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# The Evangelical Quarterly

OCTOBER 15TH, 1934

## SURVIVALS OF A PAGAN CULT— THE LOVED ONE FAR AWAY<sup>1</sup>

### I

THE theme of a poet who, stirred by reports of her beauty, falls in love with a lady in a distant land whom he has never seen, has always been a popular one. It has been treated time and again through the centuries by poets of various lands, by Uhland and Heine in Germany, by Browning and Swinburne in this country, by Carducci in Italy. In France Edmond Rostand took the theme as the subject of his play, *La princesse lointaine*. Swinburne's lines in "The Triumph of Time" are in everyone's memory :

There lived a singer in France of old  
By the tideless dolorous midland sea.  
In a land of sand and ruin and gold  
There shone one woman, and none but she.  
And finding life for her love's sake fail,  
Being fain to see her, he bade set sail,  
Touched land, and saw her as life grew cold,  
And praised God, seeing ; and so died he.

This in brief is the story of the Provençal poet, Jaufré Rudel, prince de Blaye, of which I wish to speak to-night.

The earliest version of the story, written possibly by the poet Uc de Saint Circ, is contained in the thirteenth century *Lives of the Troubadours*, and runs as follows :

"Jaufré Rudel of Blaye was a very noble man and lord of Blaye ; he fell in love with the Countess of Tripoli, whom he had never seen, on the strength of the praises he heard the pilgrims who came from Antioch tell of her ; and he made many songs about her with good melodies but poor words. And out of desire to see her he took the Cross and went to sea ; and on board ship he fell ill and was brought to Tripoli, to an inn, as if dead.

<sup>1</sup> Lecture delivered to the Scottish Anthropological Society on November 21st, 1933.

And it was told the Countess and she came to him, to his bedside, and took him in her arms ; and he knew she was the Countess and recovered the sense of hearing and of smell ; and he praised God and thanked Him for having kept him alive until he had seen her. And so he died in her arms and she had him buried with great honour in the Church of the Templars. And then the same day she took the veil, because of the grief she felt at his death.”<sup>1</sup>

This story, full of poetry and romance, raises many questions. How much in it is truth and how much is fiction ? Who was the lady who inspired this love, this loved one far away ? Was she, as some think, a real person of flesh and blood,<sup>2</sup> or was she only, as others prefer to believe, a mere imaginary being ?<sup>3</sup> If she was a real person, was she, as Stimming thought, Odierna, the wife of Raimon I, Count of Tripoli, the only plausible explanation according to Suchier and Paul Meyer, or was she, as tradition affirms, Odierna's daughter, Melissent, who in the year 1162 was disgracefully jilted by Manuel, the Emperor of Constantinople ?<sup>4</sup>

On the face of it the story is unlikely. Not that it is impossible for a poet, or for anyone else perhaps, to fall in love from hearsay, so to speak, but all that makes the charm of the story—the voyage across the sea, the illness on board ship, the arrival at Tripoli just before the poet's death, then a few hours later his death in the arms of the Countess and her decision to end her days in a convent—all that is possible perhaps, but outside the realm of likelihood unless supported by some other proof. Now, there is no other proof. The Middle Ages believed the story implicitly on the strength of the account in the *Lives of the Troubadours*. Modern scholarship, however, is more sceptical and has shown how little the *Lives* can be trusted. No historical document mentions the name of Jaufré Rudel and what is recounted in the *Lives of the Troubadours* rests on nothing historical. If it is based on anything, it is based on the poems of

<sup>1</sup> *Les Chansons de Jaufré Rudel* éditées par Alfred Jeanroy, Paris, 1915, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Monaci, who identified her with Eleonore of Poitiers, Savj-Lopez, Ortiz. For references see the very complete list of studies relating to Jaufré Rudel given by Pillet-Carstens, *Bibliographie der Troubadours*, Halle, 1933, p. 238ff.

<sup>3</sup> Stengel, Bertoni, Moore. Cf. Pillet-Carstens, *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> This question was discussed by Gaston Paris in a masterly study on Jaufré Rudel which appeared in the *Revue historique*, t. LIII (1893) and which was republished in *Mélanges de littérature française du moyen âge*, p. 498ff.

the Troubadours themselves, and so it is in the case of Jaufré Rudel. The Provençal biographer does not mention the date of Jaufré Rudel, but a contemporary poet, named Marcabru, luckily alludes to him in a poem of his composed in 1148. Marcabru sends his poem to Jaufré Rudel beyond the sea :

Lo vers e·l son vuoill enviar  
A·n Jaufre Rudel oltra mar.<sup>1</sup>

This allusion to Jaufré Rudel makes it probable that the poet "followed God to Bethlehem", as he urges all men to do in his first poem, that is to say that he took part in the Crusade of 1147, fired with religious enthusiasm by the preaching of Bernard de Clairvaux.

From this same poem—the "chanson de croisade", as it is called—Gaston Paris concluded that when the poet left his country to go on the Crusade he was in love, not with an unknown lady that he went to look for beyond the sea, but with a lady whom he left behind in France and whose love he gave up in order to go on the Crusade—witness these lines from his poem: "Love, I depart from you rejoicing, because I go seeking my own betterment."<sup>2</sup> If that was so, how could he then have taken the Cross out of desire to see Odierna, the Countess of Tripoli? Moreover the Countess did not take the veil in 1147 or at any other date.<sup>3</sup> The Provençal biographer is consequently at variance with the poet's own testimony.

It is equally difficult to believe that the poet's love was Melissent, Odierna's daughter whom the poet is supposed to have visited in 1162 or subsequent years when Melissent was in her twenties. The biographer states, as I have already said, that Jaufré Rudel took the Cross out of desire to see the Countess of Tripoli, but not only was Melissent not the Countess, for her brother Raimond II had the title at this date, but there was no Crusade between the years 1147 and 1189 and the biographer does not tell us that the poet went across the sea on two occasions. So if we believe that the poet's adventure took place in 1162, we are at variance with the testimony of Marcabru.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Poésies complètes du Troubadour Marcabru* publiées par le Dr. J-M.-L. Dejeanne, Toulouse, 1909, No. XV, l. 37f.

<sup>2</sup> Amors, alegres part de vos  
Per so quar vau mo mielhs queren, edit. Jeanroy, No. I, l. 29f.

<sup>3</sup> G. Paris, *op. cit.*, p. 518.

<sup>4</sup> G. Paris, *op. cit.*, p. 516ff.

## II

It looks, then, as if the legend of Jaufré Rudel, for legend it is, rests solely on the poems of the poet. The six poems we have of Jaufré Rudel have been divided into two groups, Nos. I, III and IV in the one and Nos. II, V and VI in the other. The former, it is thought, refer to an earthly love, a love within the limits of ordinary experience, the object of which is at no great distance from the poet, the latter tell of the poet's love for a lady far away—*amor de lonh*—*amors de terra lonhdana*—a lady whom he has never seen and may never see. In order to give an idea of this second group, I will translate the poem which is generally considered the most famous and the most beautiful of the poems of Jaufré Rudel. The striking feature of it is the repetition in rhyme in the second and fourth lines of each verse of the expression “*de lonh*”—from afar—which thus recurs like a refrain all through the poem :

1. What time the days are long in May, the sweet song of birds is a delight to me, and when I am gone from there, I remember a loved one far away : I go about then distressed in mind with bowed head and neither song of birds nor may-blossom pleases me any more than icy winter.
2. I consider the lord true through whom I shall see the loved one far away ; but for one good thing that comes my way, I have two evils, for she is so far away. Ah ! that I were a pilgrim there, so that my staff and my cloak might be seen by her beautiful eyes !
3. Joy will indeed be mine, when I ask her, for the love of God, for lodging far away ; and, if it please her, I shall lodge near her, even though I come from far away. Then will there be sweet conversation, when the distant lover will be so close that he will have delight in conversation and sweet talk.
4. Sad and gay shall I leave her, if ever I see her, the loved one far away : but I know not when I shall see her, for our two lands are so far away : many are the passes and roads from mine to hers, wherefore I make no prediction . . . but may everything be as God pleases !
5. Never shall I have joy of love if I have not joy of this loved one far away, for none nobler nor better do I know anywhere,

either near or far away; the esteem she is held in is so sincere and perfect that I would for her sake be called a captive yonder in the realm of the Saracens.

