

11 Theories on the origin of Courtly Love

1 HISPANO-ARABIC

Courtly Love was either imported into the south of France from Muslim Spain, or was strongly influenced by the culture, poetry and philosophy of the Arabs.

- (a) *Scholarship and culture of the Islamic world.* It was from the Arabs, from the tenth century onwards, that Christian Europe became better acquainted with Hellenic culture. Europe, which was still emerging from barbarism, assimilated the literary, scientific and technological achievements of a civilisation which had already reached its maturity. Lampillas (1778–81); Andrés (1782–1822); Bouterwek (1801–50); Sismondi (1813); Dawson (1935).
- (b) *Chivalry of the Arabs.* The institution and the ideal of chivalry was initially unconnected with the feudal system; it was introduced into Europe from Moorish Spain or from the Middle East, together with Arabian prose romances, through cultural, commercial and military contacts, and as a consequence of the Crusades. Huet (1671); Sismondi (1813); Hammer-Pürgstall (1849); Ghali (1919); Nelli (1963); Graves (1967); Burckhardt (1972).
- (c) *Music.* The music to which the European troubadours set their songs was Arabic in inspiration, and the instruments which they used derived from the Arabs. Ribera y Tarragó (1922); Farmer (1930); Briffault (1945).
- (d) *Rhyme and poetic forms.* The Arabs were the first to compose rhymed verse, and Provence learnt the art from Moorish Spain. Barbieri (d. 1575); Huet (1671); Sismondi (1813); Briffault (1945). Certain reputedly Arabic methods of versification, in particular the *zajal*, have been traced in early Provençal, Galician–Portuguese, and Castilian poetry. Ribera y Tarragó (1928); Nykl (1939); Menéndez Pidal (1941); Nelli (1963).
- (e) *Etymology of 'trobar'.* The verb *trobar*, 'to compose poetry', derives from *ṭarab*, 'music', 'song', or from the root *ḍaraba*, 'to strike'. The Arabic for minstrel or 'troubadour' was *tarabī*. Ribera y Tarragó (1928); Lemay (1966); Monroe (1970); Hussein (1971).
- (f) *Poetic themes.* Hispano-Arabic and medieval European love poetry

share a number of themes and motifs, some of which may be enumerated: the use of the pseudonym or *senhal* to conceal the identity of the lady addressed; the masculine form of address, *midons*, instead of *madonna*; the same *dramatis personae*, such as the guardian, the slanderer and the confidant; the same pathological symptoms of love, namely insomnia, pallor, emaciation and melancholy; a belief in the fatal consequences of this malady, known as '*ishq* or *amor hercos*'; and the use of the spring or nature prelude. Ecker (1934); Nykl (1939); Menéndez Pidal (1941); Pérès (1947); Lévi-Provençal (1948); Nelli (1963); Dutton (1968); Hussein (1971).

- (g) *The concept of love in poetry.* Some, if not all, the essential features of Courtly Love can be discerned in Hispano-Arabic (and even Middle Eastern) poetry: the insatiability of desire; the description of love as exquisite anguish; the elevation of the lady into an object of worship; the poet's submission to her capricious tyranny; and the emphasis on the need for secrecy. Sismondi (1813); Schack (1865); Burdach (1918); Gibb (1931); Nykl (1939); Menéndez Pidal (1941); Pérès (1947); Daniel (1975).
- (h) *Theoretical works on the nature of love.* There are a number of analogies between Courtly Love and the Arabic theory of profane love, which constitutes a distinct Arabic literary genre. The works most frequently cited are Ibn Dāwūd's *Kitāb al-Zahra*, Ibn Ḥazm's *Ṭawq al-Ḥamāma* and Avicenna's *Risāla fi'l-'Ishq*. These works formulated a Platonic ethic which might explain the origin of *fin'amors*. Nykl (1931); Gibb (1931); Denomy (1945); Lévi-Provençal (1948); García Gómez (1952); Hussein (1971).

There are, on the whole, strong grounds for supporting this theory, even if some of the arguments used are false. The cultural supremacy of the Islamic world in the period immediately preceding the rise of the troubadour lyric is indisputable, and the importance of Arabic scholarship as a medium for the transmission of Greek classical texts is widely acknowledged.¹ More important still, poetry was an art in which the Arabs, according to their own estimate, excelled.² In order to prove that Arabic poetry exercised a decisive influence on the development of the Romance lyric, parallels must be established between court poetry composed in Muslim Spain (or in the Middle East) and that which was composed in Provence or elsewhere in Europe. It must then be demonstrated that channels of communication existed between the Islamic world and Christian Europe, and that poets from southern

between Arab and Christian poets (Schlegel, p. 67; Jeanroy, *La Poésie lyrique*, I, pp. 70-1). This argument carries little weight. Prior to the intervention of the fanatical Almohads in the middle of the twelfth century there was constant social intercourse between Muslims, Jews and Christians; within the sphere of religion there was confrontation rather than interchange, but cultural elements which did not threaten religious identity were easily transferable; even in the fifteenth century Henry IV of Castile was able to employ numerous Moors at court and to adopt a Moorish style of life, much to the astonishment of some Bohemian travellers who visited him in 1467.⁴⁵ Women in Muslim Spain were comparatively free: they could meet in public and often wore no veil; their social position was no worse than that of Provençal women, who were kept under the surveillance of a *gardador* (the counterpart to the Arabic *raqib*) (Menéndez Pidal, *Poesía árabe*, pp. 48-9). Intermarriage and a trade in Christian slaves resulted in a greater degree of freedom for women in Muslim Spain than in other parts of the Islamic world: 'the customs of the Spanish Arabs may well have been as much influenced by Christian infiltration, often involuntary, as the other way round' (Daniel, 1975, p. 101).

It has been argued that parallel themes and poetic forms might arise spontaneously in different places, especially in view of the fact that Western Europe and the Islamic world share the same Hellenic heritage and a Semitic monotheistic religion (Bezzola, II, p. 198). It has even been maintained that Courtly Love is itself polygenetic, that is to say its essential features are timeless and transcend geographical boundaries (Dronke, *Medieval Latin*, I, p. ix). Whilst it is true that few of the motifs in the concordances of Ecker and Nykl are exclusive to Arabic and Provençal poetry, the accumulation of analogies is persuasive. Most scholars would, of course, agree that rhyme is polygenetic, and occurs, for instance, in ancient skaldic poetry and in early Christian hymns, but this does not invalidate the main lines of the argument in favour of the Hispano-Arabic theory.

