

of medical knowledge which clearly demanded more liberty. From the thirteenth century, an art of love continued to develop: pleasure in itself was the subject of a train of thought quite independent of reproduction. The impetus was given by a philosophy based on the idea of nature, but it seems that over and above the 'naturalists', a way of enjoying sex over which official theology had little power continued to develop.

DARING IDEAS IN SECULAR THOUGHT

Throughout its history, the Church recognized in the sexual act only the function of reproduction and a great many of its combats were in defence of this basic belief. A number of heresies transmitted a turbulent impulse that risked making the whole species self-destruct - that is, of course, if we take the biological point of view. Courtly ideology, which was a source of inspiration for French medieval literature and gave it its subtlety of psychological analysis, constituted one way of keeping the demands of reproduction at a distance.

The erotic of the troubadours

Because courtly love was extramarital, it was an accomplishment based on the desire to control the impatience of instinct, on the successful passing of a series of initiatory tests and finally on the discovery, thanks to the *dame*, the lady, of a world of spiritual values. According to troubadour poetics, the lady focused on herself her lover's emotions, the activity of his imagination and the way he saw his world. In this, satisfaction was proscribed, for the essential thing for anyone devoting himself to the service of love was the narcissistic cult of his desire; the woman who received this homage derived pleasure from the exercising of her power and could only refuse the embrace that would have put an end to it. We hope we will be forgiven for the brevity of this extremely incomplete sketch of courtly love, envisaged as a functional ideal. From these heights we have to come back down to reality as it was in fact experienced. On the level of sexuality,²¹ courtly love could only be an art of cultivating arousal, and of prolonging its duration so as finally to bring it to a conclusion. It differed from the erotic arts whose object was the consummation of love in the best possible conditions, and which consisted of a codified practice of coitus which allowed one to gain knowledge of the cosmos and to discover the harmony between microcosm and macrocosm.

In his quest, the courtly lover passed through a series of stages that brought him progressively into the intimacy of the lady. He was *fenhedor* (suitor), *precador* (suppliant), *entendedor* (recognized lover), and *drut* (carnal lover). Poetry could not and must not mention the consummation of love. Bearing this in mind, one may wonder what the texts say or allow one to surmise. There existed a whole series of artifices whose aim was to bring desire to a climax, among them the practice, so clearly attested in French medieval literature, of the *concubitus sine actu*. René Nelli has evoked the crucial moment of the quest for perfection, namely the encounter of the lover and his lady in the course of the final ordeal constituted by the *asag* or *asais* (= test).²² This moment was both a recompense and a new temptation, and yet the satisfactions offered were merely rhetorical, as appears from the words of the Countess of Die: '[The lover] will thus have to be content with reclining on the cushion of his bare arms, while lying next to her (*jazer*); with gazing at her (*remirar*), with *tener*, *abrassar*, *baizar*, and *manejar* her (holding, embracing, kissing and caressing her): these are the substantial intimacies permitted by courtly love.' It would seem, according to the teaching of the *trobairitz* (women troubadours), that the lover never enjoyed the rights of the husband. Nothing that might recall the husband's prerogatives, the brutality of the procreative act, could be accepted in this exercise.²³ If the behaviour alluded to was indeed as described, courtly love seems to have led to a rediscovery of and demand for clitoral stimulation, to the use of the man as an erotic stimulant — and thus to a sexuality that was active, specific and, what is more, recognized and even exalted as such by an aristocracy of the sensibility and the intelligence. Taking its cue perhaps from Arab erotic lore,²⁴ although this is a controversial question, intellectual life was for the first time associated with women's demands.

History has recorded several philosophical endeavours based on controlling the emission of semen. In ancient China it was thought that this should happen as little as possible:

Thus in Chinese literature on sex the following two basic facts are stressed again and again. First, a man's semen is his most precious possession, the source not only of his health but of his very life; every emission of semen will diminish this vital force, unless compensated by the acquiring of an equivalent amount of *yin* essence from the woman. Second, the man should give the woman complete satisfaction every time he cohabitates with her, but he should allow himself to reach orgasm only on certain specified occasions.²⁵

Retention was thought of as a kind of therapeutic gymnastics, but independently of this medical-religious value, polygamy made it necessary.

The same social conditions existed among the Arabs and men paid the same attention to controlling their sexual activity. Whether it drew on

outside influences or whether it was a spontaneous blossoming in a privileged milieu that had access to a certain type of knowledge, the form of erotic art adopted by the West was highly original: it was woman who was in control of pleasure. Though courtly love had a carnal component that could hardly be denied - a component that fitted in with the life of society at large - it remains nonetheless true that repeated again and again in literature, not experienced but dreamt about, courtly love was ultimately able to become the manifestation of a certain fear of women, a slippery slope that led to a gynophobia of which the fabliaux are the most brutal, but perhaps the least harmful expression.

Let us return now to more down-to-earth considerations. Belief in woman's continuous fecundity, as well as the interest taken in lineage, made the emission of the man's sperm into the vagina more or less impossible. It would seem that in conformity with the unanimously accepted scientific theories, 'extra vas' emission had to be practised. It could take two forms: either a satisfaction achieved manually or with another substitute, or else, after the lover's probationary period, the practice of the '*amplexus reservatus*', that is, of extravaginal ejaculation once satisfaction had been given to the woman. It is certain that if the aristocracy used this procedure, there must have been a great freedom of behaviour. It was a well-known contraceptive method since one finds it mentioned by Arab doctors. On the other hand, Noonan declares that 'Up till about 1480, *amplexus reservatus* had been ignored by many authorities, championed by a few, and attacked by none.'²⁶ In Noonan's opinion, the absence of vigorous discussion about it bears witness to ignorance of the practice. It is evidently the most elementary and least dangerous means of contraception, but one which presupposes information about, and communication with, the world of women. We are reduced to examining what was *not* said.

The enigma of the De Amore of Andreas Capellanus

Recent studies, to which we will have occasion to return, have tried to shed new light on the work of Andreas Capellanus. Many terms and allusions in it are said to include an erotic meaning. Before undertaking an exploration of the Latin text, one should appreciate the spirit of this work, with the help of a translation that was carried out a century later (1290) and which exists only in the form of a single manuscript. The author of this translation, Drouart la Vache, treats not only the literal meaning of the text, but also the content and composition of the work,

rather casually: additions and omissions abound. On hearing the Latin text, the reaction of Drouart la Vache was, to say the least, curious: 'When I had seen the book and my companion had read me a little from it, you must know that the subject certainly pleased me a great deal - indeed, it pleased me so much that I began to laugh.'²⁷ The translator's hilarity is somewhat surprising, for this treatise is considered to be an epitome of courtly casuistry. It lists the types of behaviour that are acceptable, when there is love between two people from different levels of society, and it contains the famous judgements of love that concern difficult cases: fictitiously or not, noble ladies give their opinion on the conduct to be followed in conformity with the rules of courtly love. The translator, furthermore, took some persuading before he would set to work, and he feels the need to take oratorical precautions, declaring that, if he happens to say gross things - which his book is concerned with - it is not his fault, but his subject's.²⁸ The end is even more surprising, for it reveals the love of playing games which extends from beginning to end of the text. The translator tells us his name in the form of a riddle. As for the passage just before this, he is suitably mysterious, but it cannot be denied that he is inviting us to seek out information hidden in the text itself:

And I feel quite at ease in telling you all this, for I have written this book, which is of good origin and good tone, as it should be, for clerics and not for the laity, who are rather simple and ignorant, for in the book there are several ideas which the laity could not understand, even if one threatened to drown them or hang them.²⁹

Clerics who think about it will understand the text perfectly well and will gain pleasure from it. It is clearly difficult to fail to recognize the meaning of warnings such as these, and unjust to criticize anyone who cares to make an attempt to find out more about the real meaning that Drouart la Vache wanted to give the text he translated.

