# The Virgin and the Lady: Some Considerations on the Intersections between Courtly and Marian Literature

## *Brian K. Reynolds[*]*

### ABSTRACT

In this paper I shall present briefly some considerations on the purported relationship between courtly *fin'amor* literature and the cult of the Virgin Mary. Through an analysis of a representative selection of texts (Latin hymns to the Virgin, a selection of Marian writings, Occitan and Italian lyric poems) drawn from the extraordinarily rich corpus produced between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, I shall endeavour to illustrate something of the nature and extent of the intersection between the secular and religious realms. My principal contention will be that despite undeniable evidence of influence and borrowings in both directions, the value systems underpinning religious and secular literature were fundamentally irreconcilable so that the relationship was always a conflictual and competitive one. Though this is more evident in the sharp contrast between Latin hymns and early Occitan lyric poetry it also holds true, I shall argue, both for the spiritualised poetry of the *dolce stil novo* and for vernacular texts dedicated to the Virgin which draw on the courtly tradition such as the Northern Italian *laude* and French motets of the thirteenth century.

KEYWORDS: courtly, Virgin Mary, hymns, Latin, vernacular, poetry

Brian K. Reynolds, Assistant Professor, Department of Italian, Fu Jen Catholic University
E-mail: reynoldsyutw@yahoo.co.uk

# 貞女與叔女：
# 剖析宮廷文學與瑪利亞詩歌的
# 交鋒之作

余哲安*

## 摘　　要

　　本文旨在針對宮廷文學精緻之愛 (fin'amor) 與童貞瑪利亞崇拜兩者間隱含之關係提出幾項論述。本文從十二至十四世紀豐富的文學作品中挑選代表文本 (頌讚貞女之拉丁讚美詩、稱頌瑪利亞之書寫、以奧其頓古文寫作之抒情詩與義大利文抒情詩) 並加以剖析，力圖描繪世俗領域與宗教國度交錯而生的特質與範疇。本文認為，雖無法否認該類文本確實受此二者影響，也有從中取用之痕跡，然而宗教文學與世俗文學兩者所隱含的價值體系互有牴觸，向來扞格不入，處於競爭的態勢。雖然此論點較適用於對比鮮明的拉丁讚美詩與早期奧其頓語的抒情詩，但亦合於甜美新風格 (dolce stil novo) 的淨化詩歌與頌讚貞女之方言文本，兩者皆受宮廷傳統之薰陶，諸如十三世紀風行於北義大利的世俗詩歌 (laude) 與法國經文歌等皆屬之。

**關鍵字：**宮廷、童貞瑪利亞、讚美詩、拉丁文、方言、詩歌

---

* 余哲安，輔仁大學義大利文系助理教授。
　E-mail: reynoldsyutw@yahoo.co.uk

My purpose in these pages is to present some brief considerations on the purported relationship between courtly *fin'amor* literature and the cult of the Virgin Mary by means of an analysis of a selection of representative texts (Latin hymns to the Virgin, Marian writings in the vernacular, Occitan and Italian lyric poems) drawn from the extraordinarily rich corpus produced between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. Whereas a vast body of critical analysis has grown up over the past number of decades on courtly literature, far less attention has been given to Marian texts, with the result that relatively little has been done in the way of comparative textual analysis between the two genres. Indeed, there has thus far been no sustained attempt to analyse Siculo-Tuscan and *dolce stil novo* poetry in the light of Marian texts, and no scholar, with the possible exception of Peter Dronke, has made use of Marian hymns in Latin in discussing the relationship between the courtly and Marian genres. My aim in these pages is not so much to provide a definitive answer to the question of how the Marian and courtly relate to each other, for this is a subject of immense complexity, but to contribute something new to the debate by offering an analysis based on a set of texts that have not been fully compared with one another before. Given the breadth of available literature, stretching over several centuries as well as a variety of languages and genres, I am forced to limit my observations to just a small set of texts which I hope will adequately illustrate my argument. I should also point out that since I am not concerned with a detailed philological analysis I will not seek to establish precise cases of one text influencing or drawing on another but will look more generally at the nature and extent of the intersections between the secular and religious realms.

Claims about the close relationship between the courtly lady and the Virgin abound across the critical corpus,[1] and are even more prevalent in the

---

[1] Roger Boase writes that "Marianism was . . . to some extent both a cause and a consequence of the decadence of courtly poetry" (127), that is, it was an inspiration behind the courtly lyric, and later was also a response to it, while not providing the necessary evidence for either supposition. Rigland speaks of there being one small step between the elevation of the Dame and that of Mary, which is the absence of desire in the latter (16), an inaccurate statement, I would suggest, since there is no lack of desire in Mary's devotees, but the desire is for a less fleeting pleasure. Donna Spivey Ellington says that, "Mary became the poetic lady of the troubadours," who was to be served with absolute obedience, and then continues by claiming that this was why she was given the title "Notre Dame," without realising that it was Jerome who first attributed this meaning to Mary's name in the fourth century (2). Wollock states that, "Medieval courtly love blossoms into mystical treatises on the love of God, and love poems to the Virgin Mary" (8), without providing any evidence that the former inspired the latter (Etienne Gilson for one would certainly disagree) and that "Bernard of Clairvaux's theology of love, centred on the Virgin, and expressed with great eloquence in his series

wider academic sphere.[2] A quick trawl of the Internet, entering the relevant key terms, will reveal a plethora of websites that conflate the cult of the Virgin with the phenomenon of "courtly love." Likewise, in general survey works, similarities are noted between the two phenomena, but not infrequently there is a lack of proper analysis of what is a very complex interplay between the religious and secular spheres.[3] Thus, the idealisation of the lady is said to be in direct continuity with the treatment of Mary as a paragon of virtue, but no analysis is provided of the long history of veneration of the Virgin as the all-holy (*panaghia*), and how this might relate to the courtly phenomenon, nor is there any acknowledgment of the radically different value systems that underpin the virtuosity of the different ladies. Another area of confusion is in the treatment of desire, where a lack of distinction between Christian *eros* and its courtly counterpart (not to mention the opposite poles of concupiscence and *caritas*) sometimes leads to a fuzzy understanding of what distinguishes the relationship between the courtly lover and his lady and the Marian devotee and the Virgin.[4] Meanwhile, it is often posited that the inaccessibility of the courtly lady, who consistently resists the attempts of her would-be lover to win her over, finds a parallel in the Virgin who is beyond the reach of mere

---

of sermons on the Song of Songs, has also been noted as a possible source for courtly love (44), clearly unaware that Bernard has almost nothing to say of the Virgin in his sermons on Canticles. Jean Markale claims in a sweeping generalisation that links courtly love to goddess cults, that, "with all allowance being made" the older Lady and the younger knight of courtly love correspond to the Virgin and her son, Astarte and Adonis, Isis and Horus" (185), totally ignoring the crucial importance of Mary *not* being a goddess for the Christian theology of the incarnation, let alone the dubious Jungian-style linkage of such diverse elements. See also the broad conflations made by Sandra Resnick Alfonsi, *Masculine Submission* 67-68, and Penny Schine Gold 150-51.

[2] The famed Medieval historian, Jacques Le Goff, speaks of the Virgin Mary being the highest lady of the knights (78). Lindsay speaks of a "minimum of retouches" (215) being necessary in order to transform the cult of the Lady into that od the Virgin. For example, the *Encyclopedia of Feminist Literature* in the entry of "Courtly Love" speaks of Mary as the "height of idealized womanhood" (128), but in no way attempts to explain how Marian idealisation relates to its courtly counterpart.

[3] In Chapter 11 of her recent book on Mary, for instance, Miri Rubin makes a series of sweeping statements concerning Marian lyrics, which she believes to be replete with the desire and longing of their monkish authors, a serious oversimplification of the complex dynamics at play between courtly and Marian *eros* (see note 4 below). Marina Warner, *Alone of all Her Sex,* makes some insightful observations but on the whole her analysis does not adequately reflect the complex dynamics between the two cults (149-50).

[4] Topsfield, for instance, confuses different kinds of love in comparing the Lady to the Virgin in Bernart de Ventadorn, *Troubadours and Love*, 123-24. The following statement by Miri Rubin sounds very plausible, but it merely skims over the surface meaning, confusing similarities in form with a set of values that was completely irreconcilable: "The poetics of Mary are replete with the language of desire and amorous conquest. Lyrics on Mary drew on established rhetorical habits for the expression of longing. Clerks and monks were Mary's lovers and they were also the poets of love. Love poetry cannot be described as either sacred of profane. Each sphere of yearning assumed the existence of the other, and poetry engaged the tantalising closeness of the two" (194).

mortal sinners, whereas in reality, in a whole range of texts, from hymns to homilies to popular miracle tales, she is shown to be constantly available to those who seek her mercy.[5]

My principal contention will be that despite the apparent complementarity between the cult of the courtly lady and that of the Virgin Mary, and the undeniable evidence of influence, borrowings and interference in both directions, the value systems underpinning Marian and love literature are fundamentally irreconcilable so that the relationship is always essentially a conflictual and competitive one.[6] At the very heart of courtly love is a dilemma: putting all one's energy into an object of earthly desire, no matter how noble, ultimately leads to disappointment and delusion, either because the lady remains haughtily aloof in order to preserve the virtue which is the object of the poet's esteem in the first place, or because she gives in to his charms, thereby quenching desire, the one thing that drove the lover on, and forfeiting the very quality that made her an object of admiration. Moreover, the courtly lady, like the rest of earthly reality, is doomed to fade and die, so that her beauty and virtue always fall short of their promise. Devotion to the Virgin, on the other hand, at least within the belief system that dominated the Middle Ages, was not a fruitless exercise doomed to disappoint. Love and praise of her was returned a hundredfold. In her, men could admire the beauty and virtue of her sex without any taint of concupiscence, and in the sure knowledge that it would not fade. Moreover, unlike the courtly lady, who remained haughty and distant, Mary returned love with love. Women too could love Mary, since on the whole she did not present herself as a rival for

---

[5]  In an encyclopaedia on Spanish literature, Maureen Ihrie states that in courtly love the woman does not reciprocate, that she is chaste and unreachable like the Virgin Mary (157), but the point is that it is precisely because the Virgin is *not* unreachable that she differs from the courtly Lady. Potkay, in his history of joy writes of the longed for embrace that typifies *amor de lonh* as equally applicable to the Lady and the Virgin (51), instancing the poems of Jaufré Rudel (57), without making a clear distinction between the availability of the Virgin as opposed to the lady, or providing a full analysis of the difference between the fleeting joy that is in prospect if the poet actually does manage to end up in his lady's embrace, and the immediate and enduring embrace of mercy which the Virgin offers.

[6]  I am by no means the first to assert that the relationship is competitive. Topsfield, for instance argues (as do others, most famously de Rougement), that the cult of the Virgin was set in direct opposition to courtly values in the thirteenth century in the wake of the Albigensian crusade (3). While not wishing to enter into the merits of this argument, my contention is much broader than this, in that I suggest that the two value-sets were essentially irreconcilable from the very outset, and the relationship far more complex than the likes of Topsfield realise.

male affection.[7] They could also identify with her as a mother, spouse, a widow, and virgin, according to their state of life, and look to her for aid in the various travails of their life, especially childbirth. In stark contrast to the distance and coldness of the courtly lady, Mary was utterly approachable. One could be absolutely confident that she would welcome you with open arms no matter how miserable a wretch you were, and would grant even seemingly impossible petitions, provided they were in accordance with God's will.

Thus, while it is true, as one music historian puts it, referring to thirteenth century *contrafacta*, that "it is a commonplace that the language of devotion to the Blessed Virgin is so similar to that used to express love and devotion to ladies of this world that at times the two registers can scarcely be distinguished" (Huot 85), one must be careful to distinguish between the language and the reality that lies behind the image.[8] While hymnodists did borrow from the language of the court in singing Mary's praises, and courtly poets were undoubtedly influenced in their idealisation of the lady by the elevated position that Mary held in the Medieval mind it is crucial not to be beguiled by the superficial similarities but to penetrate the underlying meaning, just as would an exegete. With this in mind let us turn now to the texts themselves to see precisely how the two worlds relate to each other.

## Latin Hymns

To my knowledge in modern times very little scholarly attention has been paid to Medieval Latin hymns to the Virgin. There are some passing observations in general works on Mary, as well as some excellent studies on related matters such as Marian prayers, and there are also occasional useful comments by literary scholars, but there is nothing of a substantial or sustained nature.[9] Nor are there any translations of most of the hymns into

---

[7] Unless, as we find in some miracle tales the woman was trying to draw a man away from a life of devotion and virginity, in which case Mary could act quite forcefully. See for instance Gautier de Coinci's *Miracles de Nostre Dame*, which contains a number of such stories.