One point should, however, be emphasised. Muslim society was not familiar with that aspect of feudalism which, in medieval Christendom, conditioned all human relations: the bond between a vassal and his feudal lord (Bezzola, II, p. 198). Feudal terminology acquired a specialised meaning in the troubadour lyric (Sutherland, 1956), but the feudal element in Courtly Love has perhaps been exaggerated (Dronke, *Medieval Latin*, I, p. 55). Love service tended to imply an exchange of favours for services rendered, although it was customary, from the thirteenth century onwards, for love poets to disclaim the right to any

reward. The Arab theory of profane love was adapted to suit the needs of a petty nobility, and thus attained a social significance which it appears to have lacked in the more autocratic environment of Muslim Spain.

2 CHIVALRIC-MATRIARCHAL

Courtly Love was the product of the interaction of Christianity and a primitive Germanic/Celtic/Pictish matriarchy, which ensured the survival of pre-Christian sexual mores and a veneration for women amongst the European aristocracy.

- (a) *The privileged status of women in pagan Europe.* Women enjoyed a position of authority amongst the peoples of northern Europe, because they participated in public affairs and were credited with divine or prophetic powers. Warton (1775-81).
- (b) *The Gothic spirit of chivalry.* Women were served and revered amongst the Gothic tribes. A code of morals, based on the service of woman, was a source of moral refinement and heroic action. Millot (1774); Warton (1775-81); Vossler (1929).
- (c) *A subterfuge to avoid ecclesiastical censorship.* The European aristocracy resented having an ascetic morality imposed upon it by the early Church. Courtly and chivalric ideals were devised as a subterfuge to prevent ecclesiastical interference, since 'they gave to customary sex relations the sanction of cultivated taste'. Briffault (1927).

The Chivalric-Matriarchal theory clearly raises more questions than it can solve. Warton, Vossler and most nineteenth-century theorists took it for granted that chastity is a virtue which women universally impose upon their menfolk, whereas Briffault asserted that 'wherever individual women enjoy a position of power, far from imposing or observing chastity, they avail themselves of their independence to exercise sexual liberty' (*Mothers*, ed. G. R. Taylor, p. 387). To the former, troubadour love was chaste and romantic; to the latter, it was sensual and essentially adulterous. Briffault's description of the barbaric behaviour of medieval knights, later romanticised in Arthurian legends, was more realistic than Warton's rosy picture of the Gothic barbarians. Similarly his conviction that troubadour love was basically lascivious would meet with the assent of many medievalists at the present moment. Warton, Vossler and Briffault were, however, agreed that women played an active part in the creation of a new art of gallantry.

In the affluent aristocratic society of Provence and Languedoc women must have been called upon to act as arbiters of fashion and literary taste. Twelfth-century France produced some outstanding women, such as Eleanor of Aquitaine, Marie de Champagne and Ermengarde de Narbonne. There were instances of women who waged war, owned land, ruled principalities and dubbed knights. ~~Yet it must~~ be emphasised that women as a whole never enjoyed ~~anything other~~ than a secondary status in medieval society (Valency, p. 2), and it is uncertain whether pagan Europe was genuinely matriarchal. Throughout the Middle Ages women were simultaneously adored and denigrated (Petrarch, for example, wrote, 'Foemina . . . est diabolus'), and it was paradoxically during the very period when Courtly Love flourished that this ambivalence was most evident. Courtly Love counterbalanced clerical misogyny, but it could scarcely have had a liberating influence. The most that can be said is that the courtly ethic presupposed a certain degree of freedom between the sexes, and that it had a civilising effect on manners (Power, 1926, p. 406). If, as Briffault argued, women were under a moral obligation to reward services performed on their behalf, then it would seem that women had less freedom in the early days of 'chivalry' than they did at a later date. The theory that matriarchy universally precedes patriarchy has, in any case, been refuted by most social anthropologists.⁴⁶ It has even been demonstrated that some primitive peoples have passed from patriarchy to matriarchy. Furthermore a period during which women are venerated and socially predominant is not necessarily matriarchal. Matriarchy must be defined in terms of actual 'mother rule', inheritance through the female line, 'matrilogy', and other specific factors.

Warton was perhaps justified in believing that chastity was itself an object of veneration in primitive times (Warton, diss., p. 67). Briffault had himself suggested that Marianism represented the resurgence of the cult of the Virgin Mother Goddess or Magna Mater which had once prevailed in pagan Europe. There is a primitive chivalrous asceticism, evident in the oaths whereby knights were prepared to do penance until they had performed a particular deed, which probably antedates Christianity. Tacitus, discussing the customs of one of the Germanic tribes, writes, 'The bravest among them wear also an iron ring (a mark of ignominy in that nation) as a kind of chain, till they have released themselves by the slaughter of a foe . . . They have no house, land or domestic cares: they are maintained by whomsoever they visit' (*Germania*, XXXI, Bohn's Classical Library, p. 322). This type of asceticism is illustrated by the activities of a lay institution

called the Fraternity of the Penitents of Love, mentioned by Warton, and described by the Chevalier de la Tour Landry in a book of admonition to his daughters (Huizinga, *Waning*, p. 87). This institution was possibly a late survival of the pagan cult of Cybele.⁴⁷ The desire to incur danger as a proof of love was an essential ingredient of Courtly Love, which was very far from being a cover for promiscuity.

There is perhaps a case for distinguishing, as René Nelli has done, between chivalrous and courtly love. The former, which was devoid of the morbid sensibility and the lively sense of status which informs the latter, would approximate to the matriarchal *mores* about which Briffault speaks. Yet it is impossible to draw a hard-and-fast distinction between these two species of love, or to argue that there was a definite evolution from the former to the latter. The troubadour revival in the late Middle Ages was, after all, inseparable from the revival of chivalry which occurred during this same period. Chivalric gallantry was not, as Hearnshaw imagines, 'a gigantic system of bigamy, in which every lady was expected to have both a husband and a *paramour*'.⁴⁸ Rather it was, to use Huizinga's phrase, 'a dream of heroism and love'. This dream or ideal does not enable us to infer that medieval society was ruled by women. Women ruled the imaginations of men and motivated their conduct, but it is doubtful whether the position of women in society was greatly altered by Courtly Love.