One of the work's constant features is thus an encomium of initiates, that is, of the clerics; their way of loving puts them above all classes of society and they have much to teach others. From the arguments that seem to establish the superiority of the cleric, in the traditional debate that sets him against the knight, we will choose an exchange, inserted by Drouart la Vache, between the master and his disciple. The disciple talks about the love that can exist between nuns and clerics and reproaches the master for speaking ill of these nuns, when he has just confessed that he has been more than kindly disposed towards one of them. The master replies with a long didactic discussion, the terms of which should be noted:

Car en cest monde puet avoir	For in this world there may exist
Double amour, ce dois tu savoir	A double form of love, and this you must know.
La premiere est pure apelee	The first is called 'pure love'
Et la seconde amour mellee.	And the second 'mixed love'.
Cil qui s'entraiment d'amour pure	Those who share 'pure love'
Dou delit de la char n'ont cure	Pay no heed to the work of the flesh
Ains wellent sanz plus acoler	But want merely to embrace
Et baisier sanz outre couler.	And to kiss each other without going any further.
Et tele amour est vertueuse,	And such a form of love is virtuous
Ne n'est a son proime greveuse.	And is not harmful to one's neighbour.
De tele amour vient grant proece	From such a form of love springs great prowess
Et Diex gaires ne s'en courece.	And God is hardly angered at it.
Et tele amour puet maintenir,	And such a form of love can be practised,
Sans li por grevee tenir,	Without the woman feeling afflicted,
Pucele et fame mariee,	By virgin and married woman,
Et nonnain a Dieu dediee	And nun devoted to God. ³⁰

We have deliberately given a literal translation. There is another way of understanding the line 'Et baisier sanz outre couler': one can, of course, read 'Make love without ejaculating' or more exactly 'without shedding anything more than the secretion of the prostatic humour'. In the line 'Ne n'est a son proime greveuse', the adjective *greveuse* has been interpreted as meaning 'harmful', but it must have the meaning 'capable of causing pregnancy'. 'Being pregnant' is a well-known meaning of the past participle. It can now easily be understood why virgins, married women and nuns can indulge in this form of love without considering themselves to be 'grevee' — harmed, or made pregnant. The meaning of this passage appears to us to be most explicit.

A discussion which pits 'the most noble man' against the 'noble woman' brings forward further arguments. The debate has in fact to do with jealousy, and the man declares, in perfect conformity with courtly tradition, that love does not exist between married people. One must clearly choose between love 'ou l'em puist faire sanz peür sa volentet tout asseür' ('love in which one can carry out one's desire without fear

in all security') and the other form, which we have alluded to. The text declares without beating about the bush that if, within marriage, it so happens that a man feels *affection* other than that which is necessary to have descendants - or if his wife asks him to behave in this way and he obeys - it is a grave sin, it is adultery. A strange piece of casuistry! This codified behaviour on the part of the married man clearly enables one to suppose that there is behaviour proper to courtly love, and in the light of what is said in the text, we will attempt to interpret a long comparison that comes before it:

Se l'yave de l'ève bien clere,	If the water of a clear stream
Par. I. chanel commence a courre,	Starts to flow along a channel
Qui est plains de boe ou de pouurre,	Which is full of mud and dust,
L'yave, qui de sa nature	The water, which of its nature
Estoit clere, devient obscure	Was clear, becomes dark
Por la gravele qui li donne	Because of the gravel which
	gives it
Oscurté . . . ³¹	Darkness . . .

The husband who behaves as a lover perverts the courtly intention (the clear water). That is the literal meaning of this allegory. One may also wonder whether the clear water is not the prostatic humour, which becomes a spermatic discharge because of the semen, *la gravele*, a word that must be linked to the group *grever* that we have just mentioned; as for the Latin text, it has the word *arena*, i.e., *a-rena*, 'coming from the kidneys' (?). The reader will have to forgive us for these guesses, but we do not think we are betraying the spirit of the clerics in indulging in them, especially when they themselves provide us with a number of other examples.

The boldness of the interpretations that we are suggesting may seem surprising, for we are basing our interpretations on fragments of texts examined brutally under a garish light. In fact, they are put in perspective by a context of ambiguous expressions which it would take too long and be too tedious to go into here. The whole work is devoted to the problems of sexuality. Thus one theme of the discussion is returned to again and again: should a woman prefer an adolescent to a man of mature years?³² The answer is this: the lady has to prefer the older man, for it may so happen that the young man never retains what the lady teaches him, so that he will never be *wise* (*sage* — suitable for the courtly game of love?). Indeed, says the text, if you have any light of understanding, you know that seed cannot always bear fruit, just because it has been

scattered onto the ground (in Latin: 'quia non semper jactata producent semina fructum').³³ We are clearly dealing with the image from the Gospels, repeated a thousand times, of the seed cast either onto good ground, or onto stony ground, but, in this context, it cannot fail but remind us of the act of Onan, the father of *coitus interruptus*, who 'shed his seed on the ground', as the text of Saint Jerome put it.³⁴

Certain questions are referred to bluntly in the text, such as the insatiability of some women. The lines can be quoted without further commentary.

N'aies dont de tel fame cure	Do not bother over such a
	woman,
Se tu ne pues tant tribouler	If you cannot work away
Que tu la puisses saouler. ³⁵	Enough to make her satisfied.

There are other questions, equally realistic, for instance that of the man deprived of the 'instruments of nature'.³⁶ Likewise, the rights of the initiating woman are mentioned: the man theoretically belongs to the woman who has awoken him to amorous life, or rather to sexual life, according to courtly tradition, since success comes with *baisiers el par acolees*, 'kisses and embraces'.³⁷ The way the cleric behaves with a woman from a lowly family is one of the most brutal things ever said: 'And if it happens that you are seized by the desire to love a woman from a lowly family, and if you can find a propitious occasion, you must not restrain yourself, but take your pleasure without waiting for another opportunity'.³⁸ This is tantamount to advising rape. The contempt with which villeins are treated is horrifying: they carry out 'the act of lust like animals'; in other words they limit themselves to satisfying their instincts. One must abstain from teaching them the art of loving - *the doctrine* - since the economic results would be disastrous: the fields and vineyards would lie fallow. It is clearly difficult to imagine that the secret in question is the art of refined courting - it would seem rather to be the art of controlling the sexual instinct, which the author always calls 'the work of lust' - in opposition to 'doing one's will', which presupposes a subject who is always in control of events. Courtly love is aristocratic - that much is clear. In its excessiveness, it disregards the frontier between the human race and animals, setting up a new boundary between courtly lovers and the rest, who are considered to be no different from animals. This is yet another reason for condemning it from a theological point of view. This superiority, established on the basis of the way one carries out the sexual act, shows on the part of the clerics a completely unjustifiable contempt for 'villeins and carters'. The cleric.