6. May God who made everything that comes and goes and who formed this loved one far away grant me means—for desire I have—of seeing with my own eyes this loved one far away, in an abode of such a sort that the room and the garden may always seem to me a palace!
7. He who calls me eager for and desirous of the loved one far away tells the truth, for no other delight pleases me so much as joy of the loved one far away. But what I desire is denied to me, for my guardian spirit so spun my fate that I should love and not be loved.
8. But what I desire is denied to me. Accursed be the guardian spirit who so spun my fate that I should not be loved!<sup>1</sup>

The Jongleurs who sang the poems of Jaufré Rudel found in this "amor de lonh" a very attractive idea, since the love was inspired without the poet ever having seen the object of his love. They knew that he had taken part in the second Crusade and that he had died from illness in Syria. It was easy after that to suppose that the poet had crossed the seas in order to see his loved one far away. Consequently the term "amor de lonh" does not provide any confirmation of the legend, but rather is itself the starting point of the legend.<sup>2</sup> Jaufré's poem became immediately popular and evoked imitations not only in the South of France, but also in the North. Gaston Paris mentions an imitation of the theme in a Provençal poem by Guilhem de Béziers and another by Gontier de Soignies in Old French and one even in the poems of the Minnesänger of Germany.<sup>3</sup> Neither he nor other scholars, however, have noticed how numerous these imitations are, and, what is still more important, that they are to be found also in the works of the older generation of Troubadour poets. If I am not mistaken, the theme had already been imitated by some of the great Provençal poets, by Bernart

<sup>1</sup> Edit. Jeanroy, No. V.

<sup>2</sup> This was the conclusion to which Gaston Paris came in the monograph already mentioned, see p. 529f. and it has been generally accepted. See A. Jeanroy, *Les Chansons de Jaufré Rudel*, p. iv.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 522, n. 3.

de Ventadour,<sup>1</sup> Peire d'Alvernhe and Peire Vidal. Peire d'Alvernhe uses the term "amor lonhdana"<sup>2</sup> and Peire Vidal writes in one of his poems that he spends his days sighing and lamenting because he cannot see the lady of his heart: "so far away from me is the land and the sweet country where she is with whom I am in love, that I have lost all joy, jollity and laughter."<sup>3</sup>

The allusion here to a loved one far away is beyond all doubt. Gaston Paris, if he noticed the allusion, paid no attention to it. For him passages like this are only imitations of the poem of Jaufré Rudel and that is the view of many other scholars at the present day. I am inclined to doubt, however, whether the vogue of Jaufré's poem was great enough to evoke such repeated imitation and would prefer to believe that those poets who treat the same theme did not imitate Jaufré alone, but rather that both they and Jaufré were using a common source.

What brings me to this conclusion is the fact that there are renderings of the theme not only by poets who were contemporaries of Jaufré Rudel, but by poets who belonged to the period preceding him. Thus Cercamon who flourished between 1135 and 1145 writes in one of his poems: "Holy Saviour, give me shelter near the most beautiful, away there in the kingdom where my lady is."<sup>4</sup> If you agree with me that there is in these lines an allusion to a loved one far away, we have here a version of the theme of Jaufré Rudel written before his poem was composed! There is perhaps a still older rendering of our theme in a curious poem by Guillaume IX de Poitiers, the first Troubadour whose works have come down to us. The lines in question are as

<sup>1</sup> Mo cor ai pres d'Amor,  
Que l'esperitz lai cor,  
Mas lo cors es sai, alhor,  
Lonh de leis, en Fransa.

*Bernart von Ventadorn, Seine Lieder* herausgegeben von Carl Appel, Halle, 1915, No. XLIV, l. 33ff.

<sup>2</sup> Contr' aisso m'agrada l parers  
d'amor lonhdan' . . .

*Die Lieder Peires von Auvergne* herausgegeben von Rudolf Zenker, Erlangen 1900, No. VI, l. 8f.

3 . . . ades planh e sospire,  
Quar no vei leis, don mos cors no s'azire,  
Quar tan m'es lonh la terr' e-l dous país  
On es cela vas cui eu sui aclis:  
Per qu'ai perdut joi e solatz e rire.

*Les Poesies de Peire Vidal*, éditées par Joseph Anglade, Paris, 1913, No. XLI, ll. 6ff.

<sup>4</sup> Saint Salvaire, fai m'albergan  
Lai el renh on mi donz estai,  
Ab la genzor . . .

*Les Poesies de Cercamon*, éditées par Alfred Jeanroy, Paris, 1922, No. IV, l. 43f.

follows : " I have a love, I know not who she is, for, by my faith, I never saw her ; she never did anything that gave me pleasure or pain, nor does it matter . . . never did I see her and I love her dearly, never did she do me right or wrong."<sup>1</sup>

The lady denoted in these lines resembles very closely the distant love of Jaufré Rudel, for Jaufré in another poem writes of his lady in language very similar to that of the Duke of Aquitania : " I know well I never had joy of her and that she will never have joy of me . . . never did she tell me truth or falsehood and I know not whether she ever will."<sup>2</sup> It seems to me that Guillaume's love, whom he had never seen, is the same person as the distant love of Jaufré Rudel,<sup>3</sup> but, if that is so, then Jaufré did not himself invent the theme of the loved one far away, for, since Guillaume died in the year 1127, his poem, at the most moderate estimate, must be some twenty years older than the

<sup>1</sup> Amigu' ai ieu, no sai qui s'es,  
Qu'anc non la vi, si m'ajut fes ;  
Ni m fes que m plassa ni que m pes,  
Ni no m'en cau . . .

Anc non la vi et am la fort,  
Anc no n'aic dreyt ni no m fes tort ;  
*Les Chansons de Guillaume IX duc d'Aquitaine*, éditées par Alfred Jeanroy, Paris, 1913, No. IV, ll. 25ff and 31f. The resemblance in this case also struck R. Ortiz, *Zeitschrift f. rom. Phil.*, t. XXXV (1911), p. 544, who thinks that Jaufré borrowed largely from Guillaume.

<sup>2</sup> Ben sai c'anc de lei no m jauzi,  
Ni ja de mi no s jauzira . . .  
Anc no m dis ver ni no m menti  
E no sai si ja s'o fara, a a.

Edit. Jeanroy, No. VI, ll. 25ff. Compare also the following lines of Guillaume IX : A totz jorns m'es pres enaissi Qu'anc d'aquo qu'amiey non jauzi, Ni o faray ni anc no fi, edit. Jeanroy, No. VII, ll. 13ff, and a similar idea in Cercamon : de s'amor no suy devis, Non sai si ja l'aurai ni quan, edit. Jeanroy, No. I, l. 33f, and in Bernart de Ventadour : Car eu d'amar no m posc tener Celeis don ja pro non aurai, edit. Appel, No. XLIII, ll. 11f.

<sup>3</sup> C. Appel, *Litbl. f. germ. u. rom. Phil.*, 1919, col. 116, n.1, believed that Jaufré borrowed this motive of an unseen love—" *Liebe sens vexer*"—from Guillaume IX. At the same time he was of opinion that the theme did not originate with Guillaume, but belonged to the common stock of universal themes. Lotte Zade, *Der Troubadour Jaufré Rudel und das Motiv der Fernliebe in der Weltliteratur*, 1919, endeavoured to prove this, but she failed in my opinion to bring forward any parallel that is at all close to our theme and at the same time older than it. For the same reason O. H. Moore, ' Jaufré Rudel and the lady of dreams,' *P.M.L.A.*, vol. XXIX (1914), p. 526ff., who contended that falling in love by hearsay or in a dream was a conventional theme to be found in several literatures, was not convincing either. I am quite willing to believe that the theme did not originate with Guillaume, but I see no reason to suppose that, if it did not do so, it necessarily belonged to any common stock of themes or even that it was originally a literary theme at all. I am well aware that K. Vossler, *Französische Philologie*, p. 51f, considers Jaufré's ' amor de lonh ' a purely literary reminiscence—a reminiscence of Ovid's *Heroides XVI*, ll. 17ff. There Paris relates to Helen that, although he had never seen her, he had conceived a great passion for her on the strength of reports of her beauty and had crossed the seas in order to obtain her love :

Attulimus flammis, non hic invenimus, illas.  
Hae mihi tam longae causa fuere viae . . .  
Te prius optavi, quam mihi nota fores.  
Ante tuos animo vidi quam lumine vultus ;  
Prima tulit vulnus nuntia fama tui.

With regard to this suggestion compare Appel's shrewd remarks in the study mentioned and also the explanation I have to suggest below (p. 345).



poem of Jaufré Rudel which was written, it is thought, at the time of the second Crusade in 1147. The theme of the loved one far away, therefore, recurring as it does in the works of several of the oldest Troubadours, instead of being the invention of any one poet, would seem to be connected with the other themes that are to be found at the very foundations of Provençal poetry and which go to make up the doctrine of courtly love of the Troubadours—"l'amour courtois" as it is called. If that is so, it is a most important fact, and one which may help to reveal the origins of Troubadour poetry, if only we can discover who was this loved one far away—a task that is more than difficult.