3 CRYPTO-CATHAR

Courtly Love grew out of the Cathar or Albigensian heresy, either as an actual vehicle for Catharist doctrines or as an indirect expression of Cathar sentiments.

- (a) *Coincidence in time and place.* The Cathar heresy flourished in the south of France in the eleventh and twelfth centuries; troubadour poetry reached its apogee between 1150 and 1250 in this same region, at a time when the Cathars were increasingly the victims of religious persecution.
- (b) *Coincidence of anti-papal sentiments.* The Cathars and the troubadours were 'protestant' or anti-papal sectarians, who sought to return to the simplicity and the purity of the primitive Church. The troubadours were, in short, harbingers of the Reformation. Rossetti (1832); Aroux (1854); Méray (1860); Péladan (1906).
- (c) *Coincidence of attitudes to love and marriage.* The Cathars recommended sexual continence; marriage was condemned by the

Perfect as an attempt to vindicate the procreative function of sexuality, which, in their eyes, was responsible for perpetuating the work of the evil demiurge. Courtly Love, being chaste and adulterous, corresponded more closely to the morality of the Cathars than to that of orthodox Christianity. De Rougemont (1939); Nelli (1963).

- (d) *Obscurity of poetic diction.* The deliberately enigmatic style of *trobar clus* lends itself to interpretation on several levels. The emphasis on secrecy, service, suffering and death indicate that Courtly Love was a vehicle for Catharist doctrines. Rossetti (1832); Aroux (1854); de Rougemont (1939).
- (e) *The ecstatic impulse of Eros.* Courtly Love and the Cathar heresy were both inspired by Eros: the soul's nostalgic and insatiable desire to dissolve itself in the Unity whence it sprang. Death is the ultimate obstacle to which passion irrevocably leads. De Rougemont (1939).

The main argument in favour of the Crypto-Cathar thesis is that the environment in which the early troubadours were writing was predominantly Cathar. There is no *prima facie* evidence that they were not Cathar sympathisers. The enigmatic *trobar clus* (or closed style) and the occurrence of the love-death equation, extolling death as a form of liberation, obviously leave room for conjecture. The Cathar condemnation of marriage provided the troubadours with an excellent moral pretext for celebrating extra-conjugal love, and it is possible, as René Nelli suggests, that some of them simulated chastity, either as a respectful tribute to the morality of the Perfect or as a necessary expedient in poetry addressed to castle ladies who were very often Cathar believers 'whose bad consciences had to be pacified by song' (quoted in de Rougemont, *Passion*, p. 114). This hypothesis is not improbable, because, according to Steven Runciman, an authority on the Manichees, 'one of the most spectacular aspects of the Cathar movement in southern France was the enthusiasm with which it was supported by the great ladies of the country'.⁴⁹ Women no doubt imagined that Catharism protected their interests. There is, for example, the case, reported by Runciman, of a girl who was accused of being a Cathar because she resisted the advances of the canon, Gervase of Tilbury. 'Good young man,' she protested, 'God doesn't wish me to be your lover or that of any man, since if I should lose my virginity and my flesh should once be corrupted, without doubt I should fall irredeemably into eternal damnation.'⁵⁰ She was found

guilty of heresy and burnt at the stake. By exalting the preservation of the human species as the noblest function of love Jean de Meun directed a double-edged assault against Courtly Love and the Cathar heresy: 'Pansez de mener bone vie, / aut chascuns anbracier s'amie, / et son ami chascune anbrace / et bese et festoie et solace.'⁵¹ The courtly lover and the Albigensian heretic were both liable to be charged with Forced Abstinence.

The recurrent troubadour theme of 'la mort-par-l'amour' may be taken as supporting the Crypto-Cathar thesis. Nelli believed that this theme was Arabic and mystical in origin, but he noted that it was employed in two contradictory senses. The lover longs for death, either because he knows that his love could never be fulfilled by the pleasures of this world or because these same pleasures have been denied him:

Tantôt, c'est l'excès même de son désir—le *Joi*—qui est censé faire mourir l'amant, la mort étant souhaitée par lui comme réalisant l'amour. (Et il y a bien là une sorte de transposition de la théorie arabe selon laquelle l'amour pur, *insatisfait par essence*, ne peut s'exprimer en ce bas monde que sous forme d'aspiration à la mort.) Tantôt, ce qui amène, au contraire, la mort de l'amant, c'est tout simplement l'insatisfaction sur le plan terrestre: la dame le désespère par sa rigueur, et comme elle ne lui accorde rien de ce qu'il désire, il souffre au point d'en mourir. (*L'Érotique*, p. 73)

The identification of love and death may be found in Arabic love poetry, in the Cathar *consolamentum*, in the *mors oculi* of the Cabbala, and in the *hieros gamos* of the Hellenistic mysteries. It is also, of course, present in the Christian biblical tradition, and is expressed in the idea of the seed that must die to be reborn.⁵²

The theory that the Cathar heresy was a formative influence on the troubadour ideal of *fin'amors* accords with the Hispano-Arabic thesis, according to Jean-Claude Vadet, there were definite links between Manichaeism and early Arabic love poetry (Vadet, 1968, pp. 171-8; 436-7). The eighth-century Iraqi poet Bashshār b. Burd (d. 783) was condemned to death as a *zindīq* or crypto-Manichee, because he identified the lady to whom he addressed his poetry with the Spirit or *rūh*, an intermediary between man and God. The *mu'tazalite* sect to which Bashshār belonged developed the theory of '*ishq*, which sought to reconcile the materialism of Persian and Ionian physics with the belief in a single Divinity. In the ninth century the cosmic principle of '*ishq* was modified by the influence of Plato's *Timaeus* and the *Symposium*. It is significant that the *zindīq* practised *zarf* or courtliness, which means that he was generally from the upper strata of society. The

expression 'more elegant than a Manichee' is proverbial in the Middle East. 'Par la prédominance qu'il donne à la vie intérieure l'esprit courtois paraît très enclin au dualisme si ce dernier est . . . un refus délibéré du monde extérieur' (Vadet, p. 437). The chaste and suicidal love codified by Ibn Dāwūd and Ibn Ḥazm was probably influenced by Manichaean habits of mind. It is thus possible that the Provençal troubadours were well disposed to the Cathars partly as a result of the Arabic theory of *'ishq* (or vice versa).