FIGURE 3.1 A detail from the Bayeux tapestry, showing a rape (?) scene. (Reproduced with special permission from la Ville de Bayeux)

the intellectual, is heir to the ideology of the civilization of the *pays d'Oc* and makes use of it to set himself at the top of the social hierarchy - and if our reading of the text is accepted, this feeling of superiority, proclaimed with such arrogance, finds its justification in the control of the sexual instinct.

The practice of *coitus interruptus*, as we have revealed in certain passages of the text, enables us to resolve two perplexing difficulties concerning the exact nature of courtly love. Hardly anyone still believes in the chastity of courtly relations, and most historians of manners and of literature agree that the woman, after a longer or shorter probationary Period, granted the *guerredon*, the ultimate favour — that is, the gift of her person. Thus Moshe Lazar, drawing on the text of Andreas Capellanus, declares: ‘There are four stages in the lover’s conquest and they depend on the lady: 1) inspiring hope; 2) promising a kiss; 3) the embraces; 4) the surrender of her whole person’.³⁹ He also contrasts the



FIGURE 3.2 *A monk and a woman in bed. From the Decameron. Ms Arsenal. 5070, fol. 108v. (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris)*

two forms of love: ‘In reality, *purus amor* and *mixtus amor* are two forms of the same love, two ways of expressing the same passion.’ Let us recall the definition of pure love, a love that does not end in the performing of the *final act of Venus*. This must be understood as ejaculation, and it is here that the line between the two forms of love has to be drawn. Such a practice enables satisfaction to be obtained without risking pregnancy. Medieval medical texts taken as a whole show that the woman is continuously fertile, except when she is pregnant or suckling. It is difficult to imagine the courtly lover making the most of these happy times. Every performance of the sexual act involved the possibility of impregnation and one thus had to envisage the possibility that the line of descendants might be broken, and that there might thus be one or more bastards among the children. It does not seem that this was accepted by medieval society. The practice we have just alluded to allows us to resolve this contradiction.

If we agree that Drouart la Vache in his translation is referring to *coitus interruptus*, a second contradiction also has to be resolved. This was realized very clearly by Noonan. The Cathars are alleged to have practised this form of contraception, as did the aristocracy of the *pays*

d'Oc, as is confirmed by R. Nelli. Later, this practice is supposed to have fallen into disuse, as Noonan says: 'This method of avoiding procreation, untreated in the thirteenth century, is launched under fresh auspices, and as a solution to a different problem, in the fourteenth century.'⁴⁰ To smooth over this break, the author supposed that knowledge of this procedure had accompanied the Cathars who settled in Northern Italy and that, from this region, it spread out in a second wave. The absence of texts dealing with the subject means nothing, and it is completely impossible to believe that a practice concerning an important part of society could have fallen into oblivion. Furthermore, aristocrats in the north were acquainted with it well before the Albigensian crusade, since it was a component of courtly love.

Nobody will deny that Drouart was well informed. He refers to the '*naturiens*' or 'naturalists',⁴¹ that is, to the very open intellectual milieu of the Faculty of Arts, steeped in Aristotle and particularly inclined to discuss problems of sexuality. It is certain that the Aristotelian concept of the respective roles played by the male and female seed, by giving an outright supremacy to the male sperm, led, in extremely liberal circles, to new trains of thought on the subject of contraception. This now needs to be verified: if it can be agreed that Drouart was talking about *coitus interruptus* in his translation of the Latin text, is any reference to this practice made in the original?

We will be granted as a working hypothesis that the characters of different social conditions may represent the different degrees of information concerning erotic technique. Here are the terms in which the dialogue between a nobleman offering his services to a noblewoman are couched: a dialogue, that is to say, 'between initiates'. We quote the translation, though the Latin text is even more expressive:

The woman says: It is very easy to discover the entrance to the court of Love, yet difficult to abide there, because of the pains poised above lovers; but people find it impossible and insuperably hard to leave because of the acts of love which they crave. Once he has truly entered Love's court, a lover can say yea or nay to nothing except the fare placed before him on Love's table, and that which can please his partner in love.

So a court of that kind we should not approach; we should totally avoid entering a place from which it is not possible to leave freely. Such a place is comparable to the court of Hell, for though the gate of Hell stays open for anyone desirous of entering, once inside there is no prospect of leaving.⁴²

The erotic reading of such a text as this cannot be avoided. Furthermore, the allegory that follows adds new and precise details:

The story goes - and it is true — that at the centre of the world is set a Palace with four highly ornate sides, in each of which is a most beautiful

entrance. . . . The eastern entrance has been reserved for the use of the god of love alone, whereas the other three are specified for particular classes of ladies. The ladies of the south entrance always linger at the open doors and are for ever to be found on the threshold. Likewise the ladies of the western entrance, only they are always to be found wandering outside the threshold of the door. But the ones who have the privilege of guarding the north entrance always remain behind closed doors, and observe nothing outside the boundaries of the palace.

Lest we lose ourselves in architectural reveries, the author carefully unveils the meaning of each of the gates:

The ones who for ever linger at the open gate, and are always found on the threshold, are the women and ladies who, when a man requests entry, are skilled at making careful enquiry of the meritorious treatment deserved and the honest character maintained by him who seeks to enter the open gate. When they are fully confident of their merits, they admit those entitled with every honour, but then repulse the unworthy far from the court of Love. The ones who claim a place at the western entrance are the promiscuous women who refuse no one; they admit all indiscriminately and are available for all men's pleasure. But those assigned to guarding the north entrance, who remain perpetually behind closed doors, are the women who open to no man's knock and refuse all men entry to the palace of Love.

A distinction is established between three types of women: courtesans, chaste women and courtly lovers, who do not refuse entry into the palace of Love, on condition that the lover first gives proof of his mastery. The dialogue which crowns book I of the *De Amore* brings together a fully initiated person and a lady who is in no way inferior to him. Nobody will be surprised that at the summit of the hierarchy of lovers is placed the cleric; the argument put forward does not contradict our interpretation of the text:

The cleric is seen to be more careful and wise in all things than the layman. He orders himself and his affairs with greater control, and is accustomed to governing everything with more fitting measure; because he is a cleric he has knowledge of all things, since scripture gives him this expertise. So his love is to be accounted better than the layman's, because nothing on earth is ^{established} to be so vital as that the lover should have experience in diligent application to all things.⁴³

Everyone has happily recognized in the *De Amore* of Andreas Capellanus the expression of a technique of love.⁴⁴ The practice of *coitus interruptus*, with the physical and moral control that it presupposes, does seem to be the main lesson taught by the work, from the twelfth century onwards. The doctrine was received by his translator Drouart, although he did

not express this half-secret lore in the same way. A recognition of these facts does not mean that those interpretations which see in courtly love a spiritual quest have to be excluded, but it does modify them somewhat. It is now easier to see the kinship between courtly ideology and the great erotic treatises of other civilizations, and demonstrate that, although they used different techniques, there was a profound analogy between them in their philosophical and religious quest. This is the deep meaning of a whole section of the poetry and courtly literature of the *langue d'Oc*. On the other hand, one can also emphasize the way the clerics appropriated these techniques. Inspiration gave way to rhetoric, the philosophical quest to the assertion of a power exercised in the very heart of society. Furthermore, a certain way of handling language and playing on words, completely infiltrated the way these intellectuals discussed love. Everything in their language seems to conceal a trap and over and above the explicit meanings that we have just elucidated were expressed, in ambiguous words, the erotic fantasies of initiated scholars - great masters of quibbles and rhetorical figures - who cheerfully transgressed the boundaries of what was permitted.