### III

My friend and sometime teacher, Professor Carl Appel of Breslau, one of the greatest of Provençal scholars, saw the problem involved in this theme and endeavoured to find a solution for it. He made the suggestion that this "amors de terra lonhdana"—love of a distant land—was not only a loved one far away, but also "a far away unearthly love"—in other words in his opinion we have in our theme the first instance in literature of the transference of the language of earthly love to the heavenly beloved, to the saintly figure of the Virgin Mary. The distant love which is in all hearts and which certainly has something mystic about it, is love of the Virgin Mary.<sup>1</sup>

The suggestion was brilliant. On the one hand it explained so well the mystic exaltation inspired by the lady in praise of whom the poets sang and on the other it seemed to be additional proof of the tremendous power of poetic suggestion that the saintly and lovable figure of the Virgin Mary possessed in the Middle Ages. Strange as it may seem, you find the Virgin in many May-day songs in the place of the May Queen, in the *Pastourelle*—at least in the days of Gautier de Coincy—in the place of Marion<sup>2</sup> and in the sermons of the preachers of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, of whom the most enthusiastic was Saint Bernard, a real knight of the Virgin, who never tired of

<sup>1</sup> Um es kurz auszusprechen: ich vermute, dass die 'amors de terra lonhdana' nicht nur eine 'Liebe in fernem Lande,' sondern auch eine 'erdenferne Liebe' ist, dass wir es hier mit der ältesten und merkwürdigsten Übertragung der Anschauung und Bilder irdischer Minne auf die himmlische Geliebte und Herrin, auf die Jungfrau Maria, zu tun haben, C. Appel, 'Wiederum zu Jaufré Rudel' in *Archiv. f. d. Stud. d. neueren Spr. u. Lit.*, t. CVII (1901), p. 343.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. J. Bédier in *Idées modernes*, t. I, p. 139.

singing her praises. You can even trace the influence of the Virgin in the *Chansons de toile* or *Chansons d'histoire*, for they were derived, as I think, from the Apocryphal account of the Annunciation, according to which the Virgin was seated spinning at the moment when the Angel appeared to her.<sup>1</sup> If Appel's theory is open to any objection, it is that, while the Virgin cult was at its height during the thirteenth century, it was not so widely spread in the second half of the twelfth century and there are few traces of it at all in the vernacular literature of the first half of the century—the time when the first Troubadours were singing of their distant love. There is also another consideration. The theory does not seem compatible, as M. Jeanroy pointed out,<sup>2</sup> with the idea, repeated frequently by the poets, of a distant journey to be undertaken and some of the expressions of love used by the poets are so crude and sensual that they seem almost blasphemous when applied to the Queen of Heaven.

For my part, research has led me to another solution. In this loved one far away I am inclined to see the goddess Cybele, the Mighty Mother of the Gods, who in the far-distant heart of Asia Minor had been worshipped from time immemorial and whose cult, originally indigenous in Phrygia, was in 204 B.C. officially established in Rome and in later times spread with the expansion of the Roman Empire along the north coast of Africa, into Spain and throughout the southern half of Gaul.<sup>3</sup> This explanation completely removes the difficulties inherent in Appel's theory. The difficulty in point of time disappears altogether, for there had always been a Mighty Mother of the Gods since prehistoric times. The nature, too, of the distant journey to be undertaken by the poet is from this point of view quite clear: it is a journey to far-distant Phrygia, the homeland of the Goddess. The object of the poet's love, however far away she might be from the poet, was not inaccessible, and this was the view of the mediæval biographer, as M. Jeanroy pointed out.<sup>4</sup> The whole enigma of the poems of Jaufré Rudel has arisen from the fact that scholars have always supposed that the

<sup>1</sup> See my study "The Origin of the Weaving Songs" in *P.M.L.A.*, XXXVII (1922), p. 141ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. vi: . . . elle me semble inconciliable avec cette idée, exprimée avec insistance, d'un lointain voyage à entreprendre (V, 15-28) et avec certaines expressions qui, employées à propos de la reine du ciel, eussent frisé le blasphème.

<sup>3</sup> For the tracks of the Goddess in these lands see the illuminating book of J. Toutain, *Les cultes païens dans l'empire romain*, t. II, pp. 102f., 119.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. vi.

poet was in love with two ladies—the lady he left behind in order to go to Syria<sup>1</sup> and his beloved far away.<sup>2</sup> I am inclined to think that these two loves are one and the same person and even Gaston Paris admitted that this was a possible view to take.<sup>3</sup> The manuscripts nowhere say that the love of the first poem lived in France, indeed the variant readings of strophe IV of that poem make it clear that she did not,<sup>4</sup> for the sense is rather that she had no equal at all in France.<sup>5</sup> In my opinion Jaufré Rudel loved only one lady and she was his loved one far away, the Mighty Mother of the Gods. But if the Mighty Mother is really the distant love of Jaufré Rudel, we have here perhaps a clue to the origin of Troubadour poetry as a whole and the latter is not, as has so long been thought, the outcome of Mariolatry<sup>6</sup> with an admixture of some traits of feudal origin and others borrowed from Ovid. Feudal traits there undoubtedly are,<sup>7</sup> as well as a considerable number borrowed from Ovid,<sup>8</sup> but they are both comparatively late additions and do not explain the origin of this poetry. The real source has so far escaped detection. Let us leave out of account the Ovidian traits and consider for a moment the nature of the Troubadour conception of love.

## IV

The lady who is addressed as “Domna” or “Midons” in the love lyrics of the Troubadours is a somewhat aetherial being. In their descriptions of her the poets frequently indulge in superlatives, lauding both her physical and her moral qualities. With regard to physical beauty, the lady is beauty itself, perfect in every feature; with regard to moral qualities she is equally perfect, since she possesses all the qualities of courtly perfection, nobility, wisdom, kindness and charm of speech and manner. She is in short the paragon and ideal of womanhood and Hueffer

<sup>1</sup> Amors, alegres part de vos, I, 29.

<sup>2</sup> Nos. II, V, VI.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 528, n.1. Cf. below, p. 361, n.2.

<sup>4</sup> C'anc no·n nasquet sai entre nos Neguna c'aia·l cors tan gen, edit. Jeanroy, p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> *Qe non nasqet entre nos Sa pars segon mon escien, ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>6</sup> Bis heute wird allgemein angenommen, dass der Minnesang sein eigentliches Vorbild im Marienkult gehabt habe, Ed. Wechsler, *Das Kulturproblem des Minnesanges*, Bd. I, *Minnesang und Christentum*, p. 436. Then follow references.

<sup>7</sup> No one doubts this since Ed. Wechsler established the fact in his excellent study entitled “Frauendienst und Vassalität” in *Zt. f. franz. Spr. u. Lit.*, t. XXIV, 1, pp. 159-190.

<sup>8</sup> W. Schrötter, *Ovid und die Troubadours*, Halle, 1908. More recently A. Hilka in his edition of *Florimont*, pp. cxvff.

was right when he affirmed "that the purest and most poetic motive of early mediæval life was the cultus of the new-found ideal of womanhood."<sup>1</sup> At the same time she is nearly always a lady of high rank and position and in social status much above her lover. Beyond that, however, we learn little or nothing about the poets' lady-loves, so little individuality have they and so little difference is there between the lady of one poet and the lady of another.<sup>2</sup> This lack of individuality has led some scholars to suggest that the ladies of the poets are for the most part imaginary phantoms and pure creations of the imagination,<sup>3</sup> but this, as Appel pointed out, is to overstate the case, for many of the Troubadours addressed their poems to well-known ladies of note.<sup>4</sup> The explanation perhaps is, as I hope to show in the following pages, that all these ladies of perfection, both those who seem to have little or nothing in common with real creatures of flesh and blood, like the distant loves of Guillaume IX and Jaufré Rudel, and those others who seem to portray real historical personages, have been fashioned in the likeness of one common model.<sup>5</sup>

The contrast between the lady and her lover is most striking, for owing to the perfection of the lady there is of necessity an infinite distance between the lover and his beloved.<sup>6</sup> The complete superiority of the lady over her lover is never questioned,<sup>7</sup> for the lover is characterized by his unsurpassed meekness, humility and patience in his relations with his lady. He lies prostrate at her feet, as it were, in an attitude of humble adoration. He has no claim on his lady at all. She can do with him what she pleases and he accepts her service unconditionally.<sup>8</sup> All that the lover aspires to is to become the accredited servant of his lady, as Bernart de Ventadour requests, "no matter what

<sup>1</sup> Hueffer, *The Troubadours*, p. 142. The source of this ideal of womanhood I shall endeavour to set forth below, see p. 354ff.