[8] This is a point that Leena Peltomaa, *The Image*, makes with reference to claims that the language of the fifth-century Akathistos Hymn signified that Mary was being treated like a goddess, when in fact it is entirely typological but which is equally valid in our own context (122-23).

[9] Meersseman, *Der Hymnos Akathistos im Abendland*, does deal with Medieval Marian hymns but as, the title of his study suggests, his main interest is in the reception of the Akathistos Hymn in the Latin Church. Henri Barré's *Prières anciennes*, a work of great scholarship is also a useful source of information but his main focus is on prayer not hymnody. Matter and Astell's books on the Canticle of Canticles give surprisingly little consideration to hymnody given the degree to which Canticles is present in Medieval hymns to the Virgin. Among general studies perhaps Fulton's *From Judgement to Passion* pays most attention to hymns but even here the treatment is marginal. Among the wealth

modern European languages. Nevertheless, some excellent philological work was done in the nineteenth century by German scholars such as Dreves, who assembled the multi-volume *Analecta Hymnica* containing many examples of Marian hymns, and Mone, whose collection of Medieval hymns, mainly from the Germanic area, includes an entire volume on the Virgin.

By way of introduction to Latin hymns it will first be necessary to make some general observations on the evolution of Marian hymnody in the Eastern Church during the first millennium of Christianity since it is here that we find the major initial source of inspiration and influence for Latin hymnodists. Broadly speaking Marian hymns may be divided into two categories, those that offer praise, and petition the Virgin for intercession, and those that recount events in her life, most especially plaints (laments at the foot of the Cross), whose purpose is mainly didactic.[10] For our purposes we need only consider hymns of praise and petition, the earliest known examples of which emerge from the Syriac and Greek Churches in the late fourth century, the finest example being the famed *Akathistos Hymn*, now believed to have been composed some time after the Council of Ephesus (431) and before the Council of Chalcedon (451).[11] We do not have the space here to dwell on this magnificent panegyric tradition at any length but it is important to highlight some pertinent characteristics if we are to understand the nature of Medieval Marian hymns. In the first place, we should note that all early Marian hymns are profoundly rooted in Sacred Scripture. They are all essentially elaborations of the Lucan texts in which the Angel Gabriel salutes Mary ("Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee," Luke 1.28), and Elisabeth greets her cousin ("Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb," Luke 1.42).[12] They are also almost exclusively concerned with Mary's role as *Theokokos*, the Mother or bearer of God through whom the

---

of information in Margot Fassler's two books on the Virgin of Chartres and on Victorine sequences are a variety of observations on Marian hymns but no sustained commentary. On Latin literature the unsurpassed master is Peter Dronke among whose many studies one does find occasional precious nuggets on Marian texts, but no substantial or sustained analysis. The same is true of Curtius' indispensable *European Literature*. See also the brief discussion by Walter Berschin in *The Church and Mary* 112-25.

[10] The major study on Marian plaints is still Sticca's *Planctus*. See also Reynolds 246-63.

[11] The acknowledged expert on Syriac hymns is Sebastian Brock, whose two books *Bride of Light* and *from Ephrem to Romanos* are indispensable. Also useful for a broader perspective on the Eastern tradition is Brubaker and Cunningham's *The Cult of the Mother*. On the Akathistos Hymn see Peltomaa.

[12] Quotations from the Bible are from the Douay Rheims translation.

Saviour has come into the world and redeemed humanity. The language used to convey this fundamental doctrine of the faith and to praise and thank Mary for her *fiat*, her acceptance to become the Mother of the Word ("Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word," Luke 1: 38) is almost entirely typological. The insistence on typology is consistent with the general tendency in early Marian texts, which were always anxious to legitimise Christianity by proving that the Virgin and her Son were already foreseen by the prophets of the Old Testament. In addition the imagery employed in many of the Marian types lent itself to lyric expression and is most likely a major reason why hymns continued to employ a great deal of typological language long after the need to defend Christian belief had faded.

Rarely if ever can a Marian hymn be understood without a familiarity with the devotional and typological apparatus that had built up around her over the centuries. [13] We therefore need to have a thorough grasp of how typology was understood and used in the Middle Ages if we are to comprehend the hymns that follow. Typology, or figural interpretation as Auerbach calls it,[14] is a method of biblical exegesis which interprets the Old Testament in light of the New. [15] People, events and things in the Old Testament may all be understood as prophetic signs whose full meaning is only revealed with the coming of Christ. Its basic purpose is to prove that Christ truly is the long-awaited Messiah of whom the Prophets had spoken, a notion that Jesus himself encourages in the Gospels by applying the Scriptures to himself and which St. Paul develops in several of his letters (1 Cor. 5.7, 10.6, 11, and 15.21; Rom. 5.12-14; Heb. 9.11-10-17), speaking in particular of Christ as the new Adam. Unlike allegory, where the equivalency is between the real and its allegorical meaning, Christian typology links two historical (in the sense of something recounted in Scripture) facts together, the first being the prophetic sign of the second, which is its fulfilment. Typology is applied particularly to Christ but is also used for Mary, Peter, the Church, the Sacraments, and other fundamentals of the Christian faith. Thus, Christ is the new Adam, while Mary is the new Eve, the Church the new synagogue, the Eucharist the new manna. Some types have already been fulfilled, others have

---

[13] A brief glance at Mone's *Lateinische Hymnen des Mittelalters* will confirm the overwhelming importance of typology in Marian hymns.

[14] See in particular his seminal article, "Figura," and also his "Typological Symbolism."

[15] The undisputable master-work on typology is the four-volume study by de Lubac. See also the volume edited by Dammen McAuliffe and others, *With Reverence for the Word*.

yet to come about, and still others have only partially come to be. Thus, a link may be established between the tree of life in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3.22), the flowering rod of Jesse (Isa. 11.1), the "budding" of Jesus from Mary, and the wood of the Cross. This might be further elaborated by adding the cedar of Lebanon (Ps. 92.12), whose wood was believed to be incorruptible, to indicate the preservation of Mary's virginity in conceiving and giving birth to Christ and the subsequent preservation of her flesh from the corruption of death through her bodily assumption into heaven.

Origen (†c. 254) was the first of the Fathers to ground his theology systematically in Scripture, through his *Hexapla* – a six-column edition of the Bible with parallel columns in Hebrew and Greek – and he was also the first to propose a systematic method of interpreting the multiple meanings of Scripture at literal, moral and mystical levels.[16] Origen states clearly that it is St. Paul who has shown how to interpret the Old Testament, pointing out that what he teaches frequently differs from the literal meaning: "What the Jews thought was a crossing of the sea, Paul calls baptism; what they supposed was a cloud, Paul says is the Holy Spirit" (qtd. in Norris: xi). It is from him that the Fathers inherit the practice of reading Scripture allegorically "awash with references to other passages," as Matter puts it (31), though they tended to follow a dual (literal and spiritual) interpretation rather than his three levels. Origen was also influenced by the tradition of Jewish exegesis, especially of the Song of Songs, which also favoured a mystical/spiritual reading of the love song.[17] It is Cassian's (†435) version of fourfold exegesis, however, which became the foundation of all Medieval Scriptural interpretation:

> Jerusalem may be understood in four ways: according to history as the city of the Jews, according to allegory as the Church of Christ, according to anagogy as that celestial city of God, "which is the mother of us all," according to tropology as the soul of man.[18]

The four senses of Scripture, then, are the literal or historical, the allegorical (which is sometimes also termed the Christological), the tropological, or moral meaning, and finally the anagogical or eschatological.

---

[16] See *De Principiis,* IV, and the prologue to his *Commentarius in Canticum Canticorum.*

[17] See Urbach and Baskin.

[18] See Cassian. *Collationes. Patrologia Latina* 49: 962. Translation mine, based in part on that of Matter 54.

The literal, as its name suggests, is the actual meaning of the text, so that the tree of life in Eden truly was a tree. The allegorical sense is that Christ on the Cross becomes the true source of life, the tropological or moral lesson might be that we should follow Christ's example and not flee suffering, while the anagogical sense, which signifies the meaning outside the span of human time, might be that the fruit of embracing the Cross is eternal life.

Let us now turn to an examination of specific hymns. First is a twelfth-century trope, *Ave præ clara maris stella*.

> *Ave præ clara maris stella,*
> *in lucem gentium,*
> *Maria, divinitus orta.*
>
> *Euge, dei porta,*
> *quæ non aperta       5*
> *veritatis lumen,*
> *ipsum solem justitiæ*
> *indutum carne,*
> *ducis in orbem*
>
> *Virgo decus mundi, 10*
> *regina cœli,*
> *præ electa ut sol,*
> *pulchra lunaris ut fulgor,*
> *agnosce omnes te diligentes*
>
> *Te plenam fide       15*
> *virgam almam stirpis Jesse*
> *nascituram*
> *priores desideraverant*
> *patres et prophetæ.*
> *Te lignum vitæ       20*
> *sancto rorante pneumate*
> *parituram*
> *divini floris amygdalum*
> *signavit Gabrihel.*

*Tu agnum regem,    25*
*terræ  dominatorem,*
*Moabitici*
*de petra deserti,*
*ad montem filiæ*
*Sion traduxisti,        30*
*Tunque furentem*
*Leviathan serpentem*
*tortuosumque*
*et vectem collidens*
*damnoso crimine    35*
*mundum exemisti* (355-57)

Hail most bright star of the sea, a light for the nations, Mary, divinely arisen. O, gate of God, who unopened, lead the light of truth into the world, he himself, the Sun of justice, clothed in flesh. 2. Virgin ornament of the world, Queen of Heaven, outstanding as the sun, beautiful as the flash of the moon, recognise all who venerate you. 3. Those who went before, patriarchs and prophets desired you, full of faith, O gentle rod about to be born of the stock of Jesse. Gabriel designated you the wood of life, by moistening you with the dew of the Holy Spirit, you, about to give birth, are the almond of the divine flower. 4. You brought the lamb who is the king, the Lord of the earth, from the rocks of the Moabite desert to the mountain of the daughter of Sion. And you banished Leviathan, the raging twisting serpent, striking him who was dominating the world with dastardly sin. [19]

In a liturgico-hymnological sense tropes were musical embellishments to the responses of the Mass such as the Alleluia or the Kyrie, and also the Holy Office.[20] This trope perfectly illustrates the style of many Medieval Marian

---

[19] Latin text from Mone, *Lateinische Hymnen*. Vol 2. no.555, translation mine. The hymn continues for a further four verses.

[20] For example, instead of just singing the words "Kyrie Eleison" (Christ have mercy) during the penitential rite of the Mass, extra words and music would be added, usually inspired by Scripture

hymns which are generally laden with typological references. As will be immediately apparent any understanding of this hymn is utterly dependent on knowledge of typology, and this is so of all Marian hymnody from the Patristic and Medieval periods. Mary was spoken of as "stilla maris," a "drop of the sea" by Jerome who declared that one etymology of her name was "bitter sea." Later, owing to a mistranscription this was changed to "stella maris," "star of the sea," which was to become one of the favourite Marian epithets of the Middle Ages.[21] Mary's virginity is prefigured in the closed Eastern gate of the temple in Ezekiel, which opens to God alone. The "Sun of Justice" is Jesus who rose out of Mary, according to an interpretation of the Book of Malachi (4.2), so that Mary comes to be associated with a variety of light imagery – the dawn, the moon, and the morning star. Mary's queenship is also scripturally based since she, in the manner of Old Testament queen mothers, is due this honour as the Mother of the King of Kings.[22] Jerome also provides an etymological interpretation of Mary's name as meaning "lady," adding further justification (789). By the later Patristic period, as belief in the Assumption grew, especially in the Eastern Church, Mary came to be regarded also as the Queen of Heaven. It is wrong, therefore, to assert that the notion of Mary's queenship is derived solely from Medieval courtly culture, though the imagery and language that one finds in some hymns is certainly influenced by it. The likening of Mary to the moon and the sun is a reference to the Bride of Canticles who increasingly came to be identified with Mary from Carolingian times onwards, as we shall see later. The "rod of Jesse" is one of the oldest and most prominent typological references to the Incarnation of the Word from Mary, who is of the stock of David.[23] Mary is the rod "*virga*," just as she is a virgin "*virgo*," while Jesus is the flower that blooms from her. From this typological interpretation spring many others of a floral and arboreal nature concerning Mary. The dew is another early typology of the Incarnation, the Fleece of Gideon (Judges 6.36-40) which is left damp

---

and often with typological significance, which would be appropriate to the particular liturgy. Thus during Advent and at Christmastide, typological references to the birth of Christ would be used.