For a medieval scholar any commentary, any exegesis, began with a literal understanding, with a word-for-word reading; according to the Isidorean tradition, the word is in itself the bearer of a hidden truth which it often reveals only at the price of a modification or fragmentation of the signs of which it is composed. This level of reading cannot be neglected in Andreas Capellanus. Recently, Betsy Bowden has shown the importance that had to be attached to the sound of words and the parallels that could be drawn between different syllables.⁴⁵ Following a tradition firmly rooted in lyric poetry, in genres close to the *Carmina Burana* or in the Latin comedy of the twelfth century, puns are used so as to suggest, implicitly, a completely different meaning from that which is made explicit. This is revealed particularly in poetry of homosexual inspiration which, furthermore, has recourse to a vocabulary comprehensible only to initiates.⁴⁶ In his *De Planctu Naturae*, Alan of Lille deplors the rupture of the *copula verborum*, the confusion of genres that link moral Perversion and the corruption of the arts of expression.⁴⁷ The influence

Cupid perverts poetic meaning; the God of Love uses antiphrasis to make words lose their normal associations.

Betsy Bowden is merely pointing out that which is most visible in the *De Amore*: the association of certain syllables, the astonishing frequency and the repeated grouping of words that could refer phonetically to a sexual meaning, playing also on the vocabulary of the vernacular. The

American scholar thus picks out a series of terms, such as *poenis*, *cunctus*, *penitus*, etc. Hubert Silvestre adds to this list *probitas* which recurs 130

times in the treatise and which Drouart la Vache translates as 'prowess'⁴⁸ This quality that the woman must seek in a lover is the opposite of 'biauté', *forma*, a specifically feminine attribute, as the poet Serlo of Wilton reminds us: 'Cur probitas maribus, cur virginibus data forma?'⁴⁹

Apart from these puns which, as one has to recognize, do not differ from the tradition of medieval jokes,⁵⁰ Betsy Bowden notes the use made of metaphors already present in the erotic vocabulary of classic Latin: *via, porta, mors, semita, tractare, arma, locus*, etc.

The duplicity of the work is, furthermore, revealed at the end, when the author addresses the recipient: 'So if you peruse with careful diligence this teaching of mine which I send you within the covers of this little book, it will present to you two differing views (*duplicis sententia*).' The reason clearly expressed is that while the first part teaches the way in which to 'obtain in full measure all bodily pleasures', the second constitutes a strict warning. It is the discussion of this reason that is referred to notably by those who hold to the idea that there is a 'pre-Averroist' flavour to the text.⁵¹ As Betsy Bowden has shown, this cannot seriously be maintained, because the second part contains as many puns and sexual allusions as the first. The work taken as a whole presents - admittedly in such a way as hardly to be noticed — formulae designed to awaken the reader's attention; for example the phrase: 'By lending a diligent and attentive ear to the advice which I have composed . . . you can become fully acquainted with the art of love'⁵² invites one to pay special attention to phonetics.

If one has to look for a hidden meaning, puns are not enough; they are often meant merely to attract attention and to provoke the mirth of a Drouart la Vache. There are other allusions that one perceives if one reads the text 'with careful diligence', as Andreas Capellanus puts it - allusions that appeal to the culture of the medieval cleric. For the *De Amore* presents us with a strange bestiary, composed for the most part of winged creatures. We will take as an example the partridge, mentioned on several occasions. Before beginning our reading, we must refer to the 'dictionary' of the Middle Ages, that is, the *Etymologiae* of Isidore of Seville; here is what is said about the partridge:

Partridge gets its name *de voce*. It is a filthy rogue of a bird. For male mounts male and blind desire forgets gender. [This bird] is such a rogue that it steals another bird's eggs to hatch them, but this piece of roguery bears no fruit. When the young hear the voice of their own mother, they abandon, out of a certain natural instinct, the bird that has hatched them, and return to their mother who bred them.⁵³

The *Bestiaire d'Amours* of Richard de Fournival described at great length how infertile partridges managed to hatch eggs. Bartholomew the

Englishman took from Isidore the notion that they indulged in homosexual relations. The two authors that we have just quoted⁵⁴ suffice to prove that the description of the way of life of this bird did not remain a dead letter in the Middle Ages. Furthermore, if one refers to the correspondences in erotic classical vocabulary, it will be found that the partridge is associated with *paedicatio*, that is with anal practices.⁵⁵ Let us now reread one of the passages in which the partridge appears in the *De Amore*. The allusion is found in the course of a dialogue between the commoner and the most noble lady; to be admitted into the court of love, the lover from the lower classes must more than any other give proof of his merits

because an aspiration avowedly beyond an individual's nature is usually dispelled by a puff of wind and lasts only a moment. We are told that occasionally among kestrels are born certain birds which by their courage or fierceness subdue partridges, but because this achievement is acknowledged to be beyond their nature, people say that such fierceness cannot endure for more than a year, reckoning from their birth. So a commoner can be selected for love by a woman of the higher nobility only if after considerable trial he is established as worthy.⁵⁶

In this passage, which speaks of 'an aspiration . . . beyond an individual's nature', the Latin text multiplies the possibilities of a double reading. Thus *ultra naturam* may mean 'against nature', with all that that implies when sexuality is being discussed, but also, giving *natura* a meaning that is attested in Cicero and which we have met with in the *Pantegni* of Constantine the African, 'beyond, on the other side of the nature [of the woman]'. The single expression *ultra naturam* includes two types of allusions that lead one to the same meaning. Let us add that the ferocity of the kestrels cannot last for longer than a year: *usque ad annum*. To designate what Walsh translates as 'kestrels', Andreas Capellanus uses the expression *lacertiva avis* in which the first term refers to *lacertus* (muscle) and the second requires no explanation, if one remembers how widespread its erotic meaning is in different languages, including those of the Middle Ages. Let us now return to the partridge: apart from the way of life described by Isidore of Seville, we find that Andreas Capellanus associates this bird in other allusions with the pheasant, *fasianus*.

The capturing of partridges by the 'kestrels' cannot last; it corresponds to a probationary period'. If it is still possible to doubt that Andreas Capellanus is suggesting in this way a channel without any risk, the rest of the same dialogue gives us other indications: the lady reproaches her lover with appearing to 'confound the order and the course of nature'. Several lines further on, it is announced that 'Abusive tongues cannot remain within courtesy's threshold'; the Latin text is more specific: 'Maledici intra curialitatis non possunt limina permanere', that is to say,

'Slanderers cannot remain within the gates of courtliness.' Here is what Drouart la Vache tells us about slanderers:

Por nule parole qu'elle oye	Let her listen to no words,
Ne por chose que mesdisant	Nor to anything the slanderers
Voisent par derriere disant;	Will say behind;
Car li mesdisant ont maniere	For the slanderers have a way
De parler touz jours par derriere	Of always speaking behind
Por faire a bons	To prevent the good from their
empeschement . . .	doing . . . , ⁵⁷

The example of the partridge enables one to establish a range of probable meanings, which are backed up by other signs as well as mere puns; numerous other pages multiply the possibilities of double meanings so as to suggest what the 'freedom to love' is, according to Andreas Capellanus: knowing how to choose, 'at the crossing of two paths', the one where one must 'serve Love',⁵⁸ according to one's degree of knowledge.