During the twelfth century the Church had little power to intervene in the daily lives of those who lived in the principalities of southern France. The clergy had acquired a reputation for greed and debauchery; many of the troubadours were in consequence violently anti-clerical, and some became ardent supporters of the Ghibelline cause. Anti-clericalism should not, however, be confused with Catharism, nor should the Cathars be confused with Ghibellines, Lollards and Franciscan 'Spirituals', as though they were all members of one vast conspiracy. Furthermore the coexistence of Catharism and Courtly Love does not in itself prove that they were genetically linked.

Little is actually known about the Cathars, because few documents have survived. According to the Abbé Foncaude, the Cathars 'differed from the Church of Rome merely in denying the sovereignty of the Pope, the powers of the priesthood, the efficacy of prayers for the dead, and the existence of purgatory' (Sismondi, I, p. 216). If this is true an analogy could be drawn between the Cathars and the Protestants of the Reformation. Whether or not the Cathars were genuine Manichees, the Church never accused the troubadours, as a group, of Catharism (Russell, 1965-66, p. 36), nor can it be proved that Cathars were more tolerant to *fin'amors* than orthodox Christians. Moreover the Cathars were not persecuted before 1210, so there was no need for elaborate concealment (Jackson, *The Literature*, p. 241). The worst charge against Crypto-Cathar theorists is that they systematically ignore the literal meaning of a text: 'Le sophisme fondamental est celui de tous les maniaqués de l'ésotérisme; on prend un texte, on en refuse le sens obvie, on y infuse un sens secret et on se redresse triomphant: "Prouvez-moi qu'il est impossible"' (Davenson, *Les Troubadours*, pp. 142-4). The attractiveness of the theory is also considerably diminished if, as many critics now agree, Courtly Love was not essentially extra-conjugal nor necessarily chaste.

Denis de Rougemont's thesis lays itself open to criticism. The observation that passion thrives on obstacles scarcely justifies postulating the existence of a self-destructive impulse; still less can such an

impulse be defined by the term Eros, Freud's life principle. In proposing that this impulse was historically determined, de Rougemont mixed bad history with bad psychology. He failed to differentiate carefully between *fin'amors*, which was based on a pledge of faith, and the fatal passion of Tristan and Iseult, which was initiated by a love potion, an extraneous device precluding freedom of choice. Nor was it ever adequately explained how the myth of Tristan could have been affiliated with Catharist doctrines. The *matière de Bretagne* was certainly known to the troubadours, but it was only of marginal importance, and was not Manichaean. The tension between mind and matter or soul and body is probably at the root of all love poetry, and the germ of dualism is latent within all religions that stress the transcendence of the Deity.⁵³ The most that can be said in favour of the Crypto-Cathar thesis is that the early troubadours may have attempted to make their songs conform, at least superficially, to the morality of the Cathars. The cult of 'la mort-par-l'amour' and the image of the *belle dame sans merci* may owe something to the Cathar environment, but both can be accounted for in other ways.

4 NEOPLATONIC

Courtly Love was fostered by Neoplatonism, which conceived of the soul as a substance, divine in origin, yearning to be liberated from the prison of created matter in order to ascend to the First Principle, the source of beauty and goodness.

- (a) *Contact with Neoplatonism.* The currents of thought which reached the south of France between the late tenth and the early twelfth centuries were primarily Neoplatonic, which means that the troubadours must have been exposed to such influences. Denomy (1944).
- (b) *The thought pattern of Courtly Love.* The basic thought pattern underlying the poetry of the troubadours, namely the supremacy of the love object, the upward surge of the lover and the insatiability of desire, is Neoplatonic. Denomy (1944).
- (c) *The amorality of the courtly ethic.* Although Courtly Love developed in a Christian milieu (twelfth-century Languedoc), it was amoral in the sense that its moral standards were not those of Christianity. Dawson (1935); Denomy (1944); Lazar (1964).
- (d) *The ascent of Eros.* Plotinus reinterpreted the Platonic Eros as a compound of need and abundance, which participates in matter

and yet desires the Good from the moment of its birth; Courtly Love was similarly intended to pass through frustration to sublimation. De Rougemont (1939); Denomy (1944); D'Arcy (1945).

- (e) *The ennobling effects of love and beauty.* According to Neoplatonism, created beauty acts as an incentive to the Godhead; similarly the courtly lover improves his conduct and his character by contemplating his lady's moral and physical excellence. Denomy (1944).

The Platonism of the Middle Ages was largely Neoplatonic and Augustinian. Neoplatonism reached the Latin Middle Ages from a variety of sources. Arab philosophy, including the works of Avicenna, was imbued with Neoplatonic thought, largely owing to the misapprehension that Aristotle was the author of two works, the *Liber de causis* and the *Theologia aristotelica*, which in fact comprised extracts from the *Institutio theologica* of Proclus and the *Enneads* of Plotinus respectively. Neoplatonism was present in Boethius, in Macrobius, in the Christian adaptations of Dionysius the Areopagite and Scotus Eriugena, and was fused in the theology of St Augustine and St Thomas Aquinas. The Cathars, whose doctrines were Gnostic in origin, shared Plotinus' view that human existence represents a descent of the soul into matter: 'By its presence, matter is the cause of the soul's exerting its generative powers, and being led thus to suffering.'⁵⁴ It should, however, be emphasised that, for Plotinus, matter is created by the Soul and has no independent existence. The naturalistic current in Neoplatonism, which was prominent in Arab philosophy, conceived of the cosmos as a series of emanations from the First Principle, which could be studied through mathematics and the natural sciences. The mystical current, exemplified in pseudo-Dionysius, in St Augustine and in the works of the Šūfīs, stressed the inwardness of religious experience and hence the independence of the individual from external authority. Augustinian and Avicennist schools of thought were replaced by Aristotelianism in the thirteenth century, but the Neoplatonic tradition was never eradicated. However, until Marsilio Ficino began to translate the works of Plato in 1463, and to write his *Theologica Platonica*, there was no such thing as a single coherent Neoplatonic system.