[21] Jerome described Mary as "stilla maris" (789), a drop of the sea, but at some point this was mistranscribed as "stella." Isidore of Seville says "Mary, light-giver, or star of the sea, because she gave birth to the light of the world" (*Etymologiae* 7, 10, 1; *Patrologia Latina* 82: 289, my translation).

[22] On this see, among others, the recent study by Edward Sri on Mary's queenship as well as a useful article by Niels-Erik Andreasen "The Role of the Queen Mother in Israelite Society." Also useful are Roschini's "La regalità," and Barré's, typically thorough "La Royauté."

[23] See Margot Fassler's marvellous study of Carolingian Rod of Jesse imagery "Mary's Nativity."

with dew in the desert while the ground around remains dry. This is followed by an allusion to the Moabite desert through which the Jews travelled on their way out of Egypt, sustained by manna and water from the rocks. Mary is the spring from whom the true water of life comes which will bring the faithful to the new Zion in Heaven, and she is the faithful daughter of Zion, unlike the people of Israel who repeatedly betrayed the Covenant. The Leviathan (Job 41.1-34) is the Devil, whom Jesus traps with the "bait" of his flesh, that is, by taking on human form from the Virgin Mary, unbeknownst to Satan, and offering that human nature up on the Cross, Jesus "tricks" the Devil and saves humanity (Lindsay 39).

We do not have the space here to provide a full analysis of this hymn but let us highlight some of the salient features. In the first place we note that it follows the typical laudatory pattern of Marian encomia, opening with the Lucan "ave" which is then extended to a veritable litany of the Virgin's wonders. The main difference from earlier Eastern panegyrics is that Mary is here addressed directly in the second person, a practice that emerged only in Medieval times. The second feature that we note is that Mary is honoured almost entirely because of what happened *through* her, and not for any achievements of her own: she brought Jesus into the world and it is he who has defeated the devil and restored hope of heaven to the faithful. This is consistent with the Greek tradition of *chairetismoí* or hymns of praise in which Mary is always seen as the instrument rather than the agent of Salvation. A further point is that the abundance of typological references gives it an impersonal quality, so that despite the repeated declarations of admiration and devotion the hymn is formulaic and completely lacking in any personal ardour or devotion. This sense of detachment is enhanced by the absence of a first person voice, the hymn being very much a collective address to the Virgin as befits the monastic setting in which it would have been sung. Although not all Latin hymns to the Virgin from this period are so entirely devoid of feeling this trope is representative of the mainstream. This is in sharp contrast to developments in prose works on the Virgin from the twelfth century onwards (sermons, commentaries on Canticles, for instance), which show a marked change towards a more affective piety. It is perhaps due in part to the strictures of hymn-writing as well as the setting in which they were sung that they continued to follow a patterns more akin to the hieratic Greek tradition.

One unusual feature of this hymn is that there is only one brief request that Mary do something in return for the praise she is receiving: "*agnosce omnes te diligentes*" ("recognise all who venerate you"). This is not the typical pattern of most Marian hymns which tend to follow a classical Greek format of first offering praise and concluding with a request for help and protection. In the case in our next example, again from the twelfth century but this time a litany, the focus is very much on seeking the Virgin's aid, as befits this type of prayer.

*Sancta Maria, porta cœli,*
*introitus paradisi,*
*sacrarium spiritus sancti,*
*ora pro nobis benedictum*
*ventris tui fructum*            5

*Sancta Maria, stirps*
*patriarcharum,*
*vaticinium prophetarum,*
*solatium apostolorum,*
*rosa martyrum,*
*præ dictio confessorum,*       10
*lilium virginium, ora*

*Sancta Maria, spes humilium,*
*refugium pauperum,*
*portus naufragantium,*
*medicina infermorum, ora 15*

*Sancta Maria, imperatrix*
*reginarum,*
*salvatrix animarum, ora*
*Sancta Maria, lucidissima*
*maris stella,*

*salus mundi, ora*            20

*Sancta Maria, claritas*
*cœlorum,*
*destructio inferorum,*
*restauratio*
*et emundatio*
*cœli et terræ, ora*         25

*Sancta Maria, terror*
*dæmoniorum,*
*pavor spirituum immundorum.*
*Sancta Maria, indulgentia*
*peccatorum,*
*veniæ gremium,*
*pacis asylum, ora*          30

*Sancta Maria, aula æterni*
*regis,*
*lectulus Salomonis,*
*palatium veri pacifici,*
*cubile cœlestis sponsi, ora*
(260-62)

1. Holy Mary, gate of heaven, entrance to paradise, shrine of the Holy Spirit, pray for us, blessed fruit of your womb. 2. Holy Mary, of the stock of the patriarchs, prophecy of the prophets, consolation of the apostles, rose of the martyrs, teaching of the confessors, lily of the virgins, pray. 3. Holy Mary, hope of the humble, refuge of the poor, harbour of the shipwrecked, medicine of the sick, pray. 4. Holy Mary, Empress of queens, saviour of souls, pray, holy Mary most bright star of the sea, salvation of the world, pray. 5. Holy Mary, glory of the skies,

destruction of hell, restoration and emendation of heaven and earth, pray. 6. Holy Mary, terror of demons, fear of unclean spirits. Holy Mary, indulgence of sinners, womb of pardon, sanctuary of peace, pray. 7. Holy Mary, palace of the eternal King, couch of Solomon, palace of the true peacemaker, marriage bed of the heavenly Spouse, pray.[24]

This hymn, of which I quote only a part,[25] is notably different in tone and style to the trope. There is far less direct reliance on typology though it is present below the surface in much of the imagery. For instance the various ways in which Mary is described as a vessel (shrine, womb, sanctuary, palace, marriage bed) all refer to the notion that she is the new temple of Jerusalem, the bearer of the living God as opposed to the law of Moses, and thus a place of refuge for sinners where they will find protection from the Devil. That she is a harbour saving the faithful from shipwreck is an allusion both to this protective function and to her being the "star of the sea." Epithets such as "gate of heaven" are anagogical fulfilments of the gate of the temple (Ezekiel 44. 1-3) but also point to Mary's liminal role as she who brought God into the world, opening up the gates of paradise to all, as well as her role as Mediatrix, through whom sinners may gain access to Heaven. The emphasis on Mary as a source of hope and protection is appropriate to a litany, with its characteristic repetition of the word "*ora*" ("pray") at the end of each verse. As in the trope the voice is collective rather than individual so that despite the increased stress on Mary as a source of mercy there is still no sense of personal warmth in the relationship between the author and the Virgin. Moreover, like the trope, Mary is portrayed more as a series of abstractions than as a person with recognisable human traits. Nevertheless, we do detect a slight change in tone here through the increased use of bridal imagery drawn largely from Canticles, but also from Ecclesiasticus, including the couch of Solomon (Canticles 3.7), and the rose and lily (Ecclesiasticus 50.7-8). Here we begin to see some hints of the sensuality that critics speak of in arguing for a link between the courtly and the Marian, but even if the rose and lily, for instance, are widely used in *fin'amor* poetry to describe the lady's beauty and virtue, we must not allow ourselves to fall into the trap that they have the

---

[24] Latin text from Mone, no.505, translation mine.
[25] The entire text is more than 130 verses.

same valence here, where their meaning is basically typological (as I noted earlier in discussing floral imagery of *Ave præ clara maris stella*).

Our last Latin hymn is much later, dating from the early 1400's, and is noticeably different in tone, language and imagery to our other two examples:

*Ave mundi domina,*

*stella maris, Maria,*

*ave dulcis figella,*

*ave suavis cithara,*

*nardus odorifera!*　　5

*Maria sole pulchrior,*

*rosis rubicundior,*

*liliis floridior,*

*paradiso dulcior,*

*omni luce clarior,*　　10

*omni dulcore suavior.*

*Tu fons omis gratiæ,*

*speculum munditiæ,*

*balsamus fragrantiæ.*

*Plus sapis quam cherubin,*15

*plus ardes quam seraphin,*

*plus gaudes quam Benjamin.*

*In planctu lætitia,*

*in bello victoria,*

*in morte fiducia.*　　　20

*In aure suavissima,*

*in corde dulcissima,*

*in ore sapientissima.*

*O dulcedo pauperum,*

*florens rosa martyrum,* 25

*pulchritudo virginum,*

*Nobis post hoc exilium*

*ostende mater pulcherrimum,*

*Maria, tuum filium.* (427-28)

1. Hail mistress of the world, Mary, Star of the Sea, hail sweet lute, hail melodious cither, sweet-smelling spikenard! 2. Mary, more beautiful than the sun, redder than the rose, more flowery than the lilies, sweeter than paradise, brighter than every light, sweeter than every delight. 3. You, fountain of all grace, mirror of purity, fragrant balsam. 4. More sweet-tasting than the cherubim, you ardour greater than the seraphim, more joyful than Benjamin. 5. Happiness in sorrow, victory in war, in death, trust. 6. Most delightful to the ears, most sweet in the heart, most wise in speech. 7. O sweetness of the poor, blooming rose of the

martyrs, beauty of the virgins. 8. Show onto us, mother Mary, after this exile, your most beautiful Son. [26]

It is not just that the old typologies have disappeared but that they have been replaced with a different lexicon, which is also typological, drawn almost entirely from Canticles and Ecclesiasticus, so that the emphasis is on Mary as Bride rather than Mother and Virgin. Canticles had already been an important source of Marian imagery for centuries, of course, as we have seen from our earlier examples, but here the whole flavour of the language is different.[27] This is a much softer and more fragrant Mary than the powerful Queen Mother of earlier centuries who was looked upon with awe but who did not arouse much in the way of feelings of affection. Instead of the hieratic beauty of an earlier age we are overwhelmed by perfumes, sweet sounds and attractive colours. The repeated comparatives in the second verse, in which Mary is said to be more beautiful, ruddier, sweeter, etc., and the triple superlatives of the sixth verse – most delightful, most sweet, most wise (the etymology of *sapiens* also reminding us of taste) – appeal powerfully to the senses and have the cumulative effect of heightening Mary's allure. The use of the superlative "*pulcherrimum*" in the penultimate line likewise deflects us from the doctrinal implication of "*mater*" instead conjuring up a far more human image of a mother. The hymn ends in standard fashion with an appeal to Mary to lead the faithful to her Son, reminding us that the true purpose of Marian prayer and hymns is not simply to offer praise but to gain salvation. And this, more than anything else perhaps, is what distinguishes Marian hymnody from the courtly love lyric: Mary is the object of admiration, praise, even ardent affection, but those who write of her, pray to her, and offer her devotion and service never do so as an end in itself,[28] the ultimate object of their love being the Creator and not creation.

---

[26] Latin text from Mone, no.608, translation mine.

[27] Aside from the previously mentioned studies by Matter and by Astell, other important works on the Song of Songs in Middle Ages include those by Friedrich Ohly, Peter Dronke and Denys Turner.

[28] Such service and its reward is evident in the Marian writings of Ildephonse of Toledo (who incidentally was writing almost half-a-millennium before the advent of courtly service). See Amata "La schiavitù."

## Occitan Love Lyrics

Let us now turn to the very different world of *fin'amor* poetry. The purpose of the hymns we have just looked at is to inspire the listener to meditate upon Scripture and the mysteries of the faith, and to encourage the faithful to dwell on their own sinfulness, and need for forgiveness, grace and protection from the wiles of the Devil. Thus the listener is invited to a very intense identification with the text (and the accompanying music) whose primary purpose is not to entertain but to effect a conversion. Instead the courtly lyric has no such transformational intent and in no way invites a radical identification with the subject.[29] At best it may be said to inspire its listeners to uphold courtly values – courtliness (*cortesia*) restraint (*mezura*), and so on, though even this may be questionable given the ludic and ironic nature of many of these texts and the fact that below the surface of even the most refined of courtly texts lies a raw concupiscent desire for the things of this world.[30]

No-one better represents the fundamental irreconcilability between the courtly and Marian realms than Guillaume IX (†1126), Duke of Aquitaine. Although his poems, especially the first, quoted below, may seem far from the refined lyrics of the later courtly poets, especially the Siculo-Tuscans and the exponents of the *dolce stil novo* whom we shall be considering later, and apparently have even less to do with the Marian lyrics we are considering, they are crucial to our discussion because they serve to show how concupiscent *eros* lay at the very heart of the courtly enterprise from the outset, and that the adoption of more refined language or even the parodying of Marian lyrics never rid courtly poems of their underlying driving force. This is ultimately why the two genres could not be reconciled, as we shall see.