<sup>2</sup> C. Appel, *Bernart von Ventadorn*, p. lxxxi., pointed out that one might almost speak of THE lady-love of the poets, while Diez, *Die Poesie der Troubadours*, 1883<sup>2</sup>, p. 107, remarked before him that the love poems of the Troubadours, though by different poets, might well have been the work of a single author in different moods.

<sup>3</sup> "En général, dirons-nous, il n'y a aucun rapport entre les poètes et les dames. Tout simplement, parce que les dames des chansons sont, en règle générale, de purs fantômes imaginaires," S. Strofński, *Le Troubadour Folquet de Marseille*, p. 68.

<sup>4</sup> C. Appel, *op. cit.*, p. xxviff.

<sup>5</sup> See below, p. 354f.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. J. Bédier in *Rev. d. deux Mondes*, t. 1896, p. 172.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. A. Jeanroy in *Rev. d. deux Mondes*, t. 1903, p. 672.

<sup>8</sup> Qu'ans mi rent a lieys e m liure, Qu'en sa carta m pot escriure, Guillaume IX, edit. A. Jeanroy, No. VIII, 7f.

the reward may be".<sup>1</sup> This he became when on his knees with folded hands he took the oath of fidelity to his lady,<sup>2</sup> while she took his hands between hers and formally accepted him as her servant, giving him at the same time some little token and sealing the pact with a kiss—a form of procedure which is modelled on the ancient feudal custom of a knight taking the oath of fealty to his overlord or a vassal to his seigneur—and this kiss was the first and last kiss the poet received from his lady. Thus the poet, although a lover, is the humble vassal and the lady, although his beloved, is his suzerain mistress.<sup>3</sup> The pact thus formed did not bind the lady to her lover; on the contrary it merely meant that she was now willing to receive his homage in verse and allow him to celebrate her in his poems.

This love of the Troubadour for his lady was clearly not the ordinary love of mortals, for in it "there is no wild storm of passion, no untrammelled effusion of sentiment"<sup>4</sup>; there is little or no real emotion, no bitter reproaches nor any of the brusque movements of passion; it was rather a measured and ever respectful appeal.<sup>5</sup> Troubadour love was a service that required on the part of the lover courtly behaviour and chivalrous deeds and a sense of what is fitting.<sup>6</sup> It was a voluntary servitude which transformed boors into courteous persons and had the power of refining manners and ennobling men.<sup>7</sup> Love of this kind is a great incentive to virtue, is indeed virtue itself and the very foundation of moral worth.<sup>8</sup> The reason for this is that

<sup>1</sup> Bona domna, re no·us deman Mas que·m prendatz per servidor, Qu'e·us servirai com bo senhor, Cossi que del gazardo m'an, edit. C. Appel, No. XXXI, 49ff.

<sup>2</sup> Anz ditz chascus, qan vol prejar, Mans jointas e de genolos: "Dompna, voillatz qe·us serva franchamen Cum lo vostr'om"; et ella enaissi·l pren, *Les Poesies des quatre Troubadours d'Ussel*, edit. Jean Audiau, p. 75. *Tenson* between Gui d'Ussel and Marie de Ventadour. Similarly Bernart de Ventadour, see Appel's edition, p. lxxxiv.

<sup>3</sup> Raynouard quoted by A. Jeanroy, *loc. cit.*, p. 672: "Quoique ami, il reste vassal; la dame, quoique amie, demeure suzeraine."

<sup>4</sup> Hueffer, *The Troubadours*, p. 143.

<sup>5</sup> Cet amour ne ressemble guère à ce que le commun des hommes entend par ce mot: il n'admet ni tendres effusions, ni reproches amers, ni tous les brusques mouvements inséparables de la passion: rien qu'une plainte éternellement respectueuse et mesurée, et quelques larmes discrètement répandues, A. Jeanroy, *loc. cit.*, p. 663.

<sup>6</sup> E coven li que sapcha far Faizg avinens, E que·s gart en cort de parlar Vilanamens, Guillaume IX, edit. A. Jeanroy, No. VII, 33ff. De cortesia·is pot vanar Qui ben sap mezur' esgardar, Marcabru, edit. Dejeanne, No. XV, 13f.

<sup>7</sup> Per son joy pot malautz sanar . . . E totz vilas encortezir, Guillaume IX, edit. A. Jeanroy, No. IX, 25, 30. Tot jorn meillur et esmeri, Car la gensor serv e coli Del mon, Arnaut Daniel, edit. R. Lavaud, No. X, 8f. For other examples, see J. Coulet, *Le Troubadour Guilhem Montanbagol*, p. 73, n. 14. According to Vernon Lee, *Medieval Love*, p. 162, the ennobling power of love springs from adultery, according to W. Schrötter, *Ovid und die Troubadours*, p. 109, it is to be traced to Christian spiritualism and Christian ethics. I would suggest a different source, see below, p. 357f.

<sup>8</sup> . . . amors non es peccatz, Anz es vertutz que·ls malvatz Fai bos, e·lh bo·n son melhor, E met om'en via De ben far tot dia, Montanbagol, edit. J. Coulet, No. II, 13ff.

this love service has a pronounced mystic character, marked by a sort of mystic reverence on the part of the lover, which implies that the lady he adores is a being of divine nature almost and has consequently a right to adoration. The frequent use of the term "*azorar*" clearly denotes this.<sup>1</sup> This mystic exaltation which the lady inspires in the lover is called *joi*<sup>2</sup> and with *joi* is frequently coupled *jove* youth and *proeza* worth. A man who had not *joi* was not considered *courtois* or fit to frequent courtly circles. He had no worth without *joi*, for neither rank nor wealth give worth to men but only *joi*, that is love. *Joi* together with *jove* and *proeza* is the distinctive feature by means of which one recognizes the lover. It is *joi* that fills the lover with a desire to live a life worthy of his lady and redounding to her praise.<sup>3</sup> Not only, however, must the lover have this *joi* and be subject to his lady, but he has also to be subject—*obediens*—to all those around his lady in her home.<sup>4</sup> *Obedienz*<sup>5</sup> and *obediensa* are technical terms which denote an important side of the courtly behaviour required of the lover.

The lover's adoration, however, is without hope, for not only is his lady infinitely above him in rank but she is also transfixed in an attitude of insensibility and indifference and pays no heed to her lover's worship<sup>6</sup>—indeed he knows that he is craving for something that he can never have.<sup>7</sup> The lady is loved by all, but gives no love in return, and the poets know in advance that their love will never be requited and frequently complain of this. Guillaume de Poitiers, Jaufré Rudel, Peire d'Alvernhe, Folquet

<sup>1</sup> Domna, per vostro' amor Jonh las mas et ador ! Bernart de Ventadour, edit. C. Appel, No. XLIV, 57f. ; Cf. H. Brinkmann, *Entstehungsgeschichte des Minnesangs*, p. 42. I do not agree with Ed. Wechsler, *Das Kulturproblem des Minnesangs*, Bd. I, *Minnesang und Christentum*, 1909, p. 270, who sees the source of this adoration in the Christian religion : Indem der Frauensänger der Herrin eine mystische Liebe widmete, setzte er voraus, dass die Geliebte, als wäre sie ein Wesen göttliche Art, göttliche Verehrung verdiene. Ausdrücklich erwies er der Herrin eine Anbetung, *azorar*, die ihren Ursprung und Sinn im religiösen Leben hatte, but I would say that it is of religious origin, not Christian however, but pagan, see below, p. 353ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. A. Jeanroy in *Annales du Midi*, t. XVII, 1905, p. 175 and C. Appel, *Bernart von Ventadorn*, p. lxxiif.

<sup>3</sup> Si·m vol mi dons s'amor donar, Pres suy del penr'e del grazir . . . E de sos pretz tener en car E de son laus enavantir, Guillaume IX, edit. Jeanroy, No. IX, 37, 41.

<sup>4</sup> Ja no sera nuils hom ben fis Contr' amor si non l'es acils, Et als estranhs et als vezis Non es consens, Et a totz sels d'aicels aizis Obediens. Obediensa deu portar A motas gens, qui vol amar, Guillaume IX, edit. Jeanroy, No. VII, 25ff. Quoted by C. Appel, *Zt. f. rom. Pbil.*, t. LII, 1932, p. 771. Cf. Bernart de Ventadour, ed. Appel, No. XIII, 41f.

<sup>5</sup> Mais non serai obediens En Peitau ni en Lemozi, Guillaume IX, No. XI, 3. Cf. C. Appel, *loc. cit.*, p. 771.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. A. Jeanroy, *loc. cit.*, p. 675 ; also *Annales du Midi*, t. XVII (1905), p. 175.