Neoplatonism, which was, after all, a 'religion of Eros', might explain how a love which for Christians was sinful could have been exalted as pure and ennobling. In modern theological terms, Courtly Love could be defined as a love of Eros rather than a love of Agape, because the lover was prompted by an ecstatic impulse to submit him-

self to the sovereignty of a lady, who, as a consequence of her beauty, virtue, rank and, very often, married status, was unapproachable or sexually unattainable. The lover's growth in worth was considered, in theory, to be a sufficient compensation for the pains of love service. Thus in many ways the ideology of the troubadours reflects a Neoplatonic mentality: 'L'idéal d'amour que les troubadours introduisent dans une société christianisée depuis des siècles, a été formé et développé par toute une tradition néo-platonicienne' (Lazar, 1964, p. 13). Neoplatonism is especially evident in Matfré Ermengaud's *Lo breviari d'amor*⁵⁵ and, of course, in Dante's *Divina Commedia*. The condemnation of jealousy by the early troubadours is, for example, consistent with Platonism: 'Que gelosia es fols ressos / don totz lo mons brai e crida'.⁵⁶

Although the general intellectual background of the troubadour lyric could be described as Neoplatonic, Courtly Love was not mystical: there was no movement from individual to universal beauty, nor was there, as in Dante's works, any ascent from the human to the divine. There are also chronological reasons for doubting whether the early troubadours could have had access to Arab Neoplatonism before about 1130, unless they were able to read or speak Arabic, which is not unlikely (Denomy, 1953). Theodore Silverstein noted that certain aspects of *fin'amors* are absent from Avicenna's doctrine of 'pure' love: there is no mention of what Andreas calls *zelotypia* (a fear lest love should not be reciprocated and an anxiety for the beloved's well-being), nor is there any reference to the state of exultation called *joy* in Provençal. The Provençal idea of *joy* was, however, accurately defined by the Neoplatonist Šūfī Ibn Arabī:

If union with the beloved is not personal union, and the beloved is a superior being who imposes obligations on the lover, then the fulfilment of these obligations sometimes takes the place of personal union, producing in him a joy which obliterates the awareness of sorrow from his soul.⁵⁷

The spiritual aspirations of Šūfī and Christian mysticism were probably more important than the highly intellectual philosophical works which would not have been available at first hand.

5 BERNARDINE-MARIANIST

The mysticism of St Bernard and the cult of the Virgin Mary influenced the ideas and sentiments of troubadour poetry, and contributed to the birth of Courtly Love.

- (a) *Nostalgia*. The courtly lover and the Christian mystic share the same yearning for a distant ideal: an *amor de lonh*. Spitzer (1944).
- (b) *Spiritual aspiration*. Courtly Love was an effort, in response to Cistercian mysticism, to bring the physical appetites into harmony with the spirit. Wechssler (1909); Lot-Borodine (1928); Foster (1963).
- (c) *Disinterestedness*. Profane love service was modelled on service to God; the troubadour, like the mystic, proved his love through suffering, and disclaimed any right to favours. Wechssler (1909); Lot-Borodine (1928).
- (d) *Ecstasy*. The courtly lover, like the Christian mystic, seeks to merge himself in the object of his love; he falls into a trance at the sight of his beloved, or loses himself in the contemplation of her image. Wechssler (1909).
- (e) *Martyrdom*. The romantic glorification of agony, a trope rooted in Christianity, was a central feature of the medieval love lyric. Wilhelm (1965).
- (f) *Redemption*. The courtly lover begs his lady to offer him a sign of recognition, a *salute*, because his fate rests in her hands. If she accords him this blessing he is transformed by *joy* into a 'new man'. Russell (1965-66).
- (g) *Marianism*. Courtly Love was a profane aristocratic counterpart to the cult of the Virgin Mary. Symonds (1883); Adams (1913); Power (1926); Ahsmann (1933); Wilhelm (1965).
- (h) *Appropriation of religious terms*. The use of religious terms, concepts and metaphors implies a transfer of religious emotion. Lot-Borodine (1928); Russell (1965-66).

It should be stated at the outset that, although Marianism and Bernardine mysticism are related phenomena, St Bernard himself did not approve of the new cult of Mary. When a Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady was celebrated at Lyons in 1140 he protested against 'this new feast of which the custom of the Church knows nothing, which reason does not approve, and that tradition does not authorize' (de Rougemont, *Passion*, p. 111). Since, however, the Order of St Bernard placed its churches under the special protection of the Virgin Mary, there is a case for conflating the two theories. The knights of St Bernard were, after all, 'knights of Mary'.⁵⁸ Furthermore Bernardine mysticism was closer to the popular devotion of the people than other contemporary intellectual developments.

It could be argued that the Cistercian movement, which began in

1098, coincided, and was therefore linked, with the birth of Courtly Love. St Bernard, having joined the Order in 1112, founded the Abbey of Clairvaux in 1115. The activity of St Bernard and Hugh of St Victor began towards 1120-30; the first great poets whose poetry displays mystical elements appeared towards the middle of the century: Jaufré Rudel, Bernart de Ventadorn and Pierre Rogier. Between 1170 and 1270 the French built eighty cathedrals and nearly 500 churches of the cathedral class, most of which were dedicated to the Virgin Mary (Adams, p. 92). It would indeed be surprising if certain general analogies could not be found between religious and literary movements during this period. There is a sense in which, both for the mystic and for the courtly lover, desire interposes a distance, in time or place, between the lover and the object of his love: 'l'éloignement est paradoxalement consubstantiel avec le désir de l'union' (Spitzer, *L'Amour lointain*, p. 21). In the words of Abbot Gilbert de Hoy, in his continuation of St Bernard's *Sermones super Cantica*: 'Ubi viget amor, ibi viget languor, si absit quod amatur' (Lot-Borodine, 1928, p. 232; Spitzer, p. 15). This stress on absence lent troubadour poetry a metaphysical slant: 'C'est le lointain qui donne à la tenue morale un rayonnement métaphysique et un sens à l'amour' (Spitzer, p. 16). Absence or non-attainment allowed the poet to concentrate on an inner vision of beauty; it was the means whereby the poet, in love with love and unwilling to risk disillusion, guaranteed the integrity of his ideal, in accordance with St Augustine's injunction 'Noli foras ire: in interiore animae habitat veritas' (Spitzer, p. 38). The lover regarded himself as a martyr subject to the whims of the person whom he 'adored'. She was the sole arbiter of his destiny, endowed with the power to kill or to save. This religion of profane love demanded patience, humility, abnegation, obedience and fidelity, and was a source of elegance and social refinement, but it was also self-consciously fictitious (Singleton, in Newman, p. 47).