Considered by most to be the earliest of the *fin'amor* poets, in his poems, the sexual drive is still in plain view unlike in many of the later troubadouresque compositions when the accretion of layers of literary conventions often masks the carnal urges that lie beneath the surface. In his

---

[29] I do not have the space here to consider the whole question of the nature of courtly poetry which has been the subject of extensive study. Among the more important studies that have a bearing on our discussion are: de Rougemont, *L'Amour et l'Occident*; Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny*; Boase, *The Origin and Meaning*; Cherchi, *Andreas and the Ambiguity*; Cholakian, *The Troubadour Lyric*; Ferrante and Economou, *In Pursuit of Perfection*; Holmes, *Assembling the Lyric*; Gaunt, *Love and Death*; Gaunt and Kay, *The Troubadours*; Pulega, *Amore cortese*; Kay, *Troubadour Subjectivity*.

[30] On play see Kendrick. On irony see Gaunt, *Troubadours and Irony*.

earlier years, Guillaume, who was one of the most powerful rulers of Europe, controlling large areas of southern France, had a reputation for being an extremely coarse, bawdy and licentious man, the chronicler William of Malmesbury (†c. 1143) describing him in *Gesta regum anglorum* as being a "sink of vice."[31] This side of his character is on display in six of the ten poems attributed to him that have survived, which could be variously termed as obscene, satirical and burlesque. The other four, which reflect a period in which Guillaume had tempered his appetites, present a far greater degree of refinement, for which reason they are considered by many to be the foundational texts of "courtly love". Here, he displays many of the characteristics that will become standard fare among the troubadours such as the unobtainable lady who inspires the poet's devoted service, the extolling of youth, joy, and other courtly values, and the exaltation of love as a noble and ennobling pursuit. But it is to one of his cruder poems that we shall now turn our attention since it best illustrates how radically different the roots of the courtly lyric are from those of Marian hymnody:

> *Companho, farai un vers qu'er covinen,*
> *Et aura-i mais de foudatz no-y a de sen,*
> *Et er totz mesclatz d'amor e de joy e de joven.*
>
> *E tenguatz lo per vilan qui no-l enten,*
> *O dins son cor voluntiers non l'apren:*
> *Greu partir si fai d'amor qui la troba a talen.*
>
> *Dos cavalhs ai a ma sselha, ben e gen,*
> *Bon son et adreg per armas e valen,*
> *E no-ls puesc amdos tener, que l'us l'autre non cossen.*
>
> *Si-ls pogues adomesjar a mon talen,*
> *Ja no volgr'alhors mudar mon garnimen,*
> *Que meils for'encavalguatz de nuill ome viven.*

---

[31] On troubadour society see Paterson. On the presence of bawdiness in courtly literature see Malm.

*Launs fon dels montaniers lo plus corren,*
*Mas aitan fer' estranhez'a longuamen*
*Et es tan fers e salvatges, que del bailar si defen.*

*L'autre fon noyritz sa jus part Cofolen*
*Ez anc no-n vis bellazor, mon escien:*
*Aquest non er ja camjatz ni per aur ni per argen.*

*Qu'ie-l donei a son senhor polin payssen,*
*Pero si-m retinc ieu tan de covenen*
*Que, s'ilh lo tenia un an, qu'ieu lo tengues mais de cen.*

*Cavalier, datz mi cosselh d'un pessamen:*
*-Anc mays no fuy issaratz de cauzimen- :*
*Res non sai ab qual me tengua, de n'Agnes o de n'Arsen.*

*De Gimel ai lo castel e-l mandamen,*
*E per Niol fauc ergueill a tota gen:*
*C'ambedui me son jurat e plevit per sagramen.*

**1.** Comrades, I shall write a fitting poem, one with more folly than sense, all laden with love, joy and youth. **2.** And let he be called a knave, who doesn't understand it, or learn it, for that matter, by heart: people who like poetry hardly part from love. **3.** I have two horses I can saddle well and gladly they are good and brave and fit for fighting, and I can't keep them both because they can't stand each other. **4.** If I could tame them as I wish, I wouldn't take my gear elsewhere, because I would be mounted better than anyone else. **5.** The one is the fastest of the mountaineers but it has been acting fiercely oddly for a long time and it is so fierce and savage that it refuses to be bridled. **6.** The other was reared around Confolens and you never saw a prettier one, by my troth: such one can't be traded for gold nor for silver.**7.** Because I gave it to its master as a filly but we agreed to the condition that, if he had it for one year, I would have it for a century. **8.** Knights, advise me about this

conundrum: -never was I [so] troubled by a choice- I don't know which one to keep to, that of dame Agnes or that of dame Arsen.[32]

Our text begins in quite a refined register, the first verse using the typical courtly terms "*amor*," "*joy*" "*joven*" but we are already forewarned by Guillaume's use of the word "*foudatz*" meaning foolish or folly that this will be a poem of *foll'amor*, not *fin'amor*, that is to say, passion will dominate over self-control, raw sexuality over the restrained *eros* of *cortesia*. In the second verse the tone changes abruptly and we find ourselves confronted with the crudeness of the soldiering class and the arrogance of a man of power. It is no accident that he uses the metaphor of horse-riding for his sexual exploits since women are little more than animals, objects to be possessed, enjoyed and discarded at will. Indeed the language throughout reveals a mercenary mentality where what counts is ownership and the ability to cow and dominate others, a far cry from the humble poet begging his lady's favour or the high and noble knight of refined manners. Here is laid bare for all to see one of the fundamental driving forces of courtly poetry, which is not even the desire to bed the lady but the need to conquer and possess her. Despite appearances, as feminist critics have noted in recent decades, power remains a constant in courtly literature, the power of men over women. As Burns elegantly puts it, courtly love is "an ideology of femininity that disempowers women in love while claiming to empower them" (24), by claiming publicly to serve the woman and to hold her in high regard while actually advertising one's own poetic and courtly prowess and having as one's primary aim the eventual conquest and possession of the woman. Indeed, if we are to understand the fundamental difference between courtly and Marian lyrics, it is essential to recall these crude lines when we come to the infinitely more refined Italian poets, and to recognize that it is fundamentally the same dynamic that underlies almost all courtly poetry, a dynamic that is alien to the whole purpose of Marian poetry, which is not possession of the Virgin, or her sexual conquest, but a liberation from the sin and passions of this world.

We note too that in this poem there is no attempt to praise the women (other than to say that she is pretty) since it is addressed to Guillaume's companions as a boast. Besides, why bother to flatter them with fine words

---

[32] Text and translation from *Trobar.org*.

when you have already had your way with them! Nevertheless, despite his bravado, one detects that behind these lines, whose purpose is to impress his companions, lies a need for approval that is born of a certain insecurity. While it might sound somewhat outlandish, Cholakian's Freudian reading of Guillaume's boasts of sexual prowess as fear of castration (26) do point to a fundamental aspect of all courtly poetry, which is a profound, ever-present fear that the lady will not return the poet's love or will withdraw her favour, once given. This same fear manifests itself in the second poem in our selection, which, at least superficially, would seem to have been written by an entirely different person: gone is the boastfulness to be replaced by humility, servitude and submission; gone too are the sexual innuendos substituted by milder hints of pleasures, both already enjoyed and yet to come if only the lady will reconsider her rejection of the poet's love.

> *Farai chansoneta nueva*
> *ans que vent ni gel ni plueva.*
> *Ma dona m'assai'e·m prueva*
> *quossi del qual guiza l'am;*
> *e ja per plag que m'en mueva,*     5
> *no·m solvera de son liam;*
>
> *qu'ans mi rent a lieys e·m liure,*
> *qu'en sa carta·m pot escriure;*
> *e no m'en tengatz per yure*
> *quar senes lieys non puesc viure,*
> *tan ai pres de s'amor gran fam.*
>
> *Que plus etz blanca qu'evori,*
> *per qu'ieu autra non azori.*
> *Si·m breu no·n ai ajutori,*     15
> *cum ma bona dompna m'am,*
> *morrai, pel cap sanh Gregori,*
> *si no·m bayz'en cambr'o sotz ram.*
>
> *Qual pro y auretz, dompna conja,*
> *si vostr'amors mi deslonja?*     20
> *Par que·us vulhatz metre monja.*

*E sapchatz, quar tan vos am,*
*tem que la dolors me ponja,*
*si no·m faitz dreg dels tortz qu'ie'us clam.*

*Qual pro y auretz s'ieu m'enclostre*  25
*e no·m retenetz per vostre?*
*Totz lo joys del mon es nostre,*
*dompna, s'amduy nos amam.*
*Lay al mieu amic Daurostre*
*dic e man que chan e [no] bram.*      30

*Per aquesta fri e tremble,*
*quar de tan bon'amor l'am;*
*qu'anc no cug qu'en nasques semble*
*en semblan del gran linh N'Adam.*

1. A new song I will arrange before the winds bring hail and rain; my love assails me: she maintains it's just a test of my intents; she won't release me from her chains, and I won't be stayed by arguments. 2. Rather, I surrender to her claim, and in her charter goes my name; if I love her just the same don't think I'm drunk; starving for her, love's to blame, without her my life's sunk. 3. For she's as white as ivory, pure, I could not love another more; if soon I don't receive the succour of her love. . . . By Saint Gregory's head! Why, if she won't kiss me, in or outdoors, by God I'm dead! 4. Where's the profit, my "wise one," if your love will make me run? It seems you want to be a nun! Here's truth (for I've fed in your pasture): if you don't right the wrongs you've done, sorrow will spur me on faster! 4. And where's the profit if I take orders and you do not keep me for yours? The world's joys would lie in our borders, Lady, if we keep our love ours! And this to my good friend, Daurostre: Let his singing be sweet, not his usual roars! 5. For her I tremble and mourn, her love I could never replace; her like has never been born in the history of Adam's whole race. [33]

---

[33] Text and translation from *Trobar.org*.

In this poem we already find in genesis many of the *topoi* that will come to characterise *fin'amor* poetry in the succeeding centuries. It opens with an allusion to Scripture – the "new song" of Psalm 144 – which signals a new type of love as well as a new style of poetry. New is a word that we find again and again in courtly poetry, not least in the Italian *dolce stil novo* whose greatest exponent Dante entitled his youthful masterpiece *La Vita nuova* – a work that draws even more heavily on Scriptural models.[34] The later likening of the lady to the pureness of ivory may well also be a Scriptural reference since ivory was often seen in religious circles as symbolising purity and virginity. The mention of the weather at the opening anticipates a frequent feature in courtly poems, which often begin with the rising of the sun on a Spring morning, (even giving rise to a genre, known as the *aube* or *alba*). Next comes the image of chains, the first of several passages in which the poets declares himself to be in the thrall of his lady, a theme that will become one of the fundamental characteristics of the genre. The playful comment that the poet will die if his lady doesn't kiss him will be replaced in later poets by a genuine belief that love sickness could be fatal to the soul of the lover, as we shall see in Cavalcanti. In common with all courtly poetry, the major focus is not actually the lady herself (we know nothing of significance concerning her physical appearance, her personality, or her feelings) but the poet for whom the beloved merely acts as a foil or mirror through whom he may dwell on his own feelings and desires. The concluding line, in which Guillaume speaks of the uniqueness and irreplaceability of his lady (when in reality most courtly ladies have few if any defining features), is also a *topos* that we will find again and again in later poems. What the juxtaposition of these two poems shows is that a more refined veneer may be introduced, through the use of a higher linguistic register that may also include pseudo-Christian and even Marian motifs, but the underlying driving forces remain unchanged. As Laura Kendrick has shown in her analysis of *Mout jozens me prenc en amar*, at first glance and in a particular context some of Guillaume's lyrics could be interpreted in a Marian key (although I think Kendrick overdoes this), but the words can also be read as having a very crude sexual double meaning (157-63). So, while we are still a long way from the *donna angelicata* of the *dolce*

---

[34] Many commentators have written on the presence of Scripture in the *Vita Nuova* but Singleton's *An Essay* and his *Journey toward Beatrice* remain among the most illuminating on the topic.

*stil novo*, to which we shall turn next, the underlying ambiguity of *fin'amor* is a constant.[35]

### Italian fin'amor

In Guido Guinizzelli (†1276), the progenitor of the "sweet new style" embraced by Dante and others, we find the first clear instance of what Barolini terms a "theologically ennobled lady" (*Lyric Past* 21), who is far closer to the Virgin than any of the *domnas* of the Occitan poets. [36] Guinizzelli's "angelic lady" will become central to Dante's poetics of praise and will eventually lead him on a path towards conflating his beloved Beatrice with the Virgin Mary, but that is a subject for another paper.