This reading of the *De Amore* - which does not, of course, exclude other interpretations — would be of only trifling importance, if the work had not gained the success that is known and if it did not figure among the books condemned in 1277. The treatise of Andreas Capellanus cannot be considered as an accident, as the result of the fantasies of a single individual. It thus transcends the simple level of a joke. Scientific information surfaces in certain places: the name of the doctor Johannicius is quoted and the definition of love is hardly any different from the definition of coitus given by Constantine the African. One reads that going with courtesans does not require 'doctrine' (*doctrina*), or 'knowledge' (*sapientia*); indeed, as William of Conches teaches, such women are sterile. As a good cleric, Andreas Capellanus shows perfect control of the art of rhetoric; it can adorn his rhetorical figures in the colours of Venus, that is, subject them to 'inversions' or 'discolorations', which 'lead them to vice', to use the terms of Alan of Lille.⁵⁹ The author makes use again and again of *annominatio*, which consists of reproducing the same word, changing only one or two letters, or in setting next to each other terms that are identical in form, but different in meaning. The recourse to *translatio* that we have mentioned with regard to Isidore of Seville is equally evident; Geoffrey of Vinsauf, writing a little later than Andreas Capellanus, gives the following definition of this 'colour': 'There is *translatio* when an expression is transferred through similarity of its proper meaning into an improper meaning.'⁶⁰

Treatises of poetics and rhetoric flourished at the time of Andreas Capellanus. Special attention must be given to the *Ars Versificatoria* of Matthew of Vendôme, also the author of a long poem which, under the title *Milo*, is extremely scabrous in content.⁶¹ An examination of the *Ars Versificatoria* will come up with some astonishing examples. Edmond Faral had himself pointed out that the statement of the rules meant to govern the physical description of the characters constituted highly favoured terrain for rhetoric to lend ‘the veil of its figures to licentious *pointes*’. Let us look at the paragraph illustrating the description of the facts and the three attributes that are thought to explain the circumstances that precede, accompany and follow the event described by the poet:

One can give a familiar example of these three [attributes]:

‘Risus amor, coitus, ventris conceptio, triplex
Indicium laesae virginitatis habent.’

There follows an analysis of these lines (which mean: ‘Love welcomed with laughter, followed by intercourse, and then by the womb’s conceiving, constitute a threefold sign that virginity has been lost’): *risus amor* is called *ante rem*, for a *consensus* of the mind (*mentis*) is the prelude to pleasure; *coitus* clearly constitutes the attribute *cum re*, while *ventris conceptio* is the consequence, the attribute *post rem*. The insertion of the words *risus* and *mens* in this context may also lead the reader to a metaphorical interpretation. The advice given by Matthew of Vendôme on the subject of describing the attributes of the feminine sex are even more explicit; apart from the fact that the word *forma* (and not *formositas* or *pulchritudo*) appears in a position of some importance, the portrait of the matronly woman is followed by an unexpected definition of *libido*:
Est autem libido res vilis et turpis ex vili et turpi membrorum agitatione proveniens, cuius appetitus plenus est anxietatis, satiety p[il]ena paenitatis - ‘Desire is a foul and filthy thing arising from the foul and filthy stirring of the members: its craving is full of anxiety, and once satisfied it inspires only feelings of guilt’. This puts us in a specifically carnal context and at the same time gives us useful parallels for the words *anxietas* and *paenitas*.

The definitions relating to grammar or rhetoric frequently provide areas Capellanus with an opportunity to give clerics, who alone are capable of understanding his allusions, the key to a double reading. The grossest puns are merely signs aimed at alerting the reader’s attention to the erotic content of the work. To judge the complexity of the system used by clerics in the Middle Ages, we will content ourselves with referring to the passage devoted to *equivocatio* in the tradition of Drouart

la Vache. We will conclude with one of the facile jokes with which he again pays homage to the cleric:

Car fames, por nules raisons,	For women cannot for any reason
Ne pueent le comperatif	Pass the comparative,
Passer, mais ou suppellatif	But to the superlative
Pueent mout bien monter li homme	Men may mount most easily,
Et estre tres noble, si comme	And be most noble, just like
Font cleric. ⁶²	The clerics.

The Roman de la Rose

We cannot discuss eroticism in the Middle Ages without mentioning the *Roman de la Rose*, or rather the continuation of the work of Guillaume de Lorris by Jean de Meung, the composition of which can be dated between 1275 and 1280. The work came into being right in the middle of the upheaval caused by the spread of Aristotelianism and Averroism. Siger of Brabant and Boethius of Dacia, representatives of this current of thought, had provoked in the Faculty of Arts in Paris an intellectual effervescence, to which Jean de Meung, like the good Arts man he was, was doubtless no stranger.

For the revolt was not only intellectual and dogma really was being questioned, as Fr. Mandonnet shows:

It was clearly in that turbulent and unbridled milieu criticized by the legate that one could hear remarks such as these: theology is founded on fables; the wise men of this world are the only philosophers; Christianity is an obstacle standing in the way of science; the only happiness is in this world; death is the end of everything; one must confess only in appearance; one must not pray; fornication is not a sin.⁶³

Such a climate evidently encouraged a free and easy way of life, and the right to pleasure that the *De Amore* of Andreas Capellanus so insistently laid claim to — with the difference that there was now an intellectual authority who enabled one not to fear punishment any more, who diminished, and even eradicated, the feeling of guilt. Averroism was exploited not only by intellectuals, but also among the people; >t encouraged a remarkable freedom: it appealed to the idea of the unity of the intellect, the unity of human intelligence. Let us again quote Fr. Mandonnet:

Of all the doctrines of peripateticism capable of wrecking the Christian faith, none was more disastrous in its consequences. With the denial of the persona

survival of the soul after death, it suppressed a fundamental part of Christianity and as a consequence destroyed the rest. Thus neither the Christian philosophers such as Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas, nor the ecclesiastical authorities, made any mistake about it.

Jean de Meung was not unaware of this new dimension of moral life and followed his own train of thought on love. Right from the start he claimed the right to freedom of expression, unless he was merely being facetious.⁶⁴

We cannot possibly study in its entirety the erotic play in the *Roman de la Rose*.⁶⁵ It is a song of seduction in the course of which metaphorical procedures are deployed in all their richness. It is, furthermore, striking to discover that, from India to the France of the thirteenth century, poetry borrowed as much from the floral domain as from the bestiary, and drew on certain constant factors. The use of the myth of Pygmalion is revealing as far as the author's thoughts on the subject of women are concerned. The sculptor gives life to the statue, the lover 'warms up' and 'softens' the stone creature. As Daniel Poirion puts it: 'The lesson in sexual education here finds an eloquent illustration, the role of male initiative in the arousing of female sensuality being clearly indicated.'⁶⁶ Nonetheless, the conclusion is far from this delicacy and the Goliard-like vein keeps breaking through, reinforced by a copious supply of more or less brutal comparisons. Jean Gerson judged certain passages to be sacrilegious. There are even jokes in more than dubious taste. The essential thing lies in the ostentation of virility, which radically separates this text from the courtly current as defined in ideal terms. One might even sense a certain regression, as compared with the *De Amore* of Andreas Capellanus, who on several occasions foresaw the possibility of women taking the initiative, in particular when he advised that the woman should be able to 'speak' first. The influence of the Aristotelian current is doubtless not unconnected to this difference in language. The *Roman de la Rose* has given rise to a variety of reactions:⁶⁷ Martin le Franc was able to say that Jean de Meung saw in love-play merely the pleasure of 'tupping' and that he behaved, with the rosebud and the tender rosebush, 'like a drunkard full of barley beer'.