<sup>7</sup> Per tal n'ai meyns de bon saber Quar vuell so que no puec aver, Guillaume IX, edit. Jeanroy, No. VII, 19f. Cf. C. Appel, *Zt. f. rom. Pbil.*, t. LII (1932), p. 771. Similarly Bernart de Ventadour : Ja per drudaria No m'am, que no·s cove, edit. Appel, No. XXV, 49f.

de Marseille and others all expressly do so ; yet for all that they do not cease to sing the praises of their beloved. In real life, however, love is not always so hopeless. Surely not every Troubadour who sang his lady's charms in verse found that she turned a deaf ear to his suit, and if so, why then this note of despair, of love unreturned which is so common a trait in Troubadour lyrics that it would almost seem to be obligatory ?

It is clear that this is a conventional conception of love and one regulated by strict rules, by a sort of code one might say, the code of the perfect lover.<sup>1</sup> It is equally clear, however, that this love service is much more than a code of rules ; it is, as some scholars have noticed, almost a religion,<sup>2</sup> for it is a real cult or worship of the lady ; the very terms used make this evident, for " *domnei* " and " *domneiar* " denote this worship of the lady. But before we endeavour to trace the connection of Troubadour love with religion, there is another very important feature to be mentioned. The Troubadours doubtless were not less successful in love than the rest of mankind and many of them were married, but a fundamental condition of their love service was that it could not exist between husband and wife.<sup>3</sup> A " *tenson* " between Gui d'Ussel and his cousin Elias puts the difference between married love and this worship addressed to women in a very lurid light and shows that, while love outside marriage is a source of honour for the lover, married love does but bring scorn and derision upon the husband.<sup>4</sup> Another passage in the same poem makes it clear that a man can fall into no greater error than to make the lady he worships his wife, and yet at the same time in choosing another woman for his wife the lover occasions his lady no offence.<sup>5</sup> But while this love of the Troubadours is love outside marriage, a free adulterous love as it seems,<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gaston Paris called attention to this code of rules, *Romania*, t. XII, p. 519, *La littérature française au moyen âge*, p. 103, and considered that it was derived from Ovid. In this he was followed by W. Schrötter, *op. cit.*, p. 95f.

<sup>2</sup> Both Vernon Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 128, and J. Anglade, *Les Troubadours*, p. 76, consider this love service as a religious cult and so it was originally, as I hope to show below.

<sup>3</sup> Compare the interesting remarks of Fauriel on this point in his *Histoire de la Poesie provençale*, t. I, p. 505ff, and of Gaston Paris, *op. cit.*, pp. 601, 606 and 611.

<sup>4</sup> Per dompna vai bos pretz enan E per moiller pert hom valor, E per dompnei de dompna es hom grazitz E per dompnei de moiller escarnitz, Audiau et Lavaud, *Nouvelle Antologie des Troubadours*, p. 196. Cf. Bernart de Ventadour : Per re non es om tan prezans Com per amor e per domnei, edit. Appel, No. XXI, 25f. and Peire d'Alverne : om ses dompneis No val ren plus que bels malvatz espics, edit. Zenker, No. VI, 54f.

<sup>5</sup> N'Elias, s'ieu midonz soan Per moiller, no·il fatz desonor ; . . . Que s'ieu la pren e pois la blan, Non puosc far faillimen major, *ibid.*, p. 197.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. G. Paris, *Romania*, t. XII, pp. 518 and 520, *Histoire littéraire de la France*, t. XXX, p. 146, *Mélanges de littérature*, pp. 489 and 611. A. Stimming, Gröbers *Grundriss*, t. II, 2, p. 28 and others.

yet it was at the same time an ideal love. It also had its restrictions and limitations and was by no means promiscuous, for it required faithfulness in the lover and life-long service of the lady.<sup>1</sup> There are certain poems which record that married women were allowed a lover as well as their husbands, but not more than one. This custom is clearly stated by Cercamon,<sup>2</sup> Bernart Marti<sup>3</sup> and Bertran de Born<sup>4</sup> amongst the Troubadours and by the well-known Chantefable *Aucassin et Nicolette*. Thus Bernart Marti writes: "I allow a lady a noble courteous lover besides her husband"<sup>5</sup> and Aucassin in a spirited passage when speaking of his prospects in the next life, says: "I want to go to hell; . . . for the beautiful courtly ladies go there, because they have two or three lovers besides their husbands."<sup>6</sup> The inference to be drawn from this passage is that, if these ladies had limited themselves to one lover only besides their husbands, they would not have infringed the law and would in due course have gone to heaven, but they made the mistake of having more than one. The testimony of all these passages is most precious and throws a lurid light on the mediæval conception of courtly love.

This conception of love, however, met with opposition from the start, for Marcabru right at the beginning (as we know it) of Troubadour poetry protested most vehemently against it,<sup>7</sup> and his protest alone, if we had not the testimony of Cercamon and Bernart Marti just mentioned, would have been sufficient to reveal this peculiar conception. But Marcabru, as Appel has so well shown,<sup>8</sup> and Jeanroy too,<sup>9</sup> is a reactionary, in violent antagon-

<sup>1</sup> This is borne out by the rules of love as given by André le Chapelain in his treatise 'De arte honeste amandi,' especially No. 12: "Verus amans alterius nisi sue coamantis ex affectu non cupit amplexus," edit. E. Trojel. Cf. V. Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 156f.

<sup>2</sup> Non a valor d'aissi enan Cela c'ab dos ni ab tres jai, IV, 36f., edit. A. Jeanroy. The lady who has an illegal lover, that is to say a second or a third lover, need expect no mercy on the day of judgment: e no clam ja merces Domna c'aja drut desleiau, IV, 34f. M. Jeanroy translates 'desleiau' by 'un amant déloyal', adding certainly a note of interrogation. The sense is rather 'not allowed by law', 'unlawful', as in the following passage: Cals fols pensatz Outracuidatz Me trais doptansa desleial! (=not allowed by right), Appel, *Prov. Cbres.*, 87, 53; cf. *ibid.*, 78, 22.

<sup>3</sup> Dona es vas drut trefana De s'amor, pos tres n'apana; Estrá lei N' i son trei: Mas ab son marit l'autrei Un amic cortes prezant. E si plus n'i vai sercant, Es desleialada E puta provada, edit. E. Hoepfner, No. III, ll. 10-18.

<sup>4</sup> Velha la tenc, si de dos drutz s'apatge, Anglade, *Antiblogie des Troubadours*, p. 60, l. 11. Cf. C. Appel, *Die Lieder Bertrams von Born*, No. XXXIX, l. 11.

<sup>5</sup> For the text see note 3 above.

<sup>6</sup> Mais en infer voil jou aler; car en infer vont li bel clerz et li bel cevalier. . . Et s'i vont les beles dames cortaises, que eles ont deus amis ou trois avoc leur barons, edit. H. Suchier trad. franç. par A. Counson, 1906, 6, 34.

<sup>7</sup> Mas cella qu'en pren dos ni tres E per un non si vol fiar, Ben deu sos pretz asordeiar E sa valors a chascun mes, edit. Dejeanne, No. XV, 27ff.

<sup>8</sup> *Bernart von Ventadorn*, p. lxivf.

*Romania*, t. LVI (1930), p. 490ff.



ism with the customs of his day and especially with the practices of "l'amour courtois". He never tired of railing at the illegitimate nature of this love and maintained that a woman should have only one lover and he should be her husband—and that is his meaning in the passage quoted.<sup>1</sup> But Marcabru's eccentricities apart, it is clear that the courtly practice of the time allowed a lady a lover as well as her husband—and a man another lady besides his wife—as indeed André le Chapelain, whose code of love we have already quoted, expressly states: "Unam feminam nichil prohibet a duobus amari et a duabus mulieribus unum."<sup>2</sup>

Much the same conception is evident in many May-day songs, refrains of dance songs and in *Chansons de mal-mariée*, songs of unhappily married girls, so closely allied to the dance songs; in all these there is an apotheosis of free love together with contempt and scorn for marriage, and the husband as such is an object of derision.<sup>3</sup> The Provençal poem *Flamenca* in a passage describing the May-day fêtes shows the same conception and in conclusion suggests that, if the husband makes objections, his wife should say: "Silence, go away, for in my arms my lover is lying, Kalenda Maya—the first of May!"<sup>4</sup> On the first of May women are exhorted to indulge freely in love with their paramours, regardless of the protests of their husbands, and the fact that they are married, as André le Chapelain points out, is not a valid excuse for not indulging in free love: "Causa conjugii ab amore non est excusatio recta."<sup>5</sup> Should they fail, however, to comply with this requirement, they are excluded

<sup>1</sup> M. Hoepffner (*Romania*, t. LIII, 1927, p. 128) comparing this passage of Marcabru's with the one just quoted from Bernart Marti takes the view that in the former's poem the lover (*drut*) is the same person as the husband and Appel took the same view before him (*op. cit.*, p. lxvi.).