> *Donna, lo fino amore*
> *m'ha tutto sì compreso*
> *che tutto son donato a voi amare;*
> *non pò pensar lo core*
> *altro che amore acceso,*            *5*
> *e come meglio vi si possa dare;*
> *e certo lo gioioso cominzare*
> *isforza l'amorosa mia natura,*
> *ond'io mi credo assai magnificato,*
> *e 'nfra gli amanti in gran gioi coronato.  10*

> *Eo porto alta corona,*
> *poi ch'eo vi son servente,*
> *a cui m'assembra alto regnar servire,*
> *sì alta gioi mi dona*
> *a voi stare ubidiente;*            *15*
> *prégone voi che'l degniate gradire.*
> *E vero certamente credo dire*
> *che 'nfra le donne voi siete sovrana*
> *di ogni grazia e di virtù compita,*
> *per cui morir d'amor mi saria vita.*        *20*

---

[35] For more on ambiguity, see Cherchi.

[36] Two useful works on Guinizzelli are Pietro Pelosi's *Stilnovo inquieto* and Paola Borsa's *La nuova poesia*.

*Se lingua ciascun membro*
*del corpo si facesse,*
*vostre bellezze non porian contare;*
*ad ogni gioi v'assembro*
*che dicer si potesse,*
*Ciò avete bel, che si può divisare:*    25
*molto ci ha belle donne e d'alto affare,*
*voi soprastate come il ciel la terra,*
*ché meglio vale aver di voi speranza,*
*che d'altre donne aver ferma certanza.*   30

*Ancor che sia gravezza*
*lo tormento d'amore,*
*ma ciò ch'abbo d'amor m'assembra bene;*
*e nulla crudelezza*
*pòte pensar lo core 35*
*che aveste, donna, 'n voi, che non s'avvene.*
*Gioco e sollazzo me sostene in pene,*
*sperando ch'avvenir può la gran gioia.*
*Meglio mi sa per voi mal sostenere,*
*che compimento d'altra gioia avere.*    40

*Madonna, il mio penare*
*per fino amor gradisco,*
*pensando ch'è in voi grande conoscenza;*
*troppo non dé durare l'affanno che sofrisco,*  45
*ché bon segnor non dà torta sentenza.*
*Compiutamente è 'n voi tutta valenza;*
*merito, voi siete, e morte e vita;*
*più vertudiosa siete in meritare*
*ch' io nom posso in voi servendo amare.*    50

    Lady an exalted love has so taken me over that I am wholly given to love you; my heart cannot think of anything but burning love and how it might better give itself to you. No doubt my loving nature prompts the

joyous beginning by which I think myself made greater and crowned with great joy among lovers. **2.** I wear this high crown since I am a servant to you, whom it seems a sublime triumph to serve; it gives me such exalted joy to remain obedient to you. I pray that you deign to be pleased by it. And truly I think to say beyond doubt that you are sovereign among women, the attainment of all grace and virtue – it would be life for me to die of love for you. **3.** If every part of my body could become a tongue, it could not recount your beauties. I compare you to every joy that might be mentioned. You possess every beauty that might be imagined. By far you stand above all beautiful and noble women, like sky over the earth. It's worth more to have hope of you than have firm assurance from other ladies. **4.** Although love's torment is heavy, whatever I might possess of love seems good to me. And my heart cannot imagine any cruelty in you, Lady, that would not be just. Joy and solace sustain me in my pain, hoping that greater joy can come. I would rather endure evil from you than realise joy from another. **5.** My lady, I rejoice in my pain through fine love, thinking that high knowledge resides in you. I should not endure the trouble I suffer too much, since a good lord doesn't give a bad sentence. All value is fully realised in you – you are reward and death and life. You are more virtuous in merit than I can be in serving you. (Guinizzelli 78-81)

In *Donna, lo fino amore*, with its exalted view of the lady, utter submission of the poet to her, and complete avoidance of any hint of physicality (not a single feature of the lady's appearance is mentioned), we could not be further from the burlesque poetry of Guillaume. In many respects this poem could indeed be about *Our* Lady rather than *a* lady. If one were to isolate certain lines, for instance those in which he declares his service and obedience, or when he says that her beauty is as far above other women in beauty and nobility as Heaven is above the earth ("*voi soprastate come il ciel la terra*" 29), they could indeed be applied to the Virgin. Moreover, Guinizzelli perhaps somewhat playfully seems to use language that echoes the Lucan narrative of the Visitation to Elizabeth. The Magnificat (Luke 1.46-55) seems to be recalled when he speaks of his amorous nature being "magnified" by the ardent love he experiences for his lady ("*ondio mi credo assai magnificato*"), but of course God is not the subject here, but the poet himself,

as is typical of the almost narcissistic auto-referentiality of *fin'amor*. Likewise he is, as it were, blessed among lovers ("*'nfra gli amanti in gran gioia coronato*" 10) because he has been granted the gift of loving his lady, just as Mary was blessed among women, but in her case because God had shown his favour to her by choosing her as the Mother of the Word. For her part, his lady reigns supreme among women in her virtue and grace ("*'nfra le donne voi siete sovrana / di ogni grazia e di virtù compita*" 18-19), and in her everything of worth is to be found ("*Compiutamente è 'n voi tutta valenza*" 54). But, for all her Marian qualities, this lady is quite unlike the Virgin because to love her is a torment (*lo tormento d'amore* 32),[37] and he cannot be sure that she will return his love, so that he is always left in a state of suspension, between joy and solace ("*Gioco e sollazzo*" 35) and pain ("*pene*" 35). Most telling of all is the poem's conclusion: whereas it would be perfectly legitimate to declare one's inability to serve the Virgin adequately, that the poet declares this lady to be life and death to him ("*voi siete, e morte e vita*") instantly alerts us to the non-Christian values of the poem. Love of Mary would never lead to a state of such agitation and dependence and she could never be seen as a cause of death since to love her is to love God who is the source of all life.

The same pattern is discernible in another of Guinizzelli's poems *Vedut' ho la lucente stella Diana* (Guinizzelli 34-35). Just as Pier della Vigna of the Sicilian school had called his lady "stella de l'albore"(Contini 1:126), Guinizzelli associates his lady with the morning star, that typically Marian *topos*. The star of course, also refers to Venus in her morning manifestation as the goddess of higher love, and is therefore perfectly suited to Guinizzelli's ambiguous fusion of the Christian and the secular:

> *Vedut' ho la lucente stella diana,*
> *ch'apare anzi che'l giorno rend' albore,*
> *c'ha preso forma di figura umana;*
> *sovr' ogn' altra me par che dea splendore (1-4)*

---

[37] There are instances in Medieval miracle tales where Mary severely punishes those who have failed to remain loyal to their commitment to serve her, and she also can be extremely severe in her treatment of those who in some way have offended her Son, but she never causes torment to those who seek her love and mercy.

>I have seen the bright morning star that appears before the
>morning offers dawn, taking the shape of a human figure, she
>who seems to me to shine above all other figures

However, unlike Mary, who as the morning star announces the coming of the Sun/Son, and who does not seek to bask in her own glory, this lady's radiance points to nothing other than her own beauty. Moreover, where the Marian star is a source of hope, the wondrous brightness and virtue of Guinizzelli's lady (which is innate rather than coming from God) so overwhelms him that he is perturbed and reduced to silence (*"Ed io dal suo valor son assalito / con sì fera battaglia di sospiri / ch'avanti a lei de dir non seri' ardito."* "And I am struck by her indwelling worth in such a wild battle of sighs that I would not be bold enough to address her.") (9-11). The *"stella Diana"* appears again in the even more obviously Marian-influenced poem, *Io voglio del ver la mia donna laudare*:

>*Io vogl' del ver la mia donna laudare*
>*ed asembrarli la rosa e lo giglio:*
>*più che stella dïana splende e pare,*
>*e ciò ch'è lassù bello a lei somiglio.*
>*Verde river' a lei rasembro e l'âre,*        5
>*tutti color di fior', giano e vermiglio,*
>*oro ed azzurro e ricche gioi per dare:*
>*medesmo Amor per lei rafina meglio.*
>*Passa per la via adorna e sì gentile*
>*ch'abassa orgoglio a cui dona salute,*        10
>*e fa 'l di nostra fé se non la crede;*
>*e non le pò apressare om che sia vile;*
>*ancor ve dirò c'ha maggior vertute:*
>*null'om pò mal pensar fin che la vede.*

>I want to praise my lady truly / And compare the rose and lily to her: / She appears and outshines the dawn star; / And I compare her to everything beautiful on high. / I liken green fields and air to her— / All colors of flowers, yellow and vermilion, / Gold and azure and jewels rich for gifts: / Love himself is refined still more through her. / She passes through the streets so elegant

and noble / That she humbles pride in anyone she greets / And converts all unbelievers to our faith. / No base-thinking man can approach her, / Yet I'll tell you she has a power greater still: / No man can ever think evil after he sees her. (40-41)

The first feature that we notice about this poem is that its sole aim seems to be to praise the lady. There is no trace here of an underlying sexual tension, no angst-ridden poet, enslaved by longing for his lady's favour. Lacking too is the haughtiness of the lady, who instead of withholding her favour bestows beatitude on all those who glimpse her. Rather than inspiring jealously and fear of rejection she cleanses all those that lay their eyes on her of any evil thoughts that they might have. Here, truly, is a miraculous presence and yet something does not sit quite right. The lady remains entirely impersonal so that she is more a force than someone with whom one can establish a personal relation. Moreover, this lady does not point beyond herself to the source of her beatifying power. Praise of her is an end in itself, not a means to salvation. Her beauty and nobility inspires and humbles, yes, but where does it lead? The poem ends inconclusively by stating that no man can think evil having seen her, but without any reference to the next life. Moreover, some lines jar with orthodox Christian theology. The "Love" (*Amor* with a capital "A") referred to here is not the Johannine God of Love (1 John 4.8), but the deity of *Eros* beloved of the courtly poets. The *salute* that she offers is a salvation of sorts but of an earthly rather than divine variety, in that it offers only temporary bliss as opposed to the eternal beatitude that Mary holds forth, while the baseness of those men (and note that it is only men) who approach her is less that of the sinner than of the unrefined and ignoble.

Let us now consider some of the poems of Guido Cavalcanti. Turning first to *Fresca rosa novella* (2-4), the opening words themselves alert us to a possible Marian influence, though the lines that follow, which speak of Spring meadows and birds gaily singing, are more typical of the courtly genre.[38] Though the poem has been seen as atypical of Cavalcanti's output, its style and language having more in common with Occitan and Sicilian poetry than with the so-called Siculo-Tuscan school, [39] the repeated emphasis on the angelic, supra-human nature of the lady suggests the influence of Guinizzelli

---

[38] Dronke notes the derivation from the *rosa novella* of Marian hymnody. See Dronke, *Medieval Latin*. Vol. 1. 140.

[39] See, for instance, Contini, who describes it as a "ballata di schemi e linguaggio arcaici" (2: 491).

and also anticipates later metaphysical developments in Cavalcanti's poetry concerning the destructive power of the lady's preternatural beauty. The insistence on the lady's uniqueness among women ("*fra lor le donne dea / vi chiaman*"; "among themselves the ladies call you goddess") (27-8), on God's exceptional action in creating her ("*Oltra natura umana / vostra fina piasenza / fece Dio, per esenza / che voi foste sovrana*"; "Beyond human nature did God create your fine loveliness so that you would be supreme by your very being") (32-35) and on her angelic nature ("*siete angelicata crïatura*" // "*Angelicata sembranza in voi, donna, riposa*"; "You are an angel-like creature. An angelic semblance dwells, lady, in you") (17-19), all have a faintly Marian ring, since they single out the lady as unique among women and above human nature, yet on closer examination they do not do not quite fit: Mary would never be called a goddess, nor is she like the angels, but rather like God. Likewise, the use of courtly and philosophical terms such as "*fina piasenza*" and "*per esenza*" would be out of place in a Marian text. One finds a similar pattern in *Avete 'n vo' li fior' e la verdure* (4-5), where the lady is again placed above all other women ("*di tutte siete la migliore*") (14), and her beauty is beyond any other creature ("*In questo mondo non ha creatura / s ì piena di bieltà ne di piacere*"; "In this world there is no creature so full of beauty of or comeliness") (5-6), where "*piacere*" is a term that places these lines firmly within the courtly register.

The poem that most obviously shows a Marian influence is *Chi è questa che ven, ch'ogn'om la mira,* whose opening lines paraphrase the Song of Songs, 6.9: "Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in array?"[40] No-one could read these lines in Cavalcanti's time without immediately thinking of the Virgin, to whom these words were applied in numerous sermons, commentaries and hymns. [41] Here, along with her beauty and gracefulness, it is the lady's unrivalled virtuousness and, above all, her humility that enhance the sense of her Marian uniqueness:

> *Chi è questa che vèn, ch'ogn'om la mira,*
> *che fa tremar di chiaritate l'âre*

---

[40] Also 3:6: 'Who is she that goeth up by the desert, as a pillar of smoke of aromatical spices, of myrrh, and frankincense, and of all the powders of the perfumer?' And 8:5: 'Who is this that cometh up from the desert, flowing with delights, leaning upon her beloved?' See Contini. Vol. 2. 495.