Étienne Gilson has convincingly demonstrated that Bernardine mysticism could not have contributed to the birth of Courtly Love, because the activity of St Bernard coincided with the most flourishing period of troubadour poetry, in the middle of the twelfth century, not with its beginnings (Gilson, *The Theology*, p. 170). Scarcely any poetry was dedicated to the Virgin Mary before 1150 (Ahsmann, 1929, p. 110), and it was only after 1230 that Marianism reached its height (Jeanroy, *La Poésie lyrique*, II, p. 130).⁵⁹ The troubadours were under increasing pressure, when the Albigensian Crusade ended in 1229, to make their poetry conform to ecclesiastical requirements. It is there-

fore more probable that Courtly Love contributed to the rise of Marianism than the reverse: 'The worship of the Virgin responded to a vital necessity for the Church while under threat and pressure' (de Rougemont, *Passion*, p. 111). As with countless cults and customs, 'the Church adopted what she could not suppress' (Briffault, *The Troubadours*, p. 154).

Gilson has also proved, by means of selected passages, as Briffault and Lazar have done, that Courtly Love was far from being disinterested or Platonic in the vulgar sense. Even if it could be shown that it was a sensual interpretation of the mystical love of St Bernard the thesis would, he insisted, remain a sophism, because the two loves are mutually exclusive (Gilson, p. 179). The parallel between the *amor purus* of Andreas and the pure love of the mystic is entirely specious, because the 'purity of courtly love keeps the lovers apart, while that of mystical love unites them' (p. 193). *Amor mixtus* is, in some respects, more acceptable to a Christian theologian than *amor purus*, which permits everything short of the sexual act. As C. S. Lewis says, 'medieval theory', by which he means Church theory, 'finds room for innocent sexuality: what it does not find room for is passion' (Lewis, 1936, pp. 16-17). Andreas wrote, 'reddit hominem castitatis quasi virtute decoratum'. Special emphasis should be given to the word *quasi* (Gilson, p. 196). An even more important distinction between love directed to God and love directed towards a human being is that the former can never be unrequited, while the latter is never sure of requital. The courtly lover is thus a prey to fears and anxieties which are completely foreign to the mystic. 'Caritas mittit foras timorem' was a maxim, taken from the Gospel of St John, on which St Bernard frequently meditated (Gilson, p. 182). If Gilson is correct, one must conclude that those analogies which exist between Courtly Love and Bernardine mysticism are either of such a general nature that they prove nothing, or formulas which have acquired a totally different meaning in their new context.

6 SPRING FOLK RITUAL

Courtly Love evolved out of the folk traditions and ritual dance songs of Europe, particularly those associated with the rites of spring, or it was an actual survival of the pagan cult of Cybele or Maia, the Great Mother of the Gods.

(a) *Spring nature prelude*. Many troubadour lyrics contain a descrip-

tion, usually in the opening stanza, of trees in blossom, singing birds, and a fountain of cool water. This picture of the rebirth of nature is appropriate to a lyrical tradition which originated in hymns to the goddess of Nature. Paris (1891-92); Anglade (1908); Chaytor (1912); C. B. Lewis (1934); Wilhelm (1965).

- (b) *Easter: season of joy and regeneration*. Just as the May festival marks the rebirth of nature after the winter, so Easter, which occurs in late March or in April, commemorates Christ's resurrection. The terms *jovens* and *joy* are used repeatedly by the troubadours. It was in Holy Week that Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Ausias March and many others met the lady with whom they fell in love.
- (c) *Adultery or free love*. It was the convention in May Day songs and in *chansons de mal-mariée* to scoff at the odious bonds of matrimony, and to treat the husband as an easily outwitted enemy. The goddess, whose festival was at the vernal equinox, on 25 March, did not recognise marriage, but required free love from all her votaries. Courtly Love was extra-conjugal, and generally adulterous. Paris (1891-92); C. B. Lewis (1934).
- (d) *Lack of individuality*. There is little difference between the lady of one poet and that of another. Cybele or Maia was the prototype of the Virgin Mary and of the lady addressed by the troubadours. C. B. Lewis (1934).
- (e) *Humble adoration*. The courtly lover was the 'servant' of a *domna*, a lady of high rank, who represented an ideal of womankind. The worshipper of Cybele likewise declared himself a 'servant' of a goddess, who alone deserved the title of *Domina*. C. B. Lewis (1934).
- (f) *Secrecy*. The practice of using a *senhal* or pseudonym originated in the worship of Cybele, whose name could only be pronounced in her innermost sanctuary. C. B. Lewis (1934).
- (g) *Growth in virtue*. 'I have fled the bad, I have found the better' was a ritual formula used in the ceremonies of the Phrygian cult of Cybele, and one which occurs in the poetry of the troubadours. C. B. Lewis (1930).

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries courtly and popular genres were not as clearly differentiated as they were later to become. There must therefore have been a constant process of cross-fertilisation, as regards both form and content (Bec, *Mélanges Lejeune*, II, pp. 1310-15). The region of Poitou, from which the first known troubadour, Guilhem IX, originated, is particularly rich in popular verse, and his poetry and that

of his contemporaries contains frequent allusions to the season of May. Love, spring, Christ's passion, and spiritual regeneration create a web of associations which were exploited by many medieval poets, including Dante in the *Vita nuova*. Holy Week was traditionally connected with the genesis of love, and an analogy was sometimes drawn between the suffering of love and the passion of Christ. It was also on May Day, soon after Holy Week, that the poetic academies of Toulouse and Barcelona celebrated their annual Floral Games. The coveted prize on these occasions was the golden replica of a violet, a flower which is said to have sprung from the blood of Attis,⁶⁰ when he was killed by a wild boar and transformed into a pine tree. The name of Attis was linked with that of Cybele, the great Asiatic goddess of fertility. **The worship of Cybele had been adopted by the Romans in 204 B.C.** and spread throughout the Roman Empire—along the northern coast of Africa and throughout southern Gaul. In Europe it survived in the May Day festival, when a tree, usually a pine tree, was cut down to serve as a maypole, which was wrapped in purple bands and decorated with violets. The mysterious apostrophe to the 'flowers of the pine tree' in the famous song by King Dinis of Portugal, 'Ai flores, ai flores do verde pino',⁶¹ is therefore possibly associated with the sacred drama of Cybele and Attis. In the twelfth century there existed in Languedoc an institution called the Fraternity of the Penitents of Love, whose members were known as Galois or Galoises. The term *Galli* was applied to the castrated priests of Attis who scourged themselves to the accompaniment of drums, pipes and deafening cries.⁶² It is therefore not impossible that vestigial traces of the cult of Cybele can be discovered in troubadour poetry. It is significant that Cybele was served by singers, crowned in laurel, and that at Rome they were trained at a *Schola cantorum* (C. B. Lewis, 1934, p. 26). It is doubtful, however, whether this theory could account for any of the essential features of Courtly Love.