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Raynouard, *Cboix des poésies originales des Troubadours*, t. II, p. cvi.

<sup>3</sup> For a description of this revolt against marriage, see G. Paris, *Mélanges de littérature*, pp. 606f., 606f. and 611. Cf. Dame qui a mal mari S'el fait ami, N'en fet pas a blasmer, Bartsch, *Rom. u. Past.*, p. 51.

<sup>4</sup> "Non sonetz mot, faitz vos en lai,  
qu'entre mos brats mos amics jai.  
Kalenda Maya!" edit. P. Meyer, l. 3253f.

<sup>5</sup> Raynouard, *op. cit.*, t. II, p. cv. In my opinion we have instances of this "libertas maia" also in certain old French poems included by K. Bartsch in his *Altfranzösische Romanzen und Pastourelles*, p. 20f., as for instance:

*Soufrés, maris, et si ne vos anuit,  
Demain m'arés et mes amis anuit.  
Je vous deffenc k'un seul mot n'en parlés:  
Soufrés, maris, et si ne vous mouvés.  
La nuis est courte, aparmains me rarés,  
Qant mes amis ara fait sen deduit.  
Soufrés, maris, etc.*

and

*J'ai ne lairai por mon mari ne die:  
Li miens amins jeut aneut aveuckes moi.*

from the May dances. There are refrains of dance songs still extant which make this perfectly clear, as for instance the following: "Let all those who are in love come and dance, but not the others"<sup>1</sup>—"Let him go away who is not in love, let him go away, he does not belong to our company"<sup>2</sup>—"Let us go back to our dance, but let no one come who is not in love",<sup>3</sup> or again "You shall not come and dance on the green, for you are not in love."<sup>4</sup>

Now, to what state of society in any period of the world's history does a conception like this correspond? Scholars have searched all ages previous to the advent of the Provençal lyric in their endeavours to find a parallel to it. They have searched in the Poitou-Limousin region, where Gaston Paris quite arbitrarily placed the origins of lyric poetry, they have searched in Roman culture and literature, in late Latin poetry and even in Arab customs and literature and only the other day a book appeared endeavouring to prove Arab influence once again.<sup>5</sup> So far, however, no clue at all has been found to the origin of this strange conception.<sup>6</sup> Gaston Paris maintained that these traits have no foundation in society, that they are purely conventional and do not correspond either to the reality of life or to the sincerity of popular poetry. In my opinion Gaston Paris was wrong. These traits do correspond to the reality of life and to a state of society that once existed—certainly this state of society is unique in history and practically peculiar to one community, but that is, after all, sufficient.

## V

The solution I would put before you and which I have already indicated is that Troubadour poetry with its whole system of courtly love is a secular reflection of the practices of

<sup>1</sup> "Tuit cil qui sunt enamourat  
Viegnent dançar, li autre non!" *Recueil de Motets*, p.p. G. Raynaud, t. I, p. 151.

<sup>2</sup> Voi t'an lai qui n'aime mie, Voi t'an lai; N'est pais de no compaignie, *Ibid.*, t. II, p. 25. Quoted in my study on "The origin of the Aalis Songs," *Neophilologus*, t. V (1920), p. 297, n.2.

<sup>3</sup> "Ralons a la galerie,—  
qui n'aime, n'i viegne mie," quoted by H. Spanke, *Zt. f. rom. Phil.*, t. LIII (1933), p. 269.

<sup>4</sup> "Vos ne vendrez mie caroler es prez,  
Que vos n'amez mie!" Bartsch, *Rom. u. Past.*, II, 89; cf. A. Jeanroy, *Les origines de la poésie lyrique en France*, p. 422.

<sup>5</sup> A. R. Nykl, *The Dove's Neck-ring*. See review by C. Appel in *Zt. f. rom. Phil.*, Bd. LII (1932), p. 77off.

<sup>6</sup> For an excellent survey of the attempts made to solve the problem of the origin of lyric poetry in France, see A. Pillet, *Zum Ursprung der altprovenzalischen Lyrik (Schriften der Königsberger gelehrten Gesellschaft, 1928, Heft 4)*.

a religious cult, namely of the worship of the goddess Cybele, and a reflection so exact and true that, with the exception of the Ovidian and feudal traits, almost every trait of Troubadour love can be paralleled by the characteristic features of this pagan religion. The moment one realizes that one is dealing with a state of things that has been derived from the ritual of a cult, the strange traits that I have mentioned take on a most significant meaning.

The Mighty Mother of the Gods herself, I would suggest, was the original prototype of the lady, "Domna", sung by the Troubadours. Her name was also "Domina", a designation which denoted that she was the supreme mistress of all her faithful followers and she alone of all goddesses had the right to this title.<sup>1</sup> Now, the chief feature of a goddess is perfection; she is by definition perfect in every respect, since she is divine, and something of this perfection, I am inclined to think, is reflected in the superlative descriptions that the poets, as we have seen, give of their ladies. Here, too, is the explanation why there is a certain lack of individuality and even of reality in the "Domna" of the Troubadours, for the poets are always copying a model which by its very nature is somewhat impalpable and that is why their descriptions resemble each other so much. Notwithstanding her perfection, however, the Goddess is kindly towards her followers and of kindly welcome, but her anger is to be feared when it is aroused.<sup>2</sup> It is significant that the lady courted by the Troubadours is kindly and gracious but also feared for her anger.<sup>3</sup> From time immemorial the Goddess had been the object of worship on the part of her faithful adepts and there is in Troubadour poetry a reminiscence of this worship, it seems to me, in the whole doctrine of "courtly love" and especially in the mystic reverence that the lover has for his lady and his fervent worship of her—I have already mentioned the frequency of the term "*azorar*". The peculiar characteristic of the lover, too, namely "*joi*", would equally well denote the religious exaltation felt by the faithful for the Goddess. If there

<sup>1</sup> See H. Graillot, *Le culte de Cybèle, Mère des diex*, p. 195, and the passage he quotes from Servius: "sane dominam proprie Matrem Deum dici Varro et ceteri adfirmant."

<sup>2</sup> Graillot, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

<sup>3</sup> Thus Guillaume IX: Per son joy pot malautz sanar E per sa ira sas murir E savis hom enfolezir E belhs hom sa beutat mudar E·l plus cortes vilanejar E·l totz vilas encortezir, quoted by C. Appel in *Zt. f. rom. Phil.*, t. LI (1932), p. 771. Also Cercamon: Car ieu la dopti e la blan, Appel, *Cbres.* 13, 49n. and Bernart de Ventadour, edit. Appel, No. XVI, 34.

is indifference and lack of response on the part of the lady to the poet's love, that was inevitable from the nature of the case. The Goddess required the love and worship of all, but gave no love in return. Like all deities she makes no response to her worshippers and gives no sign of pleasure or displeasure at the homage and worship she receives. "She never did anything that gave me pleasure or pain", writes the first Troubadour, as I have already said; "Never did she tell me truth or falsehood and I know not whether she ever will", says Jaufré Rudel. It seems to me that these utterances only receive their full meaning when they are replaced in their original setting. They are the utterances of worshippers at a shrine, of worshippers who have perceived that the divinity vouchsafes no response. If the lady whose praises are sung by the Troubadours was originally the Goddess herself, does it not explain why the poets address their love to the highest ladies in the land, to the wives of the great lords of the country, that is to say to ladies immensely above them in rank and to whose love they know in point of fact that they cannot aspire? The husbands at any rate seem to have understood this, for they are never alarmed by the love poems the poets address to their wives—on the contrary they often encourage them. They know that their love is only conventional and only in very rare cases was it anything more. The poet pays homage to the châtelaines and ladies of high rank in very much the same way as the faithful adepts of Cybele in the dim past once paid homage to the Goddess. The Goddess was perhaps one of the first women to be sung in verse and owing to the great awe in which she was held, her mighty power in the world and the fervent adoration of which she was the object, the poems about her became stereotyped, representing her as the perfect woman, immeasurably above her creatures, and depicting her adepts as humble devotees, almost despairing of ever being worthy of her love. This stereotyped attitude then passed to poems in praise of earthly women and in becoming the obligatory pattern of the attitude of the lover towards his lady gave rise to the type of love lyric as we know it in the greatest period of Provençal poetry. The courtly lyric of the Troubadours must have had its ultimate origin in hymns which gave expression to the feelings of the faithful in their fervent aspiration towards the great ideal of womanhood—the goddess Cybele.

