something about the differences reflected even in formulaic diction among Andalusians, Provençaux and French poets. Rather than pursuing elusive origins by moving backwards in time, as in the three examples treated above, it will be instructive to move forward now, noting the evolution of an obsessive gesture as it becomes petrified as symbol.

The image of embracing (in its etymological sense: encircling with one's arms) is virtually an obsession with the Andalusian poets, as has rightly been noted [Pérès 403]. Writes one poet, here expressing a sentiment which a Japanese writer like Tanizaki might share:

Is there no greater beauty than in necklaces and necks?
[Pérès 208].

Another Hispano-Arabic poet writes,

On my shoulders her two arms formed a sash
[baudrier, hamîla, a band to hold a sword, but worn like a scarf]
and around her waist there was a belt made of my two arms [Pérès 403].

Belt and necklace as images for the beloved's embracing arms (if that is not a pleonasm) recur widely [other examples in Pérès 402 and in Sponsler, below]. Necklaces are also present as a constant source of other images: the teeth are necklaces of pearls in the mouth, and the title of Ibn Hazm's classic treatise on courtly love is The Dove's Neck Ring.

Except on that dove, the necklace and the belt here are never pieces of jewelry or clothing, and the man's embracing arms adorn less the neck than the waist of the lady. While the lady occasionally returns the compliment by throwing her arms around his neck, the emphasis is clearly on the man's arms forcefully placed around the waist of his lady.

That the belt plays so frequent and critical role has not been remarked upon. The belt seems to take on several values, some familiar to us and some less so:

1). First, the belt is a symbol of carnal possession, of course, something of a positive, un-chastity belt [Sponsler 126n.11, 63].
2). At the same time, it is metonymically a euphemism for the adjoining region of the body near the waist, "à la ceinture" or "below the belt" [Sponsler 101].
3). As a gesture or act independent of the lovers whom it unites, it is also a kind of love gift: a token of love and a proof of love [Sponsler 82, 97].
4). Finally, it can be an image of constraint, obligation, commitment, like a lock, or like George Herbert's collar [Sponsler 105].

Broadly speaking, we may say that the same fascination for belts flourishes not only in Hispano-Arabic poetry but also in medieval Galician-Portuguese and in Spanish lyric as late as Juan Ruiz and the Marqués de Santillana [Sponsler 103]. The Cid and God Himself wear belts and gird on their swords for battles real and metaphysical [Monroe 300].

An Iberian preoccupation with belts becomes more interesting when we compare the Gallo-Romance usage. Here the simple images of a lover's embrace are no less present, but a shift in direction transfers their erotic dimensions and transforms their poetic intensity. Among the trobadors, it is commonly the lady and not the lover who may embrace the partner by putting her arms around him to form a necklace or a belt. Guilhem de Cabestanh, a Catalan trobador close to Spain and perhaps Arabic contacts, sings

It will be a great honor for me
if it ever were that God would grant me
that you accept to make me a belt of your arms

...que pros m'er et honors
Si ja fos mais que Dieus m'espires tan
Qe.m volcsetz far de vostres bratz sentura [Lângfors 11; cf. Pattison 196].

And in a famous lyric Bernart de Ventadorn makes a similar wish:

May she have the courage
to have me come one night

there where she undresses
and make me a necklace of her arms

ab sol c'aya tan d'ardit
c'una noih lai o.s despolha
me mezes, en loc aizit,
e.m fezes dels bratz latz al col [Lazar 1966, 134].

Here that belt and necklace festoon the male body: they are no longer concrete proclamations of the man's determined possession of the lady's love but rather dreamy anticipations of the woman's daring gift of her person. The mood and tense of the verbs in Provençal are passive, optative, doubtful, conditional, wishful, not active, affirmative, declarative, past, completed, as they are in the Hispano-Arabic poets. As Frederick Goldin has quipped, trobadors make love in the subjunctive.