Presented in this way, the myth of Pygmalion seemingly responds to the desire shown by the clerics to affirm their pedagogic vocation in all things and to exercise their power through a kind of knowledge that they insistently claimed to hold a monopoly on. The other side of the story could be called the Pygmalion complex. It runs through all literature: the man must find the woman to whom he will reveal the pleasures of love, and whose sensuality will thereby be awakened. This complex haunts the brain of every man who dreams of the virgin over

- 14 Da Rocha-Pereira, (ed.) *Obras Médicas*, p. 259.
- 15 Rhazes not only advises that the woman's legs be raised, a position which makes it easier for the semen to be taken in, but also recommends that the man withhold his sperm until the woman has had her emission (*Liber ad Almansorem*, *ibid.*).
- 16 We shall be returning to this topic.
- 17 The treatise *On the Nature of the Child* (XIII, I) cites the case of a woman singer who, because of her profession, could not get pregnant: 'And so I asked her to jump, kicking her heels up to her buttocks. She had already done it seven times when the sperm flowed to the ground with a noise- on seeing this, the singer gazed at it in astonishment' - see Joly (ed. and tr.) *De la Nature de l'Enfant*, p. 55.
- 18 Wickersheimer, *Dictionnaire biographique*, vol. I, p. 9.
- 19 John Nider (1380-1438); see Noonan, *Contraception*, p. 273.
- 20 *In IV Sententiarum*, XXXI, G, article 24, ed. A.Borgnet, p. 263. See below, pp. 135.
- 21 The carnal aspect of courtly love seems difficult to refute. On this topic, critics often refer to the treatise by Andreas Capellanus which we shall be examining below; see A. Denomy, 'Fin'Amors: The Pure Love of the Troubadours: Its Amorality and Possible Source', *Medieval Studies*, 8 (1945), pp. 139—207, and F. Schlosser, *Andreas Capellanus: seine Minnelehre und das christliche Weltbild um 1200* (H. Bouvier, Bonn, 1980), pp. 370-82. Note that the very existence of an ideal of courtly love has been challenged by some scholars: see J.F. Benton, 'An Historical View of Courtly Love', in F.X. Newman, (ed.) *The Meaning of Courtly Love* (SUNY Press, Albany, 1968), pp. 19-42.
- 22 R. Nelli, *L'érotique des troubadours* (Privat, Toulouse, 1963), pp. 199-204, and *Erotique et civilisations* (Weber, Paris, 1972), pp. 144—9. It seems that one has to accept a diversification of practices in the ritual way courtly love was conducted: the possibility we refer to does not close the discussion. Psychoanalytic approaches to courtly love show the complexity of the phenomenon: cf. H. Rey-Flaud, *La Ne'vrose courtoise*, Bibliothèque des Analytica (Navarin, Editeur, Paris, 1983); J.-Ch. Huchet, *L'Amour discourtois - La 'Fin'Amors' chez les premiers troubadours*, Bibliothèque historique (Privat, Toulouse, 1987).
- 23 These are conditions that encourage games with the sexual ambiguity of the object of desire. The game concerns not only the transformations of the object, but also the transvestism of the author. The constitution of the scientific text placed under the name of Trotula is in this respect exemplary (cf. *infra*, p. 221, n. 77). We would point out that it was clearly stated in the Middle Ages that the character who established and legitimized knowledge concerning women was Hermaphrodite; cf. Thomasset, *Commentaire du dialogue* p. 162.
- 24 See P. Dronke, *Medieval Latin and the Rise of European Love-Lyric*, 2 vols (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1968), vol. I, ch. 2.
- 25 R.H. Van Gulik, *Sexual Life in Ancient China* (E.J. Brill, Leyden, 1961), p. 47
- 26 J.T. Noonan, *Contraception*, p. 299. Noonan's opinion does seem difficult to support. Peter P.A. Biller ('Birth-Control in the West in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries', *Past and Present*, 94 (1982), pp. 3—26) on the basis of sources from various origins, that at the beginning of the fourteenth century, the practice of *coitus interruptus* spread among married

- couples. One of the channels along which information travelled could have been the priests themselves: 'Could any person who read the descriptions of impregnation in thirteenth-century encyclopaedias (such as those of Thomas of Cantimpré and Vincent of Beauvais) and the account of Onan's sin in Genesis (with its literal, contraceptive gloss) not have had a clear notion of *coitus interruptus* as a contraceptive method?' (article cited, p. 20, n. 70).
- 27 R. Bossuat, (ed.) *Li Livres d'Amours de Drouart la Vache* (Champion, Paris, 1926), lines 47-51.
- 28 *Ibid.*, lines 96—101.
- 29 *Ibid.*, lines 7547-54. It is disturbing to realize that the majority of the manuscripts still preserved of the *De Amore* of Andreas Capellanus belonged to clerics. Cf. B. Roy, 'A la recherche des lecteurs médiévaux du *De Amore* d'André le Chapelain', *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa/University of Ottawa Quarterly*, 55 (1985), pp. 45-73. Bruno Roy concludes his article with these words: 'Who, in the Middle Ages, read the *De Amore* - and how? They were Churchmen, especially Germanic Churchmen, at the end of the Middle Ages - and, it seems, they read it with great pleasure.' We cannot, however, conclude from this that they all read it in the same way as did Drouart la Vache.
- 30 Bossuat, *Li Livres d'Amours*, lines 4083-98.
- 31 *Ibid.*, lines 3570-6.
- 32 This is the fifth question: lines 5749-78; see also the ages of love, lines 491-504.
- 33 The authors Have not been able to consult the edition by Walsh (1982), and use for the Latin text the editino that had hitherto been standard: E. Trojel, *Andrea Capellani Regii Francorum 'De Amore' Libri Tres* (Libraria Gadiana, Copenhagen, 1892), p. 279. Our translation does use Walsh's edition and translation: see *Andreas Capellanus on Love*, ed. with an English tr. by P.G. Walsh, Duckworth Classical, Medieval and Renaissance Editions (Duckworth, London, 1982): the above Latin quotation is on p. 256 of this edition. - *Tr.*
- 34 The *Lime d'Enanchet*, which discusses a certain number of historical and political facts, includes a translation of part of the work of Andreas Capellanus. It drew at least the essential lesson from it. See W. Fiebig, *Das 'Livre d'Enanchet' nach der einzigen Hs. 2585 der Wiener Nationalbibl.* (Jena and Leipzig, 1938), p. 57):

So that the woman need not grant the will of her lover. And on this subject note that there are five reasons, for which woman need not grant her lover's will. The first is: so that she may be seen sometimes to refuse what is asked of her. The second: for if she grant it straightaway, he will think that she has already learnt how to do such a thing. The third: that it is sweeter to the asker if he has had to wait a long time for what he wants. The fourth: while waiting for this moment, she may give somewhat. *The fifth: for fear of getting pregnant.* [Summary of Andreas Capellanus *loquitur nobilior nobiliori*, in *Andreas Capellanus on Love*, Walsh (ed.) pp. 158ff.]