May Day theorists tend to belong to that class of critics, which includes Denis de Rougemont and Jessie Weston, whom Silverstein has described as 'literary peckers' (Newman, 1968, p. 85): it is argued that by stripping a poem of its individual traits and courtly accretions one may infer the existence of a single primal sub-genre, from which, it is deduced, all European vernacular poetry is descended. This regressive and inductive method of reasoning was criticised by Joseph Bédier in a review article on Gaston Paris' theories (Bédier, 1896). In fact popular genres, such as *pastourelles* and *reverdies*, were artificially adapted to a courtly environment, and are, for that reason, quite distinct in tone

from court love songs. C. B. Lewis must be charged with sophistry of a different kind; he can be classed, once again with de Rougemont, among 'les maniaques de l'ésoterisme' (Davenson, *Les Troubadours*, p. 144) because he expects every poem to fit an obscure hypothesis. This does not mean that the theory is totally invalid, but merely that no theory can claim a monopoly of the truth.

A more serious objection to the Folk Ritual thesis is that it cannot explain one of the most important features of Courtly Love, namely the belief in love's ennobling power (Bédier, 1896, p. 172). C. B. Lewis countered this objection by quoting the Roman historian Diodorus Siculus, who wrote, with reference to the cult of Cybele, 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'.⁶³ These sentiments are scarcely applicable to the May festivities in medieval Europe. The anti-matrimonial character of May Day has little bearing on Courtly Love, because if a poet addressed his verses to a married woman (which was by no means always the case), he never proclaimed the right to rebel against the institution of marriage; he merely pretended to be unaware of the existence of social constraints. Courtly Love did not liberate women from their parents and husbands, nor did it promote sexual licence. The Folk Ritual theory may explain certain extraneous aspects of Courtly Love, but as a theory of origin it is unconvincing.

7 FEUDAL-SOCIOLOGICAL

Courtly Love may be explained by certain sociological factors operating within the feudal environment of twelfth-century Europe, chief of which was the rapid promotion of new men into the ranks of the nobility.

- (a) *The practice of arranged marriages.* In a society where marriages were arranged by the parents of the bride and bridegroom, in accordance with political and mercenary interests, it was inevitable that love and marriage should have been considered mutually exclusive. Courtly Love was, as a consequence, an extra-conjugal affair. Paget (1884); Lewis (1936).
- (b) *The feudal contract.* Love service or *domnei* was constituted on the analogy of the feudal relationship between a vassal and his overlord: the lover swore an oath of allegiance to his lady, and made a pledge to obey her and to abide by certain rules, such as secrecy,

patience and moderation. Fauriel (1846); Wechssler (1909); Chaytor (1912); Lewis (1936); Jackson (1960).

- (c) *The absence of men on crusades.* A woman of noble birth whose husband or brother was absent on a crusade or a military expedition might be called upon to act, in his stead, as a feudal suzerain, thus facilitating the transference of feudal concepts to love. Chaytor (1912); Jackson (1960).
- (d) *Social mobility and the decline of feudalism.* The troubadours generally belonged to the lower nobility, a class comprising *ministeriales* and court officials who had recently been promoted. Lacking the prestige of inherited wealth and noble birth, they argued that nobility was a potential virtue which had to be earned by courtesy, valour and personal merit. The courtly ethic was thus sponsored by the very classes whose basis it undermined. Valency (1958); Köhler (1964).
- (e) *A high sex ratio.* A shortage of females in the upper strata of society, which was a consequence of upward social mobility, made it difficult for knights to marry. In those regions where this phenomenon occurred women were idealised and love poetry prospered. Moller (1958-59). Males were predominant within the confines of the medieval castle because it was a place of training for novice knights, and few men could afford the luxury of a wife. Paget (1884).
- (f) *The dream of hypergamy.* It was essential that a knight should not demean himself by marrying beneath his station. In the south of France, where the daughters of noblemen had the right to inherit property and where the nobility, in the twelfth century, remained an open class, hypergamy was particularly tantalising, whilst women, in such circumstances, could afford to be haughty and capricious. Moller (1958-59).
- (g) *Social anxieties.* The fluidity of class barriers created a sense of insecurity, both for the social upstart and for the nobleman of ancient lineage. The troubadour of humble origin regarded his lady as a figure of authority, capable of allaying his social anxieties and his fear of detractors, whilst the aristocrat was obliged to prove that he was worthy of his status. Moller (1958-59).
- (h) *The aristocratic 'juvenes'.* The courtly and chivalric literature of twelfth-century France (and of Europe as a whole in succeeding centuries) was conditioned by the tastes and ideals of a large group of young men, recently dubbed or aspiring to knighthood, who were without children or material commitments, and who were,

in many cases, deprived by the principle of primogeniture from the prospect of inheritance. Heer (1962); Duby (1964).

Even if Courtly Love were a mere literary fantasy, divorced from the realities of everyday life, it would still be important to ascertain what social factors caused poets to turn their backs on life. Courtly and chivalric ideals were not in fact confined to literature, but informed the manners and conduct of the aristocracy. The courtly lyric was moreover the symptom of a social activity practised at court (Jackson, 1958; Stevens, 1961), which was fashioned, to some extent, by feudal concepts. No theory that purports to explain the origin of Courtly Love can afford to ignore sociology. The analysis of quantifiable changes in the structure of medieval society in relation to social institutions and cultural ideals is a subject which is still in its infancy. Earlier theorists such as Fauriel, Wechssler and C. S. Lewis concentrated on feudalism as a static institution, and exaggerated the feudal overtones of Courtly Love.⁶⁴ Most social theorists would now agree that the new ideology was formulated by a recently ennobled class, and that social mobility was therefore important as a background to the courtly mentality. The theory that a preponderance of males in the upper classes or, more specifically, in the court environment contributed to the birth of Courtly Love is one which deserves more serious consideration. Moller's research into the sex composition of different European populations in the twelfth century was inevitably based on unreliable data, but his findings were at least partially anticipated by Violet Paget in 1884. It might be worth studying whether a similar correlation could be established between social mobility and the revival of troubadour poetry in late medieval Spain and elsewhere.