[41] See Lino Pertile's comments in this regard in *La puttana e il gigante*. 33-34.

*e mena seco Amor, sìche parlare*
*null' omo pote, ma ciascun sospira?*

*O Deo, che sembra quando li occhi gira,    5*
*Dical' Amor, ch'i' nol savria contare:*
*cotanto d'umiltà donna mi pare,*
*ch'ogn'altra ver' di lei i' la chiam' ira.*

*Non si poria contar la sua piagenza,*
*ch'a le' s'inchin' ogni gentil vertute,      10*
*e la beltate per sua dea la mostra.*

*Non fu sì alta già la mente nostra*
*e non si pose 'n noi tanta salute,*
*che propiamente n'aviàn canoscenza.*

Who is she who comes, that everyone looks at her / Who makes the air tremble with clarity / And brings Love with her, so that no one / can speak, though everyone sighs? // O God, what she looks like when she turns her eyes / Let Love say, for I could not describe it. / To me she seems so much a lady of good will / That any other in comparison to her I call vexation. // One could not describe her gracefulness, / For every noble virtue inclines towards her / And beauty displays her as its goddess. // Our mind never was so lofty / and never was such beatitude granted us / That we could really have knowledge of her. (6-7)

At both a thematic and formal level there are numerous references in this sonnet to Guinizzelli's *Io voglio del ver la mia donna laudare*. Nevertheless, though the poem may superficially appear to adhere to the Guinizzellian model of the angelic lady in its praise of a transcendent feminine figure and in its fusion of Christian and secular elements, in Cavalcanti the sheer ineffability of the lady goes much further, [42] so that she becomes the sensible manifestation of virtues or forms that derive from the Averroistic notion of the

---

[42] In layman's terms we could say "visible to the human eye."

common intellect.[43] She can therefore only be known through the intellect and yet her sensible form so overwhelms the lover and arouses his passion that he is unable to go beyond the *phantasma* to arrive at a purely intellectual understanding of her. Thus the lover can only admire but not understand or adequately express in words the humility and beauty of his lady. These same characteristics are to be found in *Veggio negli occhi de la donna mia* (36-37), though it goes even further through its references to the Nativity. From the lady's beauty is born a second transcendent self who, announced by a star, brings salvation to the poet: "*ne nasce un'altra di bellezza nova, / da la qual par ch'una stella si mova / e dica: 'La salute tua è apparita'*" (10-12). What is more, in a scene that has resonances of both the Assumption and Resurrection, the poem ends with the ascent of her '*vertù*' to heaven (20). Here then, we have a full-blown appropriation of aspects of Marian literature for purposes that are diametrically opposed to those of the Virgin's cult, in other words, an entirely secular interpretation of the overwhelming effects that feminine beauty may have on the soul of the lover. In the place of Mary's allure, which leads the admirer onwards and upwards through grace to an apprehension of the beauty and goodness of God himself (as occurs in Dante's *Paradiso* thanks to the mediation of Beatrice and the Virgin), the lover is ultimately overwhelmed and defeated by the enormity of what he has envisioned, so that he is left only with the desire but not its fulfilment.

## Vernacular Marian Texts

We have now come to the final part of our analysis in which we shall examine some examples of vernacular Marian texts. Once again we are spoiled for choice. We could turn to the rich tradition of the Iberian peninsula where we find works such as Gonzalo de Berceo's († c. 1264) *Milagros*, and Alfonso X el Sabio's (†1284) *Cantigas de Santa Maria*. In the French area we have a number of important compositions by troubadours such as Gautier de Coinci (†1236), Thibaut de Champagne (†1253), Rutebeuf (†1285), and Guiraut Riquier (†1292). Meanwhile in Italy, beginning in the latter half of the thirteenth century considerable numbers of Marian *laude* began to emerge from lay confraternities, associated with the new mendicant orders, especially

---

[43] On Cavalcanti's Averroism, see Bruno Nardi 93-129; Maria Corti 3-37; Maria Luisa Ardizzone 49-50.

the Franciscans. [44] What these vernacular texts tend to do, with varying degrees of success, is draw on both courtly and Marian traditions, so that one finds elements of the typological style typical of Latin hymns mixed together with a *fin'amor* lexicon.

In *De chanter ne me puis tenir*, [45] Thibaut de Champagne employs a number of traditional Marian topoi to praise the Virgin, such as the morning star ("*plus clers qu'estoile journaus*") (16) and flower imagery derived from the Old Testament exegesis of Isaiah 11. 1 and Numbers 17. 8, but also uses more courtly terminology addressing her as "Lady full of great goodness, courtliness and compassion" ("*Dame plaine de grant bonté, /De courtoisie et de pitié*") (33-34). This poem, which is clearly influenced by Bernard of Clairvaux, is also imbued with the notion of Mary's mercy. She can save even the worst "renegade" ("*renoié*") (36) from the wrath of God. We would do well to cling to her, he declares, because God "wishes to obey her" ("*la volt obeïr*") (9). The song ends with an appeal for the Virgin's mercy that mirrors both the plea of the courtly lover and the traditional ending of Marian prayers with a personal request for aid: "Sweet lady, I pray to you now for compassion, that you prevent me from being damned and lost through my sins" ("*Douce dame. Or vos pri gié / Merci, que me deffendez / Que je ne soi dampnez / Ne perduz par mon pechié*" (41-44). In *De grant travail et de petit esploit*, [46] Thibaut takes up another much-favoured theme in later Medieval Mariology, the notion that the Mother of Mercy acts as a counterbalance to God's harsh justice, placating his ire at the sinfulness of humanity. But he does so using the language of the court, so that Mary resembles the courtly lady who pleads with her lord on behalf of wayward courtesans who have offered her love and service: "Her exceedingly sweet and pleasant, and delicate words soothe the great ire of the great Lord. Foolish is the one who tries another love" ("*Si douz moz plesanz et savoré / Le grant coroz du grant Seigneur rapaie. / Mult par est fous qui autre amor essaie*") (14-16). The same pattern recurs in *Commencerai a fere un lai*,[47] in which he berates himself for his sinful life and begs for the Virgin's aid in persuading God to

---

[44] For some of the more significant collections of *laude* see del Popolo's *Laude fiorentine*, Scentoni's *Laudario orvietano*, Manetti's *Laudario di Santa Maria della Scala*, and Guarnini's *Laudario di Cortona*.

[45] Text and translation, O'Sullivan 134-36.

[46] Text and translation, O'Sullivan, 145-47.

[47] Text and translation, O'Sullivan, 158-59.

show mercy rather than the just punishment that he richly deserves: "If pity does not vanquish vengeance, then we will be, without a doubt, in a bad way. Lady full of goodness, may your sweet gracious words not be forgotten!" ("*Se pitiez ne vaint venjance, / Dont seronz nos, sans doutance, / Trop mal mené. / Dame plene de bonté, / Vostre douz moz savoré / Ne soient pas oublié!*") (34-39). Both Gautier and Thibaut emphasise the power that Mary holds over the Devil, because she gave birth to Christ, who defeated the Enemy through his death on the Cross, and because she continues to protect those who are faithful to her by obtaining forgiveness of their sins and protecting them from Satan's wiles. In *Dou tres douz non a la virge Marie*,[48] for instance Thibaut writes that "through her souls are freed from torment; for through her God came down here among us" ("*les amens en sont fors de torment; / Quar par li vint ça jus entre sa gent*") (4-5), and goes on to urge his listeners to appeal without delay to Mary, because "She has such a sweet, noble, and pure heart, the one who calls to her without guile will never fail to obtain forgiveness" ("*Tant a douz cuer, gentil et esmeré, / Qui l'apele de cuer sans fausseté, / Ja ne faudra a avoir repentence*" (38-40). In *De grant travail et de petit esploit*, he implicitly suggests that only Mary can effectively combat the "hooks baited with torment" ("*aimeçons aoschiez de torment*") (28), namely covetousness, arrogance, lust and wickedness, that "the Devil has cast out" ("*Li Deable a geté*") (28), for it is difficult to identify anyone in this life who is as worthy of admiration, service and love, while "the Lady, who increases all good" ("*la Dame qui touz les biens avance*") (46), to whom he sends his song, will indeed bring good fortune. In fact, this is the crucial difference between service to the Lady, which only brings further enslavement, and Mary, who offers freedom from the bonds of sin (Lindsay 214). Thibaut emphasises that the Virgin always repays those who are faithful to her, thus implicitly contrasting her with the ladies of the court. He opens *De chanter ne me puis tenir*, by declaring that he cannot keep himself from singing of this most beautiful of ladies "whom no one could serve and receive shame or misfortune" ("*Cui rien du mont ne peut server / Cui ja viegne honte ne maus*") (4-5), because the God, who deigned to dwell in her, "could never allow one who has served her to not be saved" ("*Ne porroit mie soffir / Qiu la sert, q'il ne fust saus*") (7-9). He declares, as was commonly believed in the Middle Ages, that it is through the Virgin that we must be saved ("*par vos devons*

---

[48] Text and translation, O'Sullivan, 137-39.

*garir*") (24), because it was through her that God came on earth and saved his people from the devil.

In *Amours, qui bien set enchanter*,[49] Gautier de Coinci redirects the *fin'amor* concept of service to spiritual ends. No longer is it the love of the lady that is sought but that of her son, Jesus: "Sweet lady, he who serves you well, deserves the love of your sweet son" ("*Douce dame, qui te sert bien / L'amour ton douz fil en desert*") (49-50). The reward for such service is not the "joy" that was a euphemism for sexual pleasure in the Occitan poets, but the joy of eternal life: "All those who serve you well will deserve joy without end" ("*Touz cil qui bien te serviront / Joie sans fin deserviront*") (52-53). This is an idea that he repeats in *Roÿne celestre*,[50] in even stronger terms, saying that those who do not serve her will most certainly be damned (32-33). Instead of speaking of Mary's humility, he employs the typically courtly *topos* of the suitor who humbles himself in order to gain the lady's favour: "All praise you and humble themselves before you" ("*Touz li mons t'alose / Et vers toi s'umilie*") (47-48). He strikingly endows Mary with *fin'amor* virtues, such as loyalty, worth, and courtliness (*loiauté, valeur, cortoisie*) (63-64). In the concluding lines of *Roÿne celestre* (88-108), he employs the typical *fin'amor topos* of declaring his unworthiness and begging for his lady's mercy, but there are some fundamental differences. What is at stake is not the poet's earthly happiness but the fate of his eternal soul, while there is never any doubt that Mary, the "fountain of mercy" ("*fons de misericorde*") (108) will heed his request, for as he reminds her, she has saved many who have fallen out of favour. The same theme occurs in *D'une amour quoie et serie*,[51] where he contrasts the serenity that those who love the Virgin experience with the anguish of "base people" ("*Vilanie genz*"), for, upon their death, she will present those who love her in this life to her Son.

Rutebeuf also makes use of courtly terms in praising Mary, but, consistent with his overall pattern of interspersing his poems with theological content, he includes terms that would find no place in a courtly lyric. The opening of *C'est de Notre Dame*,[52] in which he declares that he must "sing of the best woman who ever was and who ever will be" ("… *chantier de la mellieur / Qui onques fest ne qui jamais sera*") (1-2) is entirely conventional,

---

[49] Text and translation, O'Sullivan, 120-23.
[50] Text and translation, O'Sullivan, 127-30.
[51] Text and translation, O'Sullivan, 132-33.
[52] Text and translation, O'Sullivan, 200-02.

and as yet there is no hint that the lady concerned is Mary. The lines that follow, where he speaks of the lady's capacity to "heal every pain" ("*garit toute doleur*") (3) are also standard fare, though he hints at her identity when we are told that her curative powers extend beyond the poet himself: "She has cured many a soul" ("*Mainte arme a gaire*") (4). However, it is not until the second stanza, with the use of "charity," a term that is incompatible with courtly *amor*, that we are certain who this lady is: "there is in her courtesy and worth; in her is righteousness, goodness and charity" ("*Mout a en li courtoizie et valour; / Bien et bontei et charitei*") (10-11). Immediately afterwards, Rutebeuf, reverts to courtly language with the multiple use of 'folly' and its cognates (eight times in seven lines), but it is with the express intention of contrasting the charity that Mary represents with the *fol'amor* of his earlier career. Thereafter, the poem largely turns away from courtly motifs to concentrate on Mary's mediatory role as enemy of the Devil and Virgin Mother of the incarnate God.