What becomes of these belts and necklaces if we move now one chronological step and one literary degree farther along the courtly continuum? In Northern France, belts or necklaces formed by lover's or beloved's arms virtually disappear. In trouvere texts the ring commonly as gift symbolizes the lady's accepting to abandon herself to his desire [e.g., Wallensköld 1968, 13; on rings not as gifts, cf. Pattison 135, 168, 170n.59 and Dronke 11, 179-80]. Here an object mediates between the lovers' bodies. The ardent eroticism of the man seizing the lady by the waist has been toned down from love act to love token. Like the ring, other objects can serve as tokens of the love act. A lady might give her lover a sleeve or a glove (cf. donner livrée or the lost glove cycle in Guiraut de Bornelh [Serper]). Both suggestively sheath the arm or hand much as the more explicit ring encircles the lover's little finger. French lyric also attests the lady's giving her lover a cushion on which to lie, an obvious metonymy for the gift of self [Binet 57; cf. Farrayre 6-7].

In both Gallo-Romance lyric systems, the Iberian male's physical embrace of his lady around the waist, however poetically described, has been replaced: first in the South of France by the lady's making the love gesture and then in the North by the offering of a love token, either by the man or the woman. With the

ring, the simile is externalized into a metonymy: an intimate comparison is reified as a foreign object. With the intrusion of this stylized, self-conscious intermediary, gesture has become symbol, act has become poem. By the same token, we might say, actant has become passive, donor has become recipient and lover has become poet. The spontaneous embrace becomes a solicited necklace which in turn becomes a negotiated go-between. The trouvere's ring is in effect an inanimate object substituted for an anthropomorphic messenger, the trobador's song. Among Hispano-Arabic poets, no poem, no realia, no go-between, no intervening object or person obstructs the body contact of the lovers.

So, when the Andalusian directly seizes his mistress by the waist, the trobador wishes that his lady will make him a necklace of her arms and the trouvere can dream his embrace through the intermediary of a ring. This geographic and chronological sequence might reflect a diminishing boldness in erotic expression but a growing refinement in poetic diction on the part of the poet-persona from Spain to Provence to Northern France. We may tentatively posit in this overall movement from the belt to the necklace to the ring, and from the waist to the neck to the extremities, a parallel shift from epic machismo to lyric courtliness to the religion of courtly love. At the same time, the lyric stance has undergone a progressive elevation from masculine domination to feminine control to literary symbolism.

This example perhaps constitutes one modest demonstration of the kind of comparative textual analysis for which Gorton has made his appeal [also Stern 221]. A similar exercise was undertaken by Jean-Marie D'Heur in his "Le motif du vent venu du pays de l'être aimé," which also adduces Arabic parallels to the Romance examples discussed [D'Heur 93-95, to which add Menéndez Pidal 331 and works there cited]. More broadly, Anna Maria Raugei has treated formulae and topoi within the trouvere tradition. Such essays exemplify the study of "the rich possibility of permutations of significance with changing eras and social environments" that John G. Cummins seeks in vain in Boase and other origins studies, to which we might now add those of Menocal [Cummins 252]. María Rosa Menocal takes thematic borrowing as a given; seldom does she give examples or discuss passages documenting the links which are apparent to her

[Manacal 1981, 60; cf. Gartan 1974, 15 on Le Gantil]. Yet we know that, as her mentor Samuel Armistead reminds us, "the poetry of the troubadours, though it may seem 'traditional' in the recurrent nature of its topics, is, in fact, the highly contrived work of individual authors" [Armistead 416]. That is, much of the source-seeking for formulae and the polemics over origins runs the risk of being simplistic and reductive with respect to individual creativity, cultural patterns and literary interchanges.

Even this general analysis in comparative poetics and erotics necessarily brings us back to the old question of immediate sources and ultimate origins. Courtly or at least romantic love may be international and immortal, as Dronke has argued, but this self-evidence does not prevent him or us from comparing love's different literary manifestations across space and time. This one small example perhaps demonstrates in microcosm why the refinements of courtly love may have traveled <u>to</u> Spain <u>from</u> France only in the late Middle Ages rather than in the opposite direction in an earlier period.

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