- 35 Bossuat, (ed.) *Li Livres d'Amours*, lines 4439-40.
- 36 *Ibid.*, line 6384.
- 37 *Ibid.*, lines 5911-50.
- 38 *Ibid.*, lines 4495-542 (*De l'amour as vilains*).

- 39 M. Lazar, *Amour courtois et 'fin amors' dans la littérature du XIIIe siècle* (Klincksieck, Paris, 1964), p. 271.
- 40 Noonan, *Contraception*, p. 298. The only reference to this practice is made by Huguccio in the twelfth century. This is how he describes it:

To render the conjugal debt to one's wife is nothing other than to make for her a plenty of one's body for the wifely matter. Hence one often renders the debt to his wife in such a way that he does not satisfy his pleasure and conversely. Therefore, in the aforesaid case, I can so render the debt to the wife and wait in such a way until she satisfies her pleasure. Indeed, often in such cases a woman is accustomed to anticipate her husband, and when the pleasure of the wife in the carnal work is satisfied, I can, if I wish, withdraw, not satisfying my pleasure, free of all sin, and not emitting my seed of propagation [*Summa*, 2, 13].

Huguccio's point of view aroused no reaction for a whole century. Was it a procedure that people preferred to ignore, even though the texts that we are using show that it was in fact known about? It will have been noted that according to Huguccio's account, the male does not emit semen. For family reasons, in the fourteenth century, Peter de Palude claims that there is no sin providing that neither the woman nor the man ejaculate. The Church bases the notion of sin on emission. How did this affect the behaviour of clerics and laity? We are restricted to mere hypothesis; it is probable that the way the act finished had to depend on the degree of control possessed by each individual. There was an ideal to be attained, but it must nonetheless be noted that the idea of a wasted emission is mentioned by Andreas Capellanus, in connection with the comparison between adolescents and mature men.

- 41 Bossuat, (ed.) *Li Livres d'Amours*, line 6270.
- 42 Tr. Walsh, *Andreas Capellanus on Love*, p. 101, Latin text, p. 100: Mulier ait: In amoris curiam facillimus est inventus ingressus, sed propter imminentes amantium poenas ibi est perseverare difficile, ex ea vero propter appetibiles actus amoris impossibilis deprehenditur exitus atque durissimus. Nam post verum amoris curiae ingressum nihil potest amans velle vel nolle, nisi quod mensa sibi proponat amoris, et quod alteri possit amanti placere. Ergo talis non est curia appetenda; eius namque loci est omnino fugiendus ingressus, cuius libere non patet egressus. Tartarae etenim talis potest locus curiae comparari; nam, quum Tartari porta cuilibet intrare moretur aperta volenti, nulla est post ingressum exeundi facultas.
- 43 Tr. Walsh, *Andreas Capellanus on Love*, p. 185.
- 44 See the 'Introduction' to the French translation by C. Buridant, *Traité de l'amour courtois* (Klincksieck, Paris, 1974). The antithesis between the *sapiens amator* and the *stultus amator* should, he said, be seen in the context of the physiological mechanisms. The author quotes Paul Zumthor, 'Notes en marge du *Traité de l'amour* d'André le Chapelain' (p. 31), who claims that '*Sapientia* can be understood as being derived from *sapere* in the sense of *scire* = knowledge acquired from the technique of love.' There really is a technique which is something quite different from a strategy. And the art of loving not 'a practical manual of worldly relationships', as Robert Bossuat thought. As for the exclusion of peasants from the practice of love, we have already discussed the topic. The cleric tends to show an arrogance in this area that

is by no means an isolated occurrence in history.

- 45 B. Bowden, 'The Art of Courtly Copulation', *Medievalia et Humanistica*, 9 (1979), pp. 67-85. The same type of reading is suggested by Bruno Roy, 'André le Chapelain ou l'obscenite rendue courtoise', in P. Ruhe and R. Dehrens (eds), *Coll. Würzburg 1984, Mittelalter Bilder aus neuer Perspektive, Diskussions Anstöße zu 'Amour courtois', Subjektivität in der Dichtung und Strategien des Erzählens*, (W. Fink, Munich, 1985), pp. 59-73.
- 46 See J. Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1980), pp. 253-4.
- 47 See W. Wetherbee, 'The Function of Poetry in the *De Planctu Naturae* of Alain de Lille', *Traditio*, 25 (1969), p. 101.
- 48 H. Silvestre, 'Du nouveau sur Andre le Chapelain', *Revue du Moyen Age latin*, 36 (1980), pp. 99-106.
- 49 'Why was honesty given to husbands and beauty to young girls?' - Serlo of Wilton (died c. 1181); I. Oberg, (ed.) *Acta Universitatis Stockolmiensis, Studia latina*, vol. 14 (1965), p. 106, line 13.
- 50 See B. Roy, 'L'Humour erotique au XVe siècle, in *L'Erotisme au Moyen Age* (Ed. de l'Aurore, Montreal, 1977), pp. 155-71.
- 51 See A. Denomy, 'The *De Amore* of Andreas Capellanus and the condemnation of 1277', *Mediaeval Studies*, 8 (1946), pp. 107-49.
- 52 Walsh (ed.), *Andreas Capellanus on Love*, p. 287.
- 53 *Etymologiae*, XII, 7, 63. Note too the etymology that Isidore gives for the word *aves* (birds): 'They are called *aves* because they have no pre-determined routes, but lose themselves in unmarked paths (*avia*)', *ibid.*, XII, 7, 3. It is easy to see how the word could be used metaphorically. It is also noteworthy that the kite - *milvus* - to which Andreas Capellanus also alludes (pp. 63 and 69) is an animal that is *mollis* according to Isidore (XII, 7, 58). As for the meaning that Andreas Capellanus gives to 'falcon' (*falco*, *falconis*), it is expressed not so much in the bird's behaviour - as is the case with the kite - but in its name: 'Si me igitur noveris a meis degenerare parentibus, non contumeliosa milvi appellatione vocandus reperior, sed honorabili falconis vocabulo nuncupandus existo' (Walsh (ed.), *Andreas Capellanus on Love*, p. 68).
- 54 C. Segre, *Li Bestiaires d' Amours di maistre Richart de Fournival et li response du Bestiaire* (Riccardo Ricciardi, Milan and Naples, 1957); Bartholomew the Englishman, *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (edn cited).
- 55 P.E. Pierrugues, *Glossarium Eroticum Linguae Latinae* (H. Barsdorf Verlag, Berlin, rev. edn 1908), p. 387.
- 56 Tr. Walsh (ed.), *Andreas Capellanus on Love*, p. 75; Latin text, p. 74:

Nam quod ultra cuiusque noscitur pervenire naturam, modica solet aura dissolvi et brevi momento durare. Nam inter lacertivas fertur aves nasci quandoquam quasdam, quae sua virtute vel ferocitate perdices capiunt; sed, quia istud ultra ipsarum noscitur pervenire naturam, fertur quod in eis nisi usque an annum ab earum computandum nativitate haec non possit durare ferocitas.