One area of French literature in which there was a notable degree of cross-pollination was thirteenth century motets. Motets were polyphonic choral compositions that developed in the thirteenth century, initially in Paris from the Notre Dame school of Léonin and Pérotin, out of the *organum* tradition of elaborating on plainchant with one or more voices. Early motets generally consisted of a *cantus firmus* (a pre-existing melody, usually plainchant) around which were composed different voices with each voice using a distinct text. While the *cantus firmus* was always in Latin, the other voices could be a mixture of Latin and the vernacular and typically combined both sacred and secular texts. There are a number of Marian motets dating from this time which do just this by combining liturgical Latin texts with French songs in the courtly love tradition. Rothenberg suggests that allegory played a crucial role in allowing these secular love songs to be interpreted in a Marian key, an interesting argument that I believe is borne out to some extent when one looks at some of the texts concerned. However, he occasionally goes too far in trying to align specific Marian and courtly texts, suggesting, for instance that the courtly "plains . . . de douçour" (full of sweetness) corresponds to the Marian "gratia plena" (full of grace) (77): while it is reasonable to suggest that the secular content of early motets was open to allegorical interpretation, especially given that it was combined with sacred texts and/or music, to speak of such specific correspondences without solid

evidence is inadvisable. In broader terms, however, it is true to say that an allegorical reading of both more refined *fin'amor* lyrics and even the sexually loaded *pastourelle* was the only means whereby they could be reconciled with the religious base text/melody of the early motets. I would argue that the principal means whereby this rather curious juxtaposition of seemingly opposite poles could coexist was the Song of Songs, whose exegesis since the earliest centuries of the Church had legitimised the allegorical reading of a poem about human love in terms of the relationship between the soul and God, and which in more recent times had also been interpreted as love between Mary and her divine Spouse.[53]

But let us look at some of the texts that Rothenberg quotes. The first set are from the anonymous 13th century motet *Plus bele que flor / Quant revient et feuille et flor / L'autrier jouer m'en alai*, which overlays three French lyrics onto the Latin words *Flos filius eius* (the Flower, her Son) drawn from a *Styrps Iesse* responsory originally composed by Fulbert of Chartres:

> *Quadruplum*
> More beautiful than a flower, in my opinion, is she to whom I belong. For as long as I live, no one will have joy or pleasure of my love except the flower that is of paradise: she is the Mother of the Lord, who placed us here, and wants us to return to him forever.[54]

> *Triplum*
> When leaf and flower return with the approach of summer, Lord, then I remember Love, who has always been courtly and gentle with me. I am so grateful for his help, because he lightens my pain when I desire it. One gains much good and much honour from being his friend.

> *Motetus*
> The other day I was wandering in a lonely place, and into an orchard I went to pick a flower. There I found a pleasing lady, prettily dressed; her body was frail and she was singing in great

---

[53] For a discussion of the influence of the Song of Songs on both Marian and courtly texts, see Kendrick 140-56.

[54] Translation is adapted from the version by Huot 91-92, quoted in modified form by Rothenberg 48.

distress: I am in love, what shall I do. It is the end, the
end, whatever anyone says, I will love.[55]

These French texts form part of a wider family, all based on the *Flos filius eius*, but whereas the other *triplum and motetus* texts are all in Latin and are entirely religious, drawing on the standard biblical types of the flower and the lily,[56] here the *triplum* uses a Spring *topos*, much favoured by *fin'amor* poets, while the *motetus* displays all the typical features of *pastourelle* - the knight who tries to bed a lowly shepherd girl, the refusal of the girl (often named Marion) on the grounds that she wishes to remain faithful to her shepherd lover, Robin.[57] Only the *quadruplum,* which was added at a later date, is specifically religious, though written in the courtly manner of a lover who is pledging faithfulness to his lady. Meanwhile, underlying all these layers are the words (or perhaps only the melody since it is not clear if the words themselves were used) drawn from the *Styrps Iesse* responsory, "(R) The stock of Jesse produced a branch and the branch a flower. And on this flower rested the nourishing spirit. (V) The Virgin Mother of God is the branch, *the flower her Son*,"[58] which would have been familiar to any listener with a clerical or monastic background. So what is happening here? Is this an attempt to sacralise courtly love or to secularise Marian devotion, or perhaps a bid to reconcile the two in some sort of synthesis? Or is it simply a literary conceit, a show of musical bravura, for the amusement and entertainment of an educated clerical audience? Given that the audience would have been well aware that the underlying melody was religious, would they have been drawn to an allegorical interpretation of the love lyrics, even in the absence of the later Marian *quadruplum*? Or would they have felt uncomfortable with the combination so that it would have led them to question the values being promoted by the courtly songs? Or perhaps they would have simply been amused? It is impossible to answer these questions at such a distance with any certainty, whether in terms of authorial intention or audience reaction.

---

[55] Translation Robyn E. Smith, in Gordon A. Anderson, *ed*. *Compositions of the Bamberg Manuscript* (lxxx), quoted in Rothenberg 45.

[56] For the texts see Rothenberg 42-44.

[57] Maid Marian and Robin were by no means unique or original to the adventurous tales of Sherwood forest, being stock figures in the pastoral genre, generally first associated with Marcabru but perfected by Giraut Riquier see his *Yeu cuiaua souen d'amor chanter*), in which they appear as a shepherd and shepherdess couple.

[58] Translation adapted from Rothenberg 32.

However, given the gradual evolution of the motet away from secular themes, to the extent that by the Renaissance secular love themes were entirely eliminated, we can at least conclude that whatever the intention of individual authors, the long-term result was the triumph of the Marian element in the religious sphere. Where the composers of hymns that made use of courtly motifs, who had always been conscious of the essentially adversarial relationship they had with their secular counterparts, had previously been happy to appropriate courtly love to their own ends, it seems that there came a point when such an intergeneric approach was no longer deemed acceptable. Meanwhile secular love poetry and music took a different direction, though, of course, given their history of drawing on some of the same sources, they continued to bear some similarities.

As a final text to quote in this essay I can find nothing better than a poem by Alfonso X el Sabio. In many of the *loors*, or praise poems, which intersperse the miracle tales of the *Cantigas* we find a similar pattern to the poets such as Thibaut and de Coinci, or the *laude* of Italy, in which the courtly lexicon is employed alongside traditional Marian motifs. But the particular poem that I have chosen is of interest not just because of its intergeneric language but because it sets out with exceptional clarity the fundamental opposition that existed between the Virgin and the courtly lady. The beauty of this poem is that Alfonso performs a surgical deconstruction of the courtly model using the very language and notions that the courtly poets themselves had evolved, hoisting them, as it were, on their own petard:

*Quen entender quisér, entendedor*
*seja da Madre de Nóstro Sennor*

*Ca ela faz todo ben entender,*
*e entendendo nos faz connocer*
*Nóstro Sennor e o séu ben aver*
*e que perçamos do démo pavor*

*En cujo poder outras donas van*
*metê-los séus, e coita e afán*
*lles fazen sofrer, atal costum' an;*
*porên non é leal o séu amor*

*As outras fazen óme seer fól*
*e preçan-s' ende, assí seer sól;*

*mais esta nos dá sis' e faz-nos pról*
*e guarda-nos de fazê-lo peior.*

*As outras dan séu ben fazendo mal,*
*e esta dando-o sempre mais val;*
*e queno gaannad' á, non lle fal,*
*senôn se é mui mao pecador.*

*As outras muitas vezes van mentir,*
*mas aquesta nunca non quér falir;*
*e porende, quen se dela partir*
*Déu-lo cofonda, per u quér que for.*

*As outras nos fazen muit' esperar*

*polo séu ben e por el lazerar,*
*mas esta non quér con séu ben tardar*
*e dá-nos ben d'outros bẽes maior.*

*E porên séu entendedor serei*
*enquant' éu viva, e a loarei*
*e de muitos bẽes que faz direi*
*e miragres grandes, ond' ei sabo.*

**Ref.** He who would seek perfect love and understanding let him woo Holy Mary. **1.** For she makes all things clearly understood and through understanding makes us know Our Lord and enjoy his blessing and lose our fear of the devil **2.** in whose power other ladies place their servants and make them suffer great grief and woe, for such is their way, and hence their love is not true. **3.** Other ladies cause a man to be foolish and are wont to pride themselves on that. However, the Lady gives us wisdom and befriends us and saves us from going astray. **4.** The others bestow their favour by doing harm, but she, in bestowing it, becomes the more worthy. He who has won her favour will never lose it unless he be a hopeless sinner. **5.** The other ladies often lie, but she never betrays us. Therefore, he who departs from her is punished by God, whenever he may be. **6.** The others make us wait and pine for their favours, but this Lady will not withhold her rewards but gives the greatest blessing of all. **7.** Therefore, her suitor I will be as long as I may live and will praise her and tell of the many blessings she bestows and miracles she performs, in which I rejoice.[59]

Here, Alfonso brilliantly contrasts the attributes of the Virgin with those of other women and urges those who would seek perfect love to woo Mary. Where courtly ladies lead men astray and fill them with folly – a key word in the courtly lexicon implying a loss of reason – Mary offers true knowledge, and always gives her devotees their reward, loving them with a love that is true. Courtly ladies hold their lovers in the devil's power. The love that the poets experience is not true since it provokes anxiety and fear. Mary, instead, keeps her admirers on the path of virtue; her favours do good while those of other ladies do harm. Where the courtly lady humiliates her suitor and causes him suffering and pain, since she does not offer true love, Our Lady offers a love that does not delude. Indeed, were the courtly lady to grant her lover's

---

[59] Text from Walter Mettman edition and Connie L. Scarborough. I have also consulted Cunningham's translation for clarity.

desire and give him her favour, she would no longer be the unblemished object of his desire so that love of her leads to a never-ending loop of delusion. Instead, the Virgin *can* respond to love with love and grant her petitioners' pleas, and in the process her own worth is confirmed and enhanced.

## Conclusion

What conclusions can we draw at the end of our odyssey through several centuries of song and verse from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds? In the first place we can affirm with some confidence that the courtly and Marian genres had decidedly different origins and started off on very different tracks, as is amply illustrated by our Latin hymns and by the poems of Guillaume X, so that any argument for a major Marian input in the emergence of the *fin'amor* lyric may be dismissed. At best it could be argued that the centuries-long encomiastic tradition which had elevated the Virgin to an exalted position in the Medieval mind may have indirectly inspired the early troubadours, but even this is a pretty tendentious argument. In the later Occitan poets (whom we have not explored here), and even more so in the Siculo-Tuscan poets we have looked at, we find more evidence of Marian influences as the lady became more and more spiritualised and abstract. Nevertheless, even though these poets may have drawn on the Marian tradition, the fundamental values that they espoused were contrary to a Christian world view, so that there is always an unresolved tension between the "marianised" lady and the sort of love she represents which leads away from, not towards God. A further point is that we can see clearly the radically different origin and purpose of imagery in the two genres, typology being by far the most dominant feature in Latin Marian hymnody, whereas it is something that is entirely alien to *fin'amor* poetry. Even where imagery apparently coincides, for instance in the likening of the lady or the Virgin to a rose of lily, the purpose is very different. If any influence can be said to have been exerted on courtly poetry in terms of typology it is that it opened up the potential for writers to explore and exploit the polyvalence of language and imagery, most obviously in the use of the bride-bridegroom motif in Song of Songs as the basis for the spiritual readings of apparently secular texts. We can also conclude that a number of aspects of the Virgin's cult – her queenship, declarations of service, devotion and loyalty to her, the use of nature imagery – long predate the courtly phenomenon and are therefore not a

product of it. Finally, we can say that vernacular Marian song and verse, rather than being the passive subject of interference from the courtly genre, engaged actively with it, at times seeking an accommodation (with varying degrees of success) but in other cases actively seeking to appropriate its language and subvert its values. Ultimately, the two genres made uneasy bedfellows and no true synthesis was ever achieved.

## Works Cited

Alfonso X. *Cantigas de loor*. Ed. Martin G. Cunningham. Dublin: U College Dublin P 2000. Print.

——. *Cantigas de santa Maria*. Ed. Walter Mettman. 2 vols. Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1961. Print.

——. *Songs of Holy Mary of Alfonso X, the Wise: A Translation of the Cantigas de Santa María*. Trans. Kathleen Kulp-Hill. Introd. Connie L. Scarborough. Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2000. Print.

Amata, Biagio. "La 'schiavitù mariana' di Idlefonso di Toledo." *Theotokos* 14 (2006): 57-72. Print.