It is important to remember that changes in the sex or class composition of different social groups are mostly the consequence of socio-economic factors. An increment in the wealth of the ruling classes in the south of France during the twelfth century permitted an influx of persons into the service of princes and barons. At the same time this wealth, derived from the development of manufacturing industries, increasing trade links with the Orient and the introduction of new agricultural methods,⁶⁵ created a powerful bourgeoisie which threatened to undermine the feudal basis of the aristocracy. The establishment of a more stable currency made it gradually possible to replace or supplement payments and services in kind by an exchange of money, thereby loosening personal ties of dependence and permitting the individual more freedom of movement. Furthermore the inhabitant of a burgh

township enjoyed rights, as a member of a community, which were denied to the feudal vassal, who was bound to render onerous services in return for protection. A 'feudalisation of love' thus occurred when feudalism was beginning to decline. The principle of primogeniture, which was adopted by the aristocracy of the twelfth century as a means of avoiding the constant subdivision of fiefs, was another socio-economic factor which indirectly influenced the cultural ideals of the period, since it increased the number of unattached landless knights, who were debarred by prescriptive custom from stooping to productive labour. In an age when the feudal contract ceased to exercise the same sense of moral compulsion over lords and vassals, and when rapid changes in the structure of society resulted in friction and insecurity, Courtly Love, itself a patron-client relationship, may have acted to some extent as a cohesive force between the ruling élite and those who were affiliated to them. The courtly lover was, to adapt Veblen's phrase, 'conspicuously subservient', while women of noble birth, having been endowed with that 'prerogative of leisure which is the mark of gentility', required entertainment.⁶⁶ It was in the interests of the princes and magnates to promote the new ideology because it guaranteed fidelity from their noble subjects and prevented them from stirring up trouble on their rural estates. Moreover it may, as Köhler suggested, have served to neutralise the conflict at court between the old hereditary nobility and the petty nobility of recent origin. These are all factors which might be studied more carefully. Huizinga noted that ideals, however delusory, are no less important to the cultural historian than the real but hidden socio-economic forces which are known in retrospect to have shaped the course of history. However, like most theorists of Courtly Love, he underestimated the influence of the latter upon the former.

The materialistic and utilitarian character of medieval marriage is one of the few socio-economic factors which has been considered relevant. 'Any idealization of sexual love, in a society where marriage is purely utilitarian, must,' according to C. S. Lewis, 'begin by being an idealization of adultery' (Lewis, 1936, p. 13). This argument is obviously fallacious. If love was not normally connected with marriage, we must conclude that love was extra-conjugal, which is not to say that it was necessarily adulterous. There is, in any case, a more fundamental reason for this situation: in the words of Andreas, 'the easy attainment of love makes it little prized' (Andreas, trans. Parry, p. 184). It may also be observed that conjugal love was not immune from amatory ideals. There were no doubt some husbands in the Middle Ages

who sought to follow the example of the Franklin in *The Frankeleyns Tale*, and shared his opinion that 'Love wol nat been constreynd by maistry'.⁶⁷ Since, however, the *fin amant* did not, at least ostensibly, woo his lady with a view to marriage, it is doubtful whether any significance can be attached to the practice of hypergamy.

The chief objection to a purely sociological approach is that society is not the only context within which poetry should be judged; it is also the product of an intellectual environment, shaped by philosophical and religious ideas and by literary traditions and influences. The sociologist tends to be concerned with poetry only in as much as it reflects certain aspects of society. This theory would nevertheless appear to be one of the most important theories of origin.

NOTES

- ¹ For a summary of the present state of scholarship consult Watt, *The Influence of Islam*. See also *The Legacy of Islam*, 2nd edn., ed. Schacht and Bosworth (Oxford, 1974); Aldobrandino Malvezzi, *L'Islamismo e la cultura europea* (Florence, 1956); Jean Paul Roux, *L'Islam en Occident* (Paris: Payot, 1959); Youakim Moubarac, *Pentalogie Islamo-Chrétienne* (5 vols, Beirut: Editions du Cénacle Libanais, 1972-73).
- ² Vicente Cantarino, *Arabic Poetics in the Golden Age. Selection of texts, accompanied by a preliminary study* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975).
- ³ The oldest extant *zajal* date from the late eleventh and twelfth centuries. Whether they were disseminated from Andalusia or whether they occurred spontaneously in the popular lyric of different countries is uncertain. M. Hartmann argued that the *muwashshah* and *zajal* originated in certain metrical forms of Eastern Arabic poetry such as the *musammaʿ* which occur in pre-Islamic and Abbasid poetry (*Das Arabische Strophengedichte*, I, *Das Muwaššāh* [Weimar, 1897]). Stern has demonstrated that these poetic forms were almost certainly inspired by poetry which was indigenous to Spain. Guido Errante discovered an eighth-century inscription in Latin with the rhyme scheme aaab:

Te semper sobrium
Te cernebamus modestum
Tu tribulantium
Sis consolatio vera

(Errante, 1948, p. 73.). This poem requires a prelude or refrain to form the rhyme scheme of the *zajal*; see Stern (1974), pp. 208-14.

- ⁴ 'The *kharija* is the last of the *qufla* (lines ending in a common rhyme) of the *muwashshah*; it is a separate unit . . . The lines of the *kharija* are placed in the mouth of a character other than the poet. In most cases it reproduced the words of women (probably of singing girls), of young men, of drunkards, or even of doves cooing in the branches' (Ibn Sanā'al-Mulk, in Stern, 1974, p. 126).
- ⁵ Ibn Dāwūd al-Isfahānī al-Zahīrī (868-909), *Kitāb al-Zahra*, ms Cairo, IV, 260, analysed in Louis Massignon, *La Passion d'al-Hosayn-ibn-Mansour al-Hallāj, martyr mystique de l'Islam* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1922), I, pp. 170-9; Nykl, *Ispano-Arabie Poetry*, p. 123; Vadet (1968), pp. 264-316. Massignon translates the title as *Book of Venus*, which Gibb accepts, whereas Nykl, who edited the work in 1932, translates it as *Book of the Flower*. Ibn Dāwūd describes his intentions in his preface: 'J'y ai placé