## VI

If the objection is made that we know of no hymns to the Goddess, I would say that we know at least that there were a number of accredited singers in the service of the Goddess, that they were called "*Hymnologi*"<sup>1</sup> and that in processions on festival days they wore the poet's crown of laurel. At Rome their numbers were considerable and there was even a "*Schola Cantorum*" there.<sup>2</sup> There must once have been, then, one would think, no lack of hymns in praise of the Goddess. These hymns, I would readily believe, were due to the Goddess each year, on the occasion of her festival, and there are certain passages in the poems of Gautier de Coincy which would seem to support this point of view :

"Tant com vivrai, cascun an li doi rente  
Par fine amour chansonete ou conduit,"

or again :

"Chascun an li doi par dete  
Une raverdie."<sup>3</sup>

It is true that Gautier in these passages is speaking, not of Cybele, the Mighty Mother of the Gods, but of the Virgin Mary. That is no great difficulty, however, for I have shown elsewhere that Cybele in a number of ways was the prototype and model of the Virgin Mary.<sup>4</sup> The great festival of the Goddess was essentially a spring festival, celebrating the return of spring and the rebirth of Nature in all her manifold forms and the date of it was March 25th, the vernal equinox. This to my mind explains a feature of Troubadour poetry which has hitherto baffled all Provençal scholars, namely the presence in every love poem of a stanza describing the flowering of the fields, the budding of the trees and the singing and pairing of the birds,

<sup>1</sup> Graillot, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

<sup>2</sup> Graillot, *ibid.* The '*escola n'Eblo*', the school of lord Eble the singer, or *Ebolus cantator* as he is called by Latin historians, which is mentioned by Bernart de Ventadour (edit. Appel, No. XXX, 23) may possibly have had some connection with this '*Schola Cantorum*' or its descendants. Diez, *Leben und Werke der Troubadours*, 1882<sup>2</sup>, p. 17, supposed that Bernart received instruction in poetry in this school of Eble the singer. Appel on the other hand in his edition of *Bernart de Ventadour*, p. xxiv., only sees in the expression '*escola n'Eblo*' a literary movement—eine literarische Richtung—which was hotly combated by Marcabru. It may be so, but this literary movement, if such it was, was characteristic of the very essence and fundamental conceptions of Troubadour poetry and Marcabru is the best witness of the fact. Marcabru also speaks of the '*troba (or torba) n'Eblo*', No. XXXI, 74. Since then Appel has published his small *Bernart* and in it (p. vi.) he allows that the early poetic conceptions of Bernart may have been influenced by the poetry of lord Eble of Ventadour.

<sup>3</sup> K. Bartsch, *Rom. u. Past.*, p. xiii.; cf. G. Paris, *Mélanges de litt. fr.*, p. 556, n.1.

<sup>4</sup> See my study "The Aguilaneuf and Trimazô Begging Songs and their origin" in *Kastner Miscellany*, p. 308ff.

in short a little picture of the return of spring and the rebirth of Nature. As a rule this theme is treated in the opening stanza of the poem, but if it is not, it is almost sure to follow in a later stanza. In other words this theme was obligatory and an essential part of the love poem. The explanation is simple, the moment one has found the clue. Since all this love poetry originally sprang from hymns to the goddess of Nature, what could be more fitting than for each poem to open with an account of the rebirth of Nature which the great Earth Mother brought about each year in the spring ?<sup>1</sup>

If the Mother Goddess is the prototype of the lady of the Troubadours, the worshipper at her shrine is the prototype of the lover. The relation of the lover to his lady most strikingly reflects the relation of the worshipper to the Goddess. The lady who in rank is so much higher than her lovers is the Goddess herself, who is so infinitely superior to her humble worshippers. The lover prostrated in adoration before her is the humble worshipper at her shrine. His very meekness, humility and patience is exactly the attitude of the faithful adepts and initiates of the Goddess. One of the essential features of the Phrygian cult is that it stresses the omnipotence of the divinity and consequently also the humility of the worshippers. The latter declare themselves the "servants" of the divinity and not merely her votaries, as was the practice at Rome.<sup>2</sup> Does not this explain why the Troubadour poet declares himself, as we have seen, the "servant" of his lady? The words of Bernart de Ventadour to his lady, but for the feudal metaphor which they contain, might equally well have been addressed by an initiate of the Phrygian mysteries to the Great Mother: "Mistress, I am your servant and always shall be, ready to serve you in every way; I am your liegeman by pledge and by oath and I have been your servant for years past. And you are my first joy, just as you will be the last, as long as my life lasts."<sup>3</sup> Again, since this love service was originally love for a deity, does it not provide an adequate explanation for the ennobling power of love

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes perhaps the description of the rebirth of Nature may have stood alone. The mediæval *Raverdie* is just such a poem.

<sup>2</sup> C'est l'un des caractères essentiels des cultes sémitiques de manifester la toute puissance des dieux et par suite l'humilité des hommes. Ceux-ci se déclarent les "serviteurs" de la divinité, non point seulement ses "adorateurs" (cultores), comme on disait à Rome, H. Graillot; 'Les dieux tout-puissants' in *Rev. archéologique*, t. III (1904), p. 327.

<sup>3</sup> Domna, vostre sui e serai, Del vostre serviz garnitz. Vostr' om sui juratz e plevitz, E vostre m'era des abans. E vos etz lo meus jois primers, E si seretz vos lo derrers, Tan com la vida m'er durans, edit. Appel, No. XXXIII, 29ff.

that we meet with in the poems? The rites of initiation undoubtedly awakened the conscience of the initiate and led him on to the higher things of life. We know that this was so, for Diodorus Siculus records that "those who took part in the mysteries of the goddess were looked upon as having become more devout, more just and better in all respects."<sup>1</sup> I have already called attention in another place to what seem to be Troubadour adaptations of a ritual formula much used in the ceremonies of the Phrygian cult: "I have fled the bad, I have found the better."<sup>2</sup> This formula, which was also used at marriage ceremonies in Greece, indicates, as Graillot points out,<sup>3</sup> the purifying, ennobling influence of the cult practices upon those initiated into the mysteries of the goddess.<sup>4</sup> Some scholars may prefer to see the source of these adaptations in Ovid's words: "video meliora proboque, Deteriora sequor",<sup>5</sup> but it seems to me hard to believe that Ovid's lines, which show but little similarity with the formula, could have evoked so many imitations in the works of the Troubadours. These imitations to my mind are much more naturally explained if they are considered to be reminiscences of this ritual formula, for not this formula only, but many of the fundamental features of the cult to which it belongs are reflected also in the poetry of the Troubadours.

## VII

Further, if we compare the state of social life as it existed amongst the adepts of the Mighty Mother, with the state of society as represented in the May songs I have mentioned, it is clear that the two are very similar. Cybele was the goddess of Nature, the great Earth Mother, Maia, and her service consisted for the faithful in a return from the state of civilization to the free life of Nature. This made the marriage tie null and void, for the goddess did not recognize marriage but required free love from all her worshippers, whether married or unmarried. If we may believe W. M. Ramsay, who has collected much evidence on the subject, the persons employed in the temples of the

<sup>1</sup> Graillot, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

<sup>2</sup> "A Ritual formula in Troubadour Poetry" in *Zt. f. rom. Phil.*, t. L (1930), p. 595ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 216.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Th. Eisele, "Die phrygische Kult" in *Neue Jahrbücher*, t. 1909, p. 628; W. M. Ramsay, *Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia*, vol. I, p. 92f.; for other references see my article.

<sup>5</sup> I owe this reference to the kindness of my friend, Dr. E. G. W. Braunholtz who compares with it Pons de Capduelh's line: 'ben es folz, qui·l ben ve e·l mal pren'.

goddess, the "hieroi, lived, if they chose, in the ordinary social state, while not engaged in their service; but they were bound to present themselves at the sanctuary for certain terms of service; and during such terms they had to give up the society of husband or wife, and live the divine life."<sup>1</sup> In this connection it is interesting to note that the chief cases of ceremonial impurity in the cult were precisely cases relating to married life. Either the husband or the wife preferred the continuance of the married state to the requirements of the cult.<sup>2</sup> "The commonest cause of impurity", Ramsay says, "is a sexual offence, and the usual form is intercourse between husband and wife."<sup>3</sup> From this it appears that for those engaged in the service of the goddess the marriage tie was loosened and every "servant" of the goddess was called upon to do her honour in the way most pleasing to her, namely to indulge in free love. Free adulterous love was a source of honour, whereas marriage was scorned, for the Phrygian cult looked upon marriage as a restriction which encroached upon the free life of nature and this is its fundamental conception. Here, then, we have, it seems to me, the long sought for source of the Troubadour conception of love. Here is the explanation why Troubadour love is love outside marriage, why love between husband and wife was not recognized as love and why the Troubadour convention allowed a lady a lover as well as her husband and a man another lady besides his wife. Here is the explanation why marriage was scorned and not accepted as a valid excuse for not indulging in free love, for all these traits reflect the fundamental conception and practices of the cult.<sup>4</sup> Even the "*lauzengier*", whom I have not yet mentioned and who cause so much annoyance to the lover in Troubadour poetry, receive perhaps from this point of view a special significance. They and the "*jalous*" or "*gelos*"<sup>5</sup> so often mentioned, are generally considered to be the lover's rivals in love,<sup>6</sup> but I am inclined to think that these terms denote not so much rivals in love as persons not indulging in free love at all but ever ready to

<sup>1</sup> *Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia*, vol. I, p. 148.