Anderson, Gordon A., ed. *Compositions of the Bamberg Manuscript: Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Lit. 115 (olim Ed. IV. 6)*. Trans. Robyn E. Smith. Neuhausen-Stuttgart: Hänssler-Verlag-American Institute of Musicology, 1977. Print. Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae 75.

Andreasen, Niels-Erik. "The Role of the Queen Mother in Israelite Society." *CBQ* 45 (1983): 179-94. Print.

Ardizzone, Maria Luisa. *Guido Cavalcanti: The Other Middle Ages*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2002. Print.

Astell, Ann W. *The Song of Songs in the Middle Ages*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1990. Print.

Auerbach, Erich. "Figura." *Archivum Romanicum* 17 (1938): 320-41. Print.

——. "Typological Symbolism in Medieval Literature." *Yale French Studies* 9 (1952): 3-10. Print.

Barolini, Teodolinda. "Dante and the Lyric Past." *The Cambridge Companion to Dante*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993. 14-33. Print

Barré, Henri. "La Royauté de Marie pendant les neuf premiers siècles." *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 29 (1939) : 129-62, 303-34. Print.

——. *Prières anciennes de l'Occident à la Mère du Sauveu: Des origines à saint Anselme*. Paris: Lethielleux, 1963. Print.

Baskin, Judith. "Rabbinic-Patristic Exegetical Contacts in Late Antiquity: A Bibliographical Reappraisal." *Approaches to Ancient Judaism*: *Volume V*. Ed. William Scott Green. Atlanta: Scholars P, 1985. 53-80. Print.

Berschin, Walter. "Early Medieval Latin Poetry of Mary." *The Church and Mary*. Ed. Robert N. Swanson. Studies in Church History 39. Woodenbridge: Boydell, 2004. 112-25. Print.

Bloch, R. Howard. *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991. Print.

Boase, Roger. *The Origin and Meaning of Courtly Love*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1977. Print.

Borsa, Paola. *La nuova poesia di Guido Guinizelli*. Fiesole: Cadmo, 2007.

Print.

Brock, Sebastian, trans. *Bride of Light: Hymns on Mary from the Syriac Churches*. Piscataway: Gorgias P, 2010. Print.

——. *From Ephrem to Romanos: Interactions between Syriac and Greek in Late Antiquity*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999. Print.

Brubaker, Leslie and Mary B. Cunningham. *The Cult of the Mother of God in Byzantium: Texts and Images*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011. Print.

Burns, E. Jane. "Courtly Love: Who Needs It? Recent Feminist Work in the Medieval French Tradition." *Signs* 27.1 (2001): 23-57. Print.

Cassian. *Collationes*. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*. Vol. 49.

Cavalcanti, Guido. *The Poetry of Guido Cavalcanti*. Ed. and trans. Lowry Jr. Nelson. New York: Garland, 1986. Print.

Cherchi, Paolo. *Andreas and the Ambiguity of Courtly Love*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1994. Print.

Cholakian, Rouben C. *The Troubadour Lyric: A Psychocritical Reading*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1990. Print.

Contini, Gianfranco, ed. *I poeti del duecento: poesia cortese Toscana*. 2 vols. Milano: R. Riccardi, 1976. Print.

Corti, Maria. *La felicità mentale: nuove prospettive per Cavalcanti e Dante*. Turin: Einaudi, 1983. Print.

Curtius, Ernst Robert. *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*. Trans. Willard R. Trask. New York: Harper, 1963. Print.

Dammen McAuliffe, Jane, Barry D. Walfish, and Joseph W. Goering, eds. *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002. Print.

De Berceo, Gonzalo. *Milagros de Nuestra Señora*. Ed. Vincente Beltrán. 3rd ed. Barcelona: Planeta, 1990. Print.

De Coinci, Gautier. *Les Miracles de Nostre Dame*. Ed. V. Frederic Koenig. 4 vols. Geneva: Droz, 1955-70. Print.

De Lubac, Henri. *Exégèse médiévale: les quatre sens de l'Écriture*. 4 vols. Paris: Aubier, 1959-64. Print.

De Rougemont, Denis. *L'Amour et l'Occident*. Paris: Pion, 1956. Print.

Del Popolo, Concetto, ed. *Laude fiorentine. I: Il Laudario della Compagnia di San Gilio*. Florence: Olschki, 1990. Print.

Dreves, Guido M., Clemens Blume and Henry M. Bannister, eds. *Analecta hymnica medii aevi*. 55 vols. 1886-1922. Frankfurt: Minerva, 1961. Print.

Dronke, Peter. *Medieval Latin and the Rise of European Love-Lyric*. 2nd ed. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1968. Print.

——. "The Song of Songs and Medieval Love Lyric." *The Bible and Medieval Culture*. Ed. Willem Lourdaux and Daniël Verhelst. Louvain: Leuven UP, 1979. 236-62. Print.

Fassler, Margot. "Mary's Nativity, Fulbert of Chartres, and the Stirps Jesse:

Liturgical Innovation Circa 1000 and its Afterlife." *Speculum* 75 (2000): 389-434. Print.

——. *Gothic Song: Victorine Sequences and Augustan Reform in Twelfth-Century Paris.* 2nd ed. Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame P, 2011. Print.

Ferrante, Joan, and George Economou, eds. *In Pursuit of Perfection: Courtly Love in Medieval Literature*. New York: Kennikat, 1975. Print.

Fulton, Rachel. *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800-1200.* New York: Columbia UP, 1996. Print.

Gaunt, Simon. *Love and Death in Medieval French and Occitan Courtly Literature: Martyrs to Love*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006. Print.

——. *Troubadours and Irony*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989. Print.

Gaunt, Simon and Sarah Kay, eds. *The Troubadours: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999. Print.

Gilson, Étienne. *The Mystical Theology of St. Bernard*. Trans. A. H. C. Downes. New York: Sheed & Ward, 1940. Print.

Guarnieri, Anna Maria, ed. *Laudario di Cortona*. Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 1991. Print.

Guinizzelli, Guido. *The Poetry of Guido Guinizzelli*. Ed. and Trans. Robert Edwards. New York: Garland. 1987. Print.

Holmes, Olivia, *Assembling the Lyric Self: Authorship from Troubadour Song to Italian Poetry Book*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2000. Print.

Huot, Sylvia. *Allegorical Play in the Old French Motet: The Sacred and Profane in Thirteenth-Century Polyphony*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1997. Print.

Ihrie, Maureen. "Courtly Love." *The Feminist Encyclopedia of Spanish Literature*. Ed. Janet Pérez and Maureen Ihrie. Westport: Greenwood 2002. 155-58. Print.

Jerome. *De nominibus hebraicis*. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*. Vol. 23.

Kay, Sarah. *Subjectivity in Troubadour Poetry*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990. Print.

Kendrick, Laura. *The Game of Love: Troubadour Word Play*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1988. Print.

Le Goff, Jacques. *The Birth of Europe*. Trans. Janet Lloyd. Oxford: Blackwell, 2005. Print.

Lindsay, Jack. *The Troubadours and their World of the Twelfth an Thirteenth Centuries*. London: Frederick Muller, 1976. Print.

Malm, Ulf. *Dolssor conina: Lust, the Bawdy, and Obscenity in Medieval Occitan and Galician-Portuguese Troubadour Poetry and Latin Secular Love Song*. Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2001. Print.

Manetti, Roberta, ed. *Laudario di Santa Maria della Scala*. Florence:

Accademia della Crusca, 1993. Print.

Markale, Jean. *Courtly Love: The Path of Sexual Initiation*. Trans. Jon Graham. Rochester: Inner Traditions, 2000. Print.

Matter, E. Ann. *The Voice of My Beloved: The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1990. Print.

Meersseman, Gilles Gérard. *Der Hymnos Akathistos im Abendland*. 2 vols. Freiburg: Universizätsverlag, 1958-60. Print.

Migne, Jacques-Paul, ed. *Patrologiae cursus completus, seu bibliotheca universalis, integra, uniformis, commoda, oeconomica, omnium SS. Patrum, doctorum scriptorumque eccelesiasticorum qui ab aevo apostolico ad usque Innocentii III tempora floruerunt*. 221 vols. Paris: Migne, 1844-64. Print.

Mone, Franz Joseph, ed. *Lateinische Hymnen des Mittelalters*. 3 vols. 1853-55. Aalen: Scientia, 1964. Print.

Nardi, Bruno. "L'avveroismo del 'Primo amico' di Dante." Bruno Nardi. *Dante e la cultura medievale*. Bari: Laterza, 1949. 93-129. Print.

Norris, Richard A., Jr., ed. and trans. *The Song of Songs Interpreted by Early Christian and Medieval Commentators*. Grand Rapids: Eerdermans, 2003. Print.

O'Sullivan, Daniel. *Marian Devotion in Thirteenth-Century French Lyric*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2005. Print.

Ohly, Friedrich. *Hohelied-Studien: Grundzüge einer Geschichte der Hoheliedauslegung des Abendlandes bis um 1200*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1958. Print.

Origen. *De Principiis*. *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol 4. Trans. Frederick Crombie. Ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe. Buffalo: Christian Literature Publishing, 1885. Web. 20 July 2014.

———. *Origène: Commentaire sur le Cantique des cantiques*. ed. L. Brésard, H. Crouzel, and M. Borret. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1991-1992. Print. Sources chrétiennes 375-376.

Paterson, Linda M. *The World of the Troubadours: Medieval Occitan Society, c. 1100-c. 1300*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993. Print

Pelosi, Pietro. *Guido Guinizelli: stilnovo inquieto*. Liguori: Napoli, 2000. Print.

Peltomaa, Leena. *The Image of the Virgin Mary in the Akathistos Hymn*. Leiden: Brill, 2001. Print.

Pertile, Lino. *La puttana e il gigante: dal "Cantico dei Cantici" al Paradiso Terrestre di Dante*. Ravenna: Longo, 1998. Print.

Potkay, Alan. *The Story of Joy. From the Bible to Late Romanticism*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007. Print.

Pulega, Andrea. *Amore cortese e modelli teologici: Guglielmo IX, Chrétien de Troyes, Dante*. Milan: Jaca Books, 1995. Print.

Resnick Alfonsi, Sandra. *Masculine Submission in Troubadour Lyric*. New York: Lang, 1986. Print.

Reynolds, Brian. *Gateway to Heaven: Marian Doctrine and Devotion, Image and Typology in the Patristic and Medieval Periods*. Vol 1. *Doctrine and Devotion*. New York: New City P, 2012. Print.

Rigland, Ellie. Psychoanalysis and Courtly Love. *Arthuriana* 5.1 (1995): 1-20. Print.

Roschini, Gabriele M. "La regalità di Maria nell'innologia liturgica del medioevo." *Studia mediaevalia et mariologica*. Ed. Carolo Balić. Rome: Antonianum, 1971. 611-19. Print.

Rothenberg, David J. *The Flower of Paradise: Marian Devotion and Secular Song in Medieval and Renaissance Music*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011. Print.

Rubin, Miri. *A History of the Virgin Mary*. London: Penguin, 2009. Print.

Scentoni, Gina, ed. *Laudario orvietano*. Milan: Mondadori, 2008. Print.

Schine Gold, Penny. *The Lady and the Virgin: Image, Attitude, and Experience in Twelfth-Century France.* Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1985. Print.

Singleton, Charles S. *An Essay on the Vita Nuova*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1977. Print.

——. *Journey to Beatrice*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1958. Print.

Spivey Ellington, Donna. *From Sacred Body to Angelic Soul*. Washington: Catholic U of America P, 2001. Print.

Sri, Edward. *Queen Mother: A Biblical Theology of Mary's Queenship*. Steubenville: Emmaus Road, 2005. Print.

Sticca, Sandro. *The Planctus Mariae in the Dramatic Tradition of the Middle Ages*. Trans. Joseph Berrigan. Athens: U of Georgia P, 1988. Print.

Topsfield, Leslie Thomas. *Troubadours and Love.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1975. Print.

Turner, Denys. *Eros and Allegory: Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs*. Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1995. Print.

Urbach, Ephraim E. "Rabbinic Exegesis and Origen's Commentary on the Song of Songs and Jewish-Christian Polemics." *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 22 (1971): 247-75. Print.

Warner, Marina. *Alone of all her Sex: The Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary*. London: Pan Books, 1985. Print.

Whitson, Kathy, J. ed. The *Encyclopedia of Feminist Literature*. Westport: Greenwood, 2004. Print.

William of Malmesbury. *Gesta regum anglorum.* Ed. and Trans. Roger A. B. Mynors, Rodney M. Thomson and Michael Winterbottom. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998. Print.

Wollock, Jennifer G. *Rethinking Chivalry and Courtly Love*. Santa Barbara:

Praeger, 2011. Print.