Other allusions to the partridge can be found on pp. 62, 68 and 122 (Latin text). On the first occurrence, the text has 'perdix vel fasianus'.

- 57 Bossuat, (ed.) *Li Livres d'Amours*, p. 87 (lines 3025-9).
- 58 Walsh, (ed.) *Andreas Capellanus* pp. 128-9.
- 59 See Wetherbee, 'The Function of Poetry', p. 108.

- 60 E. Faral, *Les Arts Poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle* (H. Champion p 1962), p. 325.
- 61 Matthew of Vendome, *Ars Versificatoria*, in Faral, *Les arts poétiques*, pp. 106-93 (for the examples we cite, see pp. 145 and 134). 'Milo', in Cohen, (ed.) *La 'Comédie' latine*, pp. 167-77.
- 62 Bossuat, (ed.) *Li Livres d'Amours*, p. 167 (lines 5815-32); pp 20—1 (lines 710-15).
- 63 P. Mandonnet, *Siger de Brabant et l'averroïsme latin au XIIIe siècle* (Freiburg-im-Breisgau, 1899), pp. ccxxv-ccxxvi, and clxxxiii-clxxxiv. Current research suggests that Fr Mandonnet's interpretation needs to be somewhat modified: J.F. Wippel, 'The Condemnations of 1270 and 1277 at Paris', *The Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 7 (1977), pp. 169-201; R. Hissette, *Enquête sur les 219 articles condamnés à Paris le 7 mars 1277* (Publications Universitaires and Vander-Oyez, Louvain-Paris, 1977). Nonetheless, for our purposes the fact remains that in a specific intellectual milieu, there existed a certain freedom of thought.
- 64 Jean de Meung's joking comment, declaring that it is no more indecent to call the testicles ballocks than to call them *relics*, and vice versa, has been noted by all the commentators. One could read his remark as a bold assertion of the arbitrary nature of the sign. The word in its different uses has one or more obscene meanings and must be capable of being associated with a whole set of metaphors (see lines 19639ff. and 21617ff. of the edition by Felix Lecoy). The sign can be motivated in the erotic language of the clerics and the coherence of the metaphors, even the development of a narrative of this type, could be governed by the associative network of the marginal language. But these are merely Isidorean suggestions. On these problems, see D. Poirion, 'Les Mots et les choses selon Jean de Meung', *Information littéraire*, 26 (1974), pp. 7-11.
- 65 See J. Batany, *Approches du 'Roman de la Rose'* (Bordas, Paris, 1973).
- 66 D. Poirion, *Le Roman de la Rose* (Hatier, Paris, 1973), p. 198.
- 67 See the essential work by P.Y. Badel, *Le Roman de la Rose au XIVe siècle. Etude de la réception de l'oeuvre* (Droz, Geneva, 1980). On the opinion of Martin le Franc, see R. Louis, *Le Roman de la Rose. Essai d'interprétation de l'allégorisme erotique* (H. Champion, Paris, 1974), p. 132.
- 68 See the edition by Felix Lecoy, lines 13245-315.
- 69 See Jean-Charles Payen, *La Rose et Vutopie* (Editions Sociales, Paris, 1976). The author devotes a chapter to the ex-courtesan and also mentions Villon's Belle Heaumiere. One ought perhaps to consider the literary function and psychoanalytic meaning of the always aging courtesan.
- 70 We owe this information to Armand Llinares who was kind enough to pass on to us the text of the lecture 'Raymond Lull, un fou d'amour' that he gave at the Necker Hospital on 13 May 1982. *Tree of Knowledge*, XVI, 8, 14.
- 71 See R. Lapesa Melgar, (ed.) *Diccionario Histórico de la Lengua Española* (Real Academia española, Madrid, 1976).
- 72 B. Mario Damiani, (ed.) *Celestina* (Ediciones Cátedra, Madrid, 1982). principal references are to pp. 74-7, 112, 162-3, 170, 193-9 of this edition.
- 73 Chaucer mentions this influence when his Merchant sees Constantine, whom he calls 'the cursed monk', as a pimp and purveyor of aphrodisiac potions (cf. M. Bassan, 'Chaucer's *Cursed Monk*, Constantinus Africanus', *Mediaeval Studies*, 24 (1962), pp. 127-40, and P. Delany, 'Constantinus Africanus and Chaucer's Merchant Tale', *Philological Quarterly*, 46 (1967), pp. 560-66).

Note that the *De Coitu* derives from a work by ibn al-Jazzâr. It is not known whether it is the translation of an independent treatise or of a sort of somewhat enlarged adaptation of a chapter of the *Viaticum*. E. Montero Cartelle, (ed.) *Constantini Liber de Coitu, El tratado de Andrologia de Constantino el Africano* (University of Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela, 1983).

74 This passage deals with ridding oneself of the obsession:

Hec etenim que imprimit tales formas vel iterum forme delectationem afferentes acquirunt ex omni delectabili sensibus obiecto, ex quorum delectabilem facierum numero consistit balneum temperatum, confabulatio dilectorum, intuitus pulcrorum ac delectabilium facierum et etiam quantum est ex arte coitus, precipue si cum iuuenibus et magis delectationi congruis exerceatur [Arnald of Villanova, *De Amore Heroico*, (F. Fradin, Lyon, 1504)].

The same idea can, of course, be found in Avicenna, *Canon*, bk III, fen 1, tr. 4, ch. 23.

75 In particular in the *Viaticum* (bk VI).

76 See M. Gorlin, *Maimonides 'On Sexual Intercourse fi l-jimâ'*, Medical Historical Studies of Medieval Jewish Medical Works, I (Rambash Pub!., New York, 1961).

77 An examination of the manuscripts demonstrates that the three treatises placed under the name of Trotula were written by men, probably at Salerno, at the end of the twelfth century or the beginning of the thirteenth. Although this group of treatises cannot be attributed to her, it does seem to be attested that a woman doctor, named Trotula, practised at Salerno in the twelfth century. Cf. J.F. Benton, 'Trotula, Women's Problems, and the Professionalization of Medicine in the Middle Ages', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 59 (1985), pp. 30-53. We shall continue to call our author Trotula, because it is under this name that the Middle Ages placed these treatises. For ease of reference, we have used the J. Schott edition (Strasbourg, 1564).

78 An amusing example can be found in a sermon of William Peraldus (thirteenth century); it also bears witness to the rivalry between doctors and priests. The preacher notices that while the woman accepts having her hair shaved without a murmur if it is on doctor's orders, she does not obey the priest who tells her not to wear a wig (MS Paris, Bibliotheque nationale, Latin 16472, fol. 209 v.; we are grateful to David d'Avray for this item of information).

79 Another woman fasts for a month and has herself bled,
So doing in order that she might have a perfectly pale face.
For the woman without pallor seems to resemble a peasant;
Pallor is comely, it is the real colour of the woman in love, she says.
And this woman even covers her lips with various foul colours:
But why does she seek by artifice another colour?

Roger of Caen (died 1095), *De Contemptu Mundi*, ed. Thomas Wright, *Anglo-Latin Satirical Poets and Epigrammatists of the Twelfth Century*, (Longman and

Co., London, 1872), vol. II, p. 186.

80 See M. Ullmann, *Die Medizin im Islam* (Brill, Leyden and Cologne, 1970), pp. 193-8.

81 See Thomasset, *Commentaire du Dialogue*.