<sup>2</sup> Ramsay, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 150, Inscriptions, Nos. 45 and 46.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 136; cf. Inscription No. 46.

<sup>4</sup> For the discrepancy between the cult practices and the state of social life, a question that does not really concern us here, see W. M. Ramsay, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 87 and 96.

<sup>5</sup> These terms sometimes denote the husband of course, but very often not.

<sup>6</sup> So A. Jeanroy, "La poésie provençale" in *Rev. des deux Mondes*, t. 1903, p. 674. Cf. Wechsler, *Das Kulturproblem*, p. 200ff. Others consider them tell-tales who do the poet harm by noising his love abroad, J. Bédier in *Rev. des deux Mondes*, t. 1896, p. 171, n.1; cf. C. Appel in *Zt. f. rom. Phil.*, t. LII (1932), p. 782f.



denounce those who do. The words of Bernart de Ventadour: "What boots it to live without love except to cause people annoyance"<sup>1</sup> seem to support this. From the nature of the case all husbands (*jalous*) belonged to this category, since Troubadour love was love outside marriage. Those not in love were, as we have already seen, excluded from the May dances, so too were the "*jalous*", as the refrain of the famous Provençal May song shows: "Be off, be off, ye not in love and leave us to dance, leave us to dance amongst ourselves",<sup>2</sup> and the May customs and dances are derived, as I hope to show in a separate study, from the festal celebrations of the cult.<sup>3</sup> I am inclined to think, therefore, that the terms "*jalous*" and "*lauzengier*" originally denoted persons who refused to comply with the requirements of the cult and to honour the Goddess with their love.

Other features of the cult may also have survived in Troubadour poetry. The mysterious "*gardadors*" mentioned by the poets, who were apparently guardians put in charge of women,<sup>4</sup> may perhaps originally have been persons connected with the cult. The Phrygian cult, like other Eastern cults, kept a number of women in the sanctuary of the Goddess and the "*apparatores Matris Deum*" who were responsible for the organization of the cult were a sort of guardian.<sup>5</sup> The term "*obediens*" may be explainable in the same way. The lover, as we have seen, had to be subject not only to his lady but to all those around his lady in her home: in the same way the votary of the Goddess had to be subject not merely to the Goddess, but also to those who served her in her sanctuary, namely priests and priestesses. Even the four grades of love in Troubadour poetry<sup>6</sup> may have been derived from the four stages of initiation in the mysteries of the Goddess, but I do not press this point, since too little is known about these stages of initiation to allow a comparison to be drawn.

<sup>1</sup> E que val viure ses amor Mas per enueg far a la gen ? J. Anglade, *Anthologie des Troubadours*, p. 39. C. Appel against the majority of the MSS. reads 'ses valor', edit. No. XXXI, 11.

<sup>2</sup> A la vi', a la vie, jalous ! Lassaz nos, lassaz nos Ballar entre nos, entre nos ! Appel, *Cbres.*, No. 48. Compare: Tuit cil qui sunt enamourat Viegnent dançar, li autre non ! . . . Que li jalous soient fustat Fors de la dance d'un baston, Raynaud, *Rec.'d. Motets fr.*, t. I, p. 151.

<sup>3</sup> I have touched upon one side of the survivals in my study of "The Aguilaneuf and Trimazô Begging Songs and their origin" which I have already mentioned.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. C. Appel in *Zt. f. rom. Phil.*, t. LII (1932), p. 783f.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. H. Graillot, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

<sup>6</sup> Lo primers es de fegnedor E l segons es de preiador E lo ters es d'entendedor E al quart es druz apelaz, Count of Anjou, edit. A. Kolsen, *Dichtungen der Trobadors*, p. 25. Compare Fauriel, *op. cit.*, t. I, p. 502: Il y a quatre degrés en amour: le premier est celui d'hésitant (*feignaire*); le second, celui de priant (*pregaire*); le troisième, celui d'écouté (*entendeire*), et le quatrième, celui d'ami (*drutz*).

It is true that Plato speaks of four stages of initiation, but without actually specifying the mysteries of the Mighty Mother and more likely he is referring to the mysteries of Eleusis.<sup>1</sup> We do know, however, that there were rites of initiation connected with the mysteries of the Goddess and that the initiate after having been subjected to severe trials and humiliations<sup>2</sup> was received into the highest grade and attained even to union with the Goddess. We have perhaps allusions to this in the markedly sensual utterances of the poets of the first generation which all connoisseurs of Provençal poetry have noticed. The poet expresses the hope that he may in fact be united with his lady "*sotz cobertor*" or "*en cambr' o sotz ram*", "*dinz vergier o sotz cortina*".<sup>3</sup> Be that as it may, we have here perhaps an explanation of the secret nature of Troubadour love. The poet's love for his lady must never be divulged. The one condition imposed upon the poet is secrecy and the one art he has to possess is the art of discrete silence (*celar*).<sup>4</sup> No poet ever mentioned the name of his lady; he always used some pseudonym, some "*senbal*", when speaking of her. Some of these are graceful, as for instance: "*Bon Vexi*"—Kindly Neighbour; "*Bel Vexer*"—Beautiful Vision; "*Mon Aziman*"—My Magnet; "*Mon Conort*"—My Hope, my Consolation; "*Miels de Domna*"—More than Mistress; "*Miels de Ben*"—More than good. The origin of this custom is very obscure,<sup>5</sup> but it too perhaps originated in the worship of Cybele. It would have been impossible for the adept or initiate to speak of the Goddess by name, for that would have been a profanation. The name of the Goddess was only pronounced on the occasion of the most sacred mysteries and in her innermost sanctuary.<sup>6</sup>

## VIII

I would say in conclusion that it seems in the light of what I have said as if the flower of Troubadour poetry, together with the distant love of Jaufré Rudel and other poets, was modelled on the worship of the Mighty Mother, the far off goddess of

<sup>1</sup> Phaedrus, 249ff. Cf. J. Harrison, *Prolegomena to the study of Greek Religion*, p. 578.

<sup>2</sup> The mysterious and inexplicable occurrences in Jaufré Rudel's poems III and IV may conceivably contain some allusion to similar humiliations.

<sup>3</sup> That the "*Alba*" or Dawn Song had its origin in the mysteries of the Goddess I shall endeavour to show in another study.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. C. Appel, *loc. cit.*, p. 771.

<sup>5</sup> The best study so far on the '*Senbal*' of the Troubadours is Stroński's in his edition of *Folquet de Marseille*, pp. 27<sup>o</sup>-43<sup>o</sup>, but he does not elucidate the origin of the practice.

<sup>6</sup> Graillot, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

Asia Minor, now one aspect of her cult predominating, now another ; and this explains the conventional stamp of this poetry and why it so closely resembles the nature of a cult. The Phrygian religion transported first to Rome and then to Gaul was by the end of the fourth century officially supplanted by Christianity, but the chief conceptions of the pagan cult somehow or other<sup>1</sup> lived on and became in the course of time the elaborate doctrine of Troubadour love, which was not only the delight of two centuries of poets and their audiences but left its mark also on the poetry of all the neighbouring lands. This is all the more important since this poetry is the earliest appearance of lyric song in the whole of Western Europe, and it was destined to have a brilliant development which continued through the centuries to the days of Dante, Petrarch and Ronsard. The very exaltation of womanhood even, and the high esteem and respect shown to women which begins in France in the early Middle Ages with the homage of the Troubadour poets and which continues, not only in France but also in many countries of Europe, in the form of knightly chivalry in the following centuries has its source originally in the immense veneration and reverence felt for the Mother Goddess, "the loved one far away".

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<sup>1</sup> In this connection the remarks of J. Toutain, *op. cit.*, t. II, pp. 73f., 91, 102f. are not